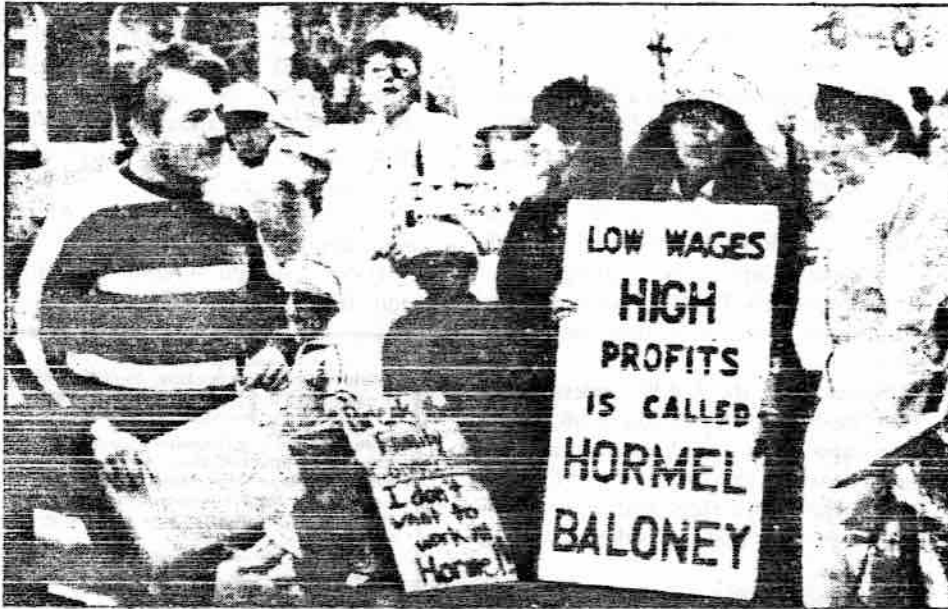


UNIONS MUST FIGHT!



By DAVID MARK

The American trade union movement must fight or die.

Every year, the AFL-CIO holds its annual conference in Bal Harbor. This is where you see one side of the trade unions. Well-manicured men in business suits playing golf, swimming, conferring with congressional lobbyists and officials from the Democratic Party — this is the top leadership of the trade unions.

Last year, the conference issued a report painting the miserable state of the trade unions.

Down in the trenches in Austin, Minnesota, where the strike against the George A. Hormel and Company has entered its sixth month, this is where you see the rest of the trade unions. More than ninety-nine percent of it. They are not lounging around, they are shivering against the cold on a picket line and holding off the National Guard. A Democratic Party official would not be near such a confrontation, neither are the workers' top union leaders.

This year in Bal Harbor the P-9 local sent a delegation to get the support of their own union. Instead they were publicly at-

tacked by the AFL-CIO tops. The United Food and Commercial Workers issued a statement charging "inexperienced and misguided leadership and false prophets" would lead to the defeat of Local P-9. Lane Kirkland said the strike was unimportant.

The top bureaucrats of the unions are feeling the ground rumbling beneath them. The American worker was sold the concessions package in order to save jobs, and insure the profits of industry. Many things conspired to make workers accept this package. It was offered at the point of a gun — give concessions or out on the street. It followed decades of labor/management cooperation. It seemed that there was no alternative leadership to fight against concessions. And it was being pushed by trade union officials and the Democratic Party alike as a cure for unemployment. But now the American worker is seeing that there is no end to it.

The trade unions have undergone a deep change. First there was a series of bitter defeats — the closing of Dodge Main in Detroit, the nationwide PATCO strike of air traffic controllers. Then alter-

native factions appeared in the lower and middle ranks of the trade union leadership. Locals Opposed to Concessions (LOC) in the UAW, and others in the miners and steelworkers unions. The strikes, though still isolated, have grown more militant and their tactics more bold. Now the ranks and the dissidents are looking for new alliances with the working class in its entirety — this is, at least initially, the significance of the founding of the National Rank and File Against Concessions.

