



## Break the grip of the union chieftains! The workers have had enough!

The anger is growing among the workers. They have had enough of the nine-years-long concessions drive. They are rallying to fight back against the capitalists.

And as the militancy has mounted, there has also been a growing breach between the rank and file and their union leaders. The workers want to fight. The union leaders are trying to hold them back.

This issue of *The Workers' Advocate*

covers a number of stories of the battle brewing between the rank-and-file workers and the union bureaucracy.

- Sixty-four percent of truck drivers and warehousemen rejected the national freight contract proposed by the Teamster leaders. But Teamster officials say they'll implement the pact anyway.

- Rubber workers also overwhelmingly rejected contracts recommended by the United Rubber Workers (URW)

leaders. But the URW bureaucrats blocked a united strike and slipped through a repackaged version of essentially the same rotten contracts.

- Chrysler workers protested voting fraud when United Auto Workers leaders claimed their new contract passed by a slim 54-46% official count.

- Transit workers called for protests against the concessions in the contract that is being arbitrated in Boston. But union officials ruled them out of order.

And the list goes on.

### Whom Do the Union Bureaucrats Serve?

Why are the union officials — the very people who are supposed to be leading the workers' struggle — taking such highhanded action against the workers?

It's because the union officials don't  
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## Gorbachev, no! Communism, yes!

With the Reagan-Gorbachev summit underway, hordes of U.S. journalists have descended on Moscow. Later this month, attention will again be focused on the Soviet capital where a major conference of the Soviet ruling party will take place.

During their summit coverage, much of what the press is sending back is trivial rubbish, such as their focusing on every twitch and gesture made by Reagan and Gorbachev or Nancy and Raisa.

At the same time, the TV and

newspapers are having a field day churning out propaganda repeating that socialism is a disaster. And they lay on the praise for Gorbachev's Western-style reforms. Look, they say, even the communists are looking to capitalist ideas to make their system work.

Isn't capitalism just wonderful, they gush. Oh sure. What about the three million homeless across the U.S.? What about the tens of millions of workers being driven in the work places and squeezed by one takeback after

another? And what about the sufferings of blacks and Latinos who are victimized by racism here in the "land of the free" — by cops, immigration agents, or the KKK?

The facts of life in America clearly don't make a case for the glories of capitalism. But aren't things pretty ugly in the present-day Soviet Union? You bet.

But the reason for that isn't socialism, it's capitalism.

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## Solidarity with the Nicaraguan workers' movement!

The Nicaraguan workers have been fighting to survive. While the Sandinista government gives privileges to the right-wing capitalists, real wages to the workers have been going down. The Sandinista government takes it upon itself to enforce a national wage scale.

Unfortunately this wage scale impoverishes the workers. This was made worse by the recent national monetary reform, which slashed wages even further.

This stand of the Sandinista government hurts the struggle against the pro-

U.S. contras and the right wing. It hinders production, sabotages enthusiasm for the revolution, and benefits the pro-contra capitalists. The working class is willing to sacrifice for the revolution. It is not willing to starve

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In a protest in Managua in support of the striking construction workers the banner reads: "We demand that the government negotiate with the workers, not with the contras." It is signed by Frente Obrero (Workers Front), the trade union center of the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua.

# DOWN WITH RACISM!

## Grand jury in Philadelphia whitewashes bombing of MOVE

On May 3 a Philadelphia County grand jury cleared every official of the city, police, and fire department of responsibility for the racist massacre three years ago.

Back in May of 1985 the Philadelphia police, under orders from Mayor Wilson Goode, assaulted and eventually bombed the house of the black group MOVE. Six children and five adults were killed and the ensuing fire storm burned down 61 houses leaving 270 people homeless.

Yet after a two-and-a-half-year investigation, the grand jury claimed that no one was to blame. Officials had no "criminal intent." This was just a correct police operation that was bungled.

### Jury Concludes Correct Operation Bungled

For example, the grand jury heard testimony from the chief of police and the fire commissioner that they decided to allow the fire, started by the bombing, to continue to burn. As well, Mayor Goode admitted to the jury that he watched a live television newscast showing the fire for about an hour before he ordered fire hoses to be turned on. These actions were obviously aimed at completely burning down the MOVE house and anybody in it. But the grand jury only called this a "terrible misjudgment."

The grand jury also discovered that two policemen lied to it about the use of a volatile military explosive in the bomb dropped on the MOVE house. But the jury did not even bother to indict them for the minimum charge of perjury. Rather, it wrote off the attempted cover-up as "asinine behavior."

The grand jury also heard testimony

that, along with the bombing, some 7,000 rounds of ammunition were fired into the MOVE house. But it claimed this was not "excessive force."

The grand jury's conclusion whines that top city officials showed "morally reprehensible behavior," "considerable incompetence and ineptitude," and "misjudgment." In short, a bungled operation. But the grand jury saw nothing wrong in the "intent" of the operation. And that's the heart of the matter.

### A Government of Terror Against the Black Masses

Why was the MOVE house attacked? It is obvious that city officials and police were out for revenge. MOVE is a small black sect with a "back to nature" religious ideology that frequently creates tensions with their neighbors. But this is no reason to massacre them. What the city officials and police could not tolerate was the MOVE members' stand of self-defense against police attacks.

The officials wanted to smash MOVE and to send a message to terrorize the whole black community. They wanted it clear that anyone who resists racist police attacks or defies the arbitrary dictate of the government will face bullets and bombs. That was the "intent." And that's what the grand jury agrees with.

The assault on MOVE — and its whitewash by the grand jury and by Goode's MOVE Commission hearings two years ago — shows the racist, terroristic nature of the capitalist government. It also shows that the black bourgeoisie, whom Goode represents, has become a servant of the ruling class' repression against the masses. □

## Boston transit forced to rehire Ellis Lawrence

Protests by other Boston transit workers forced the MBTA (Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority) to finally rehire the black bus driver Ellis Lawrence.

### Fired for Opposing Racist Police Brutality

Last October, Lawrence verbally objected to MBTA cops beating up a 16 year old black youth named Walter Coleman. Four MBTA cops grabbed Lawrence himself, beat him, and took him to jail. He was suspended from his job without pay.

In January, Lawrence went on trial. MBTA cops claimed that Lawrence had attacked them. But faced with contradictory stories by the cops and the evidence of other witnesses, the judge was forced to find both Lawrence and Walter Coleman innocent of all charges.

Despite this, the MBTA arrogantly went ahead and fired Lawrence.

### MBTA Forced to Retreat

Transit workers were outraged. From the beginning, a number of Lawrence's co-workers supported him against the police charges and the slander of the racists. The *Boston Worker*, newspaper of the Boston Branch of the Marxist-Leninist Party, took up the defense of Lawrence. Hundreds of leaflets were distributed among transit workers and to workers in other work places.

Before the trial in January, two hundred workers attended a benefit for Lawrence. And many more bought tickets to show their solidarity.

When word spread that Lawrence had been fired, workers grew angry. In

Lawrence's work place, several workers even got into a confrontation with management while defending Lawrence against their slanders.

Feeling the heat beneath their feet, the MBTA bigwigs were forced to do an about-face and rehire Lawrence. Of course the MBTA only paid Lawrence one month's back pay instead of the six months' that was rightfully his. Nor were Lawrence or Coleman compensated for trial costs, or their injuries, or the racist abuse they suffered from the MBTA and the capitalist news media.

Nor have the MBTA cops even been reprimanded.

Yet, in spite of the MBTA's dirty tricks, the mass support from the workers forced the MBTA to give Lawrence his job back. Lawrence's case is an example of the injustice of the rich against the black workers. But it is also an example of the strength the workers have if they organize together to fight the harassment and racism of the bosses.

(Based on the May 10 "Boston Worker," paper of MLP-Boston.) □

## Supreme Court out to turn back the clock on civil rights

On April 25, the Supreme Court decided to consider scrapping one of its earlier major civil rights rulings. No one asked the Court to do this. But on its own it decided that past rulings favorable to black people and other oppressed nationalities are now up for grabs.

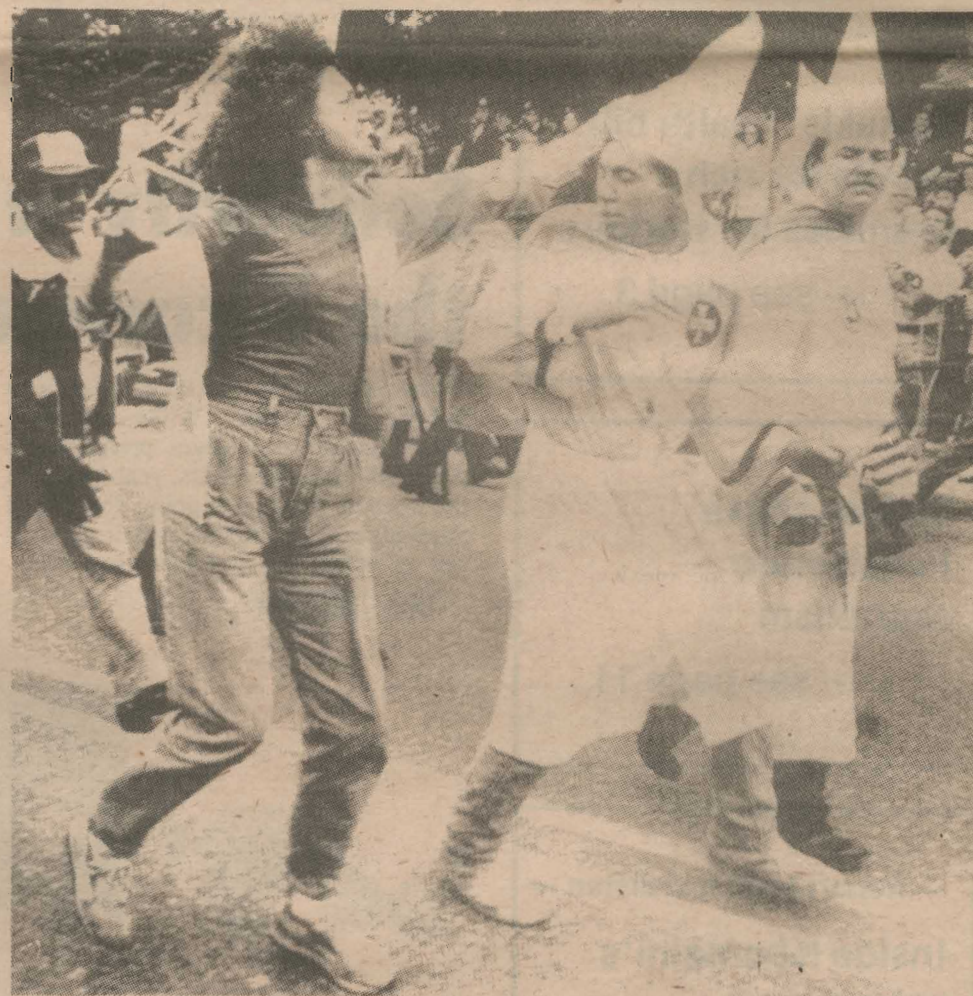
The court decided to reconsider a 1976 ruling that allowed blacks to sue for damages against whites-only private academies. That ruling, and one in 1968, are based on an 1866 Civil Rights Act that gave blacks equal rights with whites "to make and enforce contracts." It has been a precedent allowing blacks to sue for damages against private entities — such as private schools and employers — for racial discrimination.

For years the Supreme Court has been reinterpreting laws to make it increasingly difficult for black people to file suit against discrimination. A reversal of the 1976 ruling would take another legal weapon out of black people's hands.

But the Court's decision has more significance than this. It is a signal that the ruling class is willing to reconsider all the legal rights won through the massive upsurge of the black people in the 1960's and 70's.

Such is justice in the land of the capitalists. Legal, formal equality is granted, but is gutted in practice. Concessions are given to the masses at times of upsurge, but are taken back at the first opportune moment. □

## 2000 people denounce KKK in Penna.



On May 21 some 2,000 people condemned a small Klan march in Parkside, Pennsylvania. The masses carried anti-racist placards and taunted the Klansmen. At one point a woman lunged at a Klansman and ripped off his hood. She and three other militant protesters were arrested and led away in handcuffs by the Klan's police escorts.

The Klan march was sanctioned by a federal court in Philadelphia. The court overturned a local ordinance banning the racist march and worked out an agreement for when and where the march was to be held. The courts and the police continue to stand behind the racists. Only the actions of the masses can stop them. □

## Racist lies about Brawley exposed

Government officials and the capitalist news media have been carrying out a vicious campaign to discredit Tawana Brawley and cover up the racist attack on her. But the lying character of this campaign has been all too apparent. Last November Brawley, then 15

years-old, was abducted at a bus stop in Wappinger Falls, New York. The black teenager was held for four days, repeatedly raped, and then dumped in a plastic bag with "KKK" and "Nigger"

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See BRAWLEY

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# Dukakis' health insurance bill in Massachusetts Profits for the health care firms, promises for the workers

It's an election year, and Michael Dukakis and the Democrats are hawking promises about jobs, education, and health care. The only catch is that they don't want to spend money on these things.

The Democrats are scrambling for new schemes for cheaper and "self-financing" social programs. These programs are to be based on a "partnership" between government and business. The private sector is to play a big part and even make profits out of it.

A model for such a "partnership" is the new Universal Health Care Act in Massachusetts. Governor Dukakis signed the act into law at the end of April. It will be put into force through stages over the next four years.

## It's Not Universal and the Workers Pay the Bill

The new Massachusetts law is being advertised as a prototype for universal health insurance across the country. But no one should confuse this with a health care system where the employers and the government provide the medical care needed by the working people.

First, it is not universal. For the over 600,000 uninsured in the state, the Dukakis bill is at best a promise that eventually everyone will have the opportunity to purchase insurance.

But most of these will only become insured if, and this is a big if, they have the money to buy it. That's the second big hole in the bill. The workers and poor themselves will have to pay high premiums for this insurance. This is a scam. The companies are the ones who ought to pay for the health maintenance of the men and women who work for them. That is a principle which the workers have fought hard and long for because, among other things, it's the wear and tear of work that breaks down the workers' health.

What the new bill does is to start to take down barriers to buying health insurance. For that reason it may be welcomed by some who can afford to buy it. However, especially for the poorer sections of the working people, those most in need of health insurance, it will either be a heavy burden or remain out of their reach.

Moreover, the law does nothing for the large number of people who presently have partial and inadequate coverage. As well, the insurance to be sold under the new law also may not be complete. In the working out of the system much of this insurance may also be partial coverage weighed down with co-payments out of the peoples' pockets.

Under the new law, firms with more than six employees will be required to offer health insurance coverage to their workers by 1992. The employers will have to pay 50% of the premium, up to \$1,680 a year. Meanwhile, the workers will pay the other half and anything over the \$1,680.

For many workers who already are under employer insurance plans this law may mark a step back. It may encourage the companies in their current drive to make the workers shoulder a growing share of their own health insurance.

A big question is how many workers will be able to afford this insurance. Presently there are 440,000 employed workers and their dependents in the state without health insurance. Most of these are at the bottom of the infamously low wages in the region. Add to this the high cost of living in Massachusetts, and many workers will not be able to accept the "offer" to have the companies take \$140 or more out of their monthly pay. Health care will remain

out of reach.

Then what about the workers in the small firms? The self-employed? The unemployed? The temporary and part-timers? The disabled? The Dukakis bill promises a complex system of state insurance pools that eventually are supposed to make it possible for these people to also buy insurance. What a wonderful idea! Instead of providing the disabled and jobless health care for nothing — make 'em pay through the nose for it.

But there is a little problem here. Some of these sections of people don't have a lot of extra cash. To sell these people coverage the insurance pools for them will have to be subsidized by the state and other means. Initially the state is spending a relatively small amount on these subsidies. However, this may keep the number of insured small too. If large numbers of these sections of uninsured are to be able to buy insurance and at prices that aren't prohibitive, the cost of state subsidies may get heavy. This threatens the fate of the bill because it does little to tax the corporations to pay these costs. Instead, the Dukakis bill has left this bony problem to further studies.

