

Earth Day 1990

Tear the green mask off the corporate polluters!

April 22 was Earth Day. The weekend, and the days which preceded it, saw environment-related activities across the land.

From the media you'd think that everyone — the polluting corporations and the victims of pollution, the politicians and the activists — sang in chorus a single message about Earth Day 1990.

But in fact there were two different paths being promoted.

On one side there were empty gestures like politicians planting trees. And free emissions tests for your car from the auto makers.

But there were also angry protests against the polluters.

There were marches against new trash incinerators in Detroit and Los Angeles. There were actions against chemical companies.

There were voices raised by people

The only thing green that all these firms are concerned about is the dollar bill.

who refused to accept that the powers which are responsible for pollution have all become friends of the earth and its inhabitants. As we go to press, spirited protesters are disrupting business-as-usual on Wall Street. They have gone there because they don't agree with the message of official Earth Day that we are all equally to blame. They have gone there to point out that Wall Street is to blame, because it stands at the center of an economy based on limitless greed. The activists there have many different opinions about how to solve the environmen-

tal problems, but they share the view that to fight pollution, it is necessary to denounce the billionaires, not praise them.

These actions are on the mark. Just look at what has been taking place.

No limits to hypocrisy

As environmental damage mounts across the planet, more and more people are becoming worried. They have seen nuclear catastrophes like Chernobyl and Three Mile Island. They have seen chemical disasters like Union Carbide's toxic leak in Bhopal, India and the poisoning of Love Canal in upstate New York.

More people are becoming active. Anger is growing against the polluters. Therefore, the polluting corporations and their political supporters have switched tactics. From denouncing the activists as

crazies, they now read the opinion polls and declare themselves the champions of ecology.

Today George Bush, the man of the oil corporations, formerly vice-president under the same Reagan who gutted environmental regulations, has anointed himself the "Environment President." Meanwhile, corporation after corporation — never mind how big their crimes against the environment may be — have all painted themselves "green." From Exxon which brought us the Valdez oil spill to Dow Chemical which introduced the world to the wonders of napalm. From McDonalds to the nuclear power companies.

The only thing green that all these people are concerned about is the dollar bill. It is their pursuit of profit dollars that lies at the heart of the system's

Continued on page 7

Strikes in Nicaragua

Support the workers' movement!

As we go to press, Violeta Chamorro is preparing to take power in Nicaragua. She, and her National Opposition Union (UNO), have been longtime allies of the contra war against the Nicaraguan revolution. They are close friends of Reagan and Bush, and ardent defenders of U.S. imperialism. They are the loudmouthed representatives of the Nicaraguan capitalists, who want to suppress the workers and peasants and make the country into their preserve for profit grabbing.

Fearing the worst, a section of the working masses launched strikes and other actions in March and April to improve their situation and get organized before Chamorro takes power. Workers in a series of work places struck for higher pay. Poor people in Managua seized plots of land. Workers also dem-

onstrated, demanding the disarming of the contras. And there are reports that in some areas working people have been arming themselves and reorganizing self-defense groups.

In the center of this ferment has been the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua (formerly MAP-ML). The MLPN has participated in the strikes and other actions. And it is working to organize the masses to defend the gains of the revolution with their own hands. The MLPN is the party of the class conscious workers which has remained true to revolution and socialism from the insurrection against the Somoza tyranny to the crisis today.

Although there is broad dissatisfaction

among the masses, the Sandinista leadership continues to hold them back from launching a really broad struggle. The Sandinista Party is busy trying to make deals with Chamorro to get a seat in power. And they are ordering the masses to not disrupt "stability" and "peaceful transition" or the deal may fall through. "National consensus" with the capitalists and "stability," not the needs of the masses, is the prime concern of the Sandinista leaders.

The Nicaraguan revolution overthrew the Somoza dictatorship and gave the masses a breath of freedom. But after a decade of war and economic devastation, this wave of revolution is over. This is not only because the reactionaries are

taking control of the government, but also because the Sandinistas have gone over to being the right wing's junior partner. The workers and peasants will have to organize to defend their own interests, to take the class conscious road of struggle long pointed to by the MLPN.

More articles on Nicaragua — see page 6



Striking workers at Corona cooking oil plant in Managua welcome a solidarity truck convoy driven by workers from other plants.

Racism in Teaneck

see page 3

Lead poisoning and women

see page 4

Protests in Panama

see page 5

MAY DAY EVENTS

CHICAGO

Demonstration
Saturday, April 28 1:00 pm
18th Street and Union
Meeting
6:30 pm
301 N. Mayfield
(near Lake and Austin)

SEATTLE

Meeting
Saturday, May 5 7:00 pm
at C.A.M.P. 722 18th Ave.
(not a sponsor)

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

Meeting
Tuesday, May 1 evening
U.C. Berkeley campus
(room to be announced)

BOSTON

Meeting
Saturday, May 5 6:00 pm
7 Temple St.
Central Square, Cambridge



Strikes and workplace news

Greyhound strikers under attack

Ten thousand Greyhound drivers, office and maintenance workers are defiantly persisting in their seven-week strike. But they are coming under increasing attacks from Greyhound and the government.

One worker has been murdered and over 60 others injured on the picket lines by scabs protected by the police. Court injunctions barring the blocking of entrances have been handed down in some 20 cities. And four strikers have been arrested and charged with shooting into scab buses, even though in a number of cases they have proof of being elsewhere at the time of the incidents. Many workers say that many of the shootings have been set up by Greyhound to attack the strike.

Using the pretext of the shootings, Greyhound is now using the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization Act (RICO) to sue the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) for \$30 million. The suit

also calls for the removal of several local union officers. This is the first time RICO has been used in a nationwide strike. Even though prosecutors may not be able to convict strikers for shooting at scab buses, under RICO Greyhound can use the incidents to claim there is a "pattern" of violence. And a "pattern" is enough to win damages and to have the government intervene in the union.

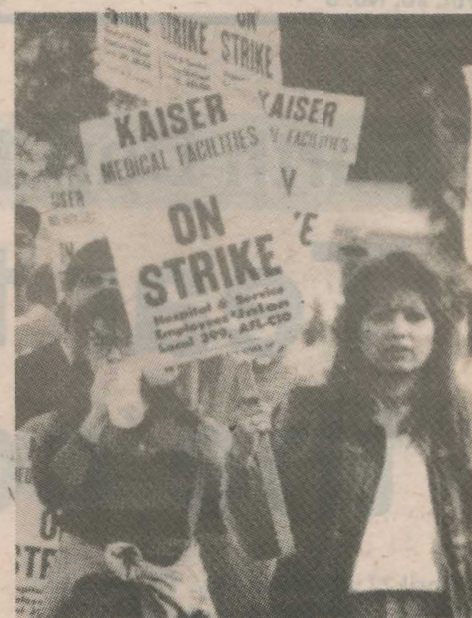
While facing the attacks of Greyhound and the government, the workers have also faced backstabbing by their own union leaders. The ATU leaders have knuckled under to the police and courts, pulled workers off the picket lines, and allowed scabs to pass unmolested. The barring of effective mass action to stop the scabs is one reason some workers' anger and frustration erupts into reckless shootings. What is needed is mass action, and the solidarity of workers from other industries, to shut Greyhound down. ■

wages frozen for six years. Kaiser offered them a contract with only a 5-6% wage increase in the first year, and 3-5% raises in the second and third years, at an estimated cost of \$44 million. And the leaders of Local 399 of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) called on the Kaiser employees to pass the contract. But they would have none of it. They rejected the contract by a two-to-one margin.

In an attempt to break the strike, Kaiser brought in workers from other facilities to scab. But its operations were greatly curtailed, and some facilities were virtually shut down, by the action of the strikers. Mass pickets were set up at several hospitals on April 2, the first day of the strike. In one incident, about 30 pickets formed a human chain blocking a delivery truck. Later, 250 strikers picketed the Los Angeles Medical Center on Sunset Boulevard.

