

TRUTH



A BULLETIN FOR SOCIALISM AND TROTSKYISM

The Struggle Against Bush Has Already Begun . . .

The struggle against George Bush and his racist, anti-working class policies has already begun.

— Eighty defenders of the democratic right to abortion clashed with anti-abortion rights forces trying to physically prevent women from using an abortion clinic in Livonia, Michigan on November 12.

— Three hundred angry students opposed to an increase in the amount of money they had to pay for school, confronted their community college president and demanded that the increase be repealed, at Henry Ford Community College in Dearborn, Michigan on November 21.

— The Central America Solidarity Committee sponsored a forum for Arnaldo Ramos, a leader of the Salvadoran people, in Detroit, Michigan on December 9.

— Homeless people occupied abandoned houses and demanded that the city turn these houses over to them in Detroit, Michigan on December 27.

— The "Al Morris Team," an opposition group in UAW Local 600, associated with Jerry Tucker and the New Directions Movement, is building an educational conference in favor of revitalizing and democratizing the UAW, for rank-and-file UAW members, in Detroit on January 8.

There have also been actions, demonstrations, and strikes in other cities. Various organizations are already planning nationally coordinated actions against U.S. intervention in Central America on January 20, the day that Bush will be inaugurated, and a national demonstration to defend the democratic right to abortion in Washington, D.C., on April 9.

The struggles today are just a small example of those to come. Workers in Palestine, Poland, Armenia, Algeria, Spain, France and several Latin American countries have already taken the road of national or general strikes against their (Continued on page 2)

Solidarity with Libya!

The U.S. shot down two Libyan jets over the Mediterranean on January 4.

We urge workers, unions, and all working class organizations to condemn this act, find out everyone who is responsible for it, and demand that they be punished.

The U.S. has absolutely no right to have any forces in the Mediterranean, still less does it

have any right to shoot down Libyan planes flying in their home territory. The U.S. does not own this planet. Oppressed nations like Libya have the right to self-determination, and to defend it by any means necessary. The Libyan people are our brothers and sisters in struggle.

TRUTH
January, 1989

INSIDE:

GENERAL STRIKES!

WHY IS JACKSON
DINING WITH BUSH?

LESSONS OF THE 1988
ELECTIONS ...

(Continued from front page)

governments' racist or anti-working class policies. In some cases, like Palestine or Algeria, these struggles have become armed, popular insurrections.

We urge all workers to support all working class and popular struggles against Bush and his policies, and to do everything possible to make them as large as possible. It is especially important to fight for the unions to support such struggles because these are the workers only mass organizations.

At the same time, it is essential to fight for a workers party, a workers program, and a workers government, to solve big problems, like unemployment, poverty, crime, and racist oppression and violence.

As long as workers do not have their own political party, their own program, and their own government, real power will remain in the hands of the rich financiers, property owners, and their families, that now run this country and others.

And as long as workers do not have their own party, program and government, rich opportunistic Democratic Party politicians — like Roosevelt, Kennedy, Carter, Coleman Young, and now Jesse Jackson — will continue to use the workers and oppressed peoples' struggles to advance themselves at the expense of the masses of people.

It is not easy to build a truly working class party. Workers are exploited and oppressed. They work. They have little time to read, to study, to figure out what is going on, to define a policy that really represents their interests. Those that they select to do this work for them often tend to become separated from the workers and begin to represent other classes.

But it is the only road. And it will be victorious.

TRUTH
December, 1988

General Strikes!

There have been so many big strike movements and even general strikes in the last months and weeks, that it is difficult to list them all, not to mention write a detailed report on each one.

— Workers in the General Trade Union Confederation organized a one-day general strike to protest the government's austerity measures in **Peru** on October 13.

— There were wildcat strikes in **Poland** in early November, when the government announced that it was going to close the famous Lenin shipyards in Gdansk, home of the Polish workers union Solidarity. Walesa, the original leader of Solidarity, succeeded in forcing the workers back to work without winning any commitments from the government to keep the plant open.

— Ten thousand workers at the government-owned steel mill in **Brazil** went on strike and occupied their plant in opposition to the government's refusal to grant them higher wages in mid-November. The government used troops to try to drive them out and killed three workers.

— There was a general strike in **Sri Lanka**

on November 10, initiated by the People's Liberation Movement in opposition to the growth of unemployment and corruption under the corrupt Julius Jayawardene government. Most of the country was paralyzed by the strike and the government order police to shoot demonstrators on sight.

— The United Workers Central in **Chile** planned a general strike to demand that Pinochet step down for November 30. We haven't yet learned if this proceeded as planned or not.

— There has been a strike wave in **France** throughout the fall. This reached a high point when transportation workers struck. Paris was completely paralyzed and the government sent 2,000 troops to Paris in an attempt to break the strike.

— Unions associated with the Socialist Party and the Communist Party initiated a general strike in **Spain** on December 14. This is the first general strike that has taken place in Spain since the fascist dictatorship was established in the late 1930s. It is especially significant because it was organized in opposition to the Socialist Party government's austerity measures. The



strike was extremely effective. The country was completely shutdown and millions of workers participated actively in the strike, with pickets and mass demonstrations. Gonzalez, the Socialist Party president, tried to get air time, but television workers cut-off all TV stations at 12 midnight on the dot.

— Palestinians initiated a general strike on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip on the anniversary of the "intifada" in late December. The strike was initiated by the underground "intifada" leadership.

There are two very significant things about these developments. Workers in the oppressed countries are no longer alone; workers in the more advanced capitalist countries like France or Spain are joining them. And workers are striking in opposition to opportunist and bourgeoisified working class leaderships like the Socialist Parties in France and Spain.

The rich bosses in the United States and Europe are obviously becoming more and more frightened. They are cornered and they don't know what to do.

These big strike movements and general strikes show the American working class its future. This is one "import" that the bosses and union bureaucrats won't be able to ban. It lives in the heart of every worker — young or old, Black or white, man or woman — who wants what is due to him and his family!—M. Gutshall



Young people in Spain demonstrate against a discriminatory jobs bill prior to the December 14 General Strike.

"Big strike movements and general strikes show the American working class its future ..."

Union Contracts in 1989

Union contracts covering 36% of all workers covered by major union contracts (contracts covering 1,000 or more workers) — that is, *3.1 million workers* — are going to expire in the next twelve months. This includes workers in the steel and aerospace industries.

We urge all workers and their unions to make a united fight in these negotiations, not only for substantial wage increases, but also for full cost-of-living allowances and a shorter work week with no cut in pay. It is necessary to prepare now to fight the inflation that is sure to come, and to draw more workers into the work force.

At the same time, the unions must begin to put forward independent labor candidates in elections, and begin to build a labor party, in order to win the oppressed population to their side, and fight for work-

ing class solutions to the economic crisis, like:

— a program of public construction and public services to provide jobs for all unemployed workers at union wages and to provide necessary goods and services like homes; the elimination of all military spending; not one penny for the bosses and their army; a 100% tax on all incomes over \$100,000;

— workers control of the banks, basic industry, and large-scale agriculture; workers veto power over all management decisions including hiring, firing, purchasing, etc., to make sure that enough workers are hired, that they are well-paid, that their working conditions are safe, and to keep management from stealing and squandering resources.—M.G.

The 1989 Detroit Mayoral Elections

Detroit, Michigan
December, 1988
To Working Class Organizations in Detroit
Dear Comrades,

We are addressing you because you have been involved in working class election campaigns in the past.

We would like to meet with you in order to find out more about your plans for the coming mayor and city council elections in Detroit and in order to explore the possibility of making a common fight for a single, united slate of working class, labor, or socialist candidates for mayor and city council.