## Profits of the Insurance and Health Care Firms Come First

The bone that might choke the whole insurance plan is corporate profit.

Because the Dukakis bill is not a state insurance system but uses private insurance carriers, it's a dream come true for the insurance tycoons. It's a marketing bonanza spurred on by state regulation and fed with subsidies out of the state treasury.

It also expands revenues for hospitals and medical companies. And these money men will take the first big bite out of the funds for the health care bill. Under the hospital-financing provision of the law, hospitals are guaranteed an 11% hike in revenues this year and about \$1 billion more over the next four years. (*Boston Globe*, April 22)

Most of the uninsured are getting a promise of buying insurance by 1992. But it's a different story when it comes to the insurance companies and health care corporations. They are getting money up front. This is already putting

pressure on an already deficit-ridden state budget.

This puts all the sweet promises of the health care bill in doubt. After four years and hundreds of millions in subsidies to the health care monopolies, whoever is governor may just declare that the money isn't there. The uninsured workers and poor will be left with

little to nothing.

## "Grey Business Suit" Liberalism

The Massachusetts health bill is typical of what Michael Dukakis and the Democratic Party chiefs are promising

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See DUKAKIS

## FBI lurks in the libraries

It seems that America's political police have discovered a new source of corruption in American life. It has been revealed that in late 1986 the FBI began a "Library Awareness Program." Despite its name, this is not a program to make children aware of libraries. On the contrary, it is designed to make the police aware of the danger posed by libraries. It aims at recruiting librarians as amateur spies on people who read books.

The American Library Association, hardly a bastion of leftism, has complained to Congress about these activities of the FBI.

The FBI has created hysteria about KGB agents checking out books from libraries or recruiting library users as agents. It calls on librarians to view with the evil eye patrons who check out

technical materials or who act suspicious when they hang out at the library. FBI agents seek to recruit individual librarians into this program and also themselves have sought to examine lists of people checking out various materials. They have targeted both public libraries and university libraries.

And not only the FBI does this. As well, the Secret Service, the Treasury Department and various police departments are getting into the act.

But they needn't worry so much. After a few more years of Reaganite cut-backs there probably won't be that many libraries around anyway.

It is still legal to check out books from the library. But it may bring you to the attention of the thought police. Such is "freedom" under the rule of the bourgeoisie. □

## U.S. thought police in action

The bourgeoisie boasts of the alleged freedom in the U.S., and then spends billions on political police and spies. Even the mail is not exempt from American's secret police.

A school child, Tim Patterson, decided to make an "encyclopedia" about the different countries of the world. He wrote to 169 governments around the world asking for information.

Strangely enough, this brought him to the attention of the FBI. Apparently they routinely examine correspondence to various countries. (It is known that they tap all phone calls to certain embassies.) In any case, he received a personal visit from the FBI as well as questioning over the telephone. At least 50 pieces of overseas mail were damaged or opened, most of them from the Soviet Union.

Finally, he demanded his FBI file under the Freedom of Information Act. One of the pages he received was marked "This communication is marked 'secret' in its entirety."

Now Tim Patterson is hardly a radical. His career ambition is to be an American diplomat. He is filing suit that the preparation of an FBI file on him was a violation of his First Amendment and the file should be destroyed. His concern is that the existence of this file may be used to stop him from joining the U.S. foreign service.

But just showing interest in the "wrong" foreign countries is sufficient to bring one to the attention of the thought police. They interfere with the mails, practice intimidation, and prepare "secret" files at the drop of a hat. □

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# The workers have had enough!

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actually represent the workers' interests. Bribed by the bosses, corrupted by the liberal capitalist politicians, bought off through a whole network of privileges, today's labor leaders are part of a union bureaucracy that is tied to the profit-taking system of capitalism.

That's why, when the capitalists demand concessions from the workers to preserve their profits, the union bureaucrats lie: "Concessions save jobs."

That's why, when the capitalists demand sacrifices to make them more competitive, the union hacks cry: "Cooperation with the bosses saves jobs."

That's why, when jobs are still lost anyway, the union bosses tell us: "Face the facts of life."

That's why, when rank-and-file militancy is growing, the union hacks are resorting to dirty tricks, threats, and bureaucratic suppression to hold the workers' movement in check.

## Get Organized

Workers are getting fed up. The recent struggles prove that. But what's the alternative?

The workers have no choice but to build up independent organization. Organization that is free of the bureaucrats' control. Organization that fights in the unions against the bureaucrats'

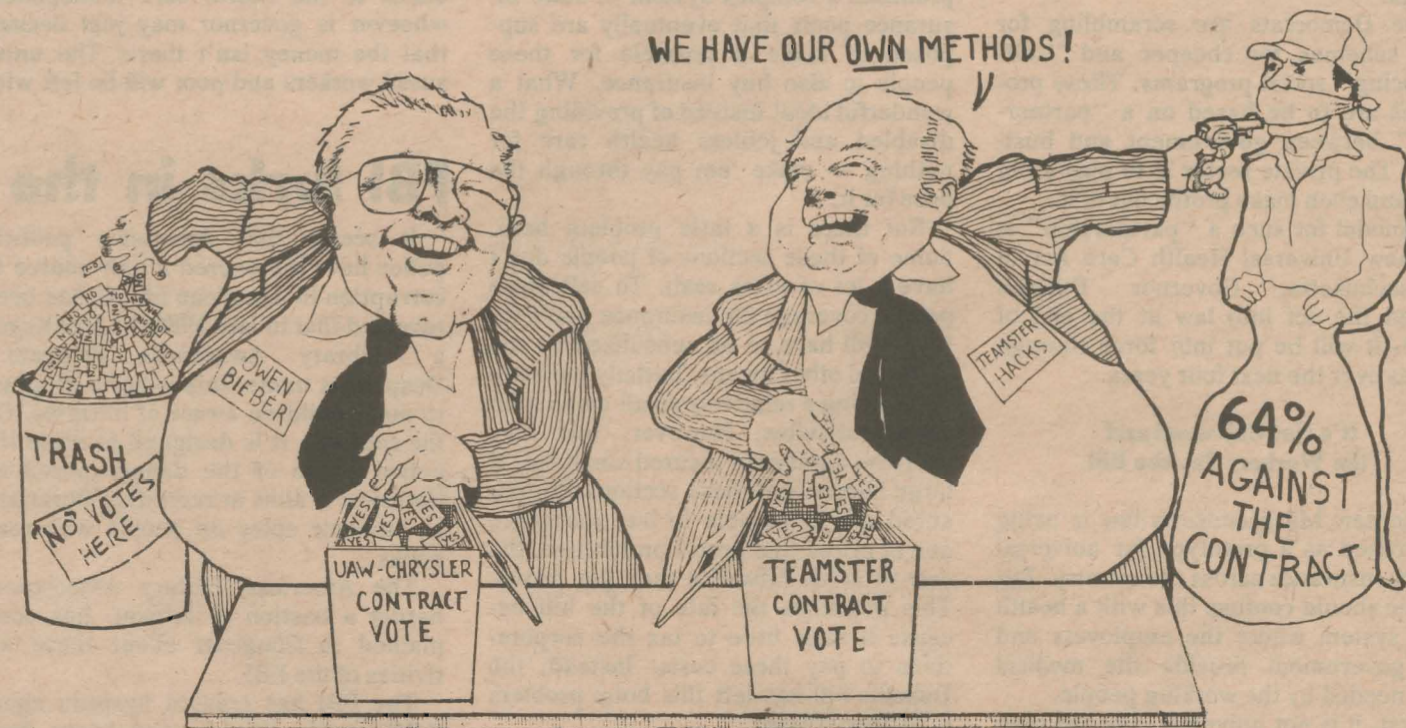
policy of collaboration with the bosses. Organization that works directly among the masses of workers and rallies them for the class struggle against the capitalists.

Building such organization is no easy matter. But it has begun. This issue of *The Workers' Advocate* reports on the protests of Chrysler workers organized by the *Detroit Workers' Voice* together

with a network of Chrysler militants. It reports on the fight against the transit union hacks unleashed by the *Boston Worker* together with militant transit workers. It tells about a petition campaign against job combination at a postal center organized independently from the union bureaucrats. It reprints a leaflet from the *Vote NO* campaign organized by the Marxist-Leninist Party in

the transit barns in New York.

These are all examples of the beginnings of independent organization. Although still weak, they represent the alternative to the soldout union bureaucracy and the hope of waging a real struggle to defend the workers' jobs and livelihood. The workers' opposition is growing. For it to become a powerful force it must be organized. □



## The amnesty trap closes on the undocumented

On May 4 the amnesty trap snapped shut. This was the last day of the amnesty program under the new immigration control act (Simpson-Rodino).

In the months before the closing of the amnesty it became clear that the amnesty was a flop. Only a fraction of the undocumented had signed up. To put on a good face, the Immigration and Naturalization Service ran a big campaign to bring people in. The INS put signs on buses and even sent out notices in tortilla packages to convince the undocumented that they had nothing to fear, that this was their opportunity. The INS also staged some dramatic raids against undocumented workers with the aim of scaring people into filing at the last minute.

In the end, some 1.3 million people signed up for the amnesty. It is estimated that more than three million others stayed away. It looks like for good reason.

The week after May 4 two large INS offices in California (Sacramento and Stockton) reported that they were rejecting over 80% of the applications received in recent months. (See "Phony Papers Foil Most Alien Amnesty Bids," *Oakland Tribune*, May 9)

Most of the rejections were supposedly because of false documents. The INS claims that phony papers bought from labor contractors and other sharks were being used in the applications. It's hard to judge this claim. How many applicants with legitimate documents are being turned down by the INS? And how many of those who purchased fake papers were otherwise fully qualified for the amnesty? But these problems of documentation were some of the most hated features of the amnesty that kept people away in the first place.

The INS is infamous for its callous, racist and brutal mistreatment of immigrants. It's outrageous that Congress authorized this same INS to pass judgment on whether or not an amnesty application is legitimate.

Moreover, it was well known before the amnesty began that hundreds of thousands of undocumented who were fully qualified for the amnesty would not be able to produce the needed docu-

ments. How can the hunted and persecuted illegals be expected to come up with papers in their real names proving where they have been living and working these past years?

The majority of those rejected at the Sacramento and Stockton offices were applying for the special agricultural amnesty. (This continues until November 30.) Undocumented farm workers need letters from their employers stating that

they worked in the fields for at least 90 days between May 1985 and May 1986.

There have been many reports of employers refusing to sign such letters, and of others doing so only for a fat fee. No wonder that a business has sprung up to sell fake letters for \$300 to \$1,000 each.

Now the question remains of what will the INS do with all the hundreds of thousands of denied applications. There is

supposed to be a confidentiality clause in the amnesty preventing the INS from using the applications to hunt down the rejected. But can it be believed that the same INS snoops who dig into all types of payrolls and other listings to track the undocumented won't find a way to look in their own file cabinets?

Moreover, there is also a clause in

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See AMNESTY

## Demonstrations for immigrant rights

On Saturday, April 30, about 500 people marched in downtown Boston in defense of the rights of the immigrant workers. The next day, May 1, some 150 also marched in Seattle for immigrant rights. These protests came on the eve of the May 4 deadline for the amnesty program under the new Simpson-Rodino immigration law.

The defense of the undocumented workers and refugees is part of defending the rights of all working people from the encroachments of the capitalists and reactionaries. Unfortunately, the main leaders of the protests did not have such a militant fight in mind. They tried to keep the demands within the framework of tinkering with the Simpson-Rodino law (such as an extension of the amnesty) and general phrases about justice. And they opposed all militancy. In Boston they even objected that slogan shouting was too loud.

However, the Marxist-Leninist Party also came to these protests. In Boston there was a strong contingent of the MLP. It worked hard to raise a sharp political protest against the Simpson-Rodino law, against its employer sanctions, against roundups and deportations. The cry "Full rights for the immigrant workers!" rang through the crowded downtown shopping district.

The protest had a sizable participation of Central American refugees; and the MLP contingent raised slogans and carried banners against the U.S. aggression against Nicaragua.

Defense of the immigrant worker is at heart a question of the international unity of the working class. Naturally,

the workers and activists in the MLP contingent carried banners saluting May 1st, International Workers' Day. And they shouted "Workers of all countries, unite!"

The reformist chieftains of the march had been planning a tranquil procession to appeal for more humane gestures

towards the immigrants.

But the people of Boston also got a display of the militant solidarity with the immigrant workers, with the victims of U.S. aggression, with the workers of the world, that the MLP is working for. □

## Homeless people on the march in Boston

Over the last several weeks homeless people in Boston have staged a number of protests to demand relief from the government.

On April 21st, 150 activists rallied on the Boston Common and erected a symbolic cemetery with grave markers — each one inscribed with the name of one of 85 homeless people who died on the streets this past winter in the Boston area. They then marched to the State House steps where some 75 people spent the night and started an around-the-clock vigil.

The next day there was a street march from Cambridge Common to the State House where another rally was held. On April 25, the homeless activists were joined by more than 100 students who supported their demands.

In these demonstrations the homeless have voiced their anger against Massachusetts Governor Dukakis and the state legislature. While Dukakis tramps across the country with stories about an "economic miracle" in Massachusetts,

the reality is that thousands of people are being forced out into the streets, caught between skyrocketing rents and poverty-level wages. Many of the homeless are full-time workers whose wages cannot pay for anything more than a bed at Pine Street or the YMCA. Thus one of the main demands in these protests has been for lowering of rents.

But Dukakis, like all the capitalist politicians, has shown only disdain for these impoverished working people. His response to the demonstrations was to close the 300-bed shelter last week at the state armory on Commonwealth Ave. as part of the first wave of budget cutbacks in social services.

The struggle of the homeless deserves our support. The problem of homelessness and growing poverty is increasing daily. It is only a powerful mass struggle that can win any relief from the rich capitalists and their government.

(From the May 10 issue of "Boston Worker," paper of MLP-Boston.) □



## Strikes and workplace news

### GE's "Angell of Doom" demands more concessions

GE's chief negotiator, Bill Angell, is out for more concessions in the '88 contract. In the *GE News* of April 29, he outlines GE's plan for further splitting up the national contract, increasing layoffs, and cutting wages and benefits.

**On splitting up the contract**, he says, "...each GE business has to stand on its own results. Success or failure is measured business by business, not on the basis of overall corporate profits." And that, "in some businesses," the current pay and benefit package "places us at a serious disadvantage with our competitors."

GE just split off the Motor Division and forced a \$1.20 an hour pay cut. They obviously plan to continue this union-busting as a means to drive down the workers and drive up their profits even more.

**On job security**, he says, "Realistically, GE can't bargain absolute job guarantees..." and, "Job security only comes from working for a business that is competitive in its market." And so, "...there are definite limits to what can or should be done."

This means we are supposed to believe that accepting every concession, every layoff, and every crack of the whip will bring us job security.

**On wages**, Angell says that we should be satisfied that we make two bucks an hour more than the average poverty level job. And, "Clearly, increases in base wage costs pose problems for GE in the global marketplace."

Once again, GE is threatening us with moving work to poverty-stricken dictatorships like South Korea or Brazil. But most GE workers are already living week-to-week and are deep in debt for houses and cars. We need a serious wage increase, not a base freeze.

**On benefits**, Angell says, "This time around we must be particularly concerned about the impact of rapidly rising health-care costs on our comprehensive medical insurance plan."

This means more restricted health care and more payments by the workers.

Angell's main theme is that all these concessions are needed to "beat the competition." This means that GE will never be satisfied until we have been driven down into sweatshop slavery.

And for what? So that the billionaires who own GE can make even more than the current THREE BILLION DOLLAR yearly profit. So that they can build up their multinational empire with more billion-dollar buyouts. So that Jack Welch can remain one of the top ten millionaire executives.

Obviously, GE can afford to pay higher wages and benefits, and keep people working. But it is out for maximum profits at our expense. They will not give up a dime without us fighting for it.

Workers! Reject GE's arrogant concessions demands. We must organize mass struggle.

