

# TRUTH

A REVOLUTIONARY TROTSKYIST BULLETIN IN DETROIT-FOUNDED 1974

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

If you want job security . . .

# Make the

# UAW fight

# for jobs for all!

# Divide work among all workers, without cutting pay!

# Workers control of the auto industry!

NO. 239 • APRIL, 1990 • 50¢

# Unity against each and every layoff and plant closing now!

## If one worker can be laid-off, every worker can be laid-off!

In the last few years, some of the millionaire owners of the auto corporations have begun to hire some young workers. Now many of these young workers are being laid-off.

So far, the top leadership of the UAW has done nothing to stop these layoffs. Many of the older, higher-seniority workers don't seem to be too concerned either.

This is a serious mistake.

If the millionaire owners of the auto industry have the power to layoff one worker in the Detroit area, they have the power to layoff each and every worker in the Detroit area. There is no reason to believe that the top UAW leadership is going to do anything to stop this. They work, live, and think like bosses, in air-conditioned offices and luxury apartments and homes. As long as they have jobs, and can rub shoulders with the millionaire owners of the auto industry that they admire so much, they don't give a damn what happens to thousands of autoworkers and their families.

Each and every worker who values his job and his future, needs to take up a firm and determined struggle against each and every attempted layoff and plant closing, for dividing work among all workers without cutting workers pay, and for his fellow workers, union mem-

bers, and union leaders to take up this struggle.

Naturally, the millionaire owners,

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**“Each and every worker who values his job and his future, needs to take up a firm and determined struggle against each and every attempted layoff and plant closing ... ”**

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their puppets in the top UAW leadership, and others, will claim that it is impossible to divide work among all workers without cutting workers pay. They'll say that this will ruin them, that they will go bankrupt, that they'll have to go out of business.

Workers must not allow themselves to be intimidated by this propaganda.

They need to form their own com-

mittees in workplaces to study the industry, to fight for workers control of the industry, to begin to prepare themselves for direct workers management, for taking the industry away from private millionaire owners and for making it a public enterprise, run by workers, in the interests of the people.

This is a struggle that can unite millions of working people and their power against the millionaire owners of the auto industry, millions of working people who have suffered because of these owners, their layoffs, plant closings, high prices, and shoddy products. This is a struggle that can save jobs now.

Calls for domestic content legislation, for getting the owners to produce a new vehicle in this or that plant, for “bringing back the work,” or even for “repairs,” are, at best, a diversion from the struggle to stop each and every layoff and plant closing now. At worst, they cause layoffs and plant closings because they pit workers of different nationalities and localities against each other, thus strengthening the owners and weakening the solidarity of the working class.

Unity against each and every layoff and plant closing now!

Divide work among all workers without cutting workers' pay! — Truth

# Which side are you on?

## The privileged bureaucrats or New Directions?

There are working class and popular movements developing throughout the world against the privileged, dictatorial bureaucrats that have dominated the workers movement.

The uprising in China, the miners' strike in the USSR, the uprising in Germany, the insurrection in Romania, the uprisings in Azerbaijan and Lithuania today.

The same kinds of struggles are developing in the Americas, Africa and elsewhere.

Workers in Argentina, Brazil, South Africa, and elsewhere are breaking with many of the old leaderships that are tied to the millionaire owners of the big corporations in the U.S. and Europe, that are privileged and serve their masters by suppressing other workers and oppressed people.

The New Directions Movement in the United Auto Workers union (UAW) is one of the first signs of these movements in the United States.

The New Directions Movement has taken a position against the top UAW leadership's policy of *concessions* to the millionaire owners of the auto industry. It has taken a position against the top leadership's policy of *privileges* to the top leadership and its friends. It has taken a position against the top leadership's policy of *suppressing oppositionists*. Many of the leaders of the New Directions Movement in the Detroit area — Sally Bier, Don Douglas, Pete Kelly, Pat Patterson, Ed Tweed — have led important strikes and other struggles against the millionaires and their puppets in the top UAW leadership.



**Chrysler worker addresses ND Conference in October.**

All young people and working people in the Detroit area should support the New Directions Movement and its efforts to get the best possible contract for autoworkers, *against* the millionaire owners of the auto industry, and *against* the top leadership of the UAW (the so-called "Administration Caucus"). This leadership is a privileged, dictatorial leadership tied to the millionaire owners, much like the privileged, dictatorial bureaucrats in China, Eastern Europe and the USSR.

