

# To Arm the Working Class an educational series

## Workers Defense against repression and reaction



By David Heffelfinger

"The reformists systematically implant in the minds of the workers the notion that the sacredness of democracy is best guaranteed when the bourgeoisie is armed to the teeth and the workers are unarmed." (The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International -- the Transitional Program)

In response to the tremendous mobilization of the workers all over the world -- Spain and France, Africa, South America -- the ruling class has been forced to unleash a fierce wave of repression. In Poland the bureaucracy has retreated on its price hikes, but only with massive arrests and trials of militants who led the strike movement. In Argentina, the military dictatorship is not content with beheading its own proletariat, a task which has far from been accomplished, and strikes at Latin American refugees with death squads. In the United States, which is behind every plot and coup from Thailand to Argentina, the bourgeoisie has launched a wave of repression directed at the youth, especially black youth, with the aim of demoralizing the whole working class and breaking its momentum.

The proletarian policy for defense of the working class against repression and reaction is based on the organization of the youth and workers independently of the government of US imperialism. Opposed to this policy are those leaderships, Stalinism and centrism, who seek to instill in the youth a certain trust for the supposedly liberal and reform-minded supporters of capitalism, in the Democratic Party and the trade union bureaucracy.

But neither liberalism nor the trade union bureaucracy have any solution to the crisis of this system. On the contrary, it is these ladies and gentlemen who are in the forefront of the holy war being waged against the youth in the ghettos, the streets, and the factories. The ruling class is simply horrified by the disgust which the youth have shown for its sacred institutions -- property, the courts, and the church -- so liberals and their former "enemies" have joined hands against the common enemy. The recent "March against crime" in Detroit revealed the common features of the bourgeois form of bird with the union leaders, the NAACP, church groups, ministers, judges, police, and pogromists, all marching behind the steady step of Mayor Coleman Young, a liberal to be sure.

Unemployment, war, the death penalty, curfew laws, and frameups are the only solution that capitalism and its liberal defenders have to offer. The working class might well ask -- "With friends like these, who needs enemies?"

And friends are what the liberals claim to be. So it was with the billion dollar job bill passed in Congress last summer which was to alleviate unemployment. In Detroit, which tends to be a pacesetter for repression, many thousands of unemployed policemen were rehired, but no more jobs were available for the workers. Nevertheless, the Stalinists and the centrist Socialist Workers party persist in calling on the liberal to pass more job bills, to revise laws and "outlaw" repression. Imagine, the Socialist Workers party and the Communist party/USA even call on Federal troops to protect black youth in Boston and presumably in Detroit?) from being attacked by "racist mobs." The fact that fascist gangs and "racist mobs" have overlapping membership with the police, be they federal or not, doesn't prevent centrism and Stalinism from making a fine distinction between the two.

The differences between centrism and Stalinism toward the repressive apparatus of the capitalist state, and the policy of the Fourth International is the gulf between the public relations of the Democrats and trade union misleaders and their true intentions. The increasing unemployment rolls, the holy war against the youth, the strengthening of the national defense and repressive powers of the government, the raising of goon squads by the trade union misleaders, these are the reality behind the fiction of reformism.

Against the betrayal of the workers to the trap of reformism, the true proletarian policy, that of the Fourth International, bases itself on the upsurge of the working class. Again from the Transitional Program:

"In connection with every strike and street demonstration, it is imperative to propagate the necessity of creating workers groups for self-defense. It is necessary to write this slogan into the program of the revolutionary wing of the trade unions. It is imperative wherever possible, beginning with the youth groups, to organize groups for self-defense, to drill and acquaint them with the use of arms."