(From May 11 issue of "Boston Worker," paper of MLP-Boston.) □

### Stolen votes ratify Chrysler contract

It is clear that the rank and file rejected the contract just signed at Chrysler. Even by the official count of the United Auto Workers (UAW) union bureaucrats the contract was turned down at four of the seven big assembly plants as well as at a number of other plants.

What is more, workers report that there was enormous opposition to the agreement at plants that the union hacks claim passed the contract by big margins. At Detroit's Dodge Truck plant, for example, workers protested in outrage against the claim they had ratified the deal. And who can believe that workers at three Acustar parts plants voted in favor of this agreement to close their plants? Certainly not the workers at Detroit Forge who have been wearing stickers that declare, "I voted NO to the sellout in '88."

#### Why Such Opposition to the Agreement

The Chrysler pact was modeled on last year's Ford and GM contracts. They were supposed to "guarantee jobs." But workers had seen how worthless these job guarantees were when one GM plant after another was closed down following the signing of their contract.

What is more, a struggle had broken out just before Chrysler bargaining began against the planned closing of the assembly plant in Kenosha, Wisconsin and the planned sale of Chrysler's Acustar parts plants. Chrysler workers opposed the new contract because it failed to stop the plant closings and layoffs.

The workers were also angry that the contract froze basic hourly wages (replacing raises with one-time lump-sum bonuses) and stole 15 cents out of the cost-of-living allowance.

#### Growing Opposition to the Union Hacks

Still the UAW leaders claim the contract was approved by 54%. What does this show?

It shows that the UAW leaders have gone over to company-unionism. They are so tied up in their loving embrace with the auto billionaires that they will lie, cheat and steal votes to make sure Iacocca has his way.

But the contract vote shows something else, as well. There is a growing gap between the rank-and-file workers and the union bureaucracy. The workers don't want to lie down and roll over for the benefit of filthy rich companies. The opposition that mounted against this contract can be turned into a serious fight against plant closings and layoffs, against job combination, speedup and other concessions.

The only thing needed is organization. The power of the rank and file is awesome if it is only organized. But the soldout union bureaucracy has control of the UAW. The rank and file must get organized independently from the union bureaucracy. Separate organizations, like the resistance network of militants at Jefferson Assembly in Detroit, must be built. Such organizations can fight in union meetings against the treachery of the bureaucrats. At the same time, such groups can organize direct action on the plant floor, wildcats, protest rallies, and other mass actions.

The mass opposition that came up to this contract is not a lost cause. Rather it is the beginning of the fight. It's time for the rank and file to get organized on its own.

(Based on May 17 "Detroit Workers Voice," by MLP-Detroit.) □

### Dodge Truck workers furious about vote stealing

Most workers at Detroit's Dodge Truck plant opposed the new Chrysler contract. So you can imagine their outrage when it was announced that this plant had voted in favor of the contract. In fact, Local 140 president Gil Wojcik claimed that 88% of the production workers and 65% of the skilled workers voted for the contract.

The workers were mad as hell. Earlier, militants had spread through the plant a *Detroit Workers' Voice* condemning the sellout. And then on May 11, when the vote was announced on 2nd shift, workers immediately denounced the vote count as a lie. They shouted, banged tools, and set the plant in turmoil in protest against the sellout deal. Since then the MLP has helped militants spread through the plant hundreds of stickers that declare, "I

voted NO to the sellout in '88."

How can it be explained that there was overwhelming opposition to the contract, but the plant ended up with a big "yes" vote? Well, one thing is clear. Local president Wojcik was also the chairman of the UAW bargaining committee that settled this agreement. He backed the contract to the hilt. And it appears he wanted to make sure it passed by creating a big "yes" vote at his own local.

But no matter the "official" vote count, the workers are against this contract. And with the campaigns before and after the vote they are starting the work to get organized independently from the soldout union bureaucracy.

(Based on May 17 "Detroit Workers Voice," by MLP-Detroit.) □

**I voted NO  
to the sellout in '88**

### Jefferson Assembly workers fired up against the contract

UAW officials shoved through the vote on the new Chrysler contract in only a few days. They hoped that the rank and file would not have enough time to get organized to oppose it. Nevertheless, workers at Jefferson Avenue assembly in Detroit waged an active campaign against the sellout.

The *Detroit Workers' Voice*, together with a network of militants at Jefferson, spread a leaflet through the plant. It denounced the rotten agreement and demanded real job security and a substantial wage increase. This helped to get workers fired up against the agreement.

Leaflets were also distributed at the union meetings called to discuss the contract. At the meeting for 2nd and 3rd shift, workers vigorously denounced the contract. For example, one laid-off worker pointed out that in every contract since 1979 the union officials have called for giving up concessions, arguing that at least "you have a job." The worker condemned the union hacks saying that now he does not have a job either.

### Hard lessons from rubber workers' strike

Beginning the 15th of May, 4,700 workers struck Firestone plants in six states. Meanwhile, the 15,000 Goodyear workers had rejected a proposed contract and were poised to strike.

The Firestone strike was the first strike of rubber workers since 1979. In the last eight years workers at all the rubber companies have suffered from one round after another of wage slashing, job elimination, and other takebacks. They want to fight back.

At Firestone the workers stayed out nine days. The events over those nine days constitute a good lesson about exactly where the union bureaucrats stand.

The meeting for 1st shift workers was also a raucous affair. After a while, most workers got up together and marched out of the meeting. They were disgusted at the bureaucrats' feeble attempts to explain the rotten deal.

The night before the vote, supporters of the *Detroit Workers' Voice* held a protest against the contract at the back gate. Workers coming out for lunch break were greeted with songs like "We Say NO to this sellout contract." Leaflets were distributed. And many discussions were had about organizing the fight against the contract.

This campaign helped to galvanize the overwhelming opposition to the contract at the plant. Still union officials tried to claim that Jefferson workers rejected the contract by only a slim margin. The UAW bureaucracy is helping Chrysler's drive against the workers at every turn. The network of militants, working with *Detroit Workers' Voice*, is the only organized force standing against them.

(Based on May 17 "Detroit Workers Voice," by MLP-Detroit.) □

#### Workers Reject Sellout Contracts

In April, United Rubber Worker (URW) officials negotiated a pact with Goodyear. URW leaders hailed this as the pattern contract for the other rubber companies. But there was a hitch. On May 1, the Goodyear rank and file rejected the pact by a vote of three to one.

Then, at Firestone, the workers walked out. Firestone's contract offer didn't even match the Goodyear pattern.

The Firestone workers were hot. For  
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See RUBBER



## Strikes and workplace news

### RUBBER

#### Continued from page 5

example, hundreds of strikers formed a mass picket line in front of the Firestone plant in Noblesville, Indiana. Their picket line blocked management personnel from entering the plant during three shift changes. Right before the strike the management at Noblesville hired 200 new workers whom they hoped to use as scabs. However, they were unable to force the newly-hired to cross the militant picket line.

Imagine the picture: 4,700 rubber workers already walking the picket line; another 15,000 poised to join them. The strike was ready to spread and gain the strength it needed to beat back the concessions offensive in the rubber industry.

#### A Sleight of Hand

But the URW officials blocked united action by the workers.

Even though Goodyear workers overwhelmingly rejected the proposed contract, the URW president continued to defend it. He refused to call an immediate strike at Goodyear, claiming it would have been a breach of faith with the company. When Firestone workers struck, he quickly reached another agreement with Goodyear to block a united strike. Then this pattern was shoved down the throats of the striking Firestone workers.

And what great new provisions did the bureaucrats win? Virtually nothing.

## Teamster bosses trample on 64% rejection of national contract

On May 19 Teamster officials announced the results of nearly month-long balloting on the national freight contract. This contract directly covers about 180,000 truck drivers and warehousemen at several dozen trucking firms. And it sets the pattern for more than 300,000 other Teamsters.

The union officials reported that 64,101 Teamster members rejected the contract. That is, 64% of all the votes counted said "NO!" to this rotten deal. The workers obviously want to fight the companies.

#### No to the Reaganite Concessions Drive

The workers have been suffering from the Reaganite "deregulation" of the trucking industry. Some 100,000 union drivers and warehousemen have lost their jobs in the last six years. This is due both to trucking companies opening up nonunion subsidiaries and to a productivity drive that has eliminated jobs while intensifying the work of those still employed. The trucking companies have come to the workers time and again demanding concessions. And the top Teamster bureaucrats have caved in to every demand.

The new contract, recommended by the union bosses, had no measures to protect jobs or to block the setting up of nonunion subsidiaries. The cost-of-living allowance was capped at 2%, providing no protection against growing inflation. And by some accounts companies that plead they are facing bankruptcy will be allowed to cut pay by up to 15%.

The workers had had enough. They demanded an end to concessions and restoration of pay and benefits lost in past concession deals.

#### Union Bosses Take Companies' Side

But the top officials of the Teamsters turned a deaf ear to the enormous rank-and-file opposition to this contract. They denounced criticism of the contract as

The second contract proposal at Good-year differs little from the first proposal which was resoundingly defeated.

But the union bureaucrats pulled a fast one. The COLA increase of 25 cents per hour, proposed in the first contract, was reshuffled in the second contract offer. Now the Goodyear workers will receive a 25 cents per hour wage increase. But, and this is a big but, the wage increase will be deducted from future COLA payments in increments of 10 cents in July, 10 cents in October and 5 cents in January. Some wage increase!

Worse yet, the contract stipulates that a wage increase in the third year is possible only if the company agrees that its profitability has been restored. The wording of this portion of the contract includes a no-strike clause. This means that if the company does not grant the third year raise, the union will not be allowed to strike over the issue.

The second contract did contain a provision that requires all of the locals to approve any wage concessions accepted by a single local. Goodyear had kept this clause out of the first contract proposal hoping to ease its way for grabbing plant-by-plant concessions. Unfortunately, this is about all that can be recommended in this contract.

The URW leaders' sleight of hand prevented a united strike and cut short the strike at Firestone before the workers' struggle could overcome the years of concessions bargaining. Still, this strike shows that the hard pressed rubber workers are starting to fight back. □

being "wholly inaccurate." And — claiming a constitutional rule of the Teamster union that requires a two-thirds no vote to reject a contract — the Teamster bosses declared they would go ahead and implement the new agreement.

There are even reports that Teamster officials had to stuff the ballot boxes to come up with the "yes" votes they claim. Ken Paff, national organizer of the Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU), reported, "They denied ballots to all the employees of one company, even though it is covered by the agreement, while they provided ballots to the employees of several companies not covered because they thought those members would approve the contract."

The highhanded actions of the union officials show that they have taken the side of the companies against the workers. The workers can defend themselves only by opposing the union bureaucracy, by organizing independently from them.

#### Organize the Resistance

Unfortunately, the TDU — which claims to be the opposition to the top union sellouts — refuses to completely break with the bureaucracy. They are the reformist wing of the bureaucracy, the "loyal opposition."

Although there was overwhelming rank-and-file opposition to this contract, the TDU never even considered organizing mass struggle. Rather, Paff declared, "We may be looking at a legal challenge." And so it goes. The TDU constantly undermines the rank-and-file opposition by diverting it back into the channels of the bureaucracy and into legal maneuvering.

The rank-and-file Teamsters must free themselves from TDU tinkering, as well as the right-wing bureaucrats, if they are to mount a real struggle against the capitalist concessions drive. The huge no vote shows the growing rank-and-file opposition to their union bosses. Now the task is to organize that opposition. □

## Detroit postal workers stand against speedup

Recently workers at Detroit Bulk Mail Center (BMC) raised their voices against the speedup and safety hazards being imposed on the parcel keyers through the one-man keying system. One and a half years ago the U.S. Postal Service nationwide brought in the one-man system to try to increase productivity. One-man keying replaces the former two-man system in which the partners had provided relief for each other.

For months, clerks assigned to parcel keying have been protesting the one-man keying system. They have raised complaints at safety meetings and through grievances. As well, a section has kept production close to the previous two-man level of about 800 parcels/hour per person, even though management has pushed for 1,000-

1,500 parcels/hour.

In April the parcel keyers asked for, and received the solidarity of their fellow workers for the following demand: A return to two-man keying, or rotation off keying after four hours. Over 120 clerks, mailhandlers, maintenance workers and mechanics signed the petition the keyers circulated stating these demands.

Frightened by the show of worker unity, supervision has temporarily made some slight improvements in the rotation of keyers. The workers should take courage from this and push their struggle forward, with no illusions that the problem is solved.

(From May 27 issue of "Detroit Workers' Voice," paper of MLP-Detroit.) □

## One-man parcel keying linked to crippling injuries

One-man keying produces a variety of ailments. In particular it increases the keyers' risk of developing the repetitive work injuries, tendonitis and carpal tunnel syndrome. This fact has been clearly established and documented at the Pittsburgh Bulk Mail Center, where OSHA has condemned one-man keying as a safety hazard. As well, tendonitis has showed up at Detroit BMC even under the two-man system.

#### Union Leaders Turn Their Backs on the Struggle

At various times clerks at the BMC have brought the problem of one-man keying to the local American Postal

Workers Union representatives. Far from organizing a militant struggle to reverse this serious attack on the clerks, the union leaders' role has been to throw cold water on the issue.

"Nothing can be done," they claim, unless some Detroit keyers present proof they are crippled! Clearly, these "leaders" cannot be relied on to fight for the workers' interests. The workers need to eliminate the hazards of one-man keying before they are crippled. They cannot afford to wait for a "national level" decision on the grievances they have already filed, as the union leadership is recommending.

(From May 27 "Detroit Workers' Voice," paper of MLP-Detroit.) □

## NY transit workers: Vote NO to givebacks!

(The New York Branch of the MLP has been campaigning against the concessions contract for New York transit workers. Below is an excerpt from their leaflet of May 15.)

New York transit workers, beware of the proposed contract! Behind the boastful "victory" cries of Sonny Hall (president of Local 100 of the Transit Workers Union) lies another giveback contract in the long and rotten tradition of John Lawe (International president of TWU). At a time when workers are fuming at concessions and denouncing management and the union bureaucrats, right and left, Gunn (Transit Authority boss) and Hall have emptied their bag of tricks in order to sell their stinking deal to the membership.

The proposed contract represents a major attack on transit workers. A modest increase in wages and benefits is more than offset by the millions of dollars in savings purposely scattered and hidden among the new contract provisions. The TA takes another giant step in establishing a two-tier work force. And major issues like contracting out are not dealt with at all.

Hall's disinformation "fact" sheet begs about the "highest" this and the "best" that "ever." "Unprecedented" achievements, shout the TWU hacks. We agree! An unprecedented \$4.00

per hour trainee wage! An unprecedented "sick abuse" program written into the contract! An unprecedented legitimization of hiring provisionals for more than one year.

Hall has even invented a new way to lie. Remember, last contract he said there were "no givebacks." Well this contract they are called "offsets" instead of givebacks! But a rose is a rose is a rose. And garbage is garbage!

Hall needs a new way to lie because transit workers are fed up with concessions and sellouts. That's why the TWU officials refuse to call any mass meetings on the contract terms — not even traditional shop gate meetings. They know the workers will string them up!

Transit workers should VOTE NO to the proposed settlement. A large no vote will register our opposition to the givebacks and the sellout policies of the TWU bureaucrats. We should also show our contempt for the sellout by plastering the shops, bars and work locations with the Vote No to Givebacks sticker.

Spread the spirit of resistance by denouncing the sellout agreement. Get organized independently of the union bureaucrats. Take up the path of rank-and-file action against the TA attacks and betrayal by the union misleaders. □

## Boston transit workers ask: Who's out of order?

Last month we pointed out in *Boston Worker* that the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority management and the top officials of Local 589 were extending contract negotiations into a prolonged arbitration process.

We pointed out that the MBTA was demanding more concessions in the

contract and that this delayed process would make it easier to impose the concessions after the presidential elections.

We pointed out that due to the national spotlight being on Massachu-

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# Solidarity with Nicaraguan workers' movement!

Continued from front page

to death so that the pro-contra capitalists can drive Toyotas through the streets of Managua.

