

SOCIALISM!



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WTO: No! Global labor solidarity: Yes!



Workers and oppressed demonstrate against U.S.-backed regime in Indonesia.

Stop U.S. war on Colombia!

Since 1990, the U.S. government has spent at least \$1 billion on military operations in Colombia. The U.S. government claims it is doing this to stop the flow of drugs into the U.S.; this is a lie. The U.S. is aiding the Colombian government and right-wing, anti-labor, paramilitary death squads in their effort to put down working class and popular struggles in Colombia, including a general strike last fall and an armed peasant movement. U.S. corporations own and control the U.S. government; they own and control U.S. foreign policy. It serves their interests, whether it's practice bombing of the Vieques Island of Puerto Rico, sanctions against Cuba, a secret war on workers and peasants of Colombia, constant military attacks and sanctions against Iraq, occupying Bosnia, bombing and occupying Serbia and Kosova, or sending guns to the Indonesian military while it slaughters the East Timorese. Working class groups in the U.S. need to make a united fight to stop all U.S. attacks on workers and peasants of other countries, to stop all U.S. aid to anti-labor regimes, and to get all U.S. forces out of all foreign lands and waters. □

Thousands will demonstrate against the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Seattle on November 30.

The majority of demonstrators are hostile to the WTO because they see it is owned and controlled by U.S., European, and Japanese multinationals and their governments, which trample on anyone and everyone who gets in their way. They are right.

But a very wide range of alternatives to the WTO are being promoted, some very hostile to the interests of working class people, others in accord with them.

Buchanan

Pat Buchanan and his supporters are calling for putting "America first," for U.S. corporations and U.S. workers to work together to build a self-contained economy and keep out foreigners. He denounces the rich, NAFTA, GATT, the WTO, Republicans, Democrats, and trade union leaders who support them, and appeals to white Christians to build a movement hostile to working class people of other ethnic groups, nationalities and nations.

Pat Buchanan's perspective can only lead to trade wars and shooting and bombing wars with working class people of other countries. It can only divide the U.S. working class. While there are some U.S. workers who have absolutely no family and friends from or living in other countries, there are many U.S. workers with ties to workers in other countries. They won't rally to an economic and political perspective calling for enriching U.S. corporations and U.S. workers, without regard to the consequences for working class people of other nations.

The trade unions

Unfortunately, many trade union leaders sound a lot like Pat Buchanan. George Becker, head of the United Steel Workers of America (USWA), has joined with U.S. steel corporations in blaming foreign imports for U.S. steel workers losing their jobs. He's calling for placing restrictions on importing foreign steel. This may save a few U.S. steel workers' jobs in the short run, but it hurts workers producing "foreign" steel and all working class people of all ethnic groups in the long run. When large, wealthy nations

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The fight for Mumia Abu-Jamal

For the second time, Pennsylvania Gov. Ridge signed a death warrant for Mumia Abu-Jamal and set a date to execute him. For the second time, a judge was forced to issue a stay-of-execution.

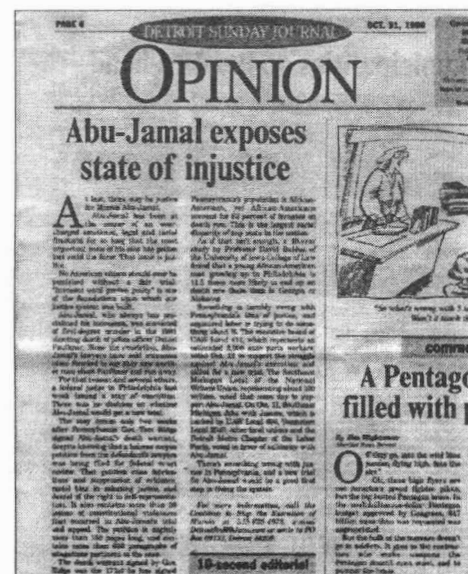
This is a victory for the movement for justice for Mumia Abu-Jamal. This victory is the result of the work of a very small number of dedicated activists and thousands of young people new to the movement. These young people are shocked by the society they see. They are shocked that a man like Mumia can be sent to prison and sentenced to death with so little evidence against him.

Mumia's attorneys say it looks like Mumia will have an opportunity to speak in court in February. This is also victory for the movement. But it would be a serious mistake to think that simply because Mumia will be able to speak in court, there will be justice.

Now more than ever it's necessary to build a mass movement to put pressure on the upper classes who own and control the legal system to allow Mumia a new trial and free him.

It's important to keep on mobilizing young people, African-Americans, and socialist activists. It's also important to go beyond the most radical forces in society, reach out to working class people, demand that the trade unions, the biggest, most powerful organizations working class people have, take a stand against the execution, demand a new trial, use their power and influence to make this happen.