But on April 5, a Los Angeles superior court judge issued an order barring strikers from blocking entrances to hospitals and clinics. The SEIU leaders demanded that the strikers obey.

Then the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service demanded the employees vote on a new contract — which was only a slightly reworded version of the original proposal and cost Kaiser the same \$44 million. The SEIU leaders conceded to the demand. They claimed they had no official recommendation this time on the new contract. But workers



reported to supporters of the MLP that union leaders threatened they "could be fired" if they did not accept the new agreement. Facing scabs, court injunctions, and threats from their own union leaders, the new contract was pushed through on April 9.

MLP supporters report that there was tremendous resentment against the SEIU sellouts. Dissidents put out leaflets denouncing the union misleaders and calling for a no vote. And at the Los Angeles Medical Center on Sunset Boulevard, as many as 75% of the workers said they voted no against the contract. ■

Kaiser workers sold out

Over 11,000 licensed vocational nurses, technicians and maintenance workers struck seven hospitals and 45 clinics of

Kaiser Permanente in Southern California for a week in April.

The Kaiser employees have had their

AFL-CIO leaders and May Day:

May Day is international working class day. It is a day of solidarity of workers around the world. A day of struggle against our common enemy, the capitalist exploiters.

But in the U.S. the trade union bureaucracy does not celebrate May Day. Why? Because they do not actually stand against the capitalists. Indeed, they have become the whiphands of the capitalist concessions drive and champions of the capitalist trade war against the workers of other countries.

Decline of the unions in the 1980's:

Throughout the 1980's the union

leaders bent their knees to the capitalist wage and job cutting offensive. One result of this has been the decline of the unions themselves. Between 1983 and 1989 the percentage of unionized workers in manufacturing fell from 27.8% to 21.6%. In service industries the percentage fell from 8% to 6%. And for the total work force organized workers fell from 20.1% to only 16.4%.

If these were losses taken in a sharp battle against the capitalists, it would be one thing. But in fact the labor leaders did not fight. Rather, they preached that the working class had to give ground in order to help out the capitalists. Take a look at how the AFL-CIO leaders sum

How the union hacks sum up the 80's

up the 1980's.

Concessions to save the capitalists

A January issue of the *AFL-CIO News* carried an article entitled "American Labor in the 1980's."

The article admits that "management took advantage of a sagging economy and massive trade deficits to wring economic concessions from workers...." But then it praises the union leaders for giving into the concessions drive. It declares that, "To preserve both their jobs and their industries, unions agreed to demands for pay freezes and in some cases wage and benefit takeaways...." The article does not mention that, far from saving jobs, hundreds and hundreds of thousands of jobs were eliminated in basic industry. Concessions did not save jobs, it only preserved capitalist profits.

Innovations in sellout

The article goes on to praise "bargaining innovations" of the AFL-CIO leaders.

It brags, for instance, about replacing wage increases with Employee Stock Ownership Plans (ESOPs) — deals that frequently led to wage cuts and also tied the workers to the capitalist profit drive.

It also includes under "bargaining innovations" the "emergence of the two-tier contract, which permitted lower wage scales for new entrants into a company's workforce." The article sighs, "unions reluctantly bowed to this economic necessity."

But when it comes to striking for the workers' demands, the article reluctantly agrees that this is sometimes inevitable, and even claims the AFL-CIO leaders went all out to support strikes. But it does not mention that the union leaders, in fact, left the air traffic controllers alone to have their strike busted by Reagan. Nor does it mention how na-

tional contracts in steel, auto, rubber, telephone and dozens of other industries were broken up. Nor does it point out how the workers from individual companies, or even individual plants, were left isolated to fight alone by the union leaders.

Joining the capitalist trade war

The article reserves its greatest praise for the AFL-CIO's joining up with the capitalist trade war against foreign workers. It declares, "Labor and management then joined forces and, in defiance of the Reagan administration's discredited free trade philosophy, won Congressional passage of legislation to get tough with countries that use unfair tactics, including denial of worker rights, to rack up excessive trade surpluses with the United States."

Hypocritical talk about opposing the "denial of worker rights" is thrown in here. But the article does not mention any support for the massive strike struggles of the workers in South Korea, or in Mexico, or in any of the other countries where the workers are super-exploited, and frequently by our "own" U.S. multinationals. No, talk of the trade war is aimed at getting workers to "join forces" with our "own" capitalists against workers of other countries.

This is what the AFL-CIO leaders consider to be the victory of the 1980's. Little wonder then, that they oppose May Day.

The rank and file can't settle for a cover-up of the debacle of the 1980's. Instead, it must prepare for a resurgence of the workers' movement in the 1990's. Such a resurgence requires standing against the sellout of the union leaders and organizing independently from them. May Day is a good time for the workers to get prepared for such a struggle. ■

The Workers' Advocate



Monthly Theoretical-Political Newspaper of the Central Committee of the Marxist-Leninist Party, USA.

Letters:

The Workers' Advocate
P.O. Box 11942
Ontario Street Station
Chicago, IL 60611

Orders and Subscriptions:

Marxist-Leninist Publications
P.O. Box 11972
Ontario Street Station
Chicago, IL 60611

From distributor: 25¢
Via first class mail (U.S., Canada, Mexico): \$1.00 for single copy
Subscription: \$6.00 for 6 issues; \$11.00 for 12 issues

ISSN 0275-363X

El Estandarte Obrero



Spanish Supplement to THE WORKERS' ADVOCATE, Voice of the Marxist-Leninist Party of the USA.

By mail: \$0.50 for single copy From vendor: \$0.25
Subscription: \$3.00 for 6 issues; \$6.00 for 12 ISSN 0275-4434
Order from: Marxist-Leninist Publications, P.O. Box 11972, Ontario Street Station, Chicago, IL 60611

DOWN WITH RACISM!

Black youth take on racist cops in Teaneck, NJ

Black and Latino youth are fed up with constant harassment and abuse from the police in Teaneck, New Jersey. Their anger reached the boiling point April 11, after a white policeman murdered a black teenager.

As a vigil at the Municipal Building wound down, some two dozen black youth took the protest to the police station next door. Four police cars, sirens blaring and lights flashing, screeched up to threaten the teenagers. But they only got angrier, and hundreds of people from the vigil moved to join them at the station. Several youth jumped on top of an empty parked police car and stomped in the roof. The windshield was smashed and the car was rolled over on its side. Some teenagers smashed the front door of the police station. As police pushed the crowd away, it moved on up Teaneck Road towards the scene of the police murder. The crowd grew. Store windows were smashed. Police were taunted.

Coldblooded murder

The teenagers repeatedly declared their anger was not directed against whites. Rather it was aimed against the racist police. They say the murder of 16-year-old Phillip Pannell the day before was typical of the daily harassment they receive from the police.

That day about 20 teenagers were playing in Tryon Park. Two police cars came blazing across the grass. The cops jumped out, pointed their guns at the teenagers, and ordered the youth to go to a wall to be frisked. The cops then began to converge on Pannell. When he ran, the cops chased him. Although Pannell threw up his hands and begged "don't shoot," a white policeman named Gary Spath shot him in the back.

The cops claim Pannell fit the description of a youth earlier reported to have been pointing a gun at another youth. They claim they felt the gun in his pocket while frisking him. They claim they found a 22-caliber pistol on Pannell after he was gunned down. Even by this account, Pannell only had the gun in his pocket. That's certainly no justification for shooting him down.

But two adults and six youth who witnessed the incident dispute the cops' story and argue this was coldblooded murder. They say Pannell had no gun. He had been playing with a BB pistol earlier, but its owner had left the park with it before the cops arrived. They say Pannell

was never frisked. They say Pannell had his hands up and pleaded for his life. A medical autopsy also indicates Pannell was shot while his hands were up in the air. Witnesses also report that, after the shooting, another cop shouted at the policeman who did the shooting, "You [expletive] up, man! Look at the [expletive] you got us in now!"