## The Construction Workers Go On Strike

Since the end of the state of emergency, the Nicaraguan working class has been waging strikes. The most important one has been the construction workers' strike in Managua. The construction workers have a militant history from back in the days of the struggle against Somoza. They are one of the sources of many militant Marxist-Leninist comrades, including Comrade Isidro Tellez ("Chilo"), General Secretary of the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua (MLPN, formerly MAP-ML).

The Sandinistas have responded to the strikes with a crackdown against the workers' movement. They use scabs against the workers' strikes. These scabs are often prisoners, because the Sandinistas are unable to find other workers who are willing to break popular strikes. The Sandinistas have particularly attacked the construction workers' strike. The regime has unleashed gangs of thugs and special police to break the strikes of the construction workers and auto mechanics. Many strikers have been fired and some arrested. A police cordon was thrown up to isolate the dozens of workers who went on a hunger strike in support of the workers' demands.

## Repression Against the Marxist-Leninists

As part of this crackdown the Sandinista leadership has attacked the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua, which is the champion of the striking workers. The MLPN has a long history of support among the construction workers. It has spearheaded support work for the construction workers. And the Sandinistas have replied with thuggery and police measures.

At the end of April Comrade Isidro Tellez was attacked on the streets of Managua and beaten by a gang of thugs from the government's official trade union. He was attacked while he was leading a team of workers of Managua who were doing support

work for the construction strike. Comrade Tellez is a well-known leader of the Nicaraguan workers and an elected delegate in the National Assembly.

The radio program associated with the Marxist-Leninist Party, *Radio Periodico El Pueblo*, was shut down for eight days. This too was a result of Sandinista embarrassment at the radio's militant support for the strikers.

Another Marxist-Leninist worker, Comrade Rigo Parales, was assaulted by two soldiers in the western town of Chichigalpa.

We condemn this thuggery against the active working class forces of Nicaragua. It is the revolutionary working class which is the bulwark of the revolution. It doesn't matter what "revolutionary" verbiage the Sandinista leaders use to justify their whips against the revolutionary workers and their Marxist-Leninist vanguard. Such repression is a crime against the revolution, a real aid to the Nicaraguan right wing.

## The Working Class Against the "Mixed Economy"

These developments are an inevitable result of the Sandinista policy of "mixed economy." Under this plan the workers and peasants are to keep pulling in their belts while the exploiters are given subsidies and privileges. The Nicaraguan capitalists — the social base for the right-wing parties and contra restoration — are pampered while the bulwark of the revolution, the toilers, is bled white.

## The Arias Plan

This crackdown also comes during the Arias peace process and the on-again, off-again negotiations with the contras. This process involves fighting as well as negotiations, but it continues. Step by step the Sandinistas are offering to restore more and more rights and privileges of the same big capitalists and reactionaries who cruelly oppressed and exploited the Nicaraguan working people in the epoch of the late dictator Somoza.

Take the agrarian reform. It has all but ceased as the government has stopped taking over the land of landlords who flee to join the contras. Yet giving good land and support for

production to the peasantry is key to preventing the contras and the right wing from consolidating peasant supporters.

Take the wage rates. The Sandinistas have taken it upon themselves to enforce low wage rates at the factories still run by the capitalists. They are thus taking upon themselves the hatred that should be directed at the capitalists. They are thus helping the right-wing attempts to blame the revolution, rather than pro-contra capitalists, for the economic difficulties.

Take political and social rights. The Sandinistas are granting rights for the CIA and international capitalism to intervene in Nicaraguan politics. The pro-contra *La Prensa* publishes again on government-supplied paper. It gets favorable treatment in obtaining scarce foreign currency. Meanwhile the revolutionary workers see their leaders beaten; their radio voice intermittently silenced; their strikes set upon by thugs and police.

And if the Sandinistas obtain a deal with the contras, it will mean further privileges to the right wing and more restrictions on the revolution and on the toilers.

## Revisionist Treachery

While the Sandinistas barter away the revolution to the contras and the capitalists, the leaders of the revisionist parties complain that the Sandinistas aren't going to the right fast enough. The pro-Soviet Socialist and Communist Parties have joined a right-wing coalition against the Sandinistas. This is utter treachery itself. They are providing a pro-worker cover for the right wing.

The construction workers' union is affiliated to the trade union center associated with the revisionist Socialist Party. And the auto mechanics' union is part of the union center associated with the revisionist Communist Party. But the treachery of the revisionists does not mean that the workers' demands aren't legitimate and just. It means, however, that it is the MLP of Nicaragua that has proved itself as the workers' voice in the strike wave. It is the MLPN that has fought against the right-wing slogans that the revisionists wanted to impose on the strike. And it is the MLPN that has led the militant solidarity with the

strikes, while the Socialist Party wanted the construction workers to sit on their hands during the strike.

## Solidarity With the Nicaraguan Workers!

We denounce the thuggery being unleashed against the left-wing Marxist-Leninist organizations of the workers. The Marxist-Leninist Party and its Workers Front trade union organization militantly champion the workers' demands and defend their revolutionary aims. They are the only force that stands up to both the repression of the Sandinista bureaucracy and the capitalist right wing.

We also denounce the revisionist parties for seeking to unite the workers with the right-wing parties. It is only the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua that fights against this attempt of the right-wing and revisionist parties to manipulate the workers' struggles. The Sandinista repression can only play into the hands of the right wing.

We denounce the crackdown on the workers' movement. The Nicaraguan workers' movement showed its strength in the revolution that toppled Somoza, the hated dictator and U.S. puppet. It has been a pillar of resistance to the CIA's contras and the internal counter-revolution. Ultimately it is the pivotal force in the sharpening political struggle inside Nicaragua. Even today, in spite of the heavy-handed repression, the workers' strikes and protests keep gaining strength.

In the midst of this movement the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua is striving to mobilize the working class towards deepening the revolution. It is working hard to block the path to U.S. imperialist-sponsored reaction. It is seeking to open the way for the revolutionary power of the workers and toilers. This will be a power that defends the working masses against the rich reactionaries. It will not send thugs and police to put down the workers' movement while giving every type of economic and political concession to the bloodstained contras and other tools of imperialism. That is why the U.S. workers and anti-imperialist activists should lend their support to the revolutionary Nicaraguan workers. □

## BOSTON TRANSIT Continued from page 6

sets Governor Dukakis during his presidential campaign, this would be an ideal year for mass action by the T workers to roll back management rights. But instead Romano, the local transit union president, was keeping everything quiet so we could be screwed while Dukakis could play "friend of the workers" on national TV.

In response to our article a number of workers went to the last union meeting demanding to know what was going on with the contract. One of them put forward a motion calling for the union to hold a rally at the State House to publicize the rotten plight of the part-time workers and the deterioration of our working conditions under "Management Rights" as part of the fight on the contract.

This motion was very popular with the workers present at the meeting and 16 people jumped up to second it. But Tony Romano ruled the motion out of order and all the officials sided with him.

This motion was not out of order. There is no bylaw or anything else against such a motion. Besides, since when is it out of order for workers to want to take part in fighting for their own contract?

The workers will have to live with the contract. They won't be able to go onto any positions on the pension board or

the labor board like our last two presidents. Romano was just using his control of the union apparatus to squelch anything that might upset a sweetheart deal with Dukakis and the T management.

## Contract voted down, 6000 march with IP strikers

On April 30, over 6,000 marchers in Jay, Maine showed their solidarity with the striking International Paper (IP) paperworkers. The demonstration drew supporters from at least 15 states and Canadian provinces.

The demonstrators marched militantly toward the IP plant and its barbed-wire fences. They were met by a line of Maine state police and local cops. Despite intimidation, the demonstrators chanted against the company and their scabs.

The Jay workers have been on strike since last June, along with workers at IP mills in Lock Haven, Pennsylvania, DePere, Wisconsin, and locked-out workers at IP's Mobile, Alabama plant. The 3,400 workers at the four sites are resisting the company's demands for deep concessions in wages, work rules, benefits and holidays.

The April demonstration came barely a week after the paperworkers at all four locations overwhelmingly rejected the company's latest contract offer. IP claims that the scabs are now permanent employees. Their offer to the

Workers, don't wait around for Romano to sell us out. Turn out to the union meetings in large numbers. Denounce the officials for refusing to fight and refusing to keep us informed. Keep up the pressure and organize

the rank and file to fight in spite of Romano.

(From the May 10 issue of "Boston Worker," paper of MLP-Boston.) □

strikers was only "preferential hiring rights" and "outplacement" preference

at other IP locations. □



Workers rally for IP strikers in Jay, Maine, April 30.



# U.S. imperialism, get out of Central America!

## Part of the Arias plan:

# More U.S. threats on Nicaragua

The Arias plan ("Central America peace plan") is in full swing. And what do we find? One threat after another from Congress and the White House. Instead of the era of universal peace and brotherhood, there is more aggression against Nicaragua.

### Economic Blockade

The U.S. economic blockade of Nicaragua was supposed to end on May 1. The cease-fire between the contras and the Sandinistas was in effect. But Reagan renewed the economic blockade anyway. This blockade has been in effect since 1985. It prohibits economic trade with Nicaragua. It attempts to starve out the Nicaraguan people. And it is based on the fiction that there is a "national emergency" in the U.S. due to threats from Nicaragua.

There is no objection from Congress. Not only was the blockade continued, but it was strengthened. Previously a small amount of Nicaraguan coffee could get around the blockade by being processed in Europe and then imported from there. Now this coffee too is to be boycotted.

### Congress Threatens More Military Aid

Meanwhile the Congress too wanted to get into the act of threatening Nicaragua. Twenty-four Democratic members of the House of Representatives sent a letter to Nicaraguan President Ortega threatening military funds for the contras if the cease-fire broke down. This was designed to lay the blame for Reagan's dirty war on the Nicaraguans themselves.

Indeed, Speaker of the House Wright has already promised a speedy vote on more military aid if the cease-fire breaks down. Note that he doesn't demand a speedy vote on impeaching the Reagan administration for crimes against the Nicaraguan people, but instead is going to debate more war against Nicaragua. This is the supposedly impartial Congress which is the judge and jury of the Arias plan.

Some apologists for the Democrats, like the Socialist Workers Party, are shouting that "the contra war is over." The Democrats are supposed to have stopped it with the Arias plan. But Congress seems to believe otherwise. They still have their trigger finger on military aid.

### In Fact, Aid Is Continuing

Actually, contra aid is continuing anyway.

The Arias plan cease-fire itself provided for contra aid, but the Nicaraguan government and the contras were supposed to agree on who was to deliver it to the contras. The contras refused to allow the Red Cross to be the agency. So in violation of the plan the U.S. government has begun its own unilateral deliveries.

First of all, the U.S. government has been delivering supplies via Honduras. It announced delivery of "humanitarian" supplies by this route, but it is well-known that military supplies are constantly transferred to the contra bases in Honduras.

There are also government payments to contra family members. Congress takes this aid so much for granted that it doesn't usually even talk of it as contra aid.



Demonstration against "death trains" and U.S. intervention in Central America at the Concord Naval Base in California, May 1.

More recently the Reagan administration announced it would also give cash payments to the contras inside Nicaragua. This too is in violation of the Arias plan.

As usual Congress has gone along with this.

### Whitewashing Contra Drug Deals

As well, Congress excuses contra drug dealing. Congress listens to one

exposure after another of contra drug dealing and of the drug deals of the CIA's and Oliver North's pro-contra networks, and doesn't care. And this is right in the middle of the Congressional drug hysteria. When it comes to imposing drug testing on American workers, or installing another American puppet in Panama, Congress is on a red-white-and-blue anti-drug campaign. But when it comes to the contras, Congress yawns.

## CIA bankrolls the Nicaraguan right wing

U.S. imperialism uses more than just the contra war and the economic blockade in its efforts to strangle the Nicaraguan revolution. It also finances the right-wing forces inside Nicaragua. What Reagan falsely calls the "democratic" forces are actually exploiters who rely on the American dollar. They are contras in civilian clothing. The Arias plan ("Central American peace plan") aims at forcing the Nicaraguan government to give more rights to the right wing and the CIA to buy political influence in Nicaragua.

### Bipartisan Aggression

Aid to the right-wing opposition inside Nicaragua is supported by American capitalist politicians from the Reaganites to the liberal Democrats. Only last November, Republican Senator Durenberger cosponsored with Democratic Party liberals Edward Kennedy and John Kerry an amendment to the foreign aid bill which gave \$250,000 to the right-wing press and political parties in Nicaragua. This came on top of another half a million dollars given to the pro-contra paper *La Prensa* and the right-wing political parties grouped in

the pro-contra "Democratic Coordinator" in 1987.

### The Money Pipeline

The recent Congressional aid goes through the infamous National Endowment for Democracy (NED) set up by Reagan in 1983. Other aid is funneled through the Agency for International Development, which sent over \$600,000 to the Catholic Church hierarchy between 1981-83.

There is also secret CIA aid. The current levels of this aid are unknown, but it is reported that it was \$10 million annually in the early 1980's. CIA aid has gone to the Catholic Church, *La Prensa*, and the reactionary CUS trade union center. The CUS also received over half a million dollars through the NED over the last four years. NED and CIA aid has also gone to finance the "January 22 Movement," an organization in support of imprisoned former members of the late dictator Somoza's murderous National Guard.

There is also a private aid network from right-wing millionaires. This private network is usually directed through the CIA or the White House.

## Arias plan poses danger of Chile-style solution in Nicaragua

After 10 months of the Arias plan, even its ardent revisionist and reformist supporters in the U.S. have been forced to acknowledge some of its rotten features. Take the pro-Soviet revisionists of the Line of March organization. They confess that the Arias plan has assisted the internal subversion of Nicaragua. The May 9 issue of their newspaper *Frontline*, in an article entitled "The 'Chileanization' of the Nicaraguan

Counter-Revolution," states:

"Within a counterrevolutionary division of labor, the internal opposition pushes forward a destabilization campaign in the political arena, while the contras carry out the 'dirty work' in the military. The immediate aim is to exploit the political opening afforded by the Esquipulas II [Arias pact] accords through provocations and manipulation." (p. 8)

### Funding the Nicaraguan Right Wing

At the same time, Congress and the White House are concerned to buy elections in Nicaragua. It is demanding that Nicaragua remove all restrictions on the CIA and the foreign bourgeoisie financing radio and TV and newspapers in Nicaragua, as well as all restrictions on pro-contra political activity.

The Nicaraguan right wing not only stands for suppressing the Nicaraguan workers and peasants, but it is an American puppet. In a separate article we discuss some of the ways the Reaganites and the government have been financing the internal subversion of Nicaragua.

### Not Peace and Light, But Power Politics

All this shows that the Central American peace plan has not brought in an era of peace and light. It is simply continuing the Reaganite aggression in another form. It doesn't mean the end to U.S. government meddling in Nicaragua. Instead it means converting this into fully bipartisan meddling, with the Democrats playing their full role in funding a counterrevolution in Nicaragua. □

For example, when Congressional aid to the Catholic Church was cut off in 1985, Oliver North's private aid network sent \$80,000 to Nicaraguan Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo, who currently is supposed to be the "neutral" judge of whether Nicaragua is acting in good faith in the negotiations with the contras.

### Not a Penny to the Contras, In Uniform or Out

This is just a brief peek at the tentacles tying the so-called "democratic" opposition to U.S. imperialism.

Nicaragua is a poor country, ravaged by the U.S. dirty war. The funds being used to prop up the Nicaraguan right wing are huge by Nicaraguan standards. Reagan and the Congress, if they can't conquer Nicaragua directly, want to buy its political process.

Activists in the U.S. should oppose not only the contra war but all White House and Congressional aggression against Nicaragua. They should oppose the Arias plan which is part of this U.S. aggression. Our stand must be "U.S. and Congress, Hands Off Nicaragua!" □

This article also points out that the U.S. is financing the pro-contra right wing inside Nicaragua. And it says that this destabilization is coordinated with the contra military action.