Detroit newspaper workers' *Sunday Journal* editorial supporting Mumia.



Demonstration in Detroit the day after the death warrant was signed.

The organized labor movement has tremendous power and influence. Unfortunately, the current leadership uses most of this power and influence to support the corporations, their political parties, and candidates. This is one reason it's possible for men like Sabo and Ridge to get away with persecuting Mumia. The more the political struggle within the labor movement forces labor leaders and organizations to support

the struggle for justice for Mumia, the more muscle on the side of Mumia, the more the upper classes will be afraid the labor movement is getting out of control and think twice about continuing to persecute Mumia.

We urge everyone fighting for justice for Mumia to dedicate some time to reaching out to working class people and pushing for labor leaders and organizations to join the struggle.—M.G. □

Fire in the sky if Mumia dies?

At demonstrations for Mumia Abu-Jamal, some demonstrators chant: "Fire in the sky if Mumia dies."

This chant has advantages: it's vivid, dramatic. It also has serious disadvantages.

Exactly what is being said? How can there be fire in the sky? With an explosion? With fires on the ground? Are demonstrators saying someone will set a fire so big it will be seen in the sky? Are they saying this is a good idea?

We need to focus on building a movement so big and powerful, they can't execute Mumia, not on what will happen if we fail. If we do want to let the upper classes know what we'll do if they decide to execute Mumia, we should let them know we'll encourage people to go into the streets in a disciplined and organized way to protest and fight for punishing

anyone involved in the execution. Millions in the streets in an organized and disciplined way, or millions going to the polls in organized and disciplined way, is more frightening to the upper classes than fires. Working class people make revolutions; fires don't.

It's important to avoid trying to get a relatively small group of people to make more and more noise, or do more and more radical things, as a substitute for building a bigger, more powerful movement. It's important to avoid saying and doing things that make it easy for police to pick out the most radical or revolutionary elements, to isolate them from the masses of people or imprison them. It is precisely the combination of revolutionaries and a mass movement that represents the most serious threat to the established order.—M.G.

The battle in Seattle: what is at stake

Thousands of workers, trade unionists, young people are going to Seattle, Washington, Nov 30, to demonstrate against the World Trade Organization's meeting.

The most advanced workers and young people are going to demand the end to the WTO and the U.S. government's involvement in it. They want government representatives, especially those from the richest countries, to know they are not safe in the U.S., that workers and young people oppose their policies that cause so much suffering, especially among working people in the poorer countries. Activists want this meeting of dignitaries to go as poorly as possible, to disrupt their business, to hound them from meeting to meeting, and to make them wish they had never come to Seattle. We heartily agree with this sentiment.

The World Trade Organization is the organization for enforcing international trade regulations and serves the interests of the richest families that own corporations around the world. In particular, the WTO is a weapon to extract wealth from the workers and peasants of poorer nations.

But the actions in Seattle have a mixed character. Statements, demands and appeals in the interests of the working class are mixed with statements, demands and appeals in the interests of the ruling class.

This mix is a reflection of the current stage of the class struggle, especially regarding international questions. Workers especially, but also some youth, will demonstrate with nationalist sentiments. They oppose the WTO in part because it seems it's part of the "global economy" that has taken away jobs and given them to foreign workers. They will also oppose child labor, military dictatorships, and the attacks of U.S. corporations on U.S. workers.

This mix, a nearly inevitable feature of actions in this period, is demonstrated by the various political forces and their actions and programs at the demonstration.

It is important to understand this so the most advanced workers and youth can advance a clear, revolutionary and working class response to the WTO that is independent of the bosses, and truly advances the unity of the working class.

Pat Buchanan

Pat Buchanan, former Republican, who just joined the Reform Party to seek its presidential nomination, says: "... in Middle America, our industrial base is eroding, factories are closing and manufacturing jobs are mov-

"The 'rule' the AFL-CIO needs to follow is simple: no support to actions against other countries without the support of workers from that country."

ing overseas. America's working men and women are being sacrificed to the Global Economy. Although our leaders seem deaf to their distress, their concerns are valid.

"As our independence falters, our sovereignty erodes. In 1994, for the first time, the U.S. joined a global institution, the World Trade Organization, where America has no veto power and the one-nation, one-vote rule applies. For America to continue down this road of global interdependence is a betrayal of our history and our heritage..."

"... other nations do not believe in our brand of free trade ... predatory partners like China and Japan each run up \$60 billion surpluses at America's expense.