Use of arms, defense guards, organization of the youth and workers against the police and union goons? The centrist leadership of the Socialist Workers party cringes at the program of the Fourth International which the SWP occasionally claims to represent. The reason for this passivity is that centrism teaches that the working class is not capable of defending itself but must rely on the help of "allies." Allies like liberalism and its programs for hiring laid off police, like the NAACP with its support to Coleman Young's holy war waged against the youth, like the Stalinists with their efficient methods of battle perfected against the workers of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Despite the blinders which centrism puts on, every experience of the workers themselves teaches them the true policy of independent organization. The Supreme court ruling on the death penalty and the courts frame-ups against black youth (Gary Tyler, J.B. Johnson) has taught the youth about the bourgeois courts. The experience of the recent auto strike has taught the autoworkers the necessity of defense guards and militant picket lines against the disorganization of the trade union misleaders. The goon squads of Woodcock and his henchmen at Mack Ave. and Fleetwood Fisher Body plants has taught the workers the true intentions of "reformism." Soon they will learn of centrism and its value too.

The self-defense of the workers is completely bound up with the struggle of the working class for power. This struggle, which is being fought out now in the streets and strikes, has nothing in common with the existence of liberalism, Stalinism, or for that matter centrism, but is at the foundation of the proletarian policy for the independent organization of the workers. Thus, the increasing militancy and spirit of the U.S. proletariat continually confirms the correctness of the policy of the Fourth International and the importance of the construction of the Workers Party against the capitulation and passivity of centrism.

For the Independent Organization of the Workers against Repression and Reaction!

Forward to the Congress of the Trotskyist Organization re-building the U.S. section of the Fourth International -- building the Workers Party!

## Supporters of Putnam & Vitale, Candidates of the TO/USA

We, the undersigned youth, workers, and militants of the workers movement, support the fight for a workers party, a workers government, a United Socialist Republic of the Two Americas; for the Platform of Combat of the Trotskyist Organization of the USA and its candidates and a Common Candidate of the whole working class.

We pledge to write in Putnam and Vitale on November 2nd and we call on all our class brothers and sisters to support this fight and do the same!

Jim Drallos, Cadillac; Lonnie Cole; Tara Gay, Robert McIntosh, Mel A. Kuchin, Fred Daniel; Earl Hill, Rouge; I. George, Larry Magee, AN McClifford, JW S. Iano, Rouge; G. Connor.

## SUPPORT THE ARGENTINE AUTOWORKERS!

We, auto workers in the US, declare our support and solidarity with our fellow auto workers in Argentina who have recently launched a strike against Ford, GM, Chrysler and Fiat and against the bloody military regime of General Videla. We call on all auto workers in the US to join with us in a campaign to defend all the victims of political repression in Argentina and to unite our struggles with the auto workers throughout the Americas!

FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS IN ARGENTINA!  
STOP ALL MILITARY AID TO THE VIDELA REGIME!  
STRIKE ALL THREE -- NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA!  
LONG LIVE THE UNITED SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF THE TWO AMERICAS!  
(signed) James T., Frank M.

## \$700 FOR the CONGRESS of the REVOLUTIONARY WORKER YOUTH

AND THE DELEGATION TO THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING CELEBRATING THE 20th ANNIVERSARY OF THE HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION AND THE 40th ANNIVERSARY OF THE SPANISH REVOLUTION!

The RWY/USA needs \$150 to pay for its literature and its office in preparation of its second Congress and \$550 to send a delegate to the international meeting celebrating the anniversary of the Hungarian and Spanish revolutions in Paris on November 6th. Contribute to this cause by selling subscriptions to INTERNATIONAL YOUNG GUARD and YOUNG GUARD, the posters of the Revolutionary Worker Youth, passing the RWY cans where you work, and selling RWY T-Shirts. Make all checks payable to A. Nelson and send them to YOUNG GUARD, PO BOX 10070, DETROIT MI 48210

## Down with Stalinist methods in the Workers Movement!

FIGHT FOR WORKERS DEMOCRACY! JOIN THE WORKERS COMMISSION OF INQUIRY AGAINST THE SLANDERS AND ATTACKS OF "TIME-TO-UNITE"!