What you can do:

**Come to the national rally sponsored by New Directions.** Sunday, April 29, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., Ford Civic Auditorium, Detroit, (near Cobo Hall).

**Join the New Directions Movement and distribute its newsletter.** (Write to New Directions, PO Box 6876, St. Louis, MO 63144)

**Vote for New Directions candidates for local office.** (At the Ford Rouge plant: Judy Wraight, Lonnie Spight, Ron Lare, Dwight O. Clay, Larry Matsey, Norman J. Seaver, Gary

Walkowicz.)

It's also necessary to fight for New Directions to go all the way and totally break with the old UAW leadership all along the line. This means a fight for:

— An all-out fight against each and every attempted layoff and plant closing now; divide all work among all workers without cutting workers' pay; if one worker's job is not safe, no worker's job is safe; don't wait for the contract.

— Integrate the skilled trades now;



**New Directions Conference last October.**

make the millionaires of GM, Ford, and Chrysler hire more Blacks, women, and other oppressed, until the percentage of Blacks, women and others is equal to or greater than their percentage in the local population.

— Cut all restrictions on the right to strike.

— Cut all union funds to the millionaires' political parties, Republicans and Democrats. For a workers party and workers candidates to fight for workers control of the auto industry, for taking the auto industry away from private millionaire owners and making it a public enterprise, run by workers, in the interests of the people. — Truth

# South Africa—a pact to save apartheid

*We are reprinting an article from **The Fourth International** on the situation in South Africa. While the imperialist publications in the United States are talking about all the great gains that the Black people in South Africa are supposedly making, this article gives a different perspective. Naturally, it is in the interests of U.S. imperialism for the Black people in the United States to think that the vicious white racists in South Africa are in the process of reforming themselves and that the Black people can peacefully coexist with them. — M.G.*

The liberation of Mandela has not meant the liberation of political prisoners or the beginning of freedoms. Rather it has meant the beginning of African National Congress (ANC) guarantees for the rights, freedoms, and property ... of the whites!

While repression is leading to more deaths in the streets, while the division in the ANC is growing, between partisans of a dialogue with the white government following Mandela, and a "hard" line of maintaining the armed struggle to defend the conquest of freedoms for the immense majority of the Black population, the White House and the Kremlin are praising De Klerk and his integrationist plans.

Political concessions to the white colonialist government have gone so far, that Mandela is not even raising the elementary democratic necessity for "one man one vote."

What elections can the ANC participate in if the most arbitrary repression prevails and if the Blacks do not even have the right to vote?

Under the State of Emergency, the apartheid regime is trying to take advantage of the shameful concessions on the part of the ANC and of Mandela, to undermine for a period the backbone

of the Black resistance and its growing armed force.



The integration, the concessions, and the collaboration of the ANC with this colonialist, almost slave-holder regime, is not the political solution that the workers and the Black population, which are the immense majority of the population, need.

### ***What the liberation of South Africa means***

The conquest of democratic freedoms for the Black population, is a very difficult concession for the colonialist government to make, without undermining the foundations of the apartheid regime, the political system that allows for the absolute domination of a tiny white minority in the service of the big world imperialist bourgeoisie.

These freedoms would also inspire peoples subjected throughout the continent and their brothers in all parts of the world.

Freedoms in South Africa have much to do with the freedom of the entirety of the Black population in every state on every continent.

Winning these freedoms demands the destruction of the entirety of the whites' state military-repressive apparatus.

The revolution of the workers and the oppressed Black population is what will liberate the energies necessary to break out of the racist strait-jacket.

The revolution in its national and democratic aspect is what can allow the immense riches to serve for the development of the population, and to do so in face of the exploitation that has developed for centuries. And which are the raw materials of the enormous contingents of Black slaves that were stolen and used as cannon-fodder in the Americas, England, and other countries.

### ***An important contingent of the world revolution***

The liberation of South Africa and the promise of its revolution affects the colonialist, slave-holder and imperialist classes in two ways.

In an immediate way, because it threatens them with losing the important source of exploitation that this state represents.

The place of the gendarme would fall. The Pretoria regime acts against all the attempts at freedom on the part of other peoples of the continent. Its fall would destroy the fragile basis of some artificial states that exist only because of the existence of the apartheid regime and in order to maintain it.

On an international level, to the naturally expansive wave that every revolutionary process produces, there is the added factor that the Blacks are the most important and outstanding minority within the North American working class.

The Black revolution in Africa is thus a time bomb pointed at the heart of U.S. imperialism.