"As President I will: Use the trade laws of this country and the power of my office to protect the jobs of our workers, the standard of living of America's families, the independence of our country and the sovereignty of the United States." (Buchanan web page official statement)

Buchanan's policy is nationalist; he uses the nationalist sentiments of U.S. workers to divide them from workers in other countries, claiming the U.S. is "losing its sovereignty" to some imaginary force. The WTO is controlled, in large part, by the heads of U.S. corporations who live in Grosse Pointe, New York, Chicago and Silicon Valley.

In addition to backing Clinton and his support for the WTO, the capitalists are funding Buchanan's campaign to direct white workers' anger at the capitalists toward workers in other countries.

Working class organizations divide into two camps: those demanding reform of the WTO and those demanding its dissolution.

Reform the WTO

The AFL-CIO, the U.S. union federation, has endorsed Al Gore, the current vice-president and an avid supporter of the WTO, for president in 2000. John Sweeney, head

of the AFL-CIO, signed a letter with the heads of major corporations, including Procter & Gamble and Monsanto, supporting Clinton's trade policy. The letter calls on the WTO to establish a "working group" to study core labor standards and trade and "marks the first time many of America's biggest companies have agreed to support U.S. moves linking trade liberalization with labor standards." (*Wall Street Journal*, 11/1/99) "The U.S. government must further ensure that any agreements enable the United States to maintain its own high standards for environmental, labor, health and safety," (!) said the letter. (Perhaps the Detroit newspaper workers or immigrant workers would have a few words to say about the "high standards" in the U.S.)

In its recent Convention Resolution, the AFL-CIO says, "the economic and political power of transnational corporations has become increasingly concentrated" It speaks of transnational corporations, as corporations that exist "above" nations. But that's not true. Every corporation has a home base. For many of these corporations, that home base is the United States.

Furthermore, "we need a rules-based global trade system that protects workers' and human rights, the environment ..." Thea Lee, AFL-CIO trade policy director says. "What we want is the ability to use trade rules to protect workers' rights."

The rich owners want to use "labor standards" and "a working group" for two reasons: 1) to deepen the collaboration of the trade union leaders in the owners' plans and 2) to use "labor standards" as they see fit to force poorer nations to trade terms that improve profits. The AFL-CIO demands that the WTO "incorporate enforceable rules on core workers' rights." The AFL-CIO reaches agreement with capitalists but not with workers of other countries that may be hurt by these trade rules. That is simply dictating potentially harmful policies from a position of wealth and power. Workers in poorer countries must be consulted before the imposition of any rules, sanctions, etc., by workers from rich countries. It is basic, absolutely necessary, solidarity.

NAFTA shows that trade agreements cannot be changed to meet the needs of workers. The Zapatista uprising showed that. The "rule" the AFL-CIO needs to follow is simple: no support to actions against other countries without the support of workers from that country.

In particular, the policy of the United

Steel Workers union of intimate collaboration with the heads of U.S. steel corporations to "save" steelworkers' jobs by opposing "dumping" of foreign steel, is wrong. These same steel companies, and if not them, their customers, are buying the steel from foreign countries. The cause of the loss of steel jobs is not "dumping" of foreign steel, but overproduction of steel. One key solution to overproduction is to shorten the work week without cutting pay. The fight against "dumping," at least 10 years old, has not saved a single steelworker's job.

The **Communist Party**, in its paper *The Weekly World*, supports the AFL-CIO analysis and policy. The newspaper reported enthusiastically on the AFL-CIO Resolution quoted above. In "WTO: Coup d'etat against democracy," Fred Gaboury favorably reviews a new book by Public Citizen that quotes Ralph Nader saying "the WTO is the greatest surrender of our national, state and local sovereignty in American history."

The **Labor Party** is the only political party opposed to the Democratic and Republican parties that is backed by trade unions. It has the greatest potential to unify all workers and youth who want the workers to have political power. Unfortunately, the Labor Party's position on trade increasingly yields far too much ground to the bosses.

The LP program opposes pro-capitalist trade policy and speaks of some of the ways that U.S. workers can oppose it. It says, "We call for worker inspection teams ... of different nations to determine whether minimum standards are met ... we insist that workers themselves be able to enforce these sanctions, relying on traditional rights ... Our Labor Party will actively promote a strategy of international solidarity and cooperation

with labor movements and labor parties in other nations ... that demonstrate our commitment to work together to confront the global attacks ... We oppose all policies instituted by corporate-dominated lending institutions like the World Bank ... We will especially strive to bring pressure on those U.S.-based transnational corporations that are violating labor rights in other nations of the world ... we demand that our government ... stop using military and foreign policy to prop up anti-labor regimes ..."

However, the recent issue of the *Labor Party Press* supports the AFL-CIO's "reform" the WTO policy. "In addition, GTW (Global Trade Watch) and almost every other popular organization is demanding that the WTO be reformed to make it a much more open and democratic institution." The Labor Party article ends by endorsing the Open World Conference in Defense of Trade Union Independence and Democratic Rights which has addressed a letter to the heads of state at the WTO demanding full compliance with the International Labor Organization's (ILO) 176 different standards.