Send \$1 to the RWY through YOUNG GUARD USA, P.O. Box 10070, Detroit, Michigan, 48210 for this special supplement to YOUNG GUARD USA, including the statements of David Heffelfinger, militant of the Trotskyist Organization and steward of Service Employees International Union, Local 79, the statement of the 47 Rouge workers who defended him, and the call of the RWY/USA to all the workers at Rouge to join this commission to bring the truth to the working class and drive these Stalinist methods and their perpetrators out of the workers movement!

**TROTSKYIST ORGANIZATION  
PO BOX 07066, DETROIT MI 48207**

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other organization of the working class youth is organized in the Revolutionary Youth International under the leadership of the Fourth International to build a Workers Party and a Workers Government.

But if in the course of the strike the RWY/USA with the TO was not able to go all the way in taking the leadership of the strike out of the hands of Woodcock and organizing the young workers en masse to lead it to victory, it has been because all the distributors of YOUNG GUARD, all the supporters and members of the Revolutionary Worker Youth, which only in the last weeks at Rouge, Fleetwood, and Torrence have numbered over 100, have not yet been organized in circles to prepare and lead the workers battles and because its leadership has not been sufficiently reinforced with the most far-sighted and militant young workers in the factories.

Thus the National Committee of the RWY has decided to prepare the Second Congress with a campaign to regroup these young workers in CIRCLES OF YOUNG GUARDS to lead the fight against the enforcement of the contract, to assemble the workers to form their own committees in the factories; against the Democratic Party and the UAW bureaucracy, in support of Putnam and Vitale on November 2nd; against the isolation of the American working class, in support of the International Week of Action in defense of the Spanish Revolution, to defend the Polish workers and free the political

prisoners in the USSR. On the basis of this fight the Congress of the Revolutionary Worker Youth will draw the balance sheet of its struggle, make its plans to continue and deepen its combat, and elect a new leadership to carry out this fight.

This Congress and its preparation is open to all the young workers, students and militants who want to build a world party of the working class to destroy the Democratic Party and the UAW bureaucracy, supported by the Stalinists and centrists, and build a workers government. All the struggles of the autoworkers in the last weeks have demonstrated that it is the organization of the workers leadership in the factories, upon which their power is based, that with this it will no longer be possible to disperse the workers as was done at the beginning of the strike, to keep them home on November 2nd as was done at the time of the ratification meetings, or keep them isolated as was done at the moment when the Argentine autoworkers were out and the Canadian autoworkers were preparing to go out.

This is the battle being taken up by the US Section (Sympathizing) of the Revolutionary Youth International, the Revolutionary Worker Youth. In this way it prepares the Congress of the Trotskyist Organization Rebuilding the US Section of the Fourth International to launch the fight to found the Workers Party of the USA.

Join it! Organize yourselves in Circles of Young Guards! Break with the Democratic Party and the bureaucracy!

# TRUTH



## Join the Revolutionary Youth International! Build a Workers Party, a Revolutionary Leadership of the UAW!

By Margaret Guttshall

Detroit, October 26th -- Over 30,000 autoworkers have voted against Woodcock's agreement with Ford Motor Company to terminate their strike on the eve of the Presidential elections. 100,000 have not voted and only 43,000 out of 175,000 autoworkers have supported this agreement, many of them because they saw no alternative to the recognized treachery of the Woodcock bureaucracy.

These figures say more than any opinion poll about what the workers in the heart of industry -- those who make this country run -- have, in the course of their strike, come to think about Jimmy Carter and his future cabinet member, Leonard Woodcock, about their call to trust in the "Democratic" Party to resolve their problems, to "restrain their demands," unite with "business," and "restore trust in 'our' form of government." (Jimmy Carter in his address to the General Board of the AFL-CIO, August, 1976).