Murderer suspended with pay

Despite the blatant murder, the cop has not yet been charged. He was suspended after the sharp protests, but he is still receiving his pay. And the police chief and prosecutor declared they only suspended him in order to "reduce tension in the community."

Meanwhile, the police arrested at least five youth on April 12 on charges of rioting the night before. At least one, Kyle Alston, who was a friend of Pannell, was beaten by police after his arrest.

Respectable leaders to the rescue of the police

Obviously, justice in Teaneck will only be won by organizing mass struggle. But the "respectable" black leaders are working overtime to prevent further protests.

Representatives of the state and coun-



Anti-racist protesters trash a police car in Teaneck, N.J.

ty offices of the NAACP met with the police chiefs of Paramus, Hackensack and Teaneck to work out ways to "maintain calm in the community." They sent dozens of college students through the neighborhoods to talk the young people into remaining quiet. Instead of protest-

ing the police attacks, George Powell, the president of the local NAACP branch, declared "Oh, the chief's a good guy."

These leaders are more concerned with keeping their cozy relations to the police and other powers-that-be than in gaining justice for the oppressed youth.

New York Students Walk Out Against Police Brutality

500 students walked out of Hilcrest High School in Jamaica, Queens in New York City March 20.

The black, Latino, Asian, and white students denounced the police for beating and arresting several students who had been rehearsing a school play the day before. They also called for firing the dean of security who provoked the incident. He had ordered Jamal Laeder, a former student who was helping with the play, out of the building. He called in the police when Mr. Laeder refused to leave, and joined with the police in assaulting him. Several other students were also beaten and arrested when they protested the attack on Mr. Laeder.

The school administration admitted that the police used excessive force, but refused to fire the dean of security.

KKK Meeting Smashed in New Jersey Town

About 300 black and Latino youth broke up a meeting of the KKK in Melville, New Jersey on April 7. Some 45 KKK members gathered at a baseball park, under heavy police protection, for a recruiting drive. The angry youth shouted that the KKK should get out of town. They threw rocks and mud balls at the Klansmen. The grand lizard, leading

the KKK rally, was hit in the face with a mud ball. Fearing for their lives, the KKK begged the police to get them out of the park. About 100 youth followed, taunting the racists all the way to their cars.

Oberlin Students Resist Police

150 students marched to the home of the president of Oberlin College (Ohio) on April 13. The black, Latino, and Asian students protested the lack of response to their earlier demands, especially for increased financial help for poor and minority students. As a rally began on the president's front lawn, 25 police cars raced up. They brought attack dogs and a fire truck. When students failed to immediately carry out police orders to disperse, the cops waded into the crowd and grabbed several students. Some were struck with flashlights. And five were arrested. But police were forced to release them when other students surrounded the cop cars.

Baltimore March Hits Racist Skinheads

About 75 anti-racist activists marched through the Belair-Edison neighborhood of Baltimore on April 7. They demonstrated in response to the spread of racist leaflets in the neighborhood by a group

called Baltimore Area Skinheads (BASH). The BASH leaflet had declared "this area n____r free, and we plan to keep it that way." The racists gathered across from the march, waving Confederate flags and shouting racist abuse. When one arrogantly tried to block the march, the anti-racists charged, grabbed and beat him. Police attacked the anti-racist marchers. One was arrested.

Haitians March Against FDA's Racism

In early February, Bush's Food and Drug Administration set out new guidelines banning Haitian and African immigrants from donating blood. It claimed this is a precaution to "slow the spread of AIDS." But the logic is racist to the core. Instead of simply screening people for the AIDS virus before they give blood, the FDA wants to brand entire nationalities as dangerous disease carriers.

The Haitian community responded with protests. In Boston, over 8,000 Haitians and their supporters marched on the JFK Federal Building April 4. Then on April 20, more than 50,000 Haitians, blacks, AIDS activists, and other anti-racists marched in New York. They demonstrated in Manhattan and closed down the Brooklyn Bridge.

MARXIST-LENINIST BOOKS AND PERIODICALS



CHICAGO: 1631 West 18th Street (one block east of 18th St. 'L' on Douglas line) • Phone: 243-5302

OAKLAND: 3232 ML King Way (old Grove St.), Oakland, CA 94609 Phone: 653-4840

IN THIS ISSUE

Strikes and Workplace News

Greyhound; Kaiser Permanente hospitals; How the union hacks sum up the 1980's 2

Down With Racism!

Teaneck, N.J.; New York students; New Jersey KKK; Oberlin College; Baltimore skinheads; Haitians 3

Step Up the Defense of Women's Rights!

Pro-choice actions; 'Right-to-life' racists; Lead poisoning and women; Catholic Church PR 4-5

Workers and poor fight back in Panama 6

News From Nicaragua

Strikes; Labor Code; Ortega grabs a pension 6

To Fight Pollution, Fight Capitalism!

Eastern Europe; Incinerator protests 7

The World in Struggle

Nepal; Sweden; Iran; Mexico; Puerto Rico; Quebec 8

Step up the defense of women's rights!

Pro-choice militants confront OR

Each year, the anti-woman bullies of Operation Rescue (OR) make a big deal of harassing patients and clinics on Good Friday. It must be a sort of revenge: crucifying women today in revenge for the Biblical story.

But as usual, OR was confronted by activists in city after city. A few examples follow:

Orange County, California

On April 13, OR hit a clinic in Tustin, California, about 30 miles south of Los Angeles. They arrived at 6:30 a.m. with 125 anti-abortion crusaders. However, these religious fanatics couldn't agree on the true theology, and their coordination was hindered by a split into Catholic and Protestant fundamentalist wings.

Meanwhile an equal number of militant women's rights activists, coming mostly from Orange County pro-choice forces and from ACT-UP circles, beat OR to the front and side clinic entrances. The activists, who eventually grew in number to 250, were in high spirits. For three hours they held back attempts by OR's goons to crash through the lines. Activists linked arms, two layers deep, and hurled back each attempt of OR to butt through.

The clinic stayed open as the action continued until 11:00 a.m. By then things had died down, and the police roped off both sides of the street leading up to one clinic entrance.

Detroit and Dearborn

On April 13, pro-choice activists rallied at Summit Clinic in Detroit and kept it open in the face of a small force of OR's thugs. When OR massed its main forces at a clinic in the neighboring town of Dearborn, the activists followed them there as well. They shouted slogans and kept up a vigorous presence.



But the Dearborn police protected OR and closed the clinic themselves. The front door of the clinic, for example, was

Are they 'right to life' or 'right to racism'?

The anti-abortion crusaders like to promote themselves as defenders of the "right to life." But every time their big-wigs open their mouths, racist poison spills out.

blocked by a police car which drove up on the sidewalk and parked directly in front of it. Anyone entering or leaving would have had to climb over it.

Los Angeles

April 14, the day after Good Friday, OR sent small forces to about six clinics to try to keep the pro-choice forces off balance. But when 350 OR concentrated on the Women's Health Clinic at 7:15 a.m., a smaller force of the pro-choice activists was there and confronted them. OR got close to the doors and sat down, but the activists surrounded them, and ridiculed them with songs, chants, and political denunciation. The pro-choice activists grew in number to 400 by 8:00 a.m.

The police moved in. Their first step was to separate both OR and the activists into a number of small groups, thus allowing OR to blockade for a few more hours. Meanwhile, at 10:00 a.m. or so, while the bulk of OR's forces were still present, NOW and Fund for a Feminist Majority staged a parking lot rally, drawing over half the pro-choice forces away from the confrontations with OR.

During the morning, about two dozen OR had ganged up on a black woman patient, who was rescued by ACT-UP activists.

Finally, at 11:00 a.m. the police ordered everyone to disperse — both clinic blockaders and clinic defenders. They moved both sides back. Another hour later, they arrested several dozen OR who had laid down at the side door. Because they arrested some OR, some pro-choice forces applauded them. However, the police had allowed OR to blockade for hours, and they threatened OR and pro-choice forces equally with repression. Only OR's refusal to move at the very end, and a couple of particularly blatant activities earlier, got them arrested.