Freedom and revolution in South Africa will contribute in an important way to the progress of the revolutionary consciousness of the North American working class. — Andreu Sol

# U.S. out of Cuba and Germany! Kremlin out of Lithuania and Azerbaijan!

Why does the U.S. government have troops stationed in Cuba, Central America, South America, Germany and throughout the world?

Why have the privileged bureaucrats in the Kremlin in Moscow sent troops to Azerbaijan and to Lithuania?

Because popular and working class revolutions continue to develop in these countries and throughout the world that threaten their privileges and power.

The U.S. government says that Fidel Castro, the head of Cuba, is a dictator just like the dictators in China, Eastern Europe, and the USSR that workers and oppressed peoples are trying to overthrow. But if this were true, the U.S. government would support him, just as it supports the privileged, dictatorial bureaucrats in China, Eastern Europe, and the USSR, against the workers and oppressed people.

The U.S. is campaigning against Castro and Cuba because so far Castro and the majority of the Cuban working people have taken a position *against* giving Cuba back to the millionaire owners of the big corporations in the U.S. and Europe.

The Kremlin bureaucrats have sent troops to Azerbaijan and Lithuania, not because they want to stop con-



"Hands Off Cuba" rally in New York on April 7.

flicts between various races and nationalities. They want to maintain the privileges and power of the *Russian Stalinist* bureaucracy, which is privileged not only with respect to Russian workers, but also with respect to other peoples in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (the USSR).

Workers in the U.S. and the USSR need to fight for the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. forces from Cuba, Germany and all foreign territories, and for the immediate withdrawal of all Kremlin forces from Azerbaijan and Lithuania. The popular and working class revolutions developing in small countries and poor countries against the millionaire owners of the big corporations in the United States and their friends in Washington and Moscow, are in our interests.

We also need to form our own, working class political party to

fight for: workers control of basic industries and banks; a workers government, based on democratically elected workers representatives, to take basic industries and banks away from private millionaire owners and make them public enterprises run by workers in the interests of the people; disarming and dismantling the millionaires' military forces.

Popular and working class revolutions can begin in small and poor nations. But they cannot be completely successful until workers in the U.S. and the USSR take their proper place in the struggle.

U.S. out of Cuba, Germany and all foreign territories!

Kremlin out of Lithuania and Azerbaijan!

For the right of oppressed nations to self-determination!

For the workers revolution! — F. Michaels

From the Trotskyist press...

# The Internationalist Socialist League on the Revolution in Eastern Europe

Excerpts from "Stalinist regimes disintegrate" by Harry Turner

*We are reprinting excerpts from an article published by the Internationalist Socialist League on the revolution in Eastern Europe and the USSR.*

*The Internationalist Socialist League (ISL) is associated with the International Workers League (Fourth International), which is one of the largest Trotskyist tendencies and has substantial forces in Argentina and other parts of Latin America.*

*As readers will see, this article expresses clear opposition to Gorbachev's pro-capitalist perestroika and clear support for the political revolution and the construction of Trotskyist parties to lead the revolution to victory.*

*This is different from some of the other groups and tendencies in the United States that claim to be Trotskyist, yet have not taken a clear position against Gorbachev's perestroika, that see almost as many dangers as opportunities in the political revolution, and are not promoting the construction of Trotskyist parties.*

*For further information about the political differences that separate our tendency (the International League for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International) from the comrades of the IWL and the IWL, readers can see articles in *The Fourth International* Nos. 149 and 152. — M.G.*

The seemingly impregnable strongholds of Stalinism in Eastern Europe — East Germany, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and Romania — have crumbled under the spontaneous revolutionary mobilization of the masses, with the masses in each country drawing inspiration and confidence from the revolutionary upheavals in the other bureaucratized workers' states. Only the Albanian totalitarian regime of Ramiz Alia, successor to Enver Hoxha, still stands but

for how much longer?

The spontaneous nature of the revolutions in Eastern Europe disclosed the complete bankruptcy of the Stalinist regimes. However, they also disclosed, as did the massacre in Tiananmen Square, Beijing, China, the necessity for revolutionary leadership, for Trotskyist parties with a clear revolutionary program, if bureaucratic oppression is to end and workers' democracy realized.

There are at best only the bare beginnings of such leaderships at this time in the Soviet and Eastern European workers' states, and the program of the political revolution to bring the working class to power has yet to be brought to their masses. It is for this reason that the Stalinist parties have been able to maneuver in rearguard actions for organizational survival and to hold onto what they could of governmental posts ...