The ILO was founded in 1919 as an organization of business, government and trade union leaders to set international labor standards. Its influence on the class struggle has been non-existent; all the major changes in the interests of workers — the 40 hour week, industrial unions, health and safety laws — have come from the struggle of the workers. Not a single worthwhile reform from the "standards" of the ILO in 80 years. Enough said?

Dissolve the WTO

Many organizations think the only response to the WTO, as to NAFTA, is to dissolve it, end it, and end U.S. participation in it. This would not stop the capitalists from exploiting poorer nations and workers, but it would remove one of the mechanisms that allow the richest countries to collaborate more easily against the rest of the world.

The Organizer, a socialist paper published in San Francisco, disagrees with the AFL-CIO's reform of the WTO and demands, "Abolish the WTO, Abrogate NAFTA!"

However, the editors propose that workers organize support for the Open Letter to the heads of state mentioned above. "The only real solution for child labor is for countries the world over to ratify, implement and fully enforce ILO Convention 138, which bans child labor altogether." We disagree. The solution to stopping child labor does not lie in pressuring poorer countries to support ILO resolutions. The only long term solution to stopping child labor is to remove the



conditions that cause parents to allow their children to work — abject poverty. The standard of living of workers must be raised. Naturally, we support laws that ban child labor that arise from struggle inside a country; but most importantly, workers in advanced countries must be convinced this goal is worth fighting for; that a fight against child labor is a fight against their own bosses, not against governments of poorer countries.

In a *Wall Street Journal* article George Melloan says that leaders of poorer countries oppose the WTO, so they can continue to oppress their people. He says: "What the Seattle commandos [referring to the anti-WTO activists] probably don't understand is that they are serving the interests they profess to hate — Third World oligarchies." We do hate military dictatorships, but behind every "Third World oligarchy" is a "First World" rich family, supporting the WTO, giving the dictators money and political support. The tail never wags the dog.

It is important that our opposition to the WTO, against child labor, for workers' rights, be directed against the puppet masters, not against the puppets, especially when the masters live in our country.

The **Industrial Workers of the World** (IWW) in Seattle are building N30, an International Day of Action against the WTO. Their leaflet says: "The WTO member nations use their enforcement power ... to enforce their will on the entire planet and over every national government." This is an understanding similar to those talking about loss of U.S. sovereignty. It is not a clear, class analysis.

The WTO is also not the first "undeniably global government in history." There are no global governments; there is no unified, global, capitalist class; there are powerful capitalist classes in the U.S., Germany, Japan and a few other countries. These

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People For Fair Trade and Network Opposed to WTO



The WTO Has A Dismal Record
Come to Seattle Nov. 27-Dec. 4

Tell the WTO leadership they can't
trample our constitutional rights!

Website graphic showing the WTO
destroying the U.S. constitution.

What is Socialism!?

Socialism! is a publication and association working to unite all forces – individuals, groups, tendencies, organizations – fighting for working class, revolutionary, socialist principles and policies and for working class and socialist revolution. There is a tendency among revolutionary socialists to exaggerate their differences with each other; this hurts working class and popular movements and revolutionary socialism. Revolutionary socialists or communists have been among the most devoted in working class and popular movements; when we exaggerate our differences with each other, we worsen the differences already in the working class.

We are working to develop a platform summing up basic working class and revolutionary principles and policies that can serve as a basis for bringing revolutionary forces together. Here are some of the points we think need to be included. We ask readers to let us know what they think. Are these points adequate? In what ways do they need to be strengthened, modified, or completely changed? — The Editors

A shorter work week without cutting pay – from 40 to 30 hours a week in the U.S., with time and a half after 6 hours a day and 30 hours a week, and comparable reductions in all countries by law. Outlaw mandatory overtime. While the U.S. economy is in a “boom” and it’s easier to find minimum wage jobs than it used to be, unemployment is still a serious problem, masked by manipulating statistics and a massive increase in arrests and imprisonments. Cutting the work week without cutting pay allows everyone to work; it allows working class people more time to take care of themselves and their children. Many serious problems – job-related injuries and illnesses, alcoholism, drug addiction, other diseases, deeply troubled relatives and children – can be eliminated or drastically reduced by cutting the work week without cutting pay.

A higher minimum wage, with automatic increases in line with price increases – at least \$10/hour in the U.S. and comparable minimum wages in all countries by law. Anyone who works 30 hours a week should be able to afford their own place, their own transportation and not have to work two or three jobs. Employers should not be able to force workers to compete with each other, to try to do the most work, endure the most pain and suffering, for the lowest wage.