These new leaders are in most cases genuine trade union militants who have grown fed up with concessions and the bureaucrats. They have captured the leadership of important locals. They represent a dynamic in the trade unions.

But if the workers' cause is going to succeed, it still has to go further. The road is not an easy one, it leads to confrontation of major proportions. If strikes are to win they are going to have to stop scabs, become larger and take on a national character. The strikers will have to work with unorganized workers and young workers who have been given second class citizenship in many unions. Black workers and white workers will have to be allies. The struggle is going to have to go on against concessions, but also against the bosses government.

The situation demands a higher form of organization and struggle than the trade unions — a working class party, a fighting party against the bosses. And yet it is the trade unions which must be the base of such a party.

The 1986 Congressional elections offer a perfect opportunity. An alliance of unions and working class parties to field *labor candidates*, this is what is needed!

The struggle at P-9 is not ending, it has only just begun. The next crucial step is to build an organization that encompasses the entire working class. That will come to the aid and defense of every worker. The next step is a fighting Labor Party, beginning with labor candidates in '86.

Bosses propaganda

By MARGARET GUTTSHALL

A rightwing economist — Morgan Reynolds from Texas A&M — has just issued a study saying that the UAW is "the primary obstacle to creating more jobs in the US auto industry." "... Overpricing and poor productivity by the UAW have exported nearly 250,000 jobs overseas," he says. "... only 'Washington interference' can slow the imported auto invasion 'without a drastic reduction in the 80 percent UAW premium of average US manufacturing costs plus a relaxation of UAW inefficiencies'" (*Detroit Free Press*, February 12, 1986).

These remarks probably sound familiar to readers. Many people are saying that foreign competition, high wages, strict work rules, and unions are responsible for layoffs and plant closings. And, thus, are even voting for import restrictions and cuts in wages, work rules, and union rights.

But is this true? In a word, no. Layoffs and plant closings are increasing throughout the world, not only in the US but also in countries that are supposedly taking our jobs like Japan and Germany, or South Korea and South Africa.

In reality, the bosses are responsible for layoffs and plant closings in all these countries. The bosses are no longer capable of expanding production, of drawing the masses of people into production. They have neither the resources nor the ingenuity. What is more, it is not profitable. And bosses do only what is profitable. They make more money when a handful of workers are working themselves to death, afraid to lose their jobs, than they do when everyone is working.

In the early days of the capitalist system, the bosses were able to increase jobs, increase wages, decrease prices, and increase profits, all at the same time. They did this largely by introducing new technology. But today they are no longer capable of doing this. This is why we say that the bosses or capitalists have outlived their usefulness. The working class is the only class capable of expanding production, through centralized planning under workers control. All the schemes to involve workers in planning and production (the Saturn plan) are a tacit recognition of the bankruptcy of the capitalist class and the superiority of the working class. Yet these schemes are doomed to failure because the bosses retain the reins while the workers remain harnessed.

Of course the bosses do not want anyone to realize that they have outlived their usefulness, that they are responsible for

layoffs and plant closings, that they are making money off them. Thus they hire thousands of politicians, journalists and academicians (like Reynolds) to point the finger at the foreign bosses (foreign competition, Japan, Germany, etc.) or the workers (high wages, strict work rules, unions, etc.). And these lackeys in turn produce reams and reams that wind up on newsstands, radio, television, churches, etc.

There is a name for this. It is called bourgeois or capitalist propaganda. And the biggest problem for the American working class is that the union leadership believes this propaganda.

When a reporter asked a UAW spokesman what he thought of the Reynolds study, the spokesman said that he would not "dignify that 'claptrap' by commenting on it." But what is the difference between what Reynolds says and what the UAW leadership has been saying?

Of course, the UAW leadership will try to find one, but actions speak louder than words.

Since 1976, the UAW leadership has been pushing for legislation restricting imports and it has signed one contract after another with Chrysler, Ford and GM cutting wages, work rules, and union rights, on the grounds that this is the only way to save jobs.