Now, while Ford, Carter, and Woodcock are seeking the means to ram this same contract down the throats of the GM and Chrysler workers -- under which thousands of workers at Ford have already been laid-off, forced to work more jobs and overtime and had their money held up, under which dozens of militants have been fired and disciplined for their activity in the strike, including those of "Time-to-Unite" at Ford River Rouge, whom the UAW bureaucracy had "promised" to "protect" -- the workers at Ford, especially at the Rouge, are seeking the means to fight the enforcement of this contract, to build a new leadership to wage this fight.

To do this it is necessary to draw the lessons of the struggle to date, above all of the leaderships who have claimed to represent the workers and their policies, for it is this that has been decisive.

This is the task not only of the supporters of the Revolutionary Workers Faction of the UAW, the militants of the Revolutionary Worker Youth, the militants of the Trotskyist Organization of the USA, but also of all the fighting young workers, class-conscious workers, and militants of the workers movement, especially those of the Young Socialist Alliance and the US Socialist Workers Party. For the central problem confronted by the workers in the course of their strike, as they turned away from the UAW bureaucracy, was all the leaderships who CLAIMED to represent them -- the centrist US SWP, the Stalinist "Communist" Party of the USA -- while supporting in practice the UAW bureaucracy and the Democratic Party.

On this basis it is necessary to regroup the most far-sighted and audacious young workers in the US Section of the Revolutionary Youth International to lead the fight to victory, the only mass organization of the working class youth, organized in an autonomous fashion under the leadership of the Trotskyist Organization of the USA, which has fought to organize the workers independently of the UAW bureaucracy and the Democratic Party. On this depends the fate of the American working class.

What is to be done -- ACCORDING TO THE CENTRISTS AND STALINISTS

What was the policy of the US SWP, the party running Camejo and Reid for President and Vice President to fight for a "Bill of 8 New Rights to protect Working People," the party which claims it will eventually construct a "Labor Party" and a "militant, class-struggle leadership" in the unions, the party which claims to be Trotskyist?

In the face of the plans of Carter

and Woodcock to contain and crush the mobilization of the autoworkers, outlined in their speeches in the weeks preceding the strike, and witnessed in the attacks on the striking workers at GM Fleetwood by the bureaucrats armed with chains and clubs and on the youth throughout Detroit by Democratic Party leader Coleman Young's police, with the full support of the Woodcock bureaucracy, the leadership of the US SWP and its supporters in the auto plants and the UAW were SILENT.

For weeks they refused to address themselves to the autoworkers; refused to join in unitary practical actions organized by the Revolutionary Worker Youth of the USA and the Revolutionary Workers Faction of the UAW (RWF/UAW) to fight the repression, to take the leadership of the strike out of the hands of Woodcock, to shutdown Ford, spread the strike, and elect independent strike committees to lead the fight; refused to join the Trotskyist Organization of the USA and its candidates Putnam and Vitale in the fight for a common candidate of the working class on the basis of the Platform of Combat to Build a Workers Party to Lead the Working Class to Power.

Then, all of a sudden, days after the strike had begun, when the Local #600 bureaucrats were organizing a campaign against militants at Ford River Rouge who were fighting to close down the plant, the US SWP sent Willie Mae Reid there who declared that she supported the "struggle of the UAW," called on them to vote for her and Camejo, and said not one word about the treachery of the bureaucracy and what to do about it.

Then, after another week of silence, at the moment when the UAW bureaucracy was preparing to break up the strike and ram their agreement with Ford and Carter down the workers' throats, the US SWP came out and declared that the autoworkers ought to "review the policy of THEIR (our emphasis) union officials and develop a new strategy," a strategy of "rewriting union contracts and a political fight by labor for a revision of the federal wages and hours law."

Now, after the fact, they comment that the autoworkers got "not much," that this is the responsibility of the UAW bureaucracy and the Democratic Party, again without one word to the autoworkers on how to organize their struggle and destroy them.