We think that the opposition to the top Democratic Party and UAW bureaucracy candidates in the primaries, the city council's victory over Young in the recent elections, and the votes for Workers Against Concessions Party candidates for local offices, all show that both opposition to Young and the Democratic Party and interest in working class candidates are rising.

By fighting for a united working class, labor or

socialist slate in the elections, we can advance this development, rather than allow it to be channeled into safe harbors or dissipated, by another Jackson-style campaign.

While there are obviously important and fundamental political differences between the different working class tendencies that have been involved in independent working class election campaigns in Detroit in the recent past — the Socialist Workers Party, the Workers World Party, Spark, Truth, the Revolutionary Workers League, Socialist Action, and perhaps others that we may not be aware of — there are also some basic demands that all tendencies seem to agree on.

Making a common fight for those things that we do agree on, will advance the cause of the working class and provide a framework for clarifying and resolving differences on other questions.

Please contact us and let us know whether you would like to meet and discuss this question.

Fraternally,
M. Gutshall

Our Work Among Workers

After we were expelled from Socialist Action, and began to publish *Truth* again, we also began to do revolutionary work among workers in Detroit again.

We decided to concentrate on distributing *Truth* and *The Fourth International* to workers at the Ford River Rouge auto plant in Dearborn, and on working to win these workers to the revolutionary struggle.

The Ford River Rouge auto plant is one of the largest auto plants in the world. Over 100,000 workers used to work there; however the work force has since been cut to only 13,000 workers. During the late 1930s, UAW organizers were forced to engage in violent conflicts with Ford's special private police in order to establish their right to distribute pro-union literature to workers and organize a union. However, by the 1960s, the UAW had degenerated so much, under the influence of the bosses, that young Black workers there formed the Ford Revolutionary Union Movement, and many opposition formations developed in the union.

Several working class tendencies distribute their publications at this plant, including the Communist Party, the Progressive Labor Party, the Socialist Workers Party, and Spark. Spark played a leading role in initiating the Workers Against Concessions slate in the recent elections, and at least two workers from this plant, Russ Leone, head of the UAW Tool and Die Unit, and Gary Walkowicz, were part of this slate. There is also a group there called "The Al Morris Team," which is associated with the New Directions group, an opposition group in the UAW.

We worked at this plant in the past, and know a few people who work there now, so we thought this would be a good place to work.

The first few times that we went to this plant with *Truth* and *The Fourth International*, only one or two workers were interested in them. However, after we passed out a leaflet urging workers to reject the union leadership's policy of supporting the rich bosses' candidates and parties, and to

vote for working class candidates and fight for emergency measures against unemployment and poverty, five workers stopped and asked for *Truth*. Some asked us how much support we had, others asked what our relationship to Spark was, still others explained that more workers didn't ask for our publication because they were afraid to be associated with communists.

". . . After we passed out a leaflet urging workers to reject the union leadership's policy of supporting the rich bosses' candidates and parties, and to vote for working class candidates . . . workers stopped and asked for *Truth* . . .

All complained that the union leadership collaborates with management.

We also passed out another leaflet after the elections on "Why George Bush Won the Election," but workers did not seem to be particularly interested in this.

We also passed out a leaflet calling for independent working class patrols, in face of a series of assaults on school girls in Detroit. Unfortunately, we were unable to return to the plant after we passed out this leaflet, so we don't know exactly what the workers response was. Spark also passed out a leaflet on this question, so it's clear that many workers are concerned about it.

Over a one month period we sold about 10 copies of *Truth* at this plant. We haven't yet sold any copies of *The Fourth International*, and we haven't yet met any workers that are particularly interested in our struggle. But neither of these things is particularly surprising. As a result of the delay in publishing *The Fourth International* in English, the issues we have had have been old, and thus not very interesting to most workers. And workers don't yet know much about us. We have met some interesting workers from "The Al Morris Team." All these workers seem to be against the union leadership. But they have

very different political views. Some are for the Republicans, some are for the Democrats, some are against both, and others are socialists. This shows the importance of fighting for working class unity in elections, for independent labor candidates to lead this fight. Without this, the bosses can easily disorient and divide promising working class movements.

We plan to continue our work at this plant. We are considering publishing *Truth* every two weeks so that it can take up questions that workers are interested in, in a more timely way. And we have definitely decided to publish *The Fourth International* in English ourselves so that it is timely. We are looking for ways to interest workers who aren't yet interested in reading publications, through more leaflets, posters, films, and things like this.

We also plan to begin distributing *Truth* in a neighborhood or community college where we can reach more young workers. Most young workers at the Ford River Rouge Plant were laid off, and the vast majority who work there now have done so for many, many years.

Readers who would like to join us in this work are welcome to do so. While it's difficult, it's also interesting, and it's absolutely necessary to build a party that really represents the interests of the workers.—M.G.

If you would like
to help distribute
Truth . . .

Call:
(313) 546-8167.

Rally to Defend Women's Rights Militant

There was a rally of about 25 people in defense of Susan Farquhar on December 12, at 8:15 a.m. in front of the Livonia District Court.

wingers.

Although it was the coldest day of the winter so



Defenders of the democratic right to abortion stopped anti-abortion rights forces from blocking doors to an abortion clinic in Livonia, Michigan on November 12.
— from
The Guardian

She had been arrested after she began removing anti-abortion rights forces who were blocking women from entering the Women's Advisory Clinic on November 12. The clinic provides family planning information and abortions. The anti-abortion rights forces attempted unsuccessfully to prevent women from entering the clinic. After Susan and some 70 demonstrators, acting on their own, forcibly began removing these reactionaries, the police arrested Susan and then arrested 57 of the right-

far, the spirited rally in front of the court defending Farquhar chanted "Drop the Charges," "Keep the Clinics Open" and EWe Will March, We Will Fight, Abortion is a Woman's Right!" for about 45 minutes before supporters went in to support Susan during her arraignment.

This attack on women's right to an abortion is the consequence of the roll back of medicaid payments for abortions for poor women that took place when proposal A was passed in

November.

The right-wing anti-abortion rights forces tried to hide their attack on women's *rights* by saying that the issue was "tax-payers paying for abortions."

The forces that gathered to stop proposal A were dominated by the Democratic Party. The Democratic Party and the trade union leadership did not mobilize the masses of women and workers to defend not only the right of women to an abortion, but the right of workers and oppressed to have children in a healthy and safe environment like rich people have. But most importantly, to mobilize the unions against these right-wing forces because they want to take away *all* the democratic rights that exist today — from separation of religion and the government, to voting rights for Blacks and other oppressed people. For example, these right-wing forces want to overturn the Supreme Court decision, *Roe v. Wade*, which abolished the anti-abortion laws in the U.S.

The rally in support of Farquhar was called by the Abortion Rights Coalition. There will be another effort by the anti-abortion rights forces to close the clinics during January. And there will be another counter-demonstration by the forces defending the rights of women.

We think that it is necessary for the unions to mobilize in the streets against these right wingers. The unions should organize defense guards that will keep the clinics open.

There will be a demonstration supporting the democratic right to abortion at 1:15 p.m. on January 22 at the Civil War Memorial across from Kennedy Square.—F.M.

Meeting to Defend Mark Curtis Held

On December 10, 1988, the Socialist Workers Party held a meeting to defend Mark Curtis. Curtis, a militant of the SWP, has been framed up on false rape and burglary charges in Des Moines, Iowa. (See Truth No. 223, October 1988.)

The speaker at the meeting was Robert Bruce of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee who worked with Mark in Birmingham, Ala. First a video was shown of the a national program called "On Trial." The segment on Mark had actual video footage from the trial. It showed clearly that there was no physical evidence (from the prosecution witness — the police forensic expert) that linked Mark Curtis and his alleged victim in any way. There was the contradictory testimony of the girl herself. And, finally, there was undisputed testimony as to

Mark Curtis' alibi at the time of the alleged attack.