### LOM Shoots Itself in the Foot

We must all thank *Frontline* for this  
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See CHILE-STYLE



## Nicaraguan workers' strikes:

### EL PUEBLO

EXPRESA EL ACTUAR Y LAS ASPIRACIONES DE LAS MAYORIAS

Edición Especial: Homenaje a los Trabajadores Managua, Nicaragua

(The following is taken from an article in the May 1st special issue of "El Pueblo," a revolutionary newspaper associated with the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua (MLPN). Translation by "Workers Advocate.")

A few days after the monetary reform, which cut wage rates and then froze them, opposition began. The monetary reform was rejected by the most militant sector of the working class, the construction workers, who last year waged six strikes at different sites across the country.

The fundamental cause of the strike is the proletariat's resistance to the economic policy of the Sandinista government. In the face of wages far below the cost of living, in the face of the policy of rigid, petrified wages, while prices float in the game of supply and demand, the construction and auto repair workers justifiably decided to go on strike.

#### To Break the Strike

The first steps to break the strike were taken immediately. The workers were locked out from their sites and scabs were brought in. CST [Sandinista trade union] members from Region II were brought in to break the strike. Another measure was to hire contract labor to work for slightly more, which actually violates the government's own Catalogue. Convicts from the Zona Franca were also used as strikebreakers. Another method was to try to negotiate separate pacts for each site. But the strike movement was able to overcome all of these obstacles.

#### Manipulation of the Strike

The political parties of the right immediately began attempts to manipulate the strike by proposing that the workers should support their constitutional reforms. They also went to Monimbo to demonstrate in favor of the policies that these right-wing parties are putting for-

ward in the National Dialogue. The armed counterrevolution, which for a few days obtained entry into Managua [during the Sandinista-contra negotiations], also tried to manipulate the strike to serve its own interests. Class independence must be maintained by the workers in struggle in the face of the right wing's intent to manipulate them.

#### The Right to Strike

Negotiations between MITRAB [the Labor Ministry] and the workers' strike committee began with the CST present. The CST's presence was immediately opposed, because the CST did not have workers on strike in construction. The Sandinistas used "persuasion" through their shock groups, arguing that the workers do not need to exercise their right to strike because "the workers and peasants are in power." The arguments of the war and the economic crisis were the ones most used in the speeches which called on the workers to abandon the struggle. However, in the debate the strikers maintained their position of using the right to strike to avoid a worse exploitation of labor power and to break the cycle of more work, more discipline, more efficiency, and less pay, which has been introduced by the Sandinista policy of mixed economy and primary accumulation.

#### The Alternative: To Give a Response

The strike movement has set forth an alternative solution to the labor conflict: dismantle the Catalogue of Consolidated Norms, and while a new one is being discussed, use the work norms from 1983. The other solutions were a 200% wage increase [which partially offsets inflation and the effect of the monetary reform], rehiring of all the workers, and no reprisals. To end the strike, these were the necessary requirements.

backed destabilization in Nicaragua is no big deal. *Frontline* acknowledges that the U.S. is backing a destabilization campaign similar to the one it used in Chile to overthrow Allende in 1973. But *Frontline* notes that in Chile, the reactionaries could use their state apparatus against Allende, whereas "In Nicaragua, the popular majority has conquered state power, thus depriving its enemies of its instruments." And it especially boasts that the Sandinistas control the army.

Why, *Frontline* argues like a dyed-in-the-wool bureaucrat. Just imagine, how can anyone fight against the state power or the army? Has *Frontline* ever heard about revolutions and counterrevolutions? Or do they just use these words without bothering to think at all? Aren't there examples of revolutions and counterrevolutions carried out against the state power or the army?

And what about the support of the "popular majority"? The Sandinistas are well on their way to losing it. The question is whether the masses will draw revolutionary or counterrevolutionary conclusions from the fiasco of the Sandinistas.

Contrary to *Frontline*, the defeat of the right wing isn't an automatic proposition. After all, the Sandinistas are following revisionist advice, and look what is happening to the revisionist regimes supported by *Frontline*. Take, for example, the Polish revisionists and the Afghan revisionists. Both hold state power, and both have utterly lost the support of the "popular majority."

Why has Nicaragua held out against the contras? It is not that the state and

# 'Between government intransigence and right-wing manipulation'

In the face of these demands, the government broke off negotiations on April 26. Previously the MLPN had resigned from the National Dialogue because the Sandinista government had violated the accords of March 21 by failing to solve labor conflicts, and by making political agreements to the armed counterrevolution.

After April 27, eleven political parties, signatories to the National Dialogue, resigned from the sessions of the Dialogue because the government did not show any political will to resolve the strike. Later the same day, these parties and fractions of parties of the Ramiro Sacasa Coordinator, together with the PLI [Independent Liberal Party], left the National Dialogue with the clear intention of trying to manipulate the strike. The Ramiro Sacasa Coordinator and the Liberals did not leave the National Dialogue due to solidarity with the workers. That was only the appearance. The real reason was to pressure Sandinism to accept their constitutional reforms.

#### Difficulties of the Strike

The main difficulty which hampered the strike from the start was the SCAAS [construction branch of the Socialist Party's CGT(i) union] leadership, which led the construction workers, and also the CAUS [Communist Party's union], which led the DISMOTOR workers and also advised the other automotive workers. The absence of bold action by the leaders was notorious. The alliance of the CGT(i) and CAUS in the CPT [joint union front of the right-wing and revisionist trade unions] was a negative factor for the strikers because this organization tried to make the strike movement support the constitutional reforms pushed by the 14 parties [the alliance of 14 right-wing and revisionist parties]. The timidity with which they pushed for class solidarity was another difficulty.

The Frente Obrero (FO) [trade union center associated with the MLPN], which did not participate in the leadership of the strike, but which had an important presence at the base, oriented its forces toward guaranteeing the independence of the strike in the face of the maneuvers of the 14 parties, the Sacasa Coordinator, and the rest of the right. Also, the FO oriented its actions to seeking the solidarity of the class, and it spread committees of workers through all the production centers in Managua and other regions. "The fundamental interest of the FO is that this strike become an important battle of the workers against the anti-worker economic policy of the government," said Fernando Malespin, the general secretary of this union center.

#### Hunger Strike

Sunday, April 24, the strike movement held a rally in the main eastern barrios of the capital, where it received the solid support of the people. The next day the workers went on a hunger strike to get answers to their demands. Thirty construction and automotive workers continue on an indefinite hunger strike. The solidarity of the people with the strike movement has been active and effective.

Irrespective of whether the construction workers win the abolition of the Catalogue of Consolidated Norms, and whether the automotive workers win some rungs on the SNOTS wage scale, the strike has already triumphed. Its great victory consists in that, for the first time, the working class expressed, albeit timidly, its class opposition to the economic policy of Sandinism. The great triumph of the strike is having begun a fight for class independence with respect to the economic policies of the government, which, despite the demagoguery of the right, favors the entrepreneurs and the capitalists. □

## CHILE-STYLE Continued from page 8

confession. The apologists for the Arias plan, including LOM, have often argued that it is the alternative to U.S./contra military aggression. But the pro-Arias *Frontline* has inadvertently punched a big hole in this argument.

Of course there is a possibility that a contra-Sandinista deal will be worked out. But this would not be the end of aggression against Nicaragua. This is why the *Frontline* article refers to "Chileanization," which means a destabilization of a country from the inside. Thus the U.S.-contra assault is to continue in other forms.

#### LOM Says "What, Me Worry?"

Poor *Frontline* is in a real dilemma. They want to defend the Arias plan. But by their own account this plan helps the counterrevolutionaries.

So they pretend that the facilitating of internal subversion by the Arias plan can do no serious harm to the Nicaraguan revolution. Indeed, they boast that "the open alliance between the internal front and the contras has undermined any possibility of it winning popular support" and that "the rightist opposition has dug its own grave." Thus the LOM organization, like the mindless jokester in *Mad* magazine, Alfred E. Newman, takes the stand of "What, me worry?"

#### Revolution? What's That?

Look at how LOM argues that U.S.-

the strata of privileged Sandinista bureaucrats are all-powerful. No, it is the legacy of the Nicaraguan revolution and of the revolutionary spirit that pervaded the masses. And if the Sandinistas, with their revisionist advisers, succeed in stamping out the spirit of revolution, succeed in smashing enough strikes, succeed in keeping the peasants from the land, succeed in labeling every protest by the real "popular majority" as an act of imperialist agents, then they may convert Nicaragua into a Poland or Afghanistan.

#### Illusions in the Bourgeoisie — Danger to the Revolution

The Sandinistas presently control the army, while Allende was overthrown by the armed forces. Nevertheless the basic plan of the Sandinistas and of Allende have much in common. They both had faith in the bourgeoisie or bourgeois institutions.

Allende paid with his life for his belief that the Chilean bourgeoisie and its military machine would obey the rules of democracy. Instead the military and the bourgeoisie lined up behind the fascist Pinochet in a bloody coup.

The Sandinistas don't seem to have learned much from this, because they believe that the bourgeoisie can be won over with subsidies and privileges, and they even want to take it into the government itself. This policy is bringing disaster for the Nicaraguan revolution. The Sandinistas are sacrificing the masses and bartering away the revolution on the altar of the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie despite the right-wing and pro-

contra stand of this bourgeoisie.

In order to build a coalition with the bourgeoisie, the Sandinistas are squeezing the workers and peasants. Land reform has ground to a halt, hurting the peasantry. The Sandinistas are enforcing wage cuts. Meanwhile the landlords and capitalists are given subsidies, even if they live in Miami like the millionaire Pellas.

The Sandinistas even want to invite the contra scum back into Nicaraguan politics with full rights. For that matter, the Arias plan has put on the agenda handing over more and more of the state machine to the bourgeoisie. Yet LOM prattles on about how Nicaragua is immune from counterrevolution! That is not solidarity with Nicaragua. That is closing one's eyes to reality.

#### Defend the Nicaraguan People! Oppose the Arias Blackmail!

Coalition with the bourgeoisie also means coalition with U.S. imperialism. The Arias plan is being negotiated not just with the contra murderers Calero and Bermudez, but with their CIA backers, with White House officials, and with Democratic congressmen like Speaker of the House Jim Wright. To believe that a solution can be found that will satisfy both Jim Wright and the revolutionary Nicaraguan workers makes as much sense as believing in the tooth fairy. Defending the Arias plan means, in practice, defending the right of Congress and the White House to intervene in the internal affairs of Nicaragua. □

# Gorbachev, no! Communism, yes!

Continued from front page

## Capitalism Has Brought Disaster to What Used to Be a Workers' State

The Soviet Union is already a capitalist society. Its main difference from Western capitalist countries is that it is a state-capitalist society — where wealthy bureaucrats in power run the economy as one huge monopoly.

It wasn't always this way. In 1917, the workers of Russia organized by Lenin and the Communist Party did seize power and set up a government of the workers and poor farmers. They took big strides in building a socialist society which was run to meet the needs of the working people. But after a while the leaders of the Soviet Union turned away from revolutionary ideas and the working class. This path eventually led to the restoration of capitalism.

Today in Gorbachev's Russia, the rulers still call themselves communist and say their country is socialist. But these are lies. The working class there is an exploited class while rich bureaucrats and managers live off their labor — just as Reagan, Iacocca and other fat-cats live off the sweat and blood of U.S. workers.

Gorbachev's love affair with Western-style reforms doesn't mean that the failure of socialism is driving him along this road. No, it's the crisis of state capitalism. The Soviet economy is in bad shape and the revisionist bureauc-

rats can't see anything but more capitalism as the solution to their problems.

## Gorbachev's Reforms — Soviet Version of Reaganism

Gorbachev's reforms aren't really that much different from what Reagan and the corporations are doing here.

The American economy too is in crisis and the billionaires are trying to make the workers pay through the nose. Here too they have fancy names for it, one of which is "reindustrialization." In the Soviet Union they call it *perestroika* (restructuring). For the workers it means the same things: wage cuts, speedup, layoffs and plant closings. For the rich, it means bigger profits and fatter salaries.

When the Soviet ruling party holds its conference at the end of June, further reforms are to be discussed. If nothing goes wrong for Gorbachev — and he's trying to pack the meeting with his supporters — there will be further steps towards a Western-style capitalist setup. And undoubtedly, these will be loudly praised here by the politicians, media and professors.

What we are saying about the fiasco of Gorbachev's proposals for the workers is not just our opinion. Many of these ideas have already been carried out in several state capitalist countries in Eastern Europe and their results are all too apparent.

Take a look at Hungary, Poland, or Yugoslavia. Because they have already implemented many capitalist reforms, these countries are often described as "market socialist." That is a misnomer since "socialism run along free market lines" really equals Western-style capitalist mixed economy which combines government-run and private enterprises.

The workers in these places are in dire straits. Elsewhere in this paper, we carry an article on the bankruptcy of "market socialism" in Hungary. We also report on the recent strikes of Polish workers against conditions that are the result of Gorbachev-type reforms in that country.

## The Specter of Class Struggle

The situation in Hungary and Poland also shows that "market socialist" reforms inevitably lead to the gulf between the rich and the worker getting bigger and bigger. The increased exploitation of labor goes hand in hand with the bureaucrats getting richer and with the emergence of wealthy private capitalists.

Side by side with this, the specter of workers' struggle inevitably looms up. Poland has seen workers' revolts and strikes breaking out repeatedly. And for the last two years, Yugoslavia has been hit by one rash of strikes after another.

Already the Soviet Union has seen several workers' protests breaking out

which say: No to wage cuts and overwork. This resistance is bound to grow.

And it is this development which we revolutionary communists welcome. The revisionists have brought disaster to these countries, and their reforms will only make things worse for the workers. It is silly to expect the state capitalists in power to make things better for the workers — just as it is ridiculous to think that here in the U.S. workers will make progress through the generosity of the corporations.

No, there as here, it is up to the workers to fight for their own rights. Class struggle is the way forward.

And there as here, it is not a matter of looking towards endless struggle between the exploiter and the exploited, but of fighting the capitalists with the goal of moving towards a radically different system — a system of workers' rule and a truly socialist economy.

This will bring back the real meaning of Marxism-Leninism. For the revisionists, Marx and Lenin are just pictures on a wall, while American business experts are invited to give seminars in the Soviet Union. But for the workers, the ideas of Marx and Lenin remain a powerful guide for fighting for workers' socialism. Only a new socialist revolution in the Soviet Union can lift the working people there out of the stagnation and exploitation which revisionism has brought back. □

## DUKAKIS

Continued from page 3

the people.

Another example is the so-called catastrophic illness bill for medicare recipients that the Democrats have been ushering through Congress. It also is "self-financing." In this case, almost the whole burden of this new social program is to be placed on the senior citizens themselves in the form of co-pays and monthly premiums.

The April 25 issue of the *Wall Street Journal* discusses this new Democratic strategy. Under the heading "Democrats Repackage Liberalism, Proposing Cheaper Government," the *Journal* aptly referred to it as "liberalism with a new face and a grey business suit."

In the post-Reagan epoch, Dukakis and the Democrats promise to keep in place the bulk of Reagan's tax breaks and subsidies for the millionaires and corporations. They promise to keep up the huge level of Pentagon spending. At the same time, in the name of fiscal responsibility and cutting the deficit, they promise to keep the lid on social spending.

In short, the Democrats are "repackaging" under a liberal disguise the pro-capitalist and anti-worker budget policies of the Reagan years.

That's why they are cooking up social programs on the cheap. They aren't supposed to cost the corporations and the wealthy very much, and can even make them a profit. Yet they make it look like something, even something dramatic, is being done for the working people.

## What's Jesse Jackson's Alternative?

Jesse Jackson has called Dukakis' bluff on his health care bill. He has pointed out the obvious: health care costs money, and the needs of the poor and working people won't be met without funding.

The Jackson campaign has become the standard-bearer of the more liberal section of the Democratic Party that recognizes that "grey business suit" liberalism cannot attract the masses to the Democrats. They are making election year promises aimed at appealing to the exploited and oppressed. Jackson even talks about funding health care as a right of the workers and the poor.