In this way the US SWP and its supporters in the auto plants and the UAW gave practical, material support to the Stalinist Communist Party of the USA and its candidates Hall and Tyner which, together with the left bureaucrats and Maoists, spent the entirety of their time during the strike trying to bail out Woodcock and Carter by trying to limit the furious opposition of the workers, especially the young black production workers, to peaceful protest. This policy was most clearly expressed in their opposition to the slogan of the Revolutionary Workers Faction/UAW -- "Elect strike committees! OUST WOODCOCK AND RINALDI! -- in favor of -- Vote NO, Send 'Em Back For More," on the basis of which they tried to organize the workers behind the Independent Skilled Trades Council and the Coalition for a Good Contract, organizations which would rather the workers walk out of the UAW than fight to overthrow the Woodcock bureaucracy.

The principle weapon utilized by the leadership of the US SWP in its collaboration with the Stalinists to resolve the crisis of the Democratic Party and the trade union bureaucracy, to convince the American workers that they have no choice at present but to accept their leadership with passive protest, is their work to maintain the isolation of the American working class from the striking autoworkers of Latin America and the rest of North America and, above all, from the workers of Europe, of Portugal and Spain, fighting the fascist monarchy, of Poland and the USSR,

fighting the hated Stalinist bureaucracy. Thus, they opposed the initiatives of the Revolutionary Worker Youth of the USA and the RWF/UAW to organize united action in the course of the strike against the imperialists and the bureaucrats to stop all orders to Videla, arresting, jailing and torturing the leaders of the Argentine autoworkers strike, just as in the past they have opposed all such initiatives to stop all orders to Juan Carlos of Spain, to defend the Polish workers, attempting to transform every such effort on the part of the workers into passive protests and cowardly appeals to the "liberal" imperialists and bureaucrats.

United in action with the workers of the world to build their own party, what American worker would think he has no choice but to stick with the Carters and Woodcocks, much less that he needs them?

The policy pursued by the leadership of the US SWP and its supporters in the plants and the union was not a series of "errors," a "mistake" to be "corrected." It was a consequence of the class-nature of this party as an agent of Stalinism usurping the banner of the Fourth International/World Party of Socialist Revolution, of Trotskyism.

It was only the Revolutionary Worker Youth of the USA, fighting at the side of the Trotskyist Organization to build the Revolutionary Workers Faction of the UAW, which took forward the struggle to break the isolation of the young workers and organize them independently of Carter and Woodcock to build a Workers Party.

### THE CONFRONTATION AT THE ROUGE

The conflict between the workers and their party in the process of being rebuilt and the imperialists and all their lackeys, concentrated at Ford River Rouge and UAW Local #600, came to a head in the last days of the strike when the militants of the RWY/USA and the TO/USA, continuing the fight they had waged in the course of the strike and basing themselves on the overwhelming opposition of the workers to the bureaucrats' agreement with Ford to end the strike, proposed to the workers of Steel, Assembly, and Stamping to support the Platform of Combat and candidates of the TO and reject this agreement by electing their own strike committees, ousting the local bureaucrats, and preparing a General Assembly of all autoworkers to set their demands, spread the strike, and oust Woodcock -- a proposal circulated by the RWF/UAW in the course of the strike which won the support of over 60 autoworkers in Detroit and Chicago.

The militants of the RWY and the TO/USA were attacked first by the bureaucrats, standing under the pictures of Carter/Mondale, claiming the militants had no right to be in a UAW Hall, and then by the leaders of the "Revolutionary Communist Party," organized in "Time-to-Unite," who took the podium, stood under the same pictures, said the same thing, and then proceeded to drive away all the young workers who wanted to do something with a long rap about the "lowlights" of the '76 contract after the bureaucrats had walked out.

A young worker from Stamping took the floor to appeal to those remaining to consider the proposal of the RWY and the TO/USA to elect a new leadership to continue the strike and to, whether they agree with it or not, defend their right to make it.