In his talk, Bruce showed how Mark Curtis was framed up by the police. He also gave the political background to the attack on Mark Curtis. Last fall he got his job back at the Swift meatpacking plant after being unjustly fired (the first time in many years that a worker had fought Swift on this issue and won). He supported his fellow Mexican workers who were arrested in a raid on the Swift plant by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). In particular, he spoke at a federal hearing concerning the "amnesty" law and this raid, urging the workers to continue to fight by getting their union to defend them. It was on the night of this meeting that the police arrested him on the false charges. This raid, relatively common

before the "amnesty law," was the first of its kind since the law was passed. It was important enough to rate mention in the Wall Street Journal.

Why attack Mark Curtis? Because he is a socialist; a person devoted to the workers' cause; because he was having an impact on the developments at Swift against the company and its lackeys, the Des Moines police force.

The Committee is currently involved in getting 5,000 endorsers for the defense effort. In February, Kate Kaku, Mark's wife and a member of the Defense Committee, will be speaking in Detroit. We urge all workers to attend.—F.M.

Lessons of the 1988 Elections

Since Ronald Reagan was elected president in 1980, there have been dozens of strikes and demonstrations against his policies: Patco, 1981; Greyhound, 1984; Phelps-Dodge, 1985; P-9, 1985-86; Paperworkers, 1987-88; Solidarity Day, 1981; The 20th Anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington, August, 1983; The April 20th March on Washington Against U.S. Intervention in Central America and Southern Africa, 1985; The April 25th March on Washington Against U.S. Intervention in Central America and Southern Africa; 1987; The 25th Anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington, August, 1988 ...

Prior to the 1984 elections, some working class and popular leaders, like Crystal Lee Sutton ("Norma Rae"), even began to speak about forming a workers or labor party. And the disgust with both the Republican and the Democratic Parties was clear in the number of people who did *not* vote in this election, the highest number since 1924.

Yet the number of votes for working class candidates for president in this election actually *fell*.

This represents a serious problem for revolutionaries in the United States and around the world.

The working class is the only class in the United States capable of destroying the imperialist or capitalist state (the imperialists' various secret and open, private and public, armed forces), establishing a workers state (the workers and the oppressed population in arms), and beginning to build socialism.

But in order to do this workers have to learn to make a political fight against the imperialists or capitalists; they have to learn to unite their forces, and those of the oppressed population as a whole, against the capitalists; and they have to learn to build their own political party to carry out this struggle.

The fact that the number of votes for working class candidates for president *fell* in this election, even though the workers are obviously becoming *more hostile* to the Republicans and Democrats, and *more militant* in some struggles that take place in opposition to them, shows that *little or no progress is being made in politically preparing the working class to fight for and take power, in building a working class party*. In other words, little or no progress is being

made in raising the working class to the level of a ruling class.

The Jackson Campaign: A Bourgeois Political Maneuver

The lack of progress on this front is the consequence of a *bourgeois political maneuver* — putting forward a bourgeois candidate, Jesse Jackson, as a working class and popular candidate — and the capitulation, adaptation, or

"Since Ronald Reagan was elected president in 1980, there have been dozens of strikes and demonstrations against his policies . . . Yet the number of votes for working class candidates for president in this election actually fell . . ."

defensiveness, before this bourgeois political maneuver, of various petty bourgeois working class tendencies.

Prior to Jackson's 1983-84 campaign, political ferment in the working class was growing, workers were turning more and more to working class tendencies because it was becoming clearer that Reagan and the Democrats were collaborating against the workers and the oppressed population, that none of Reagan's measures could have passed without the Democrats, which have had a majority in Congress for years. But once Jackson's campaign began, once various working class tendencies dominated by petty bourgeois leaderships were disoriented by it and on the defensive, this political ferment tended to flow toward the Jackson campaign and subside.

The same thing happened again this time around. The political collaboration between Reagan and the Democrats became clearer during the "Contragate" crisis. Political ferment in the working class grew. Thousands of young people and trade unions sent delegations that marched on Washington on April 25th, 1987. Demonstrations grew against plant closings and racist attacks. But in the fall and winter of 1987 and 1988 they were channeled into the

Jackson campaign, with little or no opposition from working class tendencies.

Workers organizations

The Communist Party openly supported Jackson. The Workers World Party openly supported Jackson. The United Secretariat, which falsely claims to be the Fourth International, printed articles favorable to Jackson that said things like this:

"Jesse Jackson's program is inconsistent ... Nonetheless, it is a *generally progressive program* with a powerful appeal to the needs and interests of U.S. workers and farmers, as well as an inspirational message of hope for Black America under siege." (*International Viewpoint*, No. 143, June 13, 1988.)

The United Secretariat's closest sympathizers' organization, "Solidarity," organized a conference in Detroit (The "Labor Notes" conference), had Jackson's people head the "Political Action Workshop," and prohibited working class tendencies in favor of a labor party from distributing their literature.

The Socialist Workers Party formally opposed Jackson's campaign. But it waited until Jackson's campaign was basically over to put forward its own candidates, and its main propaganda said only this about Jackson:

"The politicians of both big business parties, from Daniel Moynihan and George Bush to Jesse Jackson and Michael Dukakis, say some form of protection for 'U.S.' industry is needed to protect 'U.S.' jobs." (Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis.)

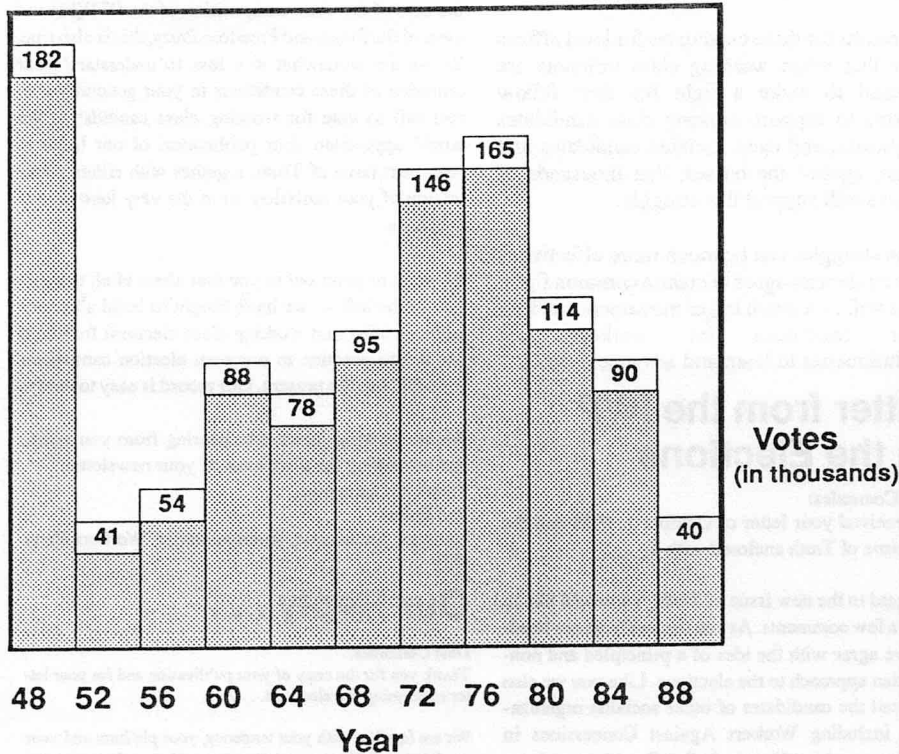
The Socialist Workers Party's candidate, James Warren, spoke in Detroit on the eve of the elections for over an hour and did not even mention Jackson once.

The Workers League also formally opposed Jackson and put forward its own candidates. But in its major piece of propaganda, "Workers League '88 Election Platform," it did not even bother to mention Jackson in passing.