But count up the dollars and you will see that what Jackson is promising just doesn't add up to that much. The other day in California Jackson released his five-year budget plan. It promises to restore some of the taxes on the rich cut during the Reagan years. It also restores some of the funding for health,

education and welfare. It freezes but makes no major cut in the giant Pentagon budget. It amounts to a return to the budgets before Reagan took office.

At most, such a step may loosen a bit the tightening noose on the working masses. But it's no way out. Just think back to the Carter years. The budget cuts and the slide into growing poverty were already under way. That's one reason why many promises from the Jackson campaign, like funding health care for the 37 million uninsured, are just pie in the sky. Such undertakings didn't fit 10 years ago within the confines of the Democratic budgets; and they won't fit now or five years from now.

## The Independent Struggle of the Workers

A general health care system is a relatively mild demand. The United States is in the shameful company of apartheid South Africa as one of the only two industrialized countries on earth without some type of universal system. Some of these systems are better than others. They tend to have gaps in what they actually provide the working masses. And these gaps are growing as the worldwide economic crisis of capitalism deepens.

The most favorable system from the

standpoint of the workers is a system of nationalized health care; a system that would make health care available to all; and that would be wholly paid for by charges on the corporations and the wealthy. But even with such a system, as long as capitalism holds sway the tendency will be towards neglect of the needs of the working people. (The present crisis of underfunding and privatization in the once nationalized health system in Britain is an example that no reform that favors the working people is stable under the rule of the capitalists.)

What's more, there will be no major step towards meeting health needs in this country without struggle. The workers have to get organized and mobilized to fight — in strikes, in the streets, in mass struggle — for their own pressing needs. The independent movement of the workers is the force that can break the hammer lock of the capitalist policies that are ruining the working people.

Either that or watch the "repackaged liberals" join with the Reaganites in finding new and cheaper ways to skin the working people. We've had a peek at their health care plans. What about education? Maybe they will contract out the public schools and start charging an entrance fee at the door. □

## POLAND

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government's policies.

But the Solidarity union leaders are quite of a different mind. The Solidarity leaders are the biggest champions of "marketization" of the Polish economy and they support Jaruzelski's "price reforms."

For some time, the Solidarity leaders have been saying that strikes are not desirable. They were not too excited when the strike wave first broke out in April. And in the Gdansk strike itself, it is reported that they advised against raising the demand for recognition of Solidarity.

But once the workers were fighting, the Solidarity leaders tried to use the strike to advance their own agenda. Thus the workers and the Solidarity leaders had something quite different in

mind about what the demand for recognition of Solidarity would mean. Walesa and his associates don't consider Solidarity's role to be one of fighting to defend the workers' day-to-day interests. No, they want to get involved in negotiations on how to implement the "price reforms" and other Western-style capitalist reforms.

## For An Independent Workers' Movement

The stand of Solidarity only weakens the Polish workers' fight. The workers feel that they are being exploited and crushed. Their class instinct leads them to go into struggle. But they are in a bind. The regime which they justly hate claims to be working class and socialist. Meanwhile the opposition — the Solidarity leaders — pose as sympathetic to their demands but support the

drive for reforms which mean more exploitation.

This pro-capitalist perspective is poison to the workers' struggles. What the workers need is an independent movement in defense of their class in-

terests. Let the Solidarity bigshots join the dance with the regime for capitalist reforms. The workers will have to build their fight against all who defend their exploitation. □

## Support the Nicaraguan workers' press!

The Nicaraguan working people need our help against U.S. imperialist aggression. The MLP is organizing material aid through the Campaign for the Nicaraguan Workers' Press. In defiance of Reagan's blockade, the Campaign is sending much needed printing materials and supplies to assist the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua (MAP/ML) and its Workers Front trade union center to build the workers' press. Send letters of support and contributions to:

Campaign for  
Nicaraguan Workers' Press  
P.O. Box 30272 Jefferson Stn.  
Chicago, IL 60630



# Wildcats and sit-ins shake Polish state capitalism

Polish workers launched a strike wave at the end of April. Workers in several work places staged wildcat strikes and sit-ins to protest sharply increased prices in basic necessities. The Jaruzelski government gave some concessions to the first strikes. But as soon as the prospect of a wider movement emerged, the regime cracked down hard.

These strikes show once again the spirit of struggle among the Polish workers. They threw themselves into action with enthusiasm despite the regime's history of repression.

Meanwhile, the strikebreaking of the Polish government again shows it up as just another dictatorship of capitalists over the workers. It exposes that all its talk of being a socialist workers' government is a lie.

Here in the U.S. the capitalist TV networks and newspapers lavished coverage on the Polish strikes. How come? How is it that the same media which routinely ignores or slanders workers' strikes in this country acts as if it supports strikes in Poland? You can bet that this doesn't mean that the big business media has suddenly become pro-worker. No, they don't give a damn about the workers in Poland. They only hope to score propaganda points against the idea of socialism.

And what's more, the media wants to promote the pro-U.S. Solidarity trade union leaders as the champion of the Polish workers. But in reality the strikes were weakened by Solidarity which actually supports the very measures that lie behind the rising prices.

## Wildcats and Sit-Ins

The strikes were sparked by the huge price rises which have been imposed by the government as part of its latest Western-style economic reforms. Food has gone up 40%, public transport 70%, heating 100%, and rent 200%.

The strikes began with a wildcat of transport workers in Bydgoszcz. This was quickly settled with the government granting them a 60% wage raise. But the transport workers' example inspired other workers to go into action.

Workers at the metal and arms works in Stalowa Wola struck and won a raise. Workers at the huge Lenin Steel Works in Nowa Huta then went on strike and occupied the plant. They demanded a 50% wage raise for all state employees in Poland, which would encompass most of the working class. The Nowa Huta steel workers were followed in a few days by workers at the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk.

## Some Small Carrots, Then the Stick

The Jaruzelski government's attitude shifted when the strike movement began to spread.

The first strikes, although they involved wildcat action by workers, remained within the control of the official pro-government unions. The government granted wage raises on a piecemeal basis to the workers involved. Besides cooling down the workers, the regime also hoped that this might strengthen the popularity of the pro-government unions.

The Nowa Huta strike, however, raised the issue of wage demands for the whole work force employed by the government. And here workers bypassed the official unions. Then the Gdansk strike erupted, which added the demand for trade union rights. The workers there demanded recognition as a local of the Solidarity union which had emerged in the 1980 strike upsurge but was banned late the following year.

But Jaruzelski was determined not to allow a general workers' challenge to take place. Shortly after May Day, when pro-strike demonstrations occurred in many cities, Jaruzelski decided to bring

out the mailed fist.

Jaruzelski sent in police to beat and arrest the strikers at Nowa Huta. They overwhelmed the workers with clubs and percussion grenades and arrested their leaders. At the same time riot police drew a ring around the Gdansk shipyard and began starving out the strikers there. After another week the Gdansk strike came to an end.

The government also announced new legislation which includes power to suspend the right to strike. The government was forced to grant this in 1980, but in truth it has remained a right on paper. The new legislation also seeks to accelerate economic reforms. One of these measures would allow streamlining of the bankruptcy process to allow the government to shut down "unprofitable" enterprises. The government has let it be known that the Gdansk shipyard is on the chopping block; thus bankruptcy will also be used as a weapon against militant sections of the workers.

## The Cynical Role of 'Solidarity'

There has been much to-do made about the Solidarity union during the recent strikes. Lech Walesa went among the strikers in the Gdansk shipyard. The *New York Times* and other U.S. media promoted him as one of the key leaders of the strike. And he did have influence

among the young strikers. But what was the actual role of Walesa and Solidarity in the latest strike wave?

The Gdansk shipyard workers did raise the demand for recognition of the banned union. But there is a big gulf between what the ordinary workers consider the Solidarity union to be and what the Solidarity leaders, like Walesa, had in mind.

The workers wanted recognition of Solidarity because it is outside of the official pro-government unions, which act like a noose around the workers. And so they believed that this union would fight for their rank-and-file demands, especially against the devastation they are suffering due to the

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See POLAND



Striking workers occupy Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk, Poland, early May.

# Hungary: Another basket case of "market socialism"

Crisis continues to rattle the state capitalist countries of Eastern Europe. In Poland, price hikes sparked a strike wave a few weeks ago. Now there are reports of strikes breaking out against pay cuts in the Yugoslav region of Bosnia. Rumania and Hungary also remain gripped by serious economic troubles.

In Hungary, the revisionists in power are trying to deal with their problems through a change of leadership. The ruling party just replaced the team around Janos Kadar with Prime Minister Karoly Grosz and other figures drawn from the country's managers and professors. The new leadership has promised to accelerate Western-style economic and political reforms in Hungary.

The new Hungarian regime thinks along the same lines as the Soviet champions of *perestroika*. In fact Hungary is already far more advanced along the path of *perestroika* than Russia.

But today's Hungary is really a symbol of the fiasco of 'market socialism.' It shows something of what lies in store for the Soviet Union when Gorbachev's reforms go into swing.

## The Debacle of Market Socialism

Back in 1968, the Hungarian regime of Janos Kadar already introduced many of the ideas that Gorbachev is proposing for Russia today. The state capitalist economy in Hungary had run into stagnation.

The U.S. media never tires of praising how these reforms brought Hungary close to a Western-style capitalist setup. And they show us pictures of fancy boutiques on the streets of Budapest. But what's been the fate of the working people?

In the early 1970's there was a temporary economic boom in Hungary. But with the rise of oil prices in the mid-70's, Hungary's import bill grew and the regime went looking for loans from Western banks. And the Western banks shelled out loans, hoping to profit from the labor of the Hungarian workers and seeking to increase Western imperialist influence.

Hungary's economic problems only got worse. The country had trouble paying back its rising foreign debts. It now has the highest per capita foreign debt in Eastern Europe. The banks and the IMF have demanded their pound of flesh out of the sweat of the workers. And thus the Hungarian workers have faced one austerity program after another.

Conditions of workers have been pushed down. Prices have gone up many times. Last summer saw another round of price hikes in basic needs. The new year began with taxes on consumption and income. Most workers have to work overtime or at extra jobs to make ends meet.

But while workers have been squeezed hard, there is another side to the picture created by 'market socialism.' Since the 1968 reforms, a large economic sector of petty and medium-sized enterprises has grown up. Most of the service sector is in private hands as well as much of construction. Reportedly there were at least 200,000 petty and middle capitalists who had emerged by the mid-80's. One of the Hungarian new rich, Rubik of Rubik's Cube fame, has even made it to the U.S. TV program *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous*.

## What Do New Economic Reforms Mean?

The other day a taxi driver in Budapest put his reaction to the new government's reform program this way: "Reform? No. Why more economic reforms when the old ones only gave us inflation, taxes and unpayable debts?"

But whether the masses like it or not, more capitalist reforms is what the new Grosz government has in mind. The workers will continue to pay, while the economic and political role of the private capitalists will grow further.

The Western banks and IMF are keeping up pressure. They eagerly wait for a new bankruptcy law that will shut down unprofitable enterprises, expected to soon lay off some 200,000 workers. They also want cutbacks on

subsidies, which will lead to more price increases.

Meanwhile, the private capitalists want more room to grow. The revisionists in Hungary, having helped create a huge strata of private businessmen, are also eager to expand capital growth by the private sector. Already a stock exchange has been set up. Breakup of state-owned enterprises and growth of private monopolies is looming up on the agenda.

## Private Capital Wants Share of Political Power

Grosz also plans political reforms which will extend privileges for the private capitalists. These are still to be spelled out.

Over the years, the state capitalist bureaucrats have hesitated to give the new bourgeois elements a share of government power. But maintaining revisionist monopoly in government becomes more difficult as each round of economic reforms expands the role of private capital. Nevertheless the squabble between the revisionist chieftains and the other bourgeois will continue over how much room they will be given and at what pace.

These changes will be trumpeted to the skies as democratization. But for the workers they will not mean a great deal. Apparently no workers' movement has emerged yet. However, if certain room is allowed for non-official associations to form legally, workers may be able to take advantage of such a situation. But if workers began to organize, the regime's promises of democratization may show their limits that much sooner. Workers will have to fight for their own political rights.

In any case, any workers' movement will have to tenaciously fight for its class independence. Not only does the regime rule in the name of the workers, but pro-Western bourgeois factions seek to hitch the workers to their cause. Both sides offer a dead end for the workers. Only the working class can emancipate itself. □

# Inside Khomeini's prisons

## Report from Kurdistan

The brutality of the Khomeini regime is well known. There are prisons in every major city in Iran where political opponents are tormented and executed. But there is also another side of this horror story. This is the story of the courage of the men and women prisoners whose revolutionary spirit and determination have triumphed over Khomeini's torturers.

In December and January a medical team of the MLP, USA travelled to the Iran-Iraq frontier in the mountains of Kurdistan. Our hosts were the revolutionary workers of Komala, the Kurdish organization of the Communist Party of Iran. In Komala's camps we met with a number of former prisoners who wanted to have their stories told.

We interviewed one such man named Moyeem. He was not a member of CPI-Komala but had been in a small communist circle that had been friendly to Komala. Moyeem had been released months before we met him, after six years in the dungeons of Tehran. It was still difficult for him to speak of his ordeal.

Moyeem and half a dozen family members were swept up in the mass roundups of the summer of 1981. At that time the ruling Islamic Republican Party faction was unleashing a desperate counterrevolutionary terror in its drive to consolidate its power.

They were brought to the infamous Evin prison where Moyeem was placed in an 18 by 18 foot cell with 18 other prisoners. After one month there were 80 men in this small cell. There was no room to sit, let alone lie down at night. They rested on their haunches. The roundups had filled 14 similarly packed cells in the cell block. The Pasdars, the so-called "Revolutionary Islamic Guards," were gangs of lumpen sadists who took pleasure in the mistreatment of their prisoners.

The situation was a shock for the prisoners. They originally thought that they were going to be asked some questions and released. The prisoners did not know why they had been arrested and had little inkling of the hell in store for them. This was even true among the left-wing prisoners.

The left-wing forces were not prepared for how ferocious the bourgeoisie was to become in its drive to strangle the revolution of the workers and toilers in an Islamic counterrevolution. The prevailing view was that there was no possibility of a return to a new tyranny like that of the Shah or even worse. As well, there were illusions in the "popular" or "anti-imperialist" credentials of one faction or another of the Islamic regime. Meanwhile, all factions of the Islamic regime were quite clear and united on turning back the revolution of the masses and suppressing the left.

### Torture and Executions

Moyeem and his comrades soon learned that the metallic thuds that came from the courtyard at night were the sounds of mass executions. They also learned that the series of single clanks were the final pistol shots to the head of the victims of the firing squads. From August to November they counted about 100 such clanks every night, and one night in September as many as 150.

The main brake on the pace of the executions was the regime's thirst for information. The prisoners were put under extreme pressure to turn over names, addresses and organizational secrets. There were endless interrogations, where the prisoners had the soles of their feet beaten with clubs and suffered other tortures.

No brutality, both physical and psychological, was too extreme. A group of prisoners would be separated off. The guards would demand of each of them: "Do you want to be executed,

or do you want to take part in executing the others? Which one?" Some prisoners would volunteer to take part in the executions to save themselves, but would go insane under the pressure.

There were no trials. There were no explanations. People were executed for violations of Islamic codes like "having fought with God" or "being corrupt on earth." Many could not even understand the Arabic religious words for these alleged crimes.

The torturers also tried to pry statements out of the left-wing militants that they and their organizations were "tools of imperialism." (Meanwhile, it was learned that the few monarchists and the CIA-trained SAVAK agents who were also in jail there — a handful of the real tools of U.S. imperialism — were being treated quite politely as compared to the revolutionary prisoners. They had refrigerators with food, TV's, and even walks in the open air.)

Despite the appalling conditions, despite the horror, the prisoners turned to collective struggle. To raise morale they found ways to contact other cells. They also found ways to challenge the abuses of the Pasdars. However, this rudimentary resistance was undermined by certain political trends.