Workers’ control of health and safety standards and enforcement by law. Thousands of workers are killed, injured, or diseased on the job. Many go to work afraid they won’t come home the way they left or won’t come home at all. All this so the richest families can maximize their profits and luxurious lifestyle at the expense of others. Working class people should not be forced to risk their health and lives for a small number of rich families. Workers, not bosses,

should control the health and safety standards and enforcement in their own workplaces by law.

Top quality healthcare for all, funded by public, non-profit funds. Outlaw HMOs; health insurance executives should not be able to use the healthcare industry to enrich themselves and deny care to people who need it. **Top quality education for all.** National financing for all public education (instead of property taxes) so each child, not just those of the rich, has the resources necessary for a good learning environment. National legislation and funding to reduce the student-teacher ratio to 15 to 1 in all public schools. National legislation and funding to expand the public school system, to provide free, top quality 24-hour childcare and educational classes for children starting at age 3 on a voluntary basis. Free public university and technical education of all kinds. Each of us should be able to go to school as far as we wish to do so.

An end to all forms of discrimination against all oppressed, including youth, women, peoples of color, immigrants, lesbians, gays, non-Christian religious groups, atheists. Repeal anti-drug laws. Treat alcohol and drug addiction as medical problems, not criminal problems. Release all prisoners imprisoned for “victimless” crimes. For an independent labor commission to review all arrests, convictions and prison sentences. Release all prisoners falsely arrested, convicted or imprisoned. Free Mumia Abu-Jamal and all political prisoners. Abolish the death penalty. For an independent labor commission of inquiry into all police and armed forces. Disband all racist, anti-labor armed forces.

International labor solidarity. No support to U.S. government and corporate attacks on working class people in other lands. Immediate unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. forces from all foreign lands and waters, including Cuba, Panama, Iraq, the Balkans. No to boycotting products produced by workers in other countries without appeals from workers in those countries.

Workers’ revolutionary democracy. For workers’ right to control their own organizations, including unions, working class political parties, all working class organizations, through regular meetings, the right to vote on all matters, the right to directly elect their representatives in their workplaces, the right to immediately recall any representative who does not carry out his/her mandate. No to any special wages, salaries, or special privileges of any kind for workers’ elected representatives. For a workers’ government, composed of workers’ representatives, democratically elected in workplaces and based on an independent mass mobilization, to fight for and enforce laws favorable to working class people. Military training for workers so they can defend their struggles.

The right of all oppressed nations to self-determination, including countries oppressed by capitalists (Cuba, Panama, Colombia, Quebec, Ireland, Euzkadi, Catalonia, Iraq, Palestine, Serbia) and countries oppressed by capitalists and “socialists” (Bosnia, Kosova, Chechnya)

Socialism. No to the privatization of public resources. Workers’ control and public ownership of all basic resources, including the banks, basic industry, transportation, the land, large-scale agriculture, so workers can use these resources to produce and distribute what people need. Toward a classless, communist society, in which everyone works together to produce and distribute what people need and everyone has what he or she needs; where there is no rich and no poor, no top and no bottom, no suffering and no misery, just people working together for the common good. The problems in the old USSR, Eastern Europe, China, and other countries where workers began to try to build socialism, are not a result of workers’ attempts to build socialism. They are a result of the imperialists’ or capitalists’ persecution of these countries and the growth of privileged, dictatorial “socialist” labor bureaucracies that began to take an unfair share of the benefits of the revolutions for themselves and to persecute the masses of working class people. The capitalists and privileged labor bureaucracies in these countries need to be replaced with workers’ revolutionary democracy.

For a Revolutionary International uniting all for working class and socialist revolution against the capitalists and privileged labor bureaucracies. Rebuild the Fourth International. Leon Trotsky and other revolutionaries founded the Fourth International in 1938 as a step toward a big revolutionary International uniting all for working class and socialist revolution. Unfortunately, working class and popular movements in Western Europe and the U.S. after WWII did not succeed in overthrowing the capitalists’ power and beginning to build new societies. Forces allied with U.S. imperialism, Social Democrats, and Stalin continued to dominate the labor movement. In many cases, the most devoted revolutionaries, socialists and communists were driven out of the unions. Capitalists, privileged labor bureaucrats, and their friends worked to isolate and persecute Trotskyists and Fourth Internationalists. The Fourth International began to break into pieces; a tendency developed among Fourth Internationalists to exaggerate their differences with each other. It’s time to bring this period to a close. All Fourth Internationalists fighting for revolutionary workers’ democracy, the right of oppressed nations to self-determination and socialism need to join together and rebuild the Fourth International as a step toward a big revolutionary International. □