And it spent much more time attacking the Socialist Workers Party, and other working class tendencies, than it did attacking Jackson and other bourgeois candidates. It went so far as to support a bourgeois police frame-up against an SWP militant and to call on workers not to vote for any other working class candidates on the ballot. When the Workers League's candidate, Ed Wimm, spoke in Detroit

Votes for Working Class Candidates for President 1948-1988

As the graph clearly shows, the number of votes for working class candidates for president has been falling in the most recent period from a high of 165,000 in 1976 to a low of 40,000 in 1988.



The parties included are: Socialist Party, the Socialist Labor Party, the Communist Party, the Socialist Workers Party, the Workers League and the Workers World Party. For more details see *America Votes*, 1986, Congressional Quarterly. The 1988 election results are from the *New York Times*, November 22, 1988.

on the eve of the elections, the Workers League would not allow us to attend the meeting because we called for a vote for working class candidates, regardless of what tendency they might be associated with.

Spark also opposed Jackson, but it did not call for a vote for any of the working class candidates for president until the very last minute. It played a leading role in initiating the Workers Against Concessions Slate or Party, which ran candidates for the U.S. Senate, the U.S. Congress, and local offices in the Detroit, Michigan area, which was a very positive development. But this developed too much in the direction of a protest vote, rather than in the direction of a struggle for a workers program and a workers party.

Working class Trotskyist tendencies like Socialist Action (associated with the United Secretariat), tendencies associated with the International Workers League, our own tendency,

and others, took a principled working class position in opposition to Jackson, for a working class program and party, and for a vote for one or more working class candidates in the elections. But they remained relatively isolated and divided between themselves.

Conclusions

The 1988 elections show that the American working class will never achieve class consciousness, build its own party, and fight for political power spontaneously.

A revolutionary workers party, a section of the Fourth International, is necessary to lead this fight.

While the number of votes for working class candidates fell in this election, there were still 40,000 people who voted for candidates of parties like the Socialist Workers Party, the Workers World Party, or the Workers League.

The vast majority of the people who voted for these candidates did not do so *because* they adapted to the bourgeois Jackson campaign. They did so *in spite* of this, that is because of whatever struggle these working class candidates and parties led against the bourgeois candidates and parties.

Thus the basis obviously exists to build a large revolutionary workers party in the United States as a section of the Fourth International. And this basis is going to get larger and larger as more and more workers and oppressed people enter into bitter struggle against the bourgeoisie and begin to turn toward the revolutionaries.

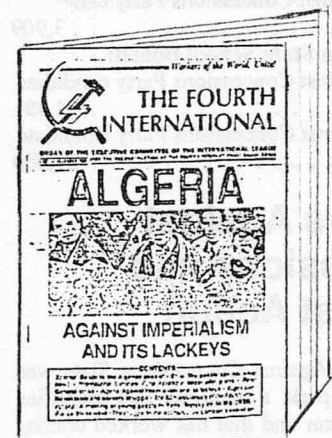
Tendencies that remain true to the Fourth International have a responsibility to lead this fight.

This means a turn toward young workers, to win them to the revolutionary workers cause, and a fight for unity between truly revolutionary Trotskyist tendencies on a principled basis. It means a fight for an open Trotskyist Congress, to map out plans to build a revolutionary workers party, as a section of the Fourth International, to form a truly national Trotskyist organization to lead this fight, and elect a leadership to carry it out.

As we say elsewhere, this is not counterposed to a struggle to build an independent political party of the masses of American workers, it is a necessary part of it.

These are the lessons of the 1988 elections, and these are the tasks of revolutionaries in America today. — M.G.

JUST OUT!



CALL: (313) 546-8167 or
WRITE: TRUTH
BOX 48085
DETROIT, MI 48237

Results for Working Class Candidates in Michigan

1984

For President:

Communist Party candidates	1,048
Workers World Party candidates	1,416
Socialist Workers Party candidates	1,049
Workers League candidates	561
Total	4,074

For U.S. Senate:

Communist Party candidate	1,196
Workers World Party candidate	2,279
Socialist Workers Party candidate	2,686
Workers League candidate	818
Total	6,979
For Other Offices	0

1988

For President:

Communist Party candidates (did not run)	0
Workers World Party candidates (listed on ballot as independent)	980
Socialist Workers Party candidates (listed on ballot as independent)	888
Workers League candidates	1,966
Total	3,834

For U.S. Senate:

Socialist Workers Party candidate (listed on ballot as independent)	5,284
Workers Against Concessions Party candidate	10,129
Total	15,413

For U.S. Congress:

Workers Against Concessions Party candidates	9,465
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For Michigan State Legislature:

Workers Against Concessions Party candidates	3,909
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For Michigan State School Board:

Workers Against Concessions Party candidate (Baird)	21,491
Workers Against Concessions Party candidate (Johnson)	27,680

Workers Against Concessions and Socialist Action

The Workers Against Concessions Slate was initiated by Spark, a tendency that identifies with Trotskyism and that has worked consistently among factory workers in Detroit.

Spark and Workers Against Concessions distributed hundreds of leaflets, buttons, and posters for these candidates. They rented billboards outside major plants to advertise their candidates and participated in radio

programs and public debates on behalf of these candidates.

Socialist Action's candidate for Board of Supervisors (City Council) in San Francisco, California received 10,529 votes. Its candidate for Board of Education received 20,945 votes. The San Francisco branch also distributed hundreds of flyers on behalf of its candidates.

The results for these candidates for local offices show that when working class militants are prepared to make a fight for their fellow workers to support working class candidates and parties, and even socialist candidates and parties, against the bosses, that thousands of workers will support this struggle.

These struggles can be much more effective if these tendencies agree to make a common fight. There will be a much larger movement creating better conditions for workers and revolutionaries to learn and advance.—M.G.

Letter from the IWP on the Elections

Dear Comrades:

We received your letter of October 1, 1988 and the new issue of Truth enclosed with it. . . .

In regard to the new issue of Truth, we would like to make a few comments. As you can see from our headline we agree with the idea of a principled and non-sectarian approach to the elections. Like you we also endorsed the candidates of other socialist organizations, including Workers Against Concessions in Michigan, and locally here in San Francisco we have endorsed Socialist Action candidates. Nationally we have given our critical endorsement to the SWP's presidential slate where they are on the ballot, and we are not. We do not however endorse the candidates of the Workers League, not on the basis of their platform — but because they maintain their slanderous accusations against the Socialist Workers Party. We do not consider them to be a working class organization for this reason, and for the fact that they have no serious social base of support.

But what surprises us, is the fact that you make no mention of the candidacy of Herb Lewin for President, or of the working class and socialist candidates of the Peace and Freedom Party in California. It would surprise us if you did not mention them out of ignorance, though we realize you are very isolated in Detroit, and may in fact not be aware of what is going on the rest of the socialist movement elsewhere.

As you can see from the enclosed platform materials our platform is not only working class, it is the most consistently socialist and revolutionary of any of the platforms of this years working class and socialist slates of candidates. In fact even the platform of the Peace and Freedom Party itself, is far more consistently working class than those of the SWP, Socialist

Action, and Workers World Party — slates which you endorse.

In the case of Workers World, they endorsed a bourgeois candidate in the primaries — Jesse Jackson.

In terms of the class composition of the slates, there can be no doubt that our slate is completely working class (100% wage workers, 60% union members). In the case of the class composition of the IWP(FI) and even of the Peace and Freedom Party, this is also true. So we are somewhat at a loss to understand your omission of these candidates in your generally correct call to vote for working class candidates. We would appreciate your publication of our letter in your next issue of Truth, together with either a correction of your omission, or at the very least an explanation.

We want to point out to you that alone of all the parties on the left — we have fought to build a nationwide socialist and working class electoral front and put it into practice in our own election campaigns from 1984 to the present. Our record is easy to verify.