For example, about 30 OR scaled a back wall and attacked half a dozen security guards. But pro-choice activists confronted the OR goons and pushed them back over the fence. Among the clinic defenders throwing back the OR thugs were five or six women from PRO-ACT, a group of clinic defenders formed earlier this year because FFM had undemocratically put a wet blanket over the militants in the Clinic Defense Alliance of Los Angeles. Some of the OR goons involved were arrested.

Phoenix

On April 14, OR picketed a Planned Parenthood clinic in the afternoon, but were met by pro-choice activists.

Buffalo

Throughout April, weekly confrontations continued between OR and clinic defenders. ■

Take the prominent conservative columnist Patrick Buchanan, an associate of and speech writer for former Republican presidents Reagan and Nixon. In a recent column against abortion, he wrote

that "abortion will be seen by history as an issue greater than slavery." And why, you ask? Because "From the Atlantic to the Urals, the once-Christian nations of Europe are depopulating themselves. The peoples from whom America sprang are committing ethnic suicide."

So it is not life that Buchanan worships, but only his own ethnic group. And, he sighs, even his own ethnic group is no longer enslaved to the old church dogma.

Well, Buchanan thinks, first things first. Let's get white, Christian babies as a bulwark against the rest of the world. If one has any doubt what he means by "ethnic suicide," he continues to lament that "While the ethnic groups whose energy built America are busy aborting themselves, Asia, Africa and Latin America are exploding." This is a major catastrophe for him, because "If the future belongs to the young, the world belongs to the black, brown and yellow peoples of the earth."

This is the alleged moral high ground of the "right to lifers." Their leading lights are diehard racists, who want more babies out of fear of "the black, brown and yellow peoples." This is not love of life, but hatred of life and hatred of other peoples.

Indeed, Buchanan just can't keep himself from casting a longing look back to the good old days when Hitler called for the Aryan "master race" to enslave

the world. He laments that "Germany in 1937 [under Hitler — ed.] had more people than East and West Germany today; and the birth rate of both Germanies is falling." And indeed, Hitler was breeding Germans as fast as possible, for the sake of world domination. In 1937, the year Buchanan refers to, German fascism was rearming furiously to prepare for World War II.

And, following the example of 1937 Germany, Buchanan wants Americans to breed, breed, breed. Why, Buchanan says, "If only the children aborted since Roe vs. Wade were alive, we Americans would have 25 million more infants. A California of new life." Not a Tanzania of new life, nor a Peru, of course. Buchanan wants to keep the proper color balance.

Actually, Buchanan's population statistics are bunk. Without Roe vs. Wade, there would still be abortions, only illegal rather than legal. The death toll of women would mount. And the population rates of Europe and America are more related to the growth of industrialism than to their abortion laws. But Buchanan's articles are not written for social scientists, but to incite the racist right wing to anti-abortion fervor. (For the above quotes, see Buchanan's mid-April column lamenting Governor Andrus' veto of the Idaho anti-abortion law a month ago.) ■

No to lead poisoning and discrimination!

Last October, a U.S. court of appeals in Chicago upheld the policy of the Johnson Controls battery company of subjecting its workers to toxic levels of dangerous chemicals and of banning "women with childbearing capacity" from jobs with high exposure to lead. This court decision effectively bans most women at Johnson Controls from most higher-paying production jobs, as they have been since 1982. And it allows Johnson Controls to continue poisoning its workers.

A group of workers is continuing to challenge this ruling, including one woman who had to agree to sterilization in order to keep her job. The Supreme Court recently agreed to hear the case.

Appeals court blesses lead poisoning

Johnson Controls freely declared that workers at its plant have elevated levels of lead in their blood. And lead poisoning is a big enough threat that for years new cars have been required to use lead-free gas, and lead-based paints have been banned for housing for fear that infants will eat paint flakes. But the company refuses to clean up its plant. It thinks that it is OK to poison the workers, so long as it ensures that no babies will be born obviously deformed or otherwise injured. It feared it could be sued for such babies. But as for adults, the courts and government routinely allow companies to deny that all but the most blatant poisoning is undermining the health of workers.

The appeals court didn't show any concern over the dangerous conditions at Johnson Controls. It endorsed the company's position that the failure to clean up dangerous conditions was a "business necessity." After all, safety measures would cost money, and the judges are more concerned with threats to company profits than to the health of

the workers. In this case, they held that the company could even flaunt its dangerous conditions to justify throwing women out. Such is capitalist justice at its finest.

Throwing women out

Instead of forcing the company to clean up its manufacturing plants, the court endorsed job discrimination against women.

But what about the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which is supposed to ban such discrimination? It turns out that previous Supreme Court interpretations of the Act had already decided that "business necessity" could be used as a loophole.

The appeals court also turned to a provision in the Act which permits employers to only hire those who meet essential "occupational qualifications." This seems like an innocent enough provision. After all, not even Johnson Controls claims the women workers couldn't perform their jobs. But what about the ability to be poisoned without it being directly traceable to the company? The court evidently feels that this is one of the most essential job requirements.

So capitalist law and order strikes again! Congress and the courts solemnly tell us that discrimination is forbidden by law. But if a corporation want to discriminate, the courts can always find a suitable loophole. The only real guarantee of rights is the united struggle of the workers, not the capitalist courts.

And the dissenting judges?

The appeals court's decision was not unanimous. Some judges disagreed with banning women from any jobs. This included conservative Reagan appointee Frank H. Easterbrook. Parading as a

Continued on next page
See DISCRIMINATION

Workers and poor fight back in Panama

Bush likes to claim that the U.S. invasion brought democracy to the long suffering masses of Panama. But the first thing it has brought is more homelessness and impoverishment, accompanied by the jackboot of the U.S. military and the reconstructed Panamanian police force.

Homeless occupy building

Take the working class neighborhood of El Chorrillo that sits next to the headquarters of the Panama Defense Forces. As part of the invasion, the U.S. army bombed and strafed the neighborhood and eventually burned it to the ground. It is estimated that over 500 residents were killed in El Chorrillo alone. Some 13,000 were left homeless. They were herded into small cubicles in a massive hanger at the Albrook U.S. Air Force base, where they are still forced to live.

But the masses are getting fed up with Bush's kindness. On February 25, over 500 of them occupied the Casa de Piedra apartment building. The squatters demanded that the building, which is still under construction, be purchased by the U.S. government and handed over to them. Two days later, some 300 El Chorrillo residents took over the Bridge of the Americas, halting traffic on this key national artery. Residents have also

seized small plots of land for the construction of improvised housing, actions that have led to numerous confrontations with police and U.S. army patrols.

Workers take protests to the streets

In the second week of March, homeless people, public sector workers, and others called for mass protests against the economic devastation, police repression and the U.S. occupation. The U.S. Southern Command and Panama's new police force responded with early morning raids on Panama City's poor neighborhoods, arresting some 1,500 people.

Despite the terrible repression, protest marches broke out. Homeless people demonstrated. Employees of Panama University filled major avenues with shouts against the new Endara government's firings and other attacks on the workers. About 30 public employees sat in at a Panama City church. And there were other protests. The police attacked the demonstrators with clubs and rubber bullets. At least five people were wounded. Meanwhile, 700 people demonstrated in Colon on March 8, demanding the rehiring of public employees who have been fired.

Shortly after these demonstrations, sanitation workers held a nationwide work stoppage. And unions are calling

for a May 1 demonstration to protest firings, layoffs, and the new government's privatization schemes.

Economic devastation

The economic blockade by the U.S. government against the Noriega dictatorship helped to turn economic crisis into disaster. But the new U.S.-backed Endara regime has made matters still worse. It is estimated that the U.S. invasion has left some 20,000 people homeless. Unemployment has soared to 35%. Endara has fired an estimated 4,000 public sector workers as being politically unreliable. And prices continue to soar.