In January 1986, the UAW leadership

once again went back to the Chrysler Jefferson Avenue Plant workers in Detroit and told them to make more concessions or lose your jobs.

But restricting imports, cutting wages, work rules and union rights will not stop layoffs or plant closings. They will only make them worse. Foreign capitalists will inevitably retaliate against import restrictions. Trade wars, then full scale wars, will ensue. Concessions to the bosses weaken the working class — ideologically, politically, and practically, in spirit, strength and solidarity.

The only way to fight layoffs and plant closings is to fight the bosses. It is high time for UAW locals to stop listening to the bosses' propaganda about layoffs and plant closings and initiate their own working class propaganda and action with labor candidates for Congress. And that goes double for UAW Local 7 at the Chrysler Jefferson Avenue Plant in Detroit. It's now or never.

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Truth Published by the Trotskyist Organization
Address: P.O. Box 32546, Detroit, MI 48232
Subscription Rates: North America: Introductory: 6 issues for \$1; Regular: 24 issues for \$6; Supporting: 24 issues for \$15; Inquire for other rates including institutional rates
Editorial Board: Margaret Guttshall, David Mark, Barbara Putman, editor

The Trotskyist Organization, a Working Class Organization

The Trotskyist Organization is a working class organization that in all cases defends the interests of the working class against the bourgeoisie and its agents (the banks, big businessmen; bosses; the army, police courts; the Republican and Democratic Parties).

The Trotskyist Organization is fighting to build an independent working class party, a Labor Party, to fight for the demands of the working class against the bourgeoisie and its agents — for jobs, wages, decent working conditions, schools, housing; for freedom for Blacks, women all oppressed; an end to US intervention; for union rights.

We are fighting to build a revolutionary working class leadership prepared to lead the working class in securing its demands by any means necessary — the occupation of the factories, the formation of a working class militia, the seizure of power through a popular uprising, the establishment of a workers government based on workers councils, and the expropriation of the banks and big business; in other words ... socialist revolution.

The Trotskyist Organization supports the struggle of Black people, the Nicaraguan people and all oppressed peoples against US imperialism without conditions. We fight to mobilize the entirety of the working class in solidarity with them and to build working class parties to lead this fight.

We support the struggle of the Polish workers against the Kremlin bureaucracy, which oppresses the workers and collaborates with US imperialism in restoring imperialist exploitation. We fight to mobilize all workers in solidarity with them and to build working class parties to lead this fight.

The Trotskyist Organization is fighting to build an open Trotskyist Congress to rebuild the US Section of the Fourth International, World Party of the Socialist Revolution, to lead the working class. We aim to do this by fighting for the interests of the working class in the mass working class movement and by training working class youth as working class leaders. This is the meaning of Trotskyism and why we call ourselves Trotskyists.

The Trotskyist Organization urges all groups of working class youth, working class women and working class men that want to collaborate in this struggle, to join the Trotskyist Organization and form Committees to lead the fight in the neighborhoods, schools, factories and unions. Those who want to do this should write the Trotskyist Organization

Meatpackers strike — "scabs out!"

By BARBARA PUTNAM

Local P-9 of the United Food and Commercial Workers called a National Rally on February 15. Nearly 3,000 unionists and militants from many political parties swelled the main street with a march through town chanting, "They say give-back, we say fightback!" Townspeople crowded both sides of the street cheering as we marched gaily along, not minding the arctic weather and the frozen pavement under our feet. It was a spirited rally that began with a rousing version of "Which Side Are You On?" sung by Larry Long. It brought tears to the eyes of the most hard-boiled leaders in the labor movement. And that song certainly hits the nail on the head. It is *the* choice facing everybody.

Our local branch of the National Rank and File Against Concessions organized a car caravan from Detroit (on very short notice). In the end only two car loads went on the 13 hour caravan to Austin, Minnesota, but a total of 30 union representatives from the Detroit area showed up, others having flown in earlier. However we arrived, the trip was well worth the effort for the spirit of solidarity it brought to the embattled P-9 local in its long struggle against Hormel.