We are looking forward to hearing from you again, and to reading the next issue of your newsletter.

Trotskyist greetings,

Ted Baker

National Secretariat, International Workers Party (FI)

Our Reply . . .

Dear Comrades:

Thank you for the copy of your publication and for your letter concerning the elections. . . .

We are familiar with your tendency, your platform and your candidates. And we certainly agree with you that your tendency, your platform, and your candidates are working class. On the basis of this consideration alone, we would certainly have included them in our list of working class candidates that workers could vote for against the bourgeois candidates in this election.

Unfortunately, your candidates, as far as we have seen, presented themselves as, and appeared on the ballot as, Peace and Freedom Party (PFP) candidates. Thus including your candidates in our list of working class candidates that workers could vote for, would have put us in the position of urging workers to vote for candidates that they would find listed on the ballot as PFP candidates.

In our opinion, and that of other Trotskyists, including some in California, the PFP is not a working class formation, but a petty bourgeois radical formation that has been tied to the Democratic Party left wing for many years. Thus to urge workers to vote for PFP candidates would create confusion among workers between independent working class formations — like the Socialist Workers Party, the Workers World Party, the Workers League, or the International Workers Party — and petty bourgeois radical formations. . . .

While it may seem to you that you are the only tendency in favor of a united working class or socialist slate in elections, there are others who also are. Perhaps this exchange can be a step toward collaborating in this struggle. . . .

Fraternally,
M. Gutshall

for the American Supporters of the International League (for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International)
January 4, 1989

Where Should We Go From Here? A Contribution From a Reader

The past decade has shown the futility of the working class depending on the Democrats, the bureaucracy of the AFL-CIO and those working-class "saviors" like Jesse Jackson, to defend the interests of the working class. It is with this in mind that I submit the following to *Truth* for discussion. It is my personal analysis of what we, the workers, should do to further our interests. I hope *Truth* will open its pages to such a discussion since it would help to clarify the role that workers should take to further their class interests.

A. Plan of Resistance and Workers Action

1. We need a clear motto to work around in building a working class of action. I would support a motto of: *Workers' Solidarity!* This motto would be useful in that we could use it in counterposing workers' interests from those of the capitalist class. Using such a motto, we can start to build a national movement to provide an alternative to the capitalist policy of government.

2. While sections of the working class are engaged in the class struggle, there are decades of mass demobilization of the workers' movement behind us. Thus, many workers are not ready to fight the struggle. We must strive to change this!

3. A mass class action is necessary to change the world. But, to get to this point we need mass activity by those organized. This activity should be oriented around actual problems and actual demands, however limited they may appear. However, we must do more than struggle. We must win! This will help put our class from a defensive posture to an offensive posture. Thus, each victory will lead to a more confident and demanding working class. The struggle will grow in numbers and strength, as the victories grow in number.

4. We not only need successful struggles of resistance against capitalist offensives, but successful struggles for higher pay, shorter hours with no pay cuts, with victories against unemployment, racism and sexism. But, the struggle must go farther than this, it must change society.

B. As society changes, the struggle must change with it.

1. The struggle against the crisis today is not the same as the struggle against capitalism during the years from the end of World War II to the crisis of the seventies and eighties.

2. We must not minimize the day-to-day class struggles, we must participate in them fully and also expand our goals in struggle.

3. The class struggle is at the center of the crisis. The capitalist class is lowering wages and social costs in order to maintain their profits. Chained to this is the

decline of good-paying jobs, elimination of the cost-of-living adjustments, and the reduction of unemployment benefits, and other welfare and social services. Also included in the capitalist offense is the breaking of the strength of the working class, in order to preserve capitalist power. In order to achieve their goals, the capitalist class has shown they will even resort to force to achieve their goals. Remember Hormel? (The strike by the Hormel meat-packing workers at UFCW Local P-9 in Austin, Minnesota.)

"... The backbone of the future alternative will be found among workers and unionists who wish to fight today ... Assembled together unified and solid in opposition to the capitalists, their government ... these workers and unionists will begin the building of an alternative ..."

C. Today, we need a strategy of Dual-Power.

1. It is necessary to shift the point where the power lies. Workers are realizing that positive change is not coming from the government. As the struggle with the capitalists increases more workers will see that the government must be made to give in by action by the workers, just like the bosses at the point of production and distribution.

2. We must shift power from the capitalist class and its government to the base of the working class, the rank and file, where the workers will construct their own power. The appearance of workers' dual-power, built through struggles is for us, the political alternative to the powers-that-be, to the State, to government and the bosses.

3. The range of dual-power in the workplace must be increased. There must be:

A. an autonomous, united and lasting self-organization of workers against the bosses, their government and the union bureaucracy;

B. clarification of workers' demands by the workers themselves, adopted democratically.

4. Demands by the workers must unify the employed and the unemployed. These demands can include:

A. the right of work for all workers.

B. reduction of hours to a level to insure full employment for all workers with no cut in pay.

C. elimination of social and wage inequality between races and sexes.

D. a uniform system of cost-of-living adjustments for all workers.

E. workers' control of new technologies, of technical choices and research and education.

F. for equality of races and sexes with protection for ethnic cultures.

D. Towards the self-managed separation from capitalism

1. The strategy of dual-power puts the power of decision-making and fulfillment of these decisions for effecting change in society directly into the hands of all workers. This is opposed to the electoralism of the capitalist "democracy" where power is delegated to candidates and parties.

2. In building towards this long process of permanent change, such a strategy clarifies the everyday practice of moving into the revolutionary period and a new society which will be self-managed. Self-Management is not just a slogan, but the building-block cornerstone of socialism.

3. We should move to break with traditional politics. This is a dead-end. The workers' movement has been bogged down and dismembered for way too long in this swamp. The real alternative means moving away from traditional politics. To do so, we must expose the falsehoods, unfairness and illusions of the capitalist electoral system.

4. A new analysis must be made of the so-called "degenerated workers' states." Whether or not we agree with the old, out-dated conception of these states is no longer important. We must realize that these states have moved into something that has been analyzed as Bureaucratic State Capitalism.

5. To fight for a real self-managed society, and to articulate this fight with mass class action is why we must build a new working-class revolutionary organization. This group, or organization, must not be sectarian. It must create unity between comrades, groups and currents to further the cause of our class, the working class.

E. The alternative requires unity.

1. While it will be very unlikely that the extreme left of the workers' movement will fuse at this time, it is possible for them to work together in coalitions on single-issues.

2. A search into the common practices for uniting forces and allowing debate is the position needed presently, amongst the revolutionary left.

F. The alternative will be forged through the class struggle.

1. The backbone of the future alternative will be found among workers and unionists who wish to fight today.

2. Assembled together unified and solid in opposition to the capitalists, their government, and the union bureaucrats, these workers and unionists will begin the building of an alternative to the politics of the pro-capitalist leaders.

3. It will be necessary for these oppositionists to assert and affirm themselves. It will only be through their democratic practices and debates in the new working class organization, which will combine the largest number of workers and militants, that theory and practice will progress.

4. Manipulative and fractional practices which plague worker' organizations should be eliminated.

5. Together we are the force which can fight against the bureaucratic elite in the unions. We will be able to create unions and worker organizations which will be independent of the bosses, their government and the union bureaucrats that will be revolutionary and oriented on workers' struggles.

6. These unions should use direct action as the means of struggle. By direct action, it is meant: strikes, boycotts, occupations and non-destructive sabotage such as slow-downs, word of mouth, and work to rule actions. The fullest expression of direct action is the general strike which may be built into the prelude of the social revolution.

G. Other features of the workers' organizations

1. By building the dual-power, the workers will be building the new society within the shell of the old. It must be realized that this organization could become the administration of the means of production and distribution after the revolution.