### Collaboration and Vacillation

The dirtiest role was played by prisoners from the pro-Soviet revisionist Tudeh Party and their allies from the Castroist Fedayee Majority. These elements took a shamelessly conciliatory policy towards the prison authorities. This was in line with the treachery of these organizations which actively cooperated with the regime in its suppression of the left, preaching loyalty towards the allegedly "anti-imperialist" Khomeini regime. Nonetheless, this did not save the Tudeh and Fedayee prisoners from torture and execution; it only acted against the spirit of resistance among the prisoners.

There was also a large number of prisoners from the bourgeois radical Islamic group called Mojahedeen. At first they were filled with bravado. They had much faith in the new alliance between the Mojahedeen and Bani Sadr, who had been recently deposed as the president of the Islamic Republic. They also had the delusion that the regime would be quickly toppled by the rash of car bombings and assassinations carried out by the Mojahedeen. Every night they waited to be rescued, sure that a new liberal Islamic regime was about to come to power and they would be carried out of prison as heroes.

By the autumn, however, it became clear that this was not happening. The Mojahedeen prisoners grew despondent. Many adopted a policy that they called "tactical repentance." The first step was to recognize Khomeini as "the present Imam," the legitimate religious leader of the Shiite Muslims. But that only whetted the sadistic appetite of the Pasdars. To see if those who "tactically repented" truly believed in the Imam, the Pasdars would squeeze them that much harder to turn over organizational information on the opponents of the Imam. The Pasdars then compelled them, as the next step in showing their faith, to take part in the executions of those who were not loyal.

This disastrous "tactical repentance" was not just a mistake of the principal Mojahedeen prisoners. It was a vacillation that flowed from their Islamic and bourgeois liberal outlook. And the Mojahedeen prisoners paid dearly for it, as it gave the Pasdars an opening to ruthlessly work on their victims. It also was a blow to the united resistance of

the prisoners.

### Unbending Fighters for the Working Class

There were many examples of heroism and bravery in the prison. The most consistently defiant were from the militant left wing. These were mainly revolutionaries who opposed the reformism and collaborationism of the pro-Soviet Tudeh and other revisionists. Many were from a left-wing organization called Peykar as well as a number of other organizations including Komala.

Most of these prisoners took a steadfast, unbending stand. This fired courage and a fighting morale. Eventually, the authorities caught on and separated the leftist prisoners from the Mojahedeen and others so that their defiant spirit would not spread.

A section of the leftists had been captured with documents or other proof of their organizational affiliation. Most of these militants did not beg or bend under torture. In the face of the Pasdars they proudly announced "Yes, I am a

communist and fighter for the working class." From the execution yard their shouts could be heard throughout the prison: "Long live socialism! Long live communism! Death to reaction! Death to imperialism!"

There were other leftist prisoners, such as Moyeem, whom the authorities had very little on. The Pasdars did their best to break them. But they refused to open their mouths or cooperate in any way.

After a while, 600 solitary cells were built at Evin prison for such intransigents. (One thousand more solitary cells were built at another prison in the city.) Taped readings of the Koran were piped into the cells day and night. After many months in solitary a number of prisoners went crazy or committed suicide. Nonetheless the authorities were frustrated in their search for information, as the prisoners stood firm and refused to talk.

### Prisoners Demand Political Status

After about a year's time there was a change in the prison regime. In the country, Khomeini and his IRP group had broken the back of the most immediately threatening opponents. At

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The mass movements in Kurdistan are a force the Khomeini regime has to reckon with.

## Slide show from MLP trip to Kurdistan: Meeting in Los Angeles on the struggle of the CP of Iran

On Saturday, May 7, there was a public meeting in Los Angeles on the struggle of the Communist Party of Iran. The featured speaker was a member of the MLP medical team that traveled to Kurdistan this winter at the invitation of Komala, the Kurdish organization of the CP of Iran. She also presented a slide show that was taken by the MLP team in the mountain camps of Komala.

The meeting was organized by supporters of the MLP along with supporters of the CPI in the Iranian community of Los Angeles. It was held on the USC campus, and was well attended by Iranian students and activists. A number of non-Iranian students and activists also took part.

In her presentation the speaker condemned the horrendous slaughter taking place in the Iran-Iraq war and the wars of both governments against the working people of Kurdistan. She denounced the dirty role of U.S. imperialism as it profits from this war through the selling of weapons and other means. And she called for building support for the workers' revolutionary underground of the CPI and for its armed struggle in Kurdistan as the only force that can put an end to the bloodletting in Iran and liberate the working masses from the Khomeini tyranny.

She also discussed the significance of the formation of the CPI in the wake of the Iranian revolution. The once prevail-

ing opportunist views in the Iranian left have been put to a severe test, and it is the standpoint of the CPI, the standpoint which champions the independent revolutionary interests of the proletariat, which has today emerged as the rallying point of the revolutionary and exploited masses.

Afterwards there was a lively discussion period. There were a number of questions about the basic forces involved in this complex region. There was discussion about the dirty imperialist role played by the Soviet Union in propping up both the Khomeini dictatorship in Iran and the Saddam dictatorship in Iraq, and in fanning the fires of the Iran-Iraq war. There was discussion about the strategy of the CPI, how it is organizing towards a new insurrection of the working class and toilers that will bring freedom to the toilers and open the way to socialism.

The extensive work done for this meeting and the success of the meeting itself is another step in getting the word out about the nature of the heroic struggle taking place in Kurdistan and throughout Iran. This is a struggle that should enjoy the support of all revolutionary-minded workers and anti-imperialist activists.

Slide shows and public meetings on the MLP trip to Kurdistan have also been held in Chicago, Detroit, Seattle, and Berkeley, and are being prepared elsewhere. □

# The daily body count is only part of Israeli brutality

Israel has clamped a tight censorship on reporting from the West Bank and Gaza. And the U.S. news media has dutifully complied. When it comes to reporting from, say, Afghanistan under Soviet occupation, the TV networks managed to get camera crews behind the lines. But with Israel today or South Africa under Botha's state of emergency, things are different. After all, these are "our allies." Thus the media loyally swear that they will respect the censorship rules of the regimes.

But just because the reports from the occupied territories have been moved out of the front pages, this doesn't mean that the intensity of the struggle has

gone away. The Palestinian uprising continues. And the Israeli repression goes on and in fact has worsened — away from the eyes of outside observers.

Take the official body count of Palestinians killed in the uprising. The shooting down of peaceful Palestinian demonstrators no longer is carried as news by the bourgeois media in the U.S. But in the meantime the official death toll maintained by UN observers has ballooned to over 200.

This is itself an outrage. But it is only part of the story, because the UN observers only count Palestinians who have been declared dead in official

clinics and hospitals. Many Palestinians refuse to go to hospitals, even when badly wounded, because Israeli troops regularly raid the hospitals looking for wounded demonstrators. Protesters seized in such raids are carried away to prison, subjected to beatings, and in some cases simply killed.

Zionist troops don't even stop harassing Palestinians when they are dead. When a Palestinian is declared dead in a hospital, Israeli troops will seize the body and carry it away for their own "official" autopsy. Quite often their investigation will reveal that a Palestinian demonstrator died of drowning or snakebite or "domestic violence" (those crazy Arabs fighting among themselves) or even "self-inflicted wounds"!

Thus the official UN count of the dead is actually a conservative estimate. Others put the death toll higher. For example, the Palestinian news agency Wafa puts the number killed in the nearly six months of the uprising at 338.

And one cannot forget that besides the Palestinians being killed in the occupied territories, Israeli warplanes

continue to routinely bomb Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon. Dozens upon dozens of Palestinians have been

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See ISRAEL*



The MLP raises militant slogans in the Middle East contingent of the April 30 demonstration in San Francisco.

## Palestinians protest 40 years of oppression

May 15 was Palestine Day, this year marking the 40th anniversary of the establishment of Israeli Zionist rule over Palestine. This year, Palestinians in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza determined to mark this anniversary as a "day of exceptional anger." They did so with a general strike and fiery protests against Israeli oppression.

Israel tried to forestall protests with stepped-up security measures. Thousands of troops were poured into Jerusalem and other cities to try and prevent demonstrations. The West Bank city of Nablus, where the most militant actions have been organized, was put under total 24-hour-a-day curfew.

Nonetheless, on May 15 a complete general strike took hold in the occupied territories. All Arab businesses were closed, and Arab workers refused to

cross into Israel to work. This strike was carried over into May 16.

Also on May 16 demonstrations erupted throughout the West Bank and Gaza. Zionist security forces responded with their typical fascist methods, shooting and beating demonstrators. Soldiers shot and killed teenage boys at the Jabaliya refugee camp outside Gaza City and the village of Azmut near Nablus. Near Hebron a group of Zionist provocateurs on the rampage dragged a 71-year-old Palestinian man out of his car and beat him to death.

Forty years after the establishment of Israel, the dispossessed Palestinian people remain defiant, determined to fight on. Meanwhile, the Zionist oppressors showed that 40 years after they stole the Palestinians' land and set up an apartheid-like state, they remain a racist regime of brutality and arrogance. □



Three hundred Palestinians and sympathizers confronted 150 Zionist students at the University of Illinois, Circle Campus in Chicago, April 21. The Zionists were attempting to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Israel, but were met by counterdemonstrations.

## Report from Kurdistan

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the same time, the outcry against the mass executions grew louder both inside Iran and internationally.

Evin prison was no longer just a processing center for interrogations and executions. Now it also took on the more "normal" prison function of warehousing the condemned. Heavy prison sentences came down on those accused of left political activity. Molyeem received the relatively light term of five years for having some type of association with the Komala organization.

With this new situation the prisoners were able to launch more organized struggles against mistreatment. In late 1985 the left prisoners launched a protest campaign demanding that they receive the status of political prisoners. After years of hell, their spirits were unbroken and their collective action was growing stronger.

### Hunger Strikes, Mass Protests.

We met other activists like Molyeem whom the regime had been unable to break and who had eventually been released. At Komala's training center we met a woman with an awesome account of revolutionary determination.

In 1980 she was thrown out of high school for leftist political activity in the Kurdish city of Marivan. She became a militant supporter of Komala as the only organization that defended the independent interests of the working class. In 1981 she was thrown in jail three times in an attempt to pressure her to stop supporting Komala. In 1982, when she was 17 years old, she was sentenced to 20 years in prison. She described her

experiences in the Marivan and Sanandaj prisons:

"The type of torture in the prisons under Khomeini is worse even than that under the Shah. I was put in solitary confinement for six or seven months. We were blindfolded. We were beat every day with whips, sticks, kicks and brass knuckles. Some had their legs broken or lost their eyes. Some committed suicide. The food was un-

bearable. There was no exercise for five or six months at a time and no visitors."

The woman stressed that these conditions could only be faced with firm conviction in the cause of the working class and socialism. As well, morale was kept up by unceasing resistance to their tormentors.

"We knew that we couldn't change the situation without mass protest," she explained. "So we organized a hunger strike. The regime knows the political effect of a hunger strike. So they responded to some demands. The militant prisoners were Komala. I defended my loyalty to Komala. And

they saw they couldn't make me repent."

The authorities were getting nowhere with this prisoner. They were also concerned about the mass protests on the outside demanding her release. The Islamic regime is particularly sensitive about such protests in Kurdistan, where the mass movement of the working people is more powerful than in the rest of Iran. That is why this comrade was released after five years of her 20-year sentence.

When we met her she had been out of prison several months. She was undergoing her military training with Komala despite possibly permanent physical disabilities suffered in prison. She had become a candidate for membership in the Communist Party of Iran.

### The Working Class Will Win!

It was an inspiration to talk to these men and women veterans of Khomeini's dungeons. Their experience can only inspire hatred for the capitalist system which resorts to such inhuman methods to put down the revolution of the workers and oppressed. But more than that, it shows the power of the working class cause and the ideals of communism. This cause and these ideals made these ordinary mortals unconquerable.

We saw this same indomitable spirit in all the work of the Iranian and Kurdish communists. We saw it in their armed resistance to the Khomeini regime in Kurdistan. And we saw it in their work to organize the revolutionary movement of the working class and exploited across Iran — a movement that one day will tear down the prison walls and win freedom for the working people of their bleeding country. □



Communist woman, a former prisoner in one of Khomeini's dungeons, at Komala training camp.

## Campus actions against apartheid

The campus anti-apartheid movement continues to smolder. A spirited action broke out at Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut, and this spring's upswing of anti-apartheid struggle continued at the University of California in Berkeley.

### Wesleyan Students Sit-In

The last two weeks of April, 250 students at Wesleyan carried out a sit-in at the administration building. The students were protesting the university's refusal to divest from companies doing business with South Africa.

Students demanded the right to attend meetings of a university committee that oversees investments. When this was refused, on May 2 the students blockaded entrances to the building. Over 100 were arrested by police when they refused to move. The next day a campus rally drew 500 people in support of the students' actions, and the students resolved to carry their struggle into the community.

### Shanties Rebuilt at Berkeley

Anti-apartheid activists held a rally and built a shantytown once again in the campus center. Activists had built shanties April 18, only to have them torn down by campus police April 19. This time the activists built them right on the steps of Biko Hall (Sproul Hall), where the big anti-apartheid sit-in of 1986 occurred. As the activists erected the shanties hundreds of students stopped by for political discussion or to lend support. By evening the steps were

filled with shanties and banners with militant slogans.

Thirty-five activists spent the night guarding the shanties, but at 6:00 in the morning dozens of campus police launched an attack against the activists and tore down the shanties. The activists then marched to California Hall, the administration center, and blockaded it until the cops regrouped and prepared another assault on the activists. At that time the activists marched off, defiantly shouting slogans at the police.

### Solidarity With the Palestinian Struggle Reaffirmed

This spring's anti-apartheid actions in Berkeley have strongly supported the Palestinian people's struggle against Israeli zionism. The parallels between South African apartheid and Israeli oppression have been repeatedly brought out by the activists.

There has been an attempt by supporters of Israel to reverse this progressive development. A group of zionist students has tried to disrupt the reviving anti-apartheid movement by declaring that the movement should not take a stand against Israeli oppression. The *Daily Californian*, the campus newspaper, jumped out to promote this group's views with front-page headlines.

At the April 25 campus rally a speaker from the Marxist-Leninist Party denounced the campus newspaper for its disruptive activities, saying: "What a farce. It took the *Daily Californian* a year and a half to oppose the divestment

fraud [the UC administration's lie that it had divested from corporations doing business with South Africa — ed.] but less than a day to promote attacks on the anti-apartheid movement. ... The zionists here try to create some confusion, saying for the anti-apartheid movement to oppose zionism is some new and 'fake agenda.' But it is neither. It was part of the opposition to apartheid in the 60's and again in '76 and right from the start of this latest upsurge in '84-'85. What is fake is the local zionists' recent pretense of opposition to apartheid. They are only interested in sowing confusion in the anti-apartheid movement. They would like to intimidate some new forces from joining in the work to build up a really powerful

fight against the supporters of apartheid."

The MLP speaker concluded by saying: "The zionists are demanding that the anti-apartheid movement drop its opposition to those who support apartheid and turn our backs on the just struggle of the Palestinians. This is a demand that the anti-apartheid movement gut itself of any real opposition to apartheid. This would not strengthen the anti-apartheid movement; it would destroy it. This is service to U.S. imperialism, this is service to the reactionary UC administration, and it is service to Botha. We will not agree to this. We mean it when we say, 'From Gaza to Soweto to Berkeley, the people fight back!'" □

## 245 Westin Hotel workers arrested in South Africa

Riot police wielding batons arrested 245 black employees of a luxury hotel in Johannesburg on May 27. The workers were demonstrating against Westin Hotels Co., the big U.S. hotel corporation.

Westin had managed the Carlton Hotel in Johannesburg for 15 years. It decided to pull out in June, but refused to give the workers a severance bonus which they had demanded.

At the demonstration workers chanted slogans and carried signs accusing Westin of exploitation. When the police moved in, they beat up protesters and flung them into police vans. One hundred and forty-two men and 103

women were arrested. The workers were released after hotel management paid \$50 fines for each worker.