The Stalinist hard-liners in Eastern Europe, those directly responsible for the repressions and the deteriorating economies, were washed away by a revolutionary torrent. But in their place came Stalinist "moderates," newly-fledged Gorbachevists, pledging democratic reforms, an end to the guaranteed "leading role" of the Stalinist parties, free multiparty elections and "market incentives." ...

To the relief not only of the "moderate" Stalinists, but also of the leaders of world imperialism, the revolutions were "non-violent" — that is, until the Romanian revolution ...

In Romania, in contrast to the revolutions which preceded it, the reign of Nicolae Ceausescu did not disintegrate with the spontaneous uprising of the masses. The violence of Ceausescu's secret police, the Securitate, and also of

the army, against the mass mobilization in Timisoara in defense of a Hungarian Lutheran cleric, Laszlo Tokes — in which many hundreds, by some estimates thousands, were massacred and buried in secret mass graves — was answered with a wider mobilization demanding, "Give us back our dead." It was this unconquerable spirit which assured the turn of the army against Ceausescu and the Securitate, the arming of the masses, and the victory of the revolution.

It seems, however, that a Council of National Salvation had been organized six months before the uprising and was poised to assume power. It is composed of dissident CP members, university students, intellectuals and, not least, army officers. Shortly after the military trial and execution of Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu, one of the Council members, Ion Iliescu, a supporter and friend of Gorbachev, was appointed provisional President. The Council also abolished the death penalty, announced elections in April, and, although affirming that it was not a party, announced that the Council would run its own list of candidates in the election. The full Council voted to cancel the referendum set for January 28 by its executive board on the restoration of the death penalty and the outlawing of the CP. Both demands had been agreed to by Council members faced by an angry demonstration of many thousands seeking revolutionary justice, and to prevent the revolution from falling into the hands of Ceausescu's collaborators ...

The bureaucracies and the leaders of world imperialism fear, with good reason, that the resistance of the workers will destroy their plans for transforming the workers' states into "market economies." The imperialists fear that even with the help of their friend, Mik-

hail Gorbachev, and coalitions of "reformed" Stalinists, intellectuals, the church and labor "leaders," e.g., Lech Walesa in Poland, the workers will not be convinced that capitalism is good for them at the same time that "market economies" produce mass unemployment and a sharp drop in living standards as subsidies on housing, food, other necessities, and free medical care, are withdrawn.

In the Soviet Union, Gorbachev has had to slow down the pace of *perestroika*...

The 'sabotage' of the economies of the Soviet Union and the Eastern European workers' states is today the most fundamental factor propelling their masses into revolt. In 'The USSR in War' (*In Defense of Marxism*) written in 1939, Trotsky analyzed the economic role of the Soviet bureaucracy. What he wrote then applies with equal force to all the bureaucratic workers' states which arose after the second world war.

"...the Soviet regime gave a mighty impulse to the economy. But the source of this impulse was the nationalization of the means of production and the planned beginnings and by no means the fact that the bureaucracy usurped command over the economy. On the contrary, bureaucratism as a system became the worst brake on the technical and cultural development of the country. This was veiled for a certain time by the fact that Soviet economy was occupied for two decades with transplanting and assimilating the technology and organization of production in advanced capitalist countries. The period of borrowing and imitation still could be accommodated to bureaucratic automatism, ie., the suffocation of all initiative and all creative urge. But the higher the economy rose, the more complex its requirements became, all the more unbearable became the obstacle of the bureaucratic regime."...

The handwriting was on the wall. The fatal contradiction between "bureaucratic automatism" and the increasingly complex technological requirements of modern society had to be resolved ...

Trotsky accurately depicted the beginnings of the political revolution taking place today in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and China.

He predicted that "A fresh upsurge in the revolution in the USSR will undoubtedly begin under the banner of the struggle against *social inequality* and *political oppression*...."

As he also pointed out, only a "party of the Fourth International" was capable of leading the Soviet masses" in a "victorious revolutionary uprising."... (From *Workers Organizer*, Vol. 5, No. 1, March-April 1990).

## Truth and The Fourth International

We sold 28 copies of the March issue of *Truth* and 9 copies of the March issue of *The Fourth International* at various auto plants, New Directions meetings, the Spark dinner, the Trotskyist Coordinating Committee conference, and on a West side street corner.

Our experience distributing this issue of *Truth* was interesting because the headline, "Workers control of the auto industry," brought us more into contact with autoworkers than previous issues, including young, unorganized autoworkers. It also allowed us to discuss fundamental questions facing working people in the Detroit area, and to begin to change their thinking, to help them realize that there is no solution to problems facing working people in this area outside a confrontation with the billionaire owners of the auto industry.