Although every speaker at the rally from Jim Guyette, president of Local P-9 to Marsha Mickens, our regional organizer of the National Rank and File Against Concessions, said that P-9 is *the* litmus test for the whole labor movement, it is clear somebody has already failed the litmus test. The United Food and Commercial Workers International leadership denounced the strike and issued a statement describing it as "a story of inexperienced, misguided leadership and false prophets." Lane Kirkland, head of the AFL-CIO has echoed this saying he has "nothing more to add or subtract" from this statement.

P-9 has paved the way for uncompromising military but the local union leadership and local union leaders from around the country who support the strike are divided over its future.

There was no way to collectively discuss the course of the strike and there will not be until a Labor Party begins to emerge to lead the workers in every

sphere. If indeed, P-9 is a litmus test (and there will be many more) then all who are partisans of the working class should have a say in the outcome because it concerns us all.

What has happened is that the strike is being replaced (prematurely) by a boycott of Hormel products. If I could have spoken to those strikers, I would have said, "Dig those scabs out if you want to win, once a scab crossed your line, that was the day the strike started losing — get them *out!* You know where they live. Take on your union's top leadership, fight to replace the traitors, run a workers candidate who opposes concessions against the Democratic governor who called the National Guard on you."

In the hustle and bustle of the rally we passed out 400 leaflets arguing for labor candidates in the 1986 elections and a Labor Party. Twenty P-9ers and other union members signed the petition on the back supporting the demand for a Labor Party and for working to build it now. Jim Guyette himself had read the leaflet before we passed it out, then shook my hand and said, "thanks for coming." (Not that it changed his mind much.)

At the rally he introduced the illustrious mayor of Austin, a card-carrying member of P-9 who was at least partially responsible for calling in the National Guard to put down the strike. His honor got a standing ovation from many workers. But all this shows is the importance of fighting for the independence of the trade unions from the capitalist government. Yes, the P-9 workers have illusions — but this is why it is so important to build a Labor Party.

One worker we met asked a friend what did he think of us Trotskyists — he said "they just keep talking about the union and a labor party." That is true, that is why we went. If you put yourself forward as a leader but only go along with the stream and do not occupy yourself with the fate of the strikes, the hard decisions facing workers, the way the whole struggle fits together, then you are no leader.

However moved I was personally by the rally, the feeling of solidarity and the wonderful men and women of P-9, I also felt troubled that the best leaders of the workers are all mixed up with conciliators and working in isolation from each other. I'm speaking of the diehards and dissenters, stiff necks and irreconcilables, who sorely need to work together in a political party that embraces the whole working class. Now more than ever the workers need such a party, one that knows for sure which side it's on.

South Africa Rally

By FRED MICHAELS

Michigan Labor for a Free South Africa, a committee of trade unionists, is organizing a march and rally in downtown Detroit, April 19. We urge all unions, individuals and youth to make this the largest possible rally of Michigan working people in support of their brothers and sisters in South Africa.

A large trade union turnout would lay the foundation for a more active role by the trade unions in support of the South African workers. The US trade unions could be decisive for the victory of South African labor with a *union boycott of all goods to South Africa.*

This committee is capable of organizing such a large turnout because active in it are local union leaders from the UAW and AFSCME and because it springs from the growing mobilization of US workers.

In order to reach the goal of a large trade union turnout, militants of the Trotskyist Organization have proposed that the political orientation of the march and rally be the elementary union solidarity of the working people of the United States with their brothers and sisters in South Africa. This is something that *any* American worker can understand. We will work to have all the efforts of the committee devoted towards a full mobilization of Michigan labor.

This is the only hope of survival of the committee. The committee is already a thorn in the side of the top union leaders in Detroit, the UAW and the metropolitan AFL-CIO. They have basically asked that it be broken up.

The UAW leadership has tried to avoid the South African issue because of its daily collaboration with some of the strongest supporters of apartheid — Ford, Chrysler and General Motors. Under enormous pressure, Owen Bieber, president of the UAW, is now co-chairman of a national Shell boycott committee which supposedly addresses the issue of South Africa. Bieber even specifically attacked the "Trotskyites" at a closed door meeting of the boycott committee, expressing fear that they would take the boycott seriously and picket gas stations!