Trotskyism and the 21st century



What is now known as the Trotskyist movement began in Russia in the 1920s. Leon Trotsky, his co-thinkers, and thousands of workers found themselves forced to begin a political struggle against the policies of other Communist Party leaders, particularly Bukharin and Stalin. After the victory of the workers' revolution in 1917 and the long civil war, many of the most devoted workers were dead or worn out. Capitalists in other countries and remnants of the upper classes in Russia took advantage of the situation to press their agenda. Bukharin and Stalin began to succumb to them. They adopted a negative attitude toward trying to spread the revolution to workers in Europe and the United States. They began to orient toward upper class peasants in the countryside in Russia and their tendency to try to enrich themselves at the expense of others. They began to seek out and accept special privileges and persecute workers who protested their policies. To justify their adaptation to the upper classes, they developed the theory of building socialism in just one country.

Trotsky, his co-thinkers, and thousands of workers fought these policies. They argued that the working class and socialist revolution could only be completely successful if it spreads to workers in the most developed capitalist countries; that workers in poorer, backward countries like Russia did not have the resources to build fully socialist societies by themselves, that a combined effort by workers in the most developed capitalist countries is necessary. They said the policies of the Russian Communist Party should be oriented toward spreading the revolution and toward workers in Russia, toward helping them hold out until it was

possible to spread the revolution. They were for industrialization, improving the conditions of the workers and, especially, workers' revolutionary democracy, allowing workers to call the shots, against the development of any kind of bureaucracy with special privileges.

As revolutionaries in other countries began to learn what was going on in Russia, they began to support Trotsky and his co-thinkers against Stalin. In 1930, Trotsky and his co-thinkers formed the International Left Opposition. In 1933, they formed the movement for the Fourth International after Stalin and his supporters in Germany allowed Hitler to take power without making a serious fight against it and there was no protest in the Third International. In 1938, Trotsky and his co-thinkers founded the Fourth International. Trotskyists played a leading role in the fight against Hitler, World War II and in the post-World War II upsurges. They played a leading role in defending the struggles of China, Cuba, and Vietnam for independence and in defending the struggles of the workers and oppressed in East Germany, Hungary, Poland, and Russia against the privileged labor bureaucracies. Since that time, the Trotskyist movement and the Fourth International have spread throughout the world. There are thousands of working class and student activists who consider themselves Trotskyists and/or Fourth Internationalists.

Nevertheless, throughout this century, the Trotskyist movement has remained a minority movement. For most of its history, the Trotskyist movement has been a severely persecuted movement. Thousands of Trotsky's co-thinkers and supporters in Russia were sent to concentration camps and/or killed. Trotsky himself was driven out of Russia and assassinated. Many of Trotsky's co-thinkers in Europe were assassinated or sent to concentration camps. All of Trotsky's children were killed. Many North American Trotskyists were imprisoned during World War II. Trotskyists in China and Cuba were imprisoned and persecuted. In the 1950s, 60s, 70s, and 80s, supporters of the privileged labor bureaucracies in Russia and China continued to say Trotskyists were agents of imperialism or the CIA, "splitters," "wreckers," and tried to keep them out of workplaces, trade unions, and other working class organizations.

Trotskyists were able to overcome this persecution in some situations and play an exemplary role in important working class

and popular struggles — the struggle against dictatorships in Argentina, Bolivia, and Brazil; the struggle against U.S. attacks on Cuba, Vietnam, Nicaragua; in England, France, Poland, and other countries. Still the Trotskyist movement has not been able to sink the roots in the working class necessary to build big movements and overthrow the power of the capitalists in the most developed countries.

Since 1989, the situation has changed for the Trotskyist movement. The working class and popular uprisings against the privileged labor bureaucracies in the old USSR, Eastern Europe and China have made it clearer that the bureaucratic form of socialism that prevailed in Russia, and still prevails in China, is not a serious alternative to capitalism. Very few look to the old Stalinist or Maoist parties for any kind of leadership. Many of these parties have dissolved. Others are disoriented and on the defensive. It is also becoming clearer to many working class people in the most developed capitalist countries that the capitalist economic system is not capable of providing any big, long-term improvement in their lives. Conditions for working class people in both the U.S. and Europe have been deteriorating in the last two decades.

Workers are tired of being told what to do by both capitalists and privileged labor bureaucrats. There's more interest in the fight for workers' democracy and the right to self-determination for oppressed peoples — two things the Trotskyist movement has a long history of fighting for.

The 20th-century saw the first successful workers' revolution in Russia in 1917; it

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Students demonstrate against Milosevic after U.S. bombings end.

Trotskyism ...

Continued from previous page

saw the revolution spread to Eastern Europe, China, Cuba, and Vietnam, albeit with a privileged bureaucracy; it saw the revolution held back, stagnate and degenerate as a result of the rise of a privileged labor bureaucracy; it saw the breakup of this same labor bureaucracy.