2. This workers' organization should be non-political in the sense that it support no particular political party. This would lead to a splitting effect on the movement. This organization is to unite, not divide the movement. At the same time, members can support or be members of a party. But, political party struggles must be kept out to insure class-wide unity on the economic front.

3. This organization should practice world-wide class unity. It should reject national and political boundaries imposed by capitalism. Nationalism divides the workers and should be defeated. We should recognize only the self-determination and free federation of all workers.

4. We should oppose war and militarism. War should be opposed through general strikes and mass demonstrations, boycotting of all war materiel, with the sole exception of a country where the workers are embroiled in their revolution. In such a case, we should help in any way possible to defend the revolution.

5. We should, during the heating up of the class struggle, have workers' militias, controlled by workers' unions and organizations, as opposed to permanent standing armies.

6. While we are opposed to all organized violence of the state, we must realize that in all probability there will be violent clashes during the gigantic and important struggles between the capitalists and workers.

Thus, we recognize the right for ourselves to defend ourselves from violence. We will do our utmost to avoid violence, but we will not hesitate to defend ourselves.

7. The expropriation of the means of production and distribution can only be carried out and brought about successfully by the direct intervention of a conscious working class through their economic organizations (i.e., revolutionary unions, councils, communes, etc.) In this country, because of the huge restraints put on them, parties will be relegated to proving the ballot to be an illusion and to be educational, propaganda organizations for the economic organizations that will encompass the whole working class into one organization at the time of the revolution.

8. We should build our organizations to be guarded against the building of internal bureaucratization. This can easily be done with short terms with no reelection for two terms for our delegates. Limiting the power of delegates, with debate and democratically-reached decision-making, involving the whole organization where possible, will keep a bureaucracy from being formed. Immediate recall of any delegates also helps. Also, elected delegates should have no special privileges.

9. By workers' organizations I would like to clarify them as revolutionary unions, councils, communes, neighborhood councils, renters' councils, etc. Anything in organizations that workers will build to fight any sort of capitalist exploitation at work, on the street, in the neighborhood, etc. But, there will be a need for one big organization to unify the whole working class to move into revolution at the same time. Organization of the working class will be essential to a working class victory.

I hope this thesis provides the basis for an intense and clarifying discussion. These are my own opinions and not those of *Truth*. Such discussion is important and it is hoped that this thesis will be a big help.

R.F., Grand Rapids, Michigan

Our Reply . . .

Detroit, Michigan

January 4, 1989

Dear Comrade,

Thank you again for your contributions to Truth ...

We think that this contribution is especially interesting and worthwhile because it is obviously written in an effort to come to grips with the problems of this working class, young and old. It is written with enthusiasm and a strongly-felt desire to devote oneself to the workers cause. It is clear that you believe that this working class, with its problems, confusions, etc., can rise to its historic task -- the overthrow of the capitalists' dictatorship and the establishment of workers rule, as the first step toward socialism.

This is extremely important. There are many who

claim to be for the workers, including many who call themselves revolutionaries and Trotskyists, who are totally cynical about the working class and the revolution. Such cynicism is really totally alien to true Trotskyism.

We agree with much of what you say in this contribution.

We agree that it is very important to fight for the immediate and democratic demands of the workers and the oppressed population and for mass action for these demands; we are for mass organs of dual power that draw in the entirety of the exploited and oppressed population; we are for workers management of the banks, basic industry and large-scale agriculture (we don't use the term "self-management" because we don't think it's a clear term; this term is used, particularly in Europe and the USSR, to mean both workers management, which obviously strengthens the workers position, and de-nationalizing state property in Eastern Europe or the USSR and turning it over to local entrepreneurs, which will weaken the workers position in these states and strengthen the pro-capitalist forces); we agree that violent confrontations between the workers and the capitalists are inevitable, that we must be prepared for them, build workers militias, etc.; and we agree that a working class revolutionary organization is necessary, that it must not be sectarian, and that it must be as large as possible.

We think these are important political questions, and important areas of political agreement.

However, we think that it is necessary to build such a working class revolutionary organization, which we call a revolutionary workers party, as a section of the Fourth International.

We think that a revolutionary workers party and International are necessary to unite the masses of workers against the bosses and lead them to power, destroy the capitalist state, establish a workers state (the workers in arms, the workers dictatorship, the dictatorship of the proletariat), and begin to build socialism.

As the class struggle heats up, as confrontations between workers and capitalists become more and more violent, it will be more and more necessary to focus our activity single-mindedly on the goal of destroying the capitalist state and establishing a workers state.

A party is necessary to fight to focus activity on this goal, to patiently explain to new working class forces that the gains they make can only be preserved in this way. And a party is necessary to eventually lead the masses of workers in carrying out these tasks, in planning and organizing a working class and popular insurrection, aimed at destroying the capitalist state and establishing the workers state. Workers do not come to such an understanding spontaneously. Nor do they carry out these tasks spontaneously.

For us building such a party and International is not counterposed to fighting for the largest possible unity of the workers against the bosses. It is a necessary part of it.

The disunity among the masses of workers, the disunity and sectarianism in the vanguard of the working class, organized in different groups, tendencies, parties, etc., that bothers you so much, and correctly so, is a consequence of the INFLUENCE and PRESSURE of the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie on the working class and its vanguard. A revolutionary workers party and an International are necessary to combat this influence and pressure and unite the workers.

In order to do this, it is necessary to base oneself on the experience of the international working class, the most advanced revolutionary theory and practice, and collaborate with revolutionary workers in other countries. We think these things are embodied in the Fourth International's program and in the tendencies that continue to base themselves on it, like the International League (for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International). Thus we are for rebuilding the Fourth International's sections and international leadership by uniting these tendencies on a principled basis and deepening their roots in the working class, in opposition to tendencies like the Socialist Workers Party leadership, or the United Secretariat leadership, that continue to be identified with the Fourth International, but that in fact oppose the construction of revolutionary workers parties as sections of the Fourth International.

We hope to convince revolutionary workers like yourself that building a revolutionary workers party, as a section of the Fourth International, is not only necessary and possible, but the only way to free themselves and others from capitalist oppression.

You raised so many interesting questions that it is difficult to respond to all of them ...

We look forward to hearing from you again. And we certainly encourage you to keep writing and struggling. Perhaps you could begin to publish a regular bulletin with revolutionary propaganda oriented especially toward young workers in your city, and begin to build a revolutionary workers group around this bulletin in your city. We would certainly do everything that we can to help you with such a project ...

Fraternally,
Fred and Margaret
(American Supporters of the International League)
January 4, 1989

SEND CONTRIBUTIONS TO:
TRUTH, P.O. BOX 48085,
DETROIT, MI 48237

Our Experience in Socialist Action

We joined Socialist Action in November, 1987. We did so for the following reasons:

— There were important areas of political agreement between Socialist Action and our organization, the Trotskyist Organization, that distinguished them from other working class Trotskyist tendencies. Both were for the construction of Trotskyist parties in all countries; for a labor party in the United States; against support to bourgeois candidates in elections; for running working class or socialist candidates in elections; for united action without preconditions against U.S. imperialist intervention; for self-determination for Nicaragua, the Black people in South Africa, and Palestine; against the Arias plan (1) and similar schemes that deny this right; against Gorbachev's reforms as pro-capitalist reforms; for steps toward the political revolution like Solidarnosc, the upsurge of oppressed peoples in the USSR, etc.

— We thought that Socialist Action's struggle against the Barnes (2) and Mandel tendencies, which favored the dissolution of Trotskyist forces into petty bourgeois forces (like the Castroites or Shachtmanites (3)), represented an important contribution to the struggle for Trotskyism and the Fourth International.