Meanwhile, the much vaunted U.S. aid is hung up in Congress. But even if it releases the \$1 billion in aid that Bush has called for, the masses are not likely to see a penny. Nearly half the aid money will go to help Panama pay its past debts to the IMF and other Western banks. And another \$400 million will be funneled through the Export-Import Bank to finance the sale of U.S. products to Panama. The Panamanian bourgeoisie will be rewarded with goods, but the masses are too poor to take part in this shopping spree.

U.S. terror

The economic devastation is creating

an explosive atmosphere. The U.S. imperialists and the Endara government are responding with more repression. According to the New York-based Independent Commission of Inquiry on the U.S. Invasion of Panama, U.S. troops are carrying out new military operations in the country's interior. Specialized units have terrorized over 100 small towns with door-to-door searches. In the name of searching for Noriega's "dignity battalions," the masses are being attacked.

The cities are still patrolled by the U.S. army, along with Panamanian police. There is a nightly curfew. And any act of protest is attacked.

The commission of inquiry also got its hands on a U.S. military command flow chart. It shows that U.S. military and State Department officials have been assigned to 22 Panamanian government ministries and agencies. The flow chart indicates that U.S. government personnel are involved in running each and every Panamanian ministry from President Endara's office on down.

Such is U.S.-style democracy in Panama. Of course, Noriega was a vicious capitalist dictator. But he has only been replaced by a colonial-style U.S. puppet. Here in the U.S. we must support the masses of workers and poor. U.S. imperialism, get out of Panama! ■

DISCRIMINATION

Continued from previous page

supporter of women's rights, he stated: "No legal or ethical principle compels or allows Johnson to assume that women are less able than men to make intelligent decisions about the welfare of the next generation." (*Los Angeles Times*, March 31, p. 2B)

Yes, women are as capable as men. That is why women workers demand their employers eliminate hazardous conditions such as lead poisoning. And what about Easterbrook? Does he support these decisions? Not at all.

Actually, Easterbrook was just giving the usual capitalist lie that workers freely choose to subject themselves to whatever conditions are forced upon them by their employers. This isn't a matter of free decision, but of facing either starvation or lead poisoning.

In fact, another dissenting judge and Reagan appointee, Richard A. Posner, raised the issue of hunger. He compared the conditions of a "pregnant woman, unemployed or working for minimum wage...ill-housed, fed and doctored" to that of a woman worker at Johnson Controls with lead in her blood, and asked "Whose fetus is at greater risk?" (*Ibid.* and the *New York Times*, March 27)

But with typical capitalist logic, Posner didn't declare that the threat from lead should be cleaned up. Instead, in effect, he declared that it should be up to the woman whether she preferred her baby

suffering the pangs of hunger or the toxic effects of lead poisoning. What a choice! Here is the reality of Reaganism for women! And indeed, the worker is fortunate when she or he is even given the information about what hazardous chemicals are being used. Here too the courts recognize the plea of "business necessity" and "trade secret."

Liberals for Reaganism

Easterbrook and Posner, however, found support from some liberal writers who claim to be horrified by the toxic working conditions at Johnson Controls. Take the columnist Ellen Goodman, for example. She points out that the company is using discrimination to avoid cleaning up the hazards. But she also quotes Easterbrook approvingly, and even Posner who thinks it is fine for workers to be driven to risk themselves and their offspring from the threat of starvation. The quotes from these judges that we have given above are from her article.

But to unite with Easterbrook and Posner means to abandon the struggle against poisoning. To fight for the rights of women workers requires denouncing not only the appeals court majority, which approved discrimination against women, but the appeals court minority as well, which held that women should be subjected to whatever chemicals the employers want to throw at them.

It is up to the workers to take action against these outrages of the capitalists. The courts aren't going to do it. ■

certainly have variety. In the morning they can write jingles against condoms and abortion for the bishops, in the afternoon they can do ads for safe sex for Warner-Lambert, and in the evening they

Do as I say, not as I do

Susan McMillan is a major media figure for the "Right to Life" League of California. She wants to abolish abortion rights — even in cases of rape or incest — because abortion supposedly equals murder.

McMillan is also a first-class hypocrite. Recently she admitted to having an abortion in 1970 when she was an unmarried college student. Then again in

can laud hedonism for Playboy.

As for the bishops, if they have to use such mundane methods as PR firms, what right do they have to present themselves as holier than thou? ■

Continued on page 6
See HYPOCRITE

INCINERATORS

Continued from page 7

repeatedly failed tests for mercury and other toxic emissions. The state politicians have tried hard to help Young get the plant on line, including a new law lowering standards on toxic ash, but the project is proving to be a bigger fiasco than anticipated.

Meanwhile, Young is trying to get courts and state politicians to overturn the latest shutoff order.

Protest vs. toxic incinerator in L.A.

April 21 also saw a demonstration against the plans to open a toxic waste incinerator in the city of Vernon outside Los Angeles.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has given the go ahead for this plant which will spew toxins into the area's already heavily polluted air. The plant is being built by a firm with a record of serious pollution violations. It is being built in an area with many food processing plants.

The EPA refused to even carry out an environmental impact study. Instead it says that there's nothing to worry about since it will monitor the plant with a remote sensing system by phone out of its office — don't laugh — in San

Francisco.

A similar monitoring system is in place in a Chicago incinerator. There, despite the supposed power of the EPA's system, the plant still managed to violate pollution standards, for which it received a \$4.5 million fine. It is reported that at least four times the company may have just shut off the monitoring devices. But what is more, none of these systems can fully detect all the toxic chemicals released by incinerators.

Arizona activists oppose hazardous waste burner

Activists rallied outside the Arizona state Capitol on April 17 to oppose an incinerator complex being built about 35 miles southwest of Phoenix. They chained an old hospital bed to a sign to dramatize that the state government is in bed with the company building the hazardous waste facility.

When the facility had been originally proposed in 1980 it was supposed to be a single hazardous waste landfill. But it has mushroomed into a 540-acre facility with three incinerators and four landfills. It will now process waste brought in from around the country. The company building it has also been fined 10 times between 1983 and 1989 for violations. But despite this the Arizona officials say that they have "not found what we would call patterns of non-compliance." Really? ■

Bishops think Madison Avenue stronger than prayer

The Catholic bishops have made debating abortion rights their number one task. To carry it out, they have turned to pollsters and public relations firms. And why not? Miraculous sermons and Madison Avenue PR have always shared a common ground of unreality.

The Bishops' Committee for Pro-Life Activities is going to spend perhaps \$5 million over several years on Madison Avenue. They have hired Hill & Knowlton and the Wirthlin Group to

defend the sanctity of church dogma.

Hill & Knowlton, like any other PR firm, will even defend the devil for money, so why not the church hierarchy? In fact, Hill & Knowlton did defend the devil in 1980, when they helped elect Reagan to the presidency. Currently they also work for the Warner-Lambert Company and Baxter Travel Labs, two makers of contraceptives, to say nothing of their work for Playboy Enterprises.

Well, Hill & Knowlton writers will

News from Nicaragua

Workers launch strikes

A series of strikes broke out in Managua in mid-March. The workers are fighting for higher pay to cope with the high cost of living. By some accounts inflation soared to an unbelievable rate of 30,000% in 1989, and wages are inadequate to stave off hunger. Workers also put up demands against firings, against layoff threats, and for demobilization of the contras. Fearing even harsher conditions under the new Chamorro government, workers launched struggles hoping to win gains before the new

regime takes power.

The Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua actively supported the strikes. During the recent election campaign, and since, it has called on the workers to organize mass actions to defend themselves and the gains of the revolution. And it put this call into practice, playing an important role in organizing strikes at several plants and bringing out workers from other work places to support the strikers.

Meanwhile, the Sandinista leaders did not support the strikes. Despite their

talk of "defending the gains" of the revolution, the Sandinista Labor Ministry declared them illegal. And top Sandinista leaders denounced them as "irresponsible."