What will the 21st century see? At the moment, U.S., European, and Japanese capitalists are still making profits high enough to allow them to make concessions to workers and divide and isolate movements that emerge. This is not going to last forever. Big revolutionary workers' movements are going to arise in the most developed capitalist countries. This time the field will be wide-open for the Trotskyist movement. There will be every opportunity for Trotskyists to win the masses of working class people to their program: revolutionary workers' democracy, the right to self-determination for all oppressed peoples, and, above all, international socialism.

To prepare themselves to take advantage of these opportunities, the Trotskyists need to draw a balance sheet of their own experiences. Trotskyists need to see how persecution has affected the movement. They need to overcome the tendency to adapt themselves to the privileged labor bureaucracies and exaggerate their differences with each other. The more the Trotskyist movement does this, the more the 21st century will see victories for the masses of working class people, more successful working class revolutions, more victories for Trotskyism and the Fourth International.— M. Guttshall □
Note: The next issue of Socialism! will also take up Trotskyism and the 21st century and the tasks ahead.

To our readers:

Many thanks to all the readers who read copy for this issue and for their suggestions on how to improve it!
— The Editors □

Socialism! is a bulletin for the Labor Party, socialism and rebuilding the Fourth International published in Detroit. We support International Workers Unity (Fourth International), an international workers revolutionary socialist tendency making an important contribution to rebuilding the Fourth International. Signed articles do not necessarily represent views of *Socialism!* These are expressed in editorials. Editorial Board: Margaret Guttshall, Tim James, Kim Morgan, Fred Russo. □

Battle in Seattle ...



Back page of the latest issue of *Solidarity*, magazine of the UAW.

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classes are trying to present a united front against the working class (which is an international class, a class capable of uniting across national boundaries all the oppressed) and the poorer nations in spite of the fundamental, competitive forces that drive the different capitalist classes apart.

Their N30 leaflet calls for shutting down the WTO; this desire for direct action to stop the WTO meeting is popular among activists and commendable. It will not be possible to shut down the WTO in the U.S. or anywhere else, without mobilizing tens of thousands of working people in their own interests, independently of the ruling class and their political lackeys outside and inside the trade unions around a concrete program.

The IWW supports the AFL-CIO mobilization without comment. They say "workers across the city of Seattle are organizing and agitating for a city-wide walkout on N30 to meet downtown for a huge rally at the Kingdome..." The AFL-CIO leadership's motives are never simple even when they call strike support rallies; how much less so when their slogans are mixed up with supporting Al Gore, co-signing a letter with corporate heads, and "reforming" the WTO. Workers and youth need to hear the truth about the AFL-CIO's policy.

The Militant, newspaper of the Socialist Workers Party, correctly headlines an article: "WTO: a tool for enforcing domination of U.S. finance capital." It shows that the WTO is primarily a tool for the "continual transfer of wealth from the semi-colonial world to the coffers of imperialist banks" "From 1980 to 1987, the buying power of Africa's export earnings decreased 30%" and the gap between poorer countries and richer countries is increasing. They say, "Class-conscious workers [should] demand from the rulers of the country they live in withdrawal from institutions like the WTO and favor their dissolution."

At the same time, they claim the "anti-WTO" campaign in its entirety points away from international solidarity and toward protectionism. *The Militant's* approach is one-sided; in these protests, they don't see workers' striving to develop an independent foreign policy; they don't see the youth in solidarity with poor and oppressed people around the world, even if in a confused way.

The Militant does not put forward a different policy for workers and youth active in this struggle; they offer a slogan of "international working-class solidarity to take power out of the hands of the exploiting classes..." with no concrete means to reach the masses of working people who are not yet prepared to "take power."

Conclusion

The mobilization against the WTO has a mixed character. The most class-conscious workers and youth need to participate in it; they also need to provide a program that clearly advances the interests of the workers. They need to support the workers' desire to fight the rich, without making concessions to nationalist sentiments, patiently explaining how the rich have the same goal, from Gore to Bush to Buchanan. International solidarity begins at home, fighting the rich families here, who are causing more suffering in times of relative "peace" than any other ruling class in history. — Fred Russo □

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WTO: No! Global labor solidarity: Yes! ...

Continued from page 1

place restrictions on imports, other nations retaliate. Markets dry up, production falls, workers are laid off, trade wars follow. U.S. steel workers need to join forces with steel workers in other countries and fight for a shorter work week without cutting pay throughout the steel industry so steel workers in all countries can keep on working. This is the way to build a united labor front against U.S. and other multinationals, not calling for restricting foreign imports, for laying off workers of other countries instead of U.S. workers.