### Workers Prepare for General Strike

Black workers across South Africa are gearing up for a massive general strike the first week of June. It will commemorate the Soweto uprising of 1976 and raise the workers' cry for an end to the ugly apartheid system that rules over South Africa. The workers will also protest new anti-labor laws being planned by the racist regime to throttle the workers in their attempts to organize and fight. □

## ISRAEL Continued from page 13

killed in these raids.

The Israelis have also stepped up other kinds of repression. There are now nearly 8,000 Palestinians in detention camps held without trial, without bail, without a hearing. These prisoners are regularly subjected to beatings and degrading treatment.

An Israeli parliamentary debate recently revealed that zionist high school students in paramilitary training have been invited into detention camps to assist in beating prisoners. Palestinians are regularly forced, under pain of beatings and torture, to denounce the PLO and to shout "Long live Kahane." (Meier Kahane is the ultra-fascist zionist leader who advocates mass expulsion of the Palestinians as the solution to the "Palestinian problem.")

### Israel Is Founded on Oppression

The brutality of the occupation is not some aberration from an otherwise democratic government, a view some troubled supporters of Israel still cling to. The nature of the Israeli regime that has been revealed in the course of the Palestinian uprising is rooted in the very foundations of Israel. It was founded as

an oppressive system on the backs of a people who were dispossessed. That was the inevitable outcome of the zionist project, which sought to establish an exclusivist and religious nation on territory already occupied by another people. The oppressive character of Israel was only reinforced by 20 years of occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.

No wonder then that both the conservative and liberal political wings in Israel — both Likud and Labor — are jointly carrying out the suppression of the Palestinians today. These despots are not about to turn into lambs tomorrow. The Palestinian people cannot win their freedom by seeking a deal with this oppressive racist regime.

Liberation will not come from some international conference managed by the superpowers either; the U.S. is the main backer of Israel and the Soviet revisionists are daily restoring ties with the zionists.

No, the rights of the Palestinians can only be achieved through the overthrow of the Israeli state and its replacement by a democratic and secular order, with equality for all irrespective of whether they are Palestinian or Jewish. This has been the goal of revolutionary Palestinians. And this should also be embraced by serious Israeli Jewish opponents of racist oppression. □

## BRAWLEY Continued from page 2

scrawled on her body in charcoal. Brawley told her family that one of the six white men who attacked her wore a badge. And, during interrogation at the police station, she pointed out a cop she recognized to be one of the attackers.

Instead of investigating the apparent involvement of police and local officials in this racist attack, the special prosecutor assigned by New York Governor Cuomo has tried to blame Brawley's family. Or it has even been claimed no attack took place. The capitalist news media has worked overtime to help the cover-up.

On May 4, for example, CBS-TV reported that Brawley must be lying because "witnesses" could attest she was at a party the very night she claimed she

had been abducted. One teen-age "witness" was interviewed anonymously on the air. The next day the *New York Post* ran a front-page headline claiming: "Kidnapped Brawley was partying." What a scoop. The authorities must have been drunk with delight.

But on May 6 a sobering revelation was made. The whole story was a lie. Gregory Flemming, the father of the "anonymous witness," held a press conference. He revealed that his son and another youth were bribed by CBS "to tell the reporter what he wanted to hear. They made it up." Flemming explained that the youths "did not understand what was happening and what kind of position they had been put in by the reporters." In fact, the youths had never seen Brawley in their lives. But it is reported that CBS had paid them \$100 for the story.

## Detroit march against world's biggest trash burner



On May 14, four hundred people held a spirited march to protest the ongoing construction of the world's largest, and probably most polluting, trash incinerator.

Young people from the Detroit and Windsor, Canada area joined the two-mile march. They banged drums and shouted slogans like "Hey hey, ho ho the incinerator has got to go!" They received a warm response from the working class community residents along the route. These residents would be among those most directly affected by the toxic emissions (including dioxins and other carcinogens) which the new plant will spew out in huge amounts when it opens in 1990.

As they passed the plant construction site the marchers paused to remember the two workers already killed during the building of this incinerator. Marchers warned of the future death and disease which this pollution generator will cause if it is allowed to open.

The protest ended with a rally at

Obviously the press and government officials are going to great lengths to convict Brawley while the racists run free. It's the system that backs up the racists. Only the mass struggle of the working people can bring any justice out of this racist system. □

Wayne State University. Speeches described the environmental and health threat posed by the incinerator. As well, speakers brought out Detroit Mayor Coleman Young's connection to apartheid in South Africa. The Combustion Engineering company is notorious for its operation in South Africa. Nevertheless, the Young administration hired Combustion Engineering to build the trash plant at a huge profit, the bill to be paid by Detroit taxpayers.

The rally concluded with songs and a vow to continue the struggle against poisoning and capitalist profiteering. □

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# MAY DAY IN THE U.S.

It's time to challenge Reaganism! This was the call of the Party's May Day campaign this year. And throughout May Day weekend this call was put into action in the Party's participation in a number of mass actions and in the May Day meetings the Party held around the country.

## Defend the Immigrant Workers

One focus of the struggle this May Day was defense of the immigrant workers. The Party took part in demonstrations in Seattle and Boston on April 30 to protest the persecution of the immigrants under the Simpson-Rodino law.

That same day the Party organized a May Day march through the Pilsen neighborhood of Chicago. People through this Mexican nationality neighborhood raised fists and joined the shouting, "Raids, No! Deportations, No! Discrimination, No! Immigrant workers, to the struggle!" And "Full rights to the immigrant workers!"

Capitalism is a hell hole for immigrant workers and the oppressed nationalities. This is why many of the people in Pilsen were so enthusiastic when the marchers shouted slogans like "Victory to socialism!" Some people joined the march. One worker came through to shake hands with a series of marchers. And a crowd gathered around to listen to the speeches and songs at a park-rally at the end of the march.



May Day march organized by the MLP in Chicago.

## No to U.S. Aggression in Central America

Another important struggle this year was to build solidarity with the working people of Central America.

The Party took part in a march of 1,000 people on the Concord Naval Station in the San Francisco Bay Area. This was a protest against weapons shipments to Central America. It was called to coincide with May Day marches in El Salvador.

As well, one feature of the Party's May Day meetings in Boston and Chicago was eyewitness accounts about the development of the class struggle in Nicaragua. These reports made it clear that support for the struggles of the Nicaraguan workers and peasants is more important now than ever. And a high point of the May Day meeting in Oakland was when a militant of the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua made a solidarity statement.

## Workers of the World, Unite

The Party also worked to rally support

for the struggles of working people in other countries.

The Party participated in a march of 5,000 people in San Francisco on April 30 and during the action carried out widespread agitation in support of the uprising of the Palestinian people.

At the Party's May Day meeting in Seattle a slide show was presented supporting the Kurdish workers' struggle against the reactionary Iranian regime.

May Day is a day of international working class solidarity. Through these and other activities, the Party worked to train the American workers in the proletarian internationalist spirit of opposition to our "own" imperialist government and support for the struggles of working people around the world.

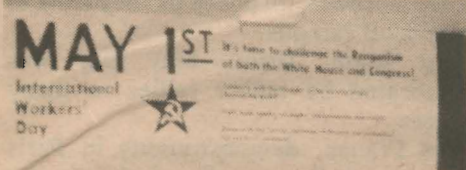
## Build the Independent Movement of the Working Class

The Party's May Day meetings were also used to make a summation of the development of the class struggles in the U.S.

In Chicago and San Francisco, comrades drew lessons from the anti-war

movement of the 1960's on the importance of fighting the Democrats and their hangers-on to orient the movement in a conscious anti-imperialist direction. In Boston comrades discussed the current economic crisis. They showed how the programs of the Reaganites and the liberal Democrats both end up serving the monopolies' takebacks, unemployment, and racist drive against the working masses. And in Seattle, comrades discussed how the Jesse Jackson election campaign is another attempt to drag the discontented working masses back into the folds of the Democratic Party.

In these meetings — and also in its agitation in the mass actions, the factories and working class neighborhoods — the Party stressed the need to build the independent movement of the working class. Reaganism has been a bipartisan offensive of the capitalist class against the working masses. The Party's May Day campaign was an important part of the work to rally the workers as a class to stand up to the capitalist offensive. □



May Day in Oakland, Calif.

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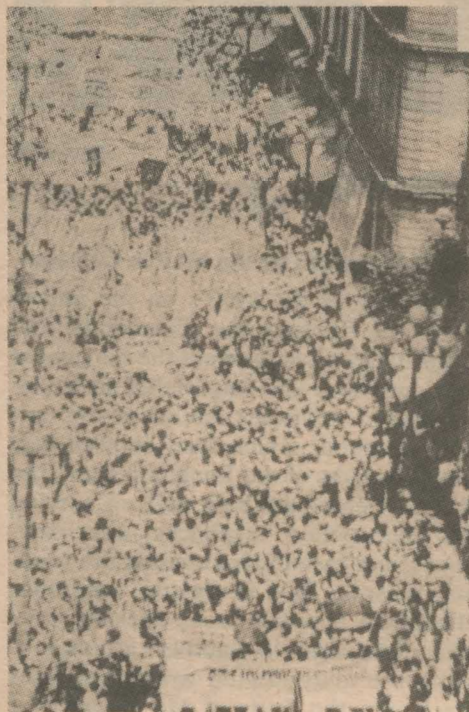
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# MAY DAY AROUND THE WORLD

May 1st was International Workers' Day, the day on which workers around the world raise the banner of struggle against exploitation, tyranny and war.

This year, the U.S. newspapers mainly reported on May Day protests in Poland or the revisionist May Day parade saluted by Gorbachev in Moscow. But there was in fact a lot more going on around the world. Below we report on some of the May Day actions news which managed to reach these shores.

## Mexico



As happens each year, the bureaucrats of the official trade union center (CTM) cosponsored a huge May Day march in Mexico City with the ruling capitalist party, the PRI. Many workers in the official march, however, found ways to express opposition to the government's economic policies. The vastly depreciated peso, the cutoff of government subsidies, and rising unemployment have slashed the workers' living conditions in the last few years.

1987 saw a rising strike movement against the PRI government and a demand for a general strike. The CTM leaders sabotaged this movement, however, with their Economic Solidarity Pact with the government. This Pact officially put the CTM leaders on the side of PRI's austerity program.

In the official May Day march there were many banners saying "Everyone against the Pact!" Other banners called for "Strikes, yes! Layoffs, no!" Workers also demanded wage increases.

Besides the official march, 20,000 workers took part in a May Day march sponsored by non-CTM unions. Here too the Pact was denounced, and part of this march protested in front of the U.S. embassy demanding that the U.S. get out of Central America.

## El Salvador

In San Salvador 60,000 workers and peasants defied government intimidation to participate in the May Day march. President Napoleon Duarte had announced that anti-government protests would not be tolerated in San Salvador, and the military set up checkpoints around and inside the city to harass May Day marchers. The day before the march, a bomb blew doors and windows off the trade union building where the march was being organized.

Nonetheless tens of thousands of toilers marched and protested against the government's economic policies and abuse of workers' rights.

## Nicaragua

May Day events were held in Nicaragua by different political forces. This year for the first time in nine years the revolutionary workers of the Marxist-Leninist Party and its union center Frente Obrero held their own spirited May Day rallies. They were held in Managua and two other cities.

At the official Sandinista rally in Managua, President Daniel Ortega devoted most of his speech to a denunciation of striking construction workers and auto mechanics. These workers were in the third month of their strike against the wage scale imposed by the Sandinista government. Turning reality upside down, Ortega denounced the striking workers as "allies of imperialism"; this at the same time as the Sandinistas were busy trying to work out further concessions to make to the imperialists and their murderous thugs, the contras.

## Chile

In Chile, the workers demanded the ouster of the military dictatorship of General Pinochet. Tens of thousands demonstrated in Santiago, battling police. The police used tear gas, water cannons and gunfire; they shot a teenager in the back.

## Spain

May Day came on the heels of a massive wave of strikes and demonstrations culminating in a nationwide general strike on April 27. On that day hundreds of thousands demonstrated in cities and villages across the country, protesting the economic and social policies of the social-democratic government headed by Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez. Gonzalez' reindustrialization program is causing the shutdown of mines, shipyards, and other work places, with the loss of thousands of jobs.

Again on May 1 hundreds of thousands poured into the streets of Spain to protest the government's policies, to demand jobs, and to express solidarity with the peoples of Nicaragua, Palestine and other countries in struggle.

## Portugal

In Portugal, workers marched on May Day against capitalist austerity and new anti-labor laws being pushed by the conservative regime. Spirits were buoyant here as the country is going through an upswing of the workers' movement. At the end of March, a general strike shut down much of the country to protest the regime's policies.

## Turkey

The first May Day celebration in nearly a decade was held in the midst of a revival of the workers' movement. Workers are demanding an immediate wage hike of 70% to make up for spiraling price rises.

This is coupled with a rising movement for democratic rights. The Turkish government has supposedly changed from a military dictatorship to a "democratic" capitalist regime. But in fact harsh repression continues.

On April 28 thousands of students demonstrated in Istanbul against police harassment. And on May 1 students joined workers in demonstrations in Is-

tanbul, Izmir, Ankara and other cities.

## Poland

May Day occurred in the midst of a new strike wave against rising prices. Striking workers demanded big wage hikes to make up for the rising costs of food, rent, transport, etc.

May Day marches in support of striking workers took place in a number of cities. Several thousand attempted to march in Warsaw, but were attacked by riot police. Five hundred marched in Gdansk; they too were attacked by police, but replied by throwing stones.

## Palestine

Palestinians on the West Bank and Gaza marked May 1st with a "day of confrontation" against the Israeli occupiers. Demonstrations took place throughout the occupied territories. Israeli troops used bullets against the protesters, wounding 13. A 22-year old was shot dead in the West Bank village of Faqua.

## Philippines

The largest May Day rally in several years was organized in the center of Manila. Four huge columns of workers converged on Rizal Park where they rallied in protest against the Aquino government's repressive policies. They demanded an immediate raise of 50 cents a day for all Filipino workers.

After this a portion of the rally, 30,000 strong, staged a torchlight procession to Mendiola, the area in front of Aquino's

palace where her soldiers massacred protesting peasants in 1987. This march confronted Aquino's troops guarding her palace behind coils of barbed wire, and demanded the removal of U.S. bases from the Philippines.

There was also a march of 7,000 plantation workers in Calamba, Laguna. Police fired on this march and kidnapped many of the protesters.

## Taiwan

Here the workers' movement has been harshly throttled by the ruling KMT dictatorship. But here too workers' struggle is surfacing. Railroad conductors and engineers called a one-day strike to coincide with May Day. The strike shut down rail service throughout Taiwan. The rail workers were demanding higher wages. This was the first time that the railways here have been shut down in 101 years.

## Elsewhere

In South Korea, protesters gathered at Yonsei University in Seoul and staged a march in defense of workers' rights. They clashed with police as they tried to march off campus.

In South Africa, May Day was celebrated by indoor rallies in many places.

In France, demonstrations in Paris denounced the growth of the fascist movement and the anti-worker policies of the Chirac government.

In Germany, workers marched protesting mass layoffs in steel, coal and other industries.

## Trinidad and Tobago



On April 29, thousands of workers gathered outside Parliament to celebrate May Day. Workers displayed their anger against the corrupt capitalist government. They carried placards, made from cardboard boxes, calling for change in their miserable conditions.

Trinidad and Tobago have been hit hard by economic crisis as world oil prices fell over the last decade. The government and capitalists have tried to squeeze the workers to the wall, with layoffs, wage cuts, and cutbacks in government services. □

## AMNESTY Continued from page 4

Simpson-Rodino calling for felony charges and up to five years in jail for trying to use false documents. Seventeen workers in Iowa have already faced prosecution under this clause.

It's not yet clear just how far the government is going to go in filling the jails with undocumented workers caught in the amnesty trap. But one thing is

clear. The capitalist rulers are coming down hard on the immigrant workers. We are just starting to feel the full brunt of the racist and anti-worker Simpson-Rodino law.

All workers, all anti-racists, all opponents of police-state measures should come to the defense of the immigrant workers. Native-born or from other lands, with or without documents, full rights for all! □