With this the supporters of this proposal began to regroup themselves to continue the fight, in this way frustrating for the moment the attempts of these "leaders" of the RCP to organize a goon squad to attack the militants of the RWY and the TO/USA as the meeting broke up.

The following day, in the face of growing support for this proposal, even within the ranks of their own organiza-

tion, these "leaders" began to threaten to get the militants of the RWY and the TO/USA with icepicks, just as Stalin had done to Trotsky, they said, and finally punched David Heffelfinger, a founding member of the RYI and a steward in SEIU Local #79, in the face, hoping the support of all the UAW bureaucrats gather around the Local #600 Hall would be sufficient to carry this out with impunity.

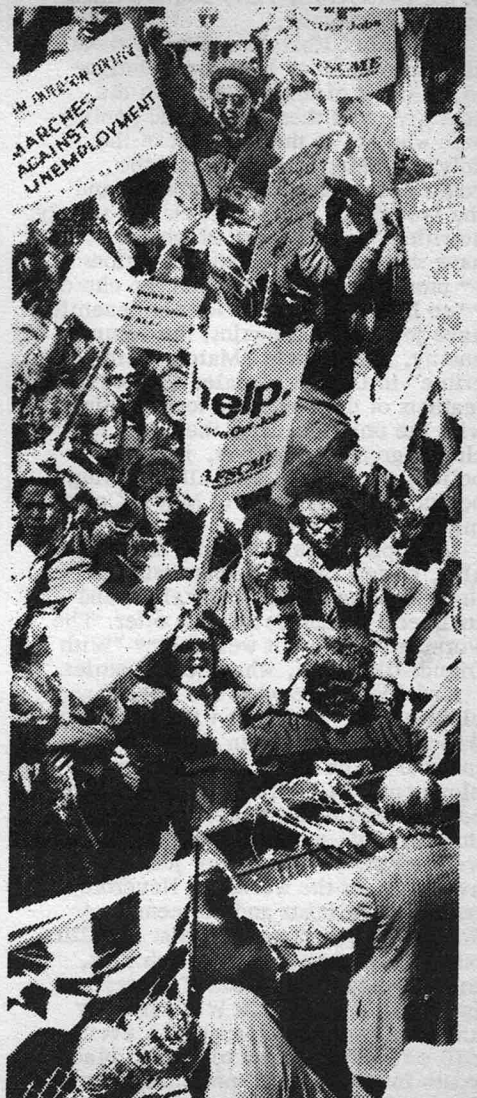
They were mistaken. The fight waged by the militants of the RWY and the TO/USA brought 47 Rouge workers to their side, as well as militants of "Time-to-Unite." With the bureaucrats, the Stalinists, and the Maoists, were none but the centrists, the leaders of the US SWP, the Workers League, the IS, the Spartacist League, who all refused to join the workers and sign the statement, the latter because, in their opinion, non-UAW members have no right to be on UAW property.

The workers at Ford Torrence in Chicago made their view of this clear the following day when they massively defended Barbara Putnam, candidate of the TO for President, against the attacks of the bureaucrats who called the police to attempt to keep her from joining Fred Vitale, member of UAW Local #551 and candidate of the TO for Vice-President, in the fight for the resolution of the Revolutionary Workers Faction of the UAW at this union meeting.

### THE ROAD FORWARD

The Revolutionary Worker Youth of the USA has proven itself in the course of this strike as the only mass organization of the young workers ready to fight to the finish to defend the rights of the workers against the attacks of the imperialists, union bureaucrats, and Stalinists, to lead their fight to victory. No other organization can make this claim -- not the CP youth, the SWP youth, nor any other. No

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WORKERS SHOUT DOWN HUBERT HUMPHREY AT APRIL 24, 1975 WASHINGTON DEMONSTRATION FOR JOBS

All out for the Congress of the RWY/USA