John Sweeney, head of the AFL-CIO, recently co-signed a statement endorsing the Clinton-Gore trade policy. The AFL-CIO is campaigning for Gore. At the same time, the AFL-CIO, which has been playing a leading role in organizing the demonstrations against the WTO, says it is for "reforming" the WTO. They want U.S. and other multinationals and their governments to include in their trade agreements clauses calling for respecting workers' rights and the environment. They want these same multinationals and their governments to refuse to do business in or with countries whose labor or environmental standards and conditions don't measure up. The AFL-CIO leadership either doesn't see or doesn't care that U.S. and other multinationals aim to use these "reforms" to hurt workers and oppressed in the poorest countries even more than they are already. For example, some activists are calling for boycotting oil from Venezuela because oil corporations based in this country pollute the environment too much. But what will boycotting Venezuelan oil do to workers and oppressed in this poor country? Wouldn't it make more sense for working class people of all ethnic groups and nations to make a united fight for better conditions in all countries, instead of promoting agreements that favor oil enterprises based in the richest countries in the name of protecting the environment?

Global labor solidarity

There is an alternative to U.S. multinationals, other multinationals, their governments, and their WTO that is in the interests of working class people of all ethnic groups, nationalities and nations: *global labor solidarity*.

What does global labor solidarity mean? It means supporting the strikes and struggles of workers and oppressed in other countries. It means building unions that bring together workers of all ethnic groups and nationalities

Global labor solidarity means ...

Labor movements and labor parties in all countries need to make a united *political* fight for laws and policies in the interests of working class people, for labor governments, based on independent mass mobilizations, to enforce them.

- **Shorter work weeks in all countries without cutting pay** so everyone can work;
- **Higher minimum wages in all countries**, with automatic increases in line with price increases, so everyone who works 30 or 35 hours a week makes enough for a decent life;
- **Workers' control of health and safety standards and enforcement** to stop injuries and death on the job;
- **Stop privatization of public resources; toward public ownership and workers' control of essential resources;**
- **Stop U.S. multinationals' superexploitation of workers and peasants in other countries:** Repeal NAFTA and GATT; abolish the WTO; cancel debts of the poorest nations to the richest banks; all U.S. forces out of all foreign lands and waters; stop U.S. aid to anti-labor regimes; for the right to self-determination for all oppressed peoples — Cuba, Panama, Colombia, Quebec, Ireland, Euzkadi, Catalonia, Iraq, Palestine, Serbia, Bosnia, Kosova, Chechnya, East Timor;
- **Military training** for working class people under union control so they can defend themselves. □

ties and coordinating collective bargaining. Above all, global labor solidarity means labor movements and labor parties in all countries have to make a *united political fight* for laws and policies in the interests of working class people of all ethnic groups and nationalities and for labor governments, based on independent mass mobilizations, to enforce them.

It's not possible to build a movement of millions in the U.S. today. At the moment, U.S. corporations are still making profits high enough to make concessions to the top layers of the middle classes and the working class and pacify them. But this situation is not going to last forever. As the economic situation gets worse, and it inevitably will, discontent will grow. More working class and middle class people will get involved in the struggle. The very same U.S.-based multinationals now passing laws making it easier for them to go anywhere and close operations in the U.S. are also developing political tendencies and organizations whose goal is to *detour* and *divide* the inevitable movements against them. This is what Buchanan represents.

Working class activists, young people, need to begin *now* to build an alternative to U.S. multinationals and their policies that can unite working class people of all ethnic groups and nationalities, that is powerful enough to overcome their power and build a new society.

The fight for global labor solidarity

means a fight against the labor aristocracy and the labor bureaucracy that dominate the labor movement. This layer has always had a policy of going along with the richest families and their super-exploitation of workers of the poorest ethnic groups and nationalities in exchange for a relatively privileged position for themselves.

It means working class and internationalist groups have to work together and form alliances and organizations on a principled basis. Small radical, socialist, communist and anarchist groups — Socialist Workers Party, Spark, Socialist Action, others — have made contributions to the class struggle, spreading information about working class and popular struggles, urging workers not to rely on Republicans and Democrats, promoting working class, revolutionary and socialist ideas. But there isn't a single one of these groups which, *by itself*, is capable of *being* an adequate alternative to Bush, Gore or Buchanan. Nor is there one capable, *by itself*, of *building* an adequate alternative.

Revolutionaries should be in the front ranks of the fight against U.S. multinationals, the U.S. government, and the WTO, for global labor solidarity, for a broad working class and internationalist alternative. It is in large working class and popular movements that revolutionary workers' movements and organizations, capable of leading the working class to power and overcoming the resistance of the capitalists, take shape and develop. — *Socialism!* □