— Because Socialist Action's organization was national and much larger than our own, we thought we could best advance the fight for Trotskyism and the Fourth International, by joining Socialist Action, building it, and developing our own particular contribution to the struggle in that framework, in particular, our struggle for a Trotskyist congress to rebuild the Trotskyist party in the United States and for an international conference to rebuild the Fourth International as a whole.

While other members of our organization, the Trotskyist Organization, POLITICALLY BROKE with our international organization, when they joined Socialist Action, we did not. We reaffirmed our fundamental political agreement with the struggle that our international tendency had developed, known at that time as the Fourth International (Rebuilt) and now as the International League (for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International). We agreed to accept Socialist Action's discipline, but, in so doing, we did not agree to renounce our struggle or to hide our ideological agreement with this tendency. Unfortunately, the Political Committee of Socialist Action, that recommended to the National Committee to accept us as members, did not make clear to its own organization the political conditions expressed in

our resolution adhering to Socialist Action. A large part of the national leadership and membership of Socialist Action did not even know that we remained in political agreement with the International League.

Immediately after we joined, Kevin FitzPatrick — an old member of the Trotskyist Organization who had become a partisan of support to a petty bourgeois candidate for president in France (Pierre Juquin) and of virtually unconditional unity with petty bourgeois tendencies (like the Krivine tendency in the French LCR), and who had become extremely hostile to the International League and to us — initiated a campaign to convince others that our work was disloyal, that we aimed to "disrupt" Socialist Action's work, and that we had no place in Socialist Action. He made dozens of informal and formal charges against us. He moved, successfully, to suspend us for what was to be a four-month period on March 26. Just days before this suspension was to end and Socialist Action's National Convention was to begin, he made more charges against us and moved, again successfully, to expel us.

We did everything possible to prove to the Political Committee, the National Committee, and the membership of Socialist Action, that our conduct toward the organization was loyal, that Kevin FitzPatrick's charges were false, in general and in detail.

We carried out every decision that Socialist Action made, whether we agreed with it or not, including decisions to close important political discussions, decisions to prohibit us from attending a meeting of the International League, decisions to prohibit us from having any contact with other members of the workers' and popular movements in Detroit, decisions to exclude us from the pre-convention discussion, and decisions to demand that we make large contributions to Socialist Action in dues, pledges, equipment, etc.

We proved in a documentary and incontestable manner that Kevin FitzPatrick's charges were false. We wrote a line-by-line refutation of every single informal and formal false charge that he had made against us. We showed how he contradicted himself from one set of charges to the next, how he modified, twisted, and falsified facts to suit his purposes.

Kevin FitzPatrick's only charge that was true was that we were loyal to the International League. And we never denied this. On the contrary, we affirmed it, before, during and after adhering to Socialist Action.

Despite all these efforts, and we cannot think of anything else that we could possibly have done, we were not successful in convincing the majority of the leadership and membership of Socialist Action that we were loyal to their organization.

Why not?

Because the majority of the leadership and membership of Socialist Action really think that there is a fundamental contradiction between loyalty to the working class, revolutionary, Trotskyist principles of Socialist Action and loyalty to the International League.

They really think that the International League is a threat to them.

But the true contradiction is not between loyalty to the principles and struggle of Socialist Action and loyalty to those of the International League. The true contradiction is between loyalty to these principles and struggles, those of both organizations, and loyalty to the United Secretariat, which is dominated by petty bourgeois tendencies that have worked, and continue to work, systematically, to exhaust and destroy Socialist Action, imposing on an international level, and in the United States, a policy hostile to the working class, inspired by petty bourgeois forces.

It is not the International League that represents a threat to Socialist Action. It is precisely these petty bourgeois tendencies of the United Secretariat.

It was these petty bourgeois tendencies that launched a factional struggle in Socialist Action to dissolve it into the petty bourgeois Shachtmanite forces in Detroit, a factional struggle that took up the entirety of Socialist Action's pre-convention discussion two years ago and that resulted in a 40% loss in membership. Those of us in political agreement with the International League on the other hand, were even prepared to continue to carry out Socialist Action's decisions even after we had been excluded from the pre-convention discussion and the convention itself.

Some may think that we went too far, that we made a lot of effort for little or nothing. But this would be short-sighted.

It is a matter of time before it becomes clear to all concerned that the true contradiction is between loyalty to the principles and struggle of the working class, of the revolutionaries, of the Trotskyists, and loyalty to the United Secretariat.

And we know that those who continue to be loyal to these principles and to this struggle will

keep in mind the efforts that we have made to work together, to correct our mistakes and to go most directly toward victory over the petty bourgeois tendencies that block the progress of the Fourth International and the construction of the revolutionary party of the American workers.

Working class, truly Trotskyist tendencies will again be forced to come together. New opportunities to clarify and resolve the differences that have separated us, to advance decisively in rebuilding the party and the International, will develop.

Since we were expelled from Socialist Action, some comrades from this organization have said to us that this does not mean that we are enemies, that they don't distinguish between "excluding" and "expelling" members, that they are very sorry that things worked out this way, that they never wanted them to work out this way, that maybe we can work together in the future, maybe we can even collaborate in the construction of a party.

And we certainly share this sentiment. Even more, we are ready to sit down at any point with representatives of Socialist Action to discuss ways in which we can collaborate, and even the conditions in which reintegration into Socialist Action would be possible in clear terms.

But this entire experience has shown that "good will" is not enough, even when there are important areas of political agreement. It is necessary to make a POLITICAL STRUGGLE for unity between working class, revolutionary, Trotskyist tendencies on a clear basis of principles and in a party, in opposition to all those who stand in the way of this struggle, and for WRITTEN, concrete, and precise agreements that accurately express the extent of this unity at each point in the struggle.

For our part, we are going to continue our struggle for party unity between working class, revolutionary, Trotskyist tendencies, against the petty bourgeois revisionist tendencies that continue to dominate the workers' vanguard, divide its ranks, and isolate it from millions of workers and oppressed peoples, which for us is the struggle for the reconstruction of the Fourth International.

At this moment, this struggle is concentrated in a fight for workers and oppressed people in the United States to vote for working class candidates against the candidates of the exploiters and oppressors, Bush and Dukakis, and for a workers or labor party.

We plan to direct our propaganda largely toward young workers who do not yet consider themselves either socialists or Trotskyists, in

order to recruit them and win them to the revolutionary cause of the proletariat. We plan to explore the possibilities of collaborating with other tendencies in this effort. And we plan to continue to say, openly and frankly, when we agree with Socialist Action and when we do not.

No doubt our enemies in Socialist Action will seize on this and say, "Look, see, they are criticizing us; they are disloyal; we were right to expel them."

No matter.

Honest and intelligent leaders and members of Socialist Action will see that loyal friends tell you honestly and frankly when they think you are making a serious mistake. False friends flatter you, soft-pedal their differences, say or do one thing to your face and another behind your back.

M. Guttshall

F. Michaels

August, 1988

Reprinted from *The Fourth International*, October, 1988.

Notes

(1) -- The Arias plan was initiated by the president of Costa Rica and demands that Nicaragua make all sorts of concessions to the United States, allegedly in exchange for the U.S. withdrawing aid to the "contras." While Nicaragua made the concessions, the U.S. never really withdrew the aid to the "contras." It simply demanded more concessions, which Nicaragua, again, unfortunately, made, falling into the Sapoia agreements.

(2) -- Jack Barnes is the leader of a petty bourgeois revisionist faction that took over the Socialist Workers Party (the historic party of Trotskyists in the United States) and that openly disassociates itself from Trotskyism and its basic principles, like "permanent revolution."

(3) -- The Shachtmanites are also a petty bourgeois tendency that emerged in the Socialist Workers Party on the eve of World War II, refused to defend the USSR against U.S. imperialism, and split from the Socialist Workers Party on the eve of the War. They have been organized in many different organizations, including the "Workers Party," the "Independent Socialist League," the "International Socialists," and, now, "Solidarity." They publish "Against the Current," which advertises Ernest Mandel, the well-known leader of the United Secretariat, as one of its "Advisory Editors," and "Labor Notes."

