ONLY REVOLUTION CAN SAVE OUR PLANET!

Coverage begins page 3
How Revolutionary China Fought Pollution 8
U.S. Drops Poison and Counterrevolution on the Andes 10
We've Seen the System... And It's Wrecking the Planet 12
How Capitalism Sabotages Recycling 14

MAY DAY 1990

4 Phony Communism Is Dead. Long Live Real Communism! Mao More Than Ever!

5 Call to May First

2 NEW JERSEY: TIME'S UP IN TEANECK
TIME'S UP IN TEANECK

The cop car in the police headquarters parking lot in Teaneck, New Jersey flipped over in the darkness. So many people had hold of it that it went over like it weighed no more than a pancake. As the car crashed onto its side, a wave of cheers and whistles went up. A huge orange oil drum came off an incline at the back of the parking lot, up into the air again, and down onto the top parking lot in Teaneck, New Jersey.

Hundreds of cheers and whistles went up. A huge orange oil drum came off an incline at the back of the parking lot, up into the air again, and down onto the top of another police car. More saturation. Rocks and bricks flew in the air. Cops in riot gear retreated. Police headquarters windows were smashed with crowbars and bats. The day after police shot 15-year-old Phillip Pannell in the back, the youths in Teaneck rose up in righteous rebellion against the racist cops and powers.

Phillip Pannell was killed on Tuesday, April 11. The police claim that the cop fired when Phillip supposedly reached for his jacket pocket where later a gun was found. But witnesses say Phillip had no gun and that the cop shot him in cold blood. Leslie Johnson, Phillip's cousin, said on a radio program that Phillip and some friends were playing basketball in a school yard when a cop drove up, one hand on the steering wheel and the other holding a gun outside the window pointed at the youths. Leslie said, "When everybody seen a gun, everybody just quit and ran. He [the cop] started chasing Phil and me, and he didn't say no warning or nothing. He just shot him in the leg, and he fell. And he was like, 'Ah, please don't shoot me no more.' And I was like, 'Please don't shoot him, don't shoot him.'" Witnesses said that Phillip got up with his empty hands in the air and the cop shot him in the back. According to Phillip's cousin, "When I was there and they searched him, they didn't find no gun. That's probably why they told me to get back. When his mom came out asking why they shot him, they told her, 'He was running, he was suspicious.' They didn't say nothing about a gun."

Teaneck is about eight miles from New York City, and Black people make up about a third of the population. The media describes the town as a model of "racial peace." But Black residents told the RW that Teaneck is a "little Harlem." In the 1950s there were still signs saying "No Jews or Negroes Allowed." Route 4 divides the town racially, and a high school student explained that "the police have different rules for the white side."

Continued on page 14
Those who rule over us like braggarts that their system is the “best of all possible worlds.” But in fact, the capitalist system is strangling the very life out of this planet. The lungs of the planet are being ripped out as tropical rain forests are destroyed. The earth’s protective shield, the ozone layer, is being depleted. And Avakianists are being devoured by the very system they are meant to destroy. In a thousand and one ways this system is killing people because its law of “profit in command” means the total disregard for the health of the planet and the environment.

In 1854 the Puget Sound Indians occupied a large area of land in Washington. When the U.S. government offered to buy the land, Chief Seattle wrote that: “We know that the white man does not understand our ways. One portion of land is the same to him as the next, for he is a stranger in this night and taken from the land whatever he needs. The earth is not his brother but his enemy, and when he has conquered it, he moves on. He leaves his fathers’ graves and his children’s birth places in his path. He takes his mother, the earth, and brothers the sky, as things to be bought, plundered, sold like sheep or bright beads. His appetite will devour the earth and leave behind only a desert.”

And in the final analysis is a global question. There is a growing sense that there is something deeply wrong with a system that leaves the earth and its inhabitants this way. And more and more, there is a feeling that only something radical and “earthshaking” is going to stop the destruction going on.

Many people also correctly see that there must be a “global approach” to this problem—that it is impossible to try and understand ecological issues in a narrow, “country by country” way. As Karl Marx said: “From the standpoint of a higher form of economic organization, private ownership of the globe by single individuals will appear quite as absurd as private ownership of one man by another. Even a whole society, a nation, or even all simultaneously existing societies taken together, are not the owners of the globe. They are only its possessors, its usufructuaries, and like boni patres familias, they must hand it down to succeeding generations in an improved condition.”

Bob Avakian, Chairman of the RCP, has also addressed this question. In Reflections, Sketches, and