Our experience distributing *The Fourth International* was also interesting. Our cover said: "Danger to Nicaragua ... no to giving power to the contras." We found that many socialists thought that the fate of the Nicaraguan revolution had already been decided, that there was nothing that American workers could do to stop power from being given to the contras. But reports in various publications show that the most militant Sandinistas and workers are already fighting against turning over power to the contras and against the sector of the Sandinistas

led by Ortega that is leading this whole scale betrayal of the revolution. We need to support them and continue the struggle to cut all U.S. aid to Chamorro and other reactionaries in Central America, to withdraw all U.S. forces, and to disarm and dismantle U.S. imperialism's forces.

We urge readers who agree with the goals outlined in *Truth* to help build support for *Truth* and *The Fourth International*, by distributing them, participating in *Truth* meetings, and joining *Truth*. — M.G.

**Truth Meetings**  
**Saturdays —12 noon**  
 Call 584-6556 for exact location

**Want to know more about Truth?**  
 Call or write for our "Draft Resolution on the Situation and Tasks in the United States" and "Our Draft Platform: What Is Truth Fighting For."

Call 313-584-6556. Write P.O. Box 1283, Detroit, MI 48244-1283.

**Note:**

The Conference planned for May 19 to discuss our draft resolution on the situation and tasks in the U.S. and our draft platform is being postponed until after the 12th World Congress of the International League to allow further time for discussion.

**Subscribe to Truth**

- One-year subscription to Truth (10 issues/\$5.00)
- One-year subscription to Fourth International (10 issues/\$12)

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Make checks payable to M. Guttshall, P.O. Box 441283, Detroit, MI 48244-1283.

## Why are workers taught to hate communism? Are communists taking workers' jobs?

Spark, a socialist and communist group in Detroit, held its annual winter dinner and forum on March 24. Approximately 150 people attended, including both Black and white auto workers from the Detroit area.

There were displays of propaganda explaining the struggle for workers to run the society, there were pamphlets, books and other forms of literature on many different subjects, and there were skits in which the actors made fun of the owners of the auto industry.

One of the most interesting events was a speech by Sam Johnson. Sam Johnson is a Black auto worker, a Trotskyist, and a supporter of Spark. He took part in the popular uprising in Detroit in 1967 and explains how bourgeois Black leaders like John Conyers and Authur Jefferson came into Black working class neighborhoods, tried to quiet the people and get the people to go home, and how they were booed down and driven away by young Black people. He also worked at the Dodge Main plant during the period of the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement and explains how nationalist leaders often missed opportunities to unite workers of different races and nationalities against the owners and the bureaucratic leadership of the UAW.

During this speech, he talked about communism and what it is. He said communism is really the struggle for the workers to build a different society in which the workers run the society. He said that the Soviet Union is not yet communist, so the crisis in the Soviet Union cannot be seen as a crisis of communism.

He said if you have a windshield, a door and a bumper, you have parts of a car, but you don't yet have a whole car. In the same sense, he said that in the Soviet Union you have parts of communism, but you don't yet have the whole thing.

He asked, why are workers and Black people taught to hate communism? He said, teaching workers to hate communism is just like teaching Black people to hate themselves. When a worker hates communism, he hates himself.

Why should workers hate communists? Communists are not taking workers' jobs, communists are not closing plants, communists are not cutting workers' wages, communists are not destroying workers' unions, workers' neighborhoods, or bringing drugs here. Communists are not discriminating against the Black people. Capitalists are doing all these things.

Sam concluded by saying that it is important to have confidence in the

future of the working class and in the future of communism. "We are a majority," he said. "If you are in a fight, and you know how to fight, and there's a hundred of you and ten of them, they may be able to take down a few of you, but sooner or later, you are going to win."

An open fight for communism, for a classless society, in which there is no rich and no poor, no top and no bottom, no want, no suffering, and no privileged, dictatorial bureaucrats, is essential to the working class. Without an open fight for communism, workers are going to suffer under the illusion that the best that they can hope for is to improve the conditions in which they are forced to slave away for the millionaire capitalists, that the working class can never be free, liberated, the master of its fate.

This is especially important now that so-called communists like Gorbachev — who was never really a communist but an opportunist just in it for himself — are openly abandoning the struggle for communism and promoting private accumulation of wealth at the expense of general poverty, that is, capitalism.

Spark's dinner and forum was an important contribution to this struggle. — M. Guttshall