At the same time, a few local leaders of the CST, the Sandinista union center, and some other Sandinista sympathizers have not been able to stomach the official Sandinista policy and took part in the strikes.

The strikes broke out at Corona vegetable oil and Polymer plastics (both

subsidiaries of the U.S. company United Brands), Plastico Moderno, Coca-Cola, and Goyena high school. Managua cab drivers also struck as did construction workers and public employees at libraries, museums, the Institute of Culture and other institutions. Below we highlight stories about a few of the strikes. They come from on-the-spot accounts carried in April issues of the *Militant* and from telephone reports by the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua.

Corona cooking oil workers win pay increase

The 250 Corona workers are in a union that is independent from the CST. They struck March 27 demanding a 100% pay increase. They received strong solidarity from workers at 34 other work places. Sugar mill workers representing seven mills drove a convoy of trucks to Corona, bringing solidarity messages and money. As well, workers at dozens of Managua factories, including Pepsi, Coca-Cola and La Victoria bottling, raised funds for the strikers and delivered bags of rice and beans, cases of Pepsi, and other supplies to the 24-hour picket line at Polymer.

The Sandinista Labor Ministry banned the strike. An MLPN delegate read the Corona workers' appeal to the National Assembly to legalize the strike. But the Sandinista leaders refused. Nevertheless, on April 9, the U.S.-owned company caved in and granted a 90% wage increase. As well, Corona agreed to pay 95% of the workers' wages for all the days they were on strike. And it promised no reprisals against strikers.

Coca-Cola workers fight firing

650 workers struck for one day at the state-run Coca-Cola plant in Managua. They walked out March 21 demanding the rehiring of a well-respected supervisor. The supervisor had been fired for exposing the corruption and misappropriation of goods by the Sandinista plant manager. Workers denounced the plant manager for being a "dictator," and locked the gates to the factory. The strike forced the rehiring of the supervisor.

Polymer plastics workers split

The 85 workers at Polymer went on strike for a 100% wage increase. They are in a CST union. But the Sandinista Labor Ministry still outlawed the strike claiming it hurt the economy. About 35 workers gave in to the pressure and called for an end to the strike. As a result, the CST leaders called off the strike with the workers winning only a 30% pay increase.

High school teachers strike

45 teachers went on strike at Goyena

high school for three days. They demanded a substantial wage increase, improved retirement benefits, and a law regulating the teaching profession.

They were joined by several hundred teachers and school administrators at a rally on March 21 and at a meeting on March 22. A big debate broke out over the strike.

Various Sandinista officials opposed the strike. Guillermo Martinez, the president of the CST-ANDEN teachers' union, denounced the strike as "counter-revolutionary" and a disruption to "stability." One FSLN supporter declared, "Right now we are in a transition period. We have to turn over the country to the new government and guarantee stability. We need to continue to work to insure demobilization of contras and to help win international economic aid for the new government. We can't ask for an excessive pay increase. We have to realize the contra aggression and the economic blockade caused these problems and we can't solve them overnight."

But the strikers argued back. They included both militant teachers who do not support the Sandinistas, as well as

FSLN members. They argued that protection was necessary against Chamorro. They also pointed out that the country has not been sacrificing equally during these hard times. Some sectors have prospered, while the teachers have been sorely underpaid. Despite their fierce arguments, they agreed to give up their strike until other teachers can be convinced to join them.

Bus drivers win increase

600 bus drivers shut down Managua's public transit services April 16. They were joined by transit line mechanics and administrative staff. The drivers demanded and won a 150% pay increase. They also called for the disarming of the contras. In a public statement the drivers declared, "We are a force capable of paralyzing the entire country. This stoppage is just the beginning of plans to demand that the new government comply with the agreements, principally those referring to the demobilization of the counterrevolution." ■

Sandinista leaders oppose demand for labor law reform

Pressure from the masses has recently forced a sharp debate in the National Assembly on the labor code and related issues. The code dates from 1945 under the Somoza dictatorship and provides the worker virtually no protection. But throughout their 10-year rule the Sandinistas have balked at changing it, for fear of jeopardizing their relationship with the capitalists.

The Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua initiated several proposals for labor reform in the assembly, which led to heated exchanges and divisions even in the ranks of the Sandinistas.

The MLPN introduced a minimum wage law with an automatically adjusted index tied to the cost of a "basic grocery basket" of 95 products.

The MLPN also proposed a labor law that would keep the government out of private sector labor negotiations, make it easier for workers to strike, make it harder for employers to fire workers, etc.

As well, the MLPN read the appeal of the striking Corona workers to the assembly. The strikers called for their strike to be declared legal (since it had been outlawed by the Sandinista Labor Ministry), for reform of the labor code, and for enactment of a higher minimum wage.

The Sandinista leadership dug in its heels against all amendments. Deputy Rafael Solis argued that any changes in the labor law would "destabilize" the Chamorro government. Any changes, Solis said, "should be brought into harmony with the high-level negotiations that are taking place" with Chamorro's representatives. These negotiations are

of course behind closed doors and out of reach of the masses. So, according to Solis, it's fine if the workers starve, as long as the Sandinista and Chamorro bargaining is proceeding smoothly.

Another Sandinista leader, Carlos Nunez, cast the supporters of labor law reform as "radical confrontationist" saboteurs of the peace process, who must be fought because they are as bad as the bosses. "It is necessary to neutralize and combat all those Nicaraguan citizens, whether they are bosses or workers, who try to sabotage and denigrate the efforts that are being made to finalize and bring about real peace in Nicaragua." The Sandinista leaders simply don't want the workers to utter a peep, in case it offends the right wing.

Not all the Sandinista delegates could stomach this class collaborationist position and sectarian raving. Hazel Lau, a Sandinista delegate from the Atlantic Coast, complained: "Every time anyone has a disagreement, they are labeled as radicals or supporters of the MAP [referring to the MLPN -ed.]. And Deputy Danilo Aguirre, assistant editor of the pro-Sandinista daily, *El Nuevo Diario*, argued that "the assembly must leave the working class with enough weapons to face the new situation." To fail to do so, he said, would be "a betrayal of the working class."

In the face of the swearing in of the pro-contras government, the FSLN top leadership is officially opting for "smooth relations." The masses are pulling in another direction, beginning to take action in their own self-defense. This is the policy advocated by the MLPN.

Meanwhile, a section of Sandinista representatives and supporters appears to be

caught in the middle, vacillating between the two policies. ■

Ortega gives himself a pension

The Sandinista leaders have balked at passing a new labor code or other laws to defend the workers and peasants before the right-wing Chamorro takes

power. But it is another matter when it comes to defending the Sandinista leaders themselves.

According to the April 7 issue of *Barricada Internacional*, the Sandinistas passed a new law that "grants former presidents and vice presidents, as of the first free elections (1984), a lifetime pension equal to the salary earned by the current president and vice president." ■


HYPOCRITE Continued from page 5

calls the "little aggressor" if the mother's life is threatened. See the laudatory article in the *Los Angeles Times* for April 2.)

McMillan was able to have safe, legal abortions when she faced what she felt were difficult circumstances. Fine. But now she lives on easy street. She has a multimillion dollar home and arrives at inner-city, anti-abortion meetings in Los Angeles in her Mercedes 380SL and with her gold Rolex watch. This lifestyle undoubtedly eases the distress she must feel as a recently-revealed repeat "murderer."

And it allows her to look down from her mansion and decree that poor women should not have the rights she took advantage of. Rights she claimed although this daughter of a rich land developer never had to face the hardships faced by working women with unwanted pregnancies. Rights she claimed even after she became an anti-abortion crusader against these same rights. From her mansion she will not see the back alley abortions that will result if her goals are achieved. But she will be able to feel proud that this carnage will take place in the name of preserving life. ■

STRUGGLE
A Journal of Proletarian Revolutionary Literature



Fiction Essays Poetry Song

Struggle is a literary journal of the Detroit Branch of the Marxist-Leninist Party, USA.
\$1.50 by mail

Order from:
Struggle
Harper Station
P.O. Box 13261
Detroit, MI 48213-0261

Earth Day 1990

Tear the green mask off the corporate polluters!