Note to Readers:

A number of readers have asked for the documents of the conflict in the Trotskyist Organization and Socialist Action, including copies of the charges against us. We have not yet had time to publish them, but plan to do so at a later date.

Letter to Mark Curtis, a Militant Unjustly Imprisoned

Detroit, Michigan
December, 1988
Mark S. Curtis
No. 805338A, Box B
Anamosa, Iowa 52205

Dear Mark,

We are writing to you to express our solidarity with you and our commitment to the struggle to free you.

We have read the material published by your defense committee, we have read all the material published by the Workers League, and we have read your statements.

It is clear to us that you are a working class militant who has been framed up by the capitalists and their police in Iowa, particularly Swift Meat Packing, because your struggle had become a threat to their plans.

What is more, it seems to us that your conduct has been exemplary. In your statement to the judge prior to sentencing, you said: "I live a hard-working life that's dedicated to making this world better for humanity." And, "... the goal of demoralizing and discrediting me and my supporters has not and will not succeed. I'm going to keep on being part of the fight for working people. As far as that goes I'll never be separate from people in struggle for their rights ... I will be freed."

This is an example that every young worker can follow.

Thus we have urged all working people, regardless of their political views, to defend you, to demand your freedom, and to demand that all those involved in unjustly persecuting you be exposed and punished.

As Trotskyists, as partisans of the construction of revolutionary workers parties as sections of the Fourth International, and as partisans of the reconstruction of the Fourth International, we obviously have profound political differences with you and your party, which was once a pillar of Trotskyism and the Fourth International, but is now hostile to it.

But these political differences do not dampen our solidarity with you and our commitment to the struggle to free you.

On the contrary. It is clear that big struggles are ahead. The capitalists are afraid. They can't isolate and discredit working class militants by calling them communists any more. So they try to frame them up, as rapists or drug dealers.

Thus Jesse Jackson, in an interview with the *Detroit News* in March, equated communists and drug dealers. Capitalist police pulled James Warren, the SWP candidate for president, off a plane and shouted to startled travelers that he was a drug dealer. The U.S. refused to admit a Columbian politician on the grounds that he was "involved with drugs." The truth -- many of his supporters had been murdered by drug

dealers.

Your case is a test case. If the capitalists are successful with this one, they will try to go on to others.

Thus every worker, every revolutionary, must make an all out fight against this frame-up, for your freedom and ours!

It is indeed true, as you and your defense committee say, that an injury to one is an injury to all.

Letter to the Workers League

Detroit, Michigan
December, 1988

To the Central Committee of the Workers League

We are writing to you to formally protest your support to the bourgeois state against the working class militant, Mark Curtis, and to demand that you withdraw this support.

In fascist Spain, anyone could denounce someone else to the police, then the accused had to prove that he or she was innocent.

The principles of bourgeois democracy on the other hand, demand that one assume that the accused is innocent until he or she is proven guilty.

Working class revolutionaries are more demanding, not less demanding than bourgeois democrats, when it comes to proving that the accused is guilty, especially when the accused is a working class militant like Mark Curtis, whether we agree with his political views and those of his party, the Socialist Workers Party, or not.

We have seen the video tape of the trial. The prosecution was unable to present any physical evidence what-so-ever that proves that Mark Curtis is guilty of this alleged crime.

As Joe Ryan pointed out in *Socialist Action*, dated October, 1988:

"The 'eyewitness' testimony against Curtis was not supported by physical evidence ... The state's expert criminologist stated under cross-examination that there was no exchange of pubic hairs between Demetria Morris and Curtis. He also testified that there was no physical evidence on Curtis's clothes, like hair, that indicated he had physical contact with a person who was Black. There was no dirt from the porch found on his underwear, and no seminal fluid was found on him or Demetria Morris. (The porch where the alleged attack took place was littered with dog hairs. While dog hairs were found on Demetria

We sincerely hope that your stay in prison will be short, and not too difficult for you, that you will soon be able to rejoin your family, friends, and comrades, and take your place in the class struggle.

Very fraternal and revolutionary greetings to you,

M. Gutshall
F. Michaels
Editors of Truth
American Supporters of the International League

Morris's clothes, no dog hairs were found on Curtis's clothes.) ..."

In other words, Curtis was convicted and imprisoned on the basis of the testimony of the police, Demetria Morris, and her brother alone.

Why are the words of bourgeois police, Demetria Morris and her brother golden to you?

Demetria Morris, a young Black woman, says that a white working class militant raped her, and you believe her, in spite of the fact that there is not one piece of physical evidence to prove this.

Tawana Brawley, another young Black woman, and her attorneys, say that racist white officials raped her, and you don't believe her, in spite of the fact that there was tons of physical evidence that she was indeed raped and abused.

The only thing that is consistent in your method and position on these two cases is that in both cases you take the side of the bourgeois state against working class or oppressed people, and falsify the facts to justify your position.

The bourgeois state "believes" Demetria Morris, and so do you. The bourgeois state doesn't believe Tawana Brawley, and neither do you.

Your organization is obviously strongly influenced by the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie, and totally isolated from the working class.

You claim to be a working class organization, you claim to represent the interests of the working class. Thus we demand that you stop supporting the bourgeois state against the working class militant, Mark Curtis.

M. Gutshall
Editor of Truth
Supporter of the International League ...

Why is Jackson Dining with Bush?

In July, 1988, Jesse Jackson said:

"Whatever may happen ... a new coalition of Americans — workers and farmers, gays and lesbians, Jews and Gentiles, blacks and whites, Hispanics and Asians — blazed a new trail. Those who had been shut down turned out and changed the shape of American politics for good ... Through the general election campaign

Afterwards Bush said: "We've got a lot in common ... It wasn't a burying-the-hatchet meeting because no hatchet needed to be buried."

And Jackson said: "...that Bush will attempt to use the White House to 'send forth a moral tone' to the country," and "... that he was not offered a post by Bush and is satisfied to be a member of the 'loyal opposition.'" (*Detroit Free Press*, December 1, 1988.)



in November — and beyond — our new coalition will stay together and fight together. We the people are three powerful words ..."

However, in December, 1988, Jackson dined with George Bush in Washington, D.C.

Some who supported Jackson may think that these remarks are true, that Bush will be different from Reagan. Others may think that these remarks are not true, but that they are acceptable, that is, necessary diplomacy. Still others may think that Jackson has changed, that he is now betraying his supporters, who voted for him because he claimed to be different from other Democrats, because he claimed that he would lead a real fight against Reagan-Bush and their pro-rich policies.

In fact, Jackson is simply continuing to serve his masters as he always has. The top circles of the bourgeoisie in the United States put forward Jackson as a fake working class or popular candidate in order to channel the rising tide of working class and popular opposition to Reagan, Bush and the Democrats into safe harbors, in order to prevent the emergence of a real working

class alternative in the elections. Now the top circles of the bourgeoisie need Jackson to white-wash Bush, to give him some moral authority that he does not deserve, and to try to soften working class and popular opposition to him.

We urge all workers who supported Jackson, who were not convinced by the arguments of revolutionary workers who fought for working class candidates in these elections, to take Jackson's latest words and deeds into consideration, and reconsider their positions on this question. And let us know your conclusions.— M.G.

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Signed articles represent the author's views. Please address all correspondence to: M. Guttshall, P.O. Box 48085, Detroit, MI 48237. Phone: 313-546-8167.	

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Note to our Readers

We had to delay publishing this issue and publish a combined December-January issue as a result of technical problems in publishing *The Fourth International* in English and the holidays. The next issue of *Truth* will be published in the first week of February.