For the April 19 action to be powerful, we must begin with a strong working class line. This will strengthen the hand of the committee because it allows for the greatest participation by the masses of workers.

Labor Against Apartheid!

April 19, Detroit

Assemble, 11 AM, Grand Circus Park
March to Kennedy Square, noon rally
(Call for rides 542-7445)

Meatpackers Strike Rally

March 1, 7 PM

UAW Local 600, Dix and Vernor
Detroit

Global Conflict



Philippines

The US role in the Philippines shows once again that the US is an imperialist nation that does not deserve our support.

Reagan openly supported Filipino dictator Ferdinand Marcos after he murdered his opponent and stole an election. "In matters like these, our bases come first," he said.

Edward Kennedy, Michigan Senator Carl Levin and other Democrats are now urging Marcos to step down. Their motivation? "Even the usually cautious US Chamber of Commerce in Manila feels that US interests in the Philippines are threatened by a continuation of the Marcos regime and that the United States should disassociate itself from Marcos ... Continuing to deal with Marcos will undermine more than our moral position; dealing with this doomed dictator threatens our important bases at Clark Field and Subic Bay" (*Detroit Free Press*, February 20, 1986).

Why is the US always being drawn into conflicts in other countries, on the wrong side and for the wrong reasons?

Because the US depends on the exploitation and oppression of peoples of other countries. American businessmen use Filipinos and others for cheap labor. They need military bases and dictators like Marcos to protect this relationship. This is why we say that the US is an imperialist nation and why we say politicians like Reagan,

Kennedy and Levin are imperialist politicians. They all want to maintain the US as an imperialist power, even if they differ on how to do it.

The Filipino people on the other hand do not want to do so. Thousands of youth and workers have been marching in the streets under banners saying things like: "Down with the US-Marcos fascist dictatorship!" or "US Out!" Many boycotted the recent elections on the grounds that they were fraudulent elections and that both candidates were tied to US imperialism (Corazon Aquino is also against getting US bases out of the Philippines.)

American youth and workers should fully break with American imperialism, with Republicans and Democrats, and join the world-wide revolt against it. We should support our Filipino brothers' and sisters' demands against the US in words and deeds, with a union boycott of all US supplies to the Marcos dictatorship and the bases.

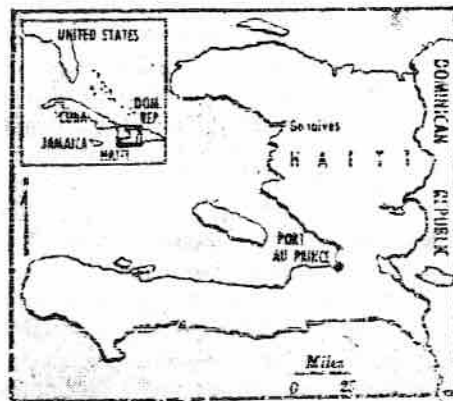
Haiti

"Baby Papa Doc" Duvalier, another brutal dictator and son of the infamous "Papa Doc" Duvalier, just fled Haiti where he had appointed himself president for life.

US Secretary of State George Shultz announced that Duvalier was leaving a week before he left, and the US provided transportation for Duvalier and his family.

Duvalier selected a committee to carry on after he left, but the mass demonstrations and thousands of exiles returning to Haiti show that things are not going to be the same again for a long time.

Once again, the American working class cannot remain neutral in this conflict between US imperialism and the oppressed people of Haiti. Their struggle must be ours.



Poland

Polish officials recently dropped charges against Lech Walesa. They had charged Walesa with slander because he said that the recent elections in Poland were a fraud.

Polish bureaucrats were probably afraid that if they attempted to try Walesa that his trial would turn into a trial of the Stalinist military dictatorship in Poland instead. This is what happened when they placed working class militants on trial in Poland before.

M.G.

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