Continued from front page

criminal disregard of the environment.

What is the message of the official Earth Day sponsors?

The sponsors of Earth Day include corporate bigshots, politicians, union bureaucrats, and mainstream environmental groups. They have focused their theme around several key issues.

One is the so-called "Valdez Principles" of corporate responsibility. Another is the idea that all of us are equally to blame, equally responsible to undo the damage. There is also a call to vote for pro-environment (read: Democratic) politicians.

The Valdez Principles

The sponsors of Earth Day are promoting a scheme by which corporations can get a Good Housekeeping-like seal by signing a pledge called the "Valdez Principles." By doing so, the corporations say they will try not to pollute, they will try to recycle, etc.

This scheme promotes faith in the corporations' promises about becoming pro-environment. And they clear the way for them to market a new set of products claiming to be "Earth friendly." This has already begun in a big way as the capitalists figure ways to cash in on concern for the environment.

The "Valdez Principles" are patterned after the "Sullivan principles" which were promoted as an alternative to corporations getting out of business with racist South Africa. In both cases, they are substitutes for real action. They are designed to let the companies paint profit-making in anti-racist and pro-environment colors.

Are we all equally responsible?

The other major theme promoted by Earth Day is the "Green Pledge" under which individuals vow to be friendly to the environment. A litany of prescriptions are offered about how individuals can pollute less.

It is all well and fine that individuals do this or that in their lives to cut down on pollution, but it is a gigantic fraud to claim that this can make more than a small dent in the overall problem. It is ridiculous to suggest that individuals can change the problem, when the causes of pollution are dictated by what is produced and how things are produced — decisions which are not made by individual consumers but by the capitalists. For example, whether one uses a less or more efficient light bulb does not affect how the power companies produce electricity.

The class struggle does not go away

Underlying the view that we are all responsible is the idea that the environmental cause goes beyond class conflict. Since we all live in a single planet, we are all supposed to be bound together in a common cause.

This ignores who profits and who suffers. There is a huge gulf here — the division into opposing classes inherent in capitalist society. We are not all in it together. It is workers in poisonous workplaces who suffer industrial disasters, not the directors in their boardrooms. It is working class communities which get

the toxins and spills and dumps, not the mansions and playing fields of the rich. How many Union Carbide bigshots died in Bhopal? How many Soviet bureaucrats in Chernobyl?

No, while it is true that in the long run damage to the environment could destroy the planet for all, it is the working people who are most affected. The wealthy ruling class evades most of the problems, and most importantly it makes its money by exploiting the laboring people and disregarding their health and safety needs.

To fight pollution, fight capitalism

The fight to defend the environment is part of the class struggle against the exploiters.

We cannot look to the liberal politicians or the born-again "green" corporations to rescue us. Rather, we must build the fight on the shoulders of all those who are most affected — the working class and poor. When we say the working class, of course we do not mean the labor bureaucrats, who are the handmaidens of the capitalists and not the repre-

sentatives of workers' interests. Activists must directly go among the rank-and-file workers and draw them into the movement. To mobilize the workers, the movement must demand protection for the workers in the work places and their communities. It must also raise the call that the rich, not the workers, have to pay the bill.

We must fight our damndest to force the capitalists to cut down the damage they are causing to the environment. But this will not do away with the source of the problem. Capitalism is demonstrating every day that as a system it is incompatible with the needs of the people and the earth we live in. It must be replaced with a new society.

Fundamental measures against pollution cannot take place without collective decisions about what is produced and how things are produced. That requires a planned economy. But planning cannot be left in the hands of today's corporations based on the profit principle. Or in the hands of a state-capitalist bureaucracy run along capitalist lines as in the Soviet Union, China, etc. A new society with the government and economy under the

control of the working class is needed. That is the workers' socialism which our Party fights for.

Technology must serve humanity, not the lust for money

Technology per se is not the problem — the problem is that under capitalism it is in the service of profit, not the masses. Workers' socialism can provide an alternative framework.

To think that we can go backwards in time is fantasy. Even dealing with the massive problems with today's environmental requires further technological progress. Can one think of cleaning up the nuclear waste dumps or renewing the ozone layer without scientific advance? Can one see harnessing solar and other forms of clean energy without new technical progress?

Of course, workers' socialism will not solve the tremendous problems with the environment overnight. But it is the only social system which can begin the task. ■

Free market won't solve pollution in Eastern Europe

The countries of Eastern Europe are the scenes of some of the worst environmental disasters in today's world. Forests are dead, rivers are running streams of poison and acid, the air is deadly, and cancer and respiratory disease rates are alarmingly high.

But it isn't socialism which is responsible for this despoiling of the environment. The problems there are the result of state-capitalism.

People in Eastern Europe rose up against the state-capitalist tyrants for many reasons, including their crimes against the environment. Unfortunately, the new pro-West political forces which are replacing the old rulers are not about to solve the problem. It appears that things will continue to get worse.

Of course there are plenty of proposals and plans being drafted which promise to improve the environment. But what's actually taking place? Look at Poland.

There was a proposal made to use pollution fines as a national fund for environmental protection. But last summer, the World Bank and IMF nixed the creation of any new special funds. These Western banking institutions are the economic powers to which the present Solidarity government is beholden.

When the Polish Ministry of Agriculture presented its aid requests to Washington last year, they wanted 15 pesticides considered by the U.S. EPA as dangerous to groundwater. The Fund for the Development of Polish Agriculture is arranging the pesticide shipments. It reportedly gets part of its funds from the pesticide makers Eli Lilly, Monsanto and ICI.

And what about cleaning up the existing mess? Not much is taking place. Toxic wastes from Western Europe keep piling up as well. The old regime in its search for cash had agreed to allow Poland to become a dumping ground for those wastes. The new regime hasn't

changed this.

There is one big measure that the new government is taking on the environment. It's called economic depression and skyrocketing inflation. The new free market reforms in Poland have driven coal prices up 400%, so the masses have no choice but to cut back. Polish officials actually brag about this as a pro-environmental policy. Meanwhile, plans to shut down many plants will also cut back on toxic emissions. But millions of workers will be left to fend for themselves on the streets.

Overall the new Polish government, like the other new Eastern European

governments, is embracing the Western-style capitalist approach to the environment. This is no alternative to the stand of the old regimes. The criminal neglect of those regimes is clear. But let's not forget what "free world" capitalism has done to the earth.

It wasn't a socialist Union Carbide corporation which poisoned Bhopal, India. And it wasn't socialist chemical companies in Switzerland which spilled toxins into the Rhine. Isn't the air in Tokyo or Mexico City a well-known scandal? They even sell portable oxygen breathers in the Japanese capital. ■

Activists march against incinerators

The crisis of trash disposal gets worse each day. The capitalist economy wastes resources with abandon and creates mountains of garbage. Now the big "waste management" businesses, allied with government authorities, are preparing to deal with the trash crisis with the latest quick fix — trash incinerators across the land which spew poisons into an already polluted air and earth.

But the government cannot simply do as it wishes. Activists in many areas are continuing protests against these incinerators. And in some cases these struggles are forcing the establishment — at least temporarily — to slow things down and promise tighter controls.

Detroit Incinerator ordered shut

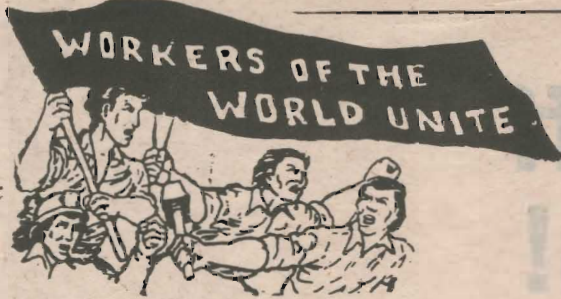
On April 21st, 300 people marched in Detroit in the latest action against the city's incinerator. They celebrated a partial victory in the struggle here and pledged to continue the fight against the

trash burner. Just a few days before, a state board had ordered that the incinerator be shut down because it continues to fail the existing standards for mercury emissions.

The incinerator there, the world's largest, was built by Mayor Coleman Young at the cost of half a billion dollars. He ignored many protests from people in Detroit and nearby Canadian cities who objected to the pollution of the air by new emissions and of the earth by the poisonous ash residue. Activists also denounced the fact that Combustion Engineering, the company contracted to build it, did business with racist South Africa.

So eager was he to make a deal with these capitalists that Coleman Young also refused to consider adding a halfway serious recycling program or to even put in the best pollution control technology. No surprise then that the plant has

Continued on page 5
See INCINERATORS



The World in Struggle

Nepal monarchy under siege



200,000 people marched in Katmandu, Nepal on April 6.

Yet another arrogant tyranny has had to retreat in the face of a mass upsurge.

For two months now, Nepal in the Himalayan mountains has been swept by huge demonstrations and strikes. Tens of thousands have poured out to protest the despotic rule of King Birendra who rules the country as his personal domain. Fearing that he might be overthrown by force, the king has finally agreed to give in to some of the demands of the people.

Until this, the monarchy's reply had simply been brute force. Schools have been ordered closed. Hundreds have been thrown into jail. Several newspapers have been shut down. And dozens of protesters have been shot down by police.

Keep in mind that this is a regime which allows citizens to be jailed up to 18 months without being charged and which does not allow political organizing. The king rules through the so-called Panchayati system, which includes a series of indirectly elected councils up to the National Assembly. The Panchayati officials are wealthy supporters of the king, who live in luxury while the masses make an average income of \$150 a year — Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world.

Repression creates wider opposition

The mass movement began February 18, when thousands of people marched in Katmandu the capital and dozens of other towns and villages. They demanded the dismissal of the king's cabinet, an end to the ban on political parties, and parliamentary elections.

With its repression, the regime only succeeded in spreading the struggle wider. Strikes began to break out against the regime. Doctors and health workers staged a general strike to protest the jailing of medical employees. Lawyers marched on the prime minister's office to demand the release of their jailed colleagues. Government workers went on strike.

The movement also picked up steam

from the ranks of the urban working class. Factory workers in Hetauda staged a one-day strike on March 22. The next day, hawkers refused to sell state publications and set fire to government newspapers.

On April 2, a general strike brought Katmandu to a halt. Police opened fire on protesters in several towns, killing a number of people. A big march on the capital was blocked by police. Many of the marchers were armed with knives, sickles and other weapons. They skouted, "We want democracy" and "We will reply to murder with murder."

On April 4, airline pilots called a one-day strike. And electricity workers blacked out the main towns.

Some of the fiercest fighting has been in Patan, a southern suburb of Katmandu. Barricades have been set up in the streets. When police brought in a bulldozer the people dismantled it. The funeral for demonstrators killed here on April 2 was a display of defiance. Residents dug deep pits at three entry points to prevent police vehicles from passing through. About 180 cops were trapped and were freed only after a daylong siege.

The regime carried out its worst atrocity April 6, when at least 50 people were killed when they were marching towards the royal palace.

After the stick, a carrot

In the wake of this massacre, the monarchy realized that its very survival was at stake and began to talk the language of concessions. The king lifted the ban on political parties. But this didn't amount to all that much, considering that the ban had been rendered meaningless in the streets.

Talks were opened up with the opposition leaders. But the masses refused to simply sit by while this went on. Thousands of Nepalese laid siege for 15 hours on the building where the talks were going on. They smashed up limousines belonging to the ministers and threatened to surge into the building several times.

Eventually, the king conceded to the resignation of the cabinet and the dissolution of the National Assembly. An interim government led by opposition figures was agreed to.

But the masses in Nepal are not about to be satisfied with these measures. As the king has shown his brutality, more and more calls have been raised for an end to the monarchy altogether.

In this situation, the bourgeois opposition politicians are calling off the movement. They hope to get positions for themselves in the regime. The Nepali Congress Party which will head up the new cabinet has never wanted anything more than a constitutional monarchy. They are being advised by the Nepali

elite to turn against the more leftist parties with whom they have had an alliance in this spring's movement. In fact, some of the reformist leaders of those parties are willing to agree to a constitutional monarchy.

But the genie of mass struggle has been unleashed in Nepal. The people have tasted their power. They have seen the real face of the king. While the middle-class politicians and their supporters may be satisfied with what's been won, the workers and young people can be expected to press for more democratic reforms and also to raise new demands — for substantial changes in the miserable conditions of the downtrodden people. ■

Swedish auto workers fight for pay raise

Since February, workers at the Saab-Scania truck plant south of Stockholm have been agitating for a raise of 5.50 kronor in their hourly pay (about 88 cents). They have held sit-ins, partial strikes, and marches around the plant. On March 17, a thousand people turned out for a demonstration marching through the town of Södertälje.

Striking over local issues is generally illegal in Sweden, so the company is retaliating by taking the workers to labor court. Nearly a thousand workers are to be sued. Workers are planning a big turnout at the court hearing.

Mass demonstrations in Tehran

The cancellation of a soccer game on February 16 turned into a mass outpouring against the Islamic Republic regime.

Tens of thousands of people had gathered outside the main soccer stadium in Tehran. When they were told the game had been canceled, the anger of the crowd was quickly transformed into a protest against the regime itself.

The demonstrations spread into various parts of the city. In one area, the crowd pulled down a giant poster of Khomeini and ripped it up. People chanted slogans against the regime and fought back against attacks by the Pasdaran militia. Several dozen people were reported killed by these thugs of the regime.

Mexican brewery workers in a bitter strike

Some 5,200 workers have been on strike since February 15 at the Modelo brewery in Mexico City. The workers want safer working conditions, a higher wage, and the right to retire after 30 years.

Making only \$9.60 per day, the work force has suffered lung problems from grain dust, back problems from excessive lifting, repetitive motion disorders, vision problems and extremes in temperatures. And to retire, a worker must be 60 years old and have 35 years on the job. But because many workers started as teenagers and due to the harsh physical conditions, hardly anyone ever lives to collect.

The government declared the strike illegal, and then the company fired all the strikers. This vicious attack was supported by Fidel Velasquez, the head of the sellout CTM union center, which was allied to the government. He also set up a company union to scab.

The brewery workers are asking for international solidarity and are calling for a boycott of Corona beer which Modelo produces.

General strike shuts down Puerto Rico



On March 28 workers all over Puerto Rico organized themselves for a one-day general strike.

Public transportation was shut down. So were utility companies, schools, universities and government offices. After morning protests across the island, 150,000 workers converged and marched through the streets to the Capitol building.

The strike was held to protest the plans to sell off the phone company to private owners. In Puerto Rico the telephone company, which employs 8,000 workers, is government-owned. The workers are protesting the fact that privatization will lead to job loss and worse working conditions.

Quebec students mobilize against fee hikes

Students in Quebec, Canada are on the march again.

They are protesting a plan to hike tuition at universities and junior colleges by about 130% over two years. If this happens, many who intended to go to school would no longer be able to afford it.

The campuses have again become hotbeds of activism. The students have also taken the issue to the general population. In Montreal rush hour marches and sit-downs were held at major intersections and bridges. Leaflets were distributed widely, including door-to-door in neighborhoods.

On March 20th, 250 students attempted to occupy the Montreal Stock Exchange. Riot police arrested more than 180. Students since then have occupied the Montreal Chamber of Commerce and demonstrated at City Hall.

In another action, 4,000 students marched on the National Assembly in Quebec City on March 30. But the Education Minister would not address the students. Instead 100 riot police with batons were sent in to beat up the students near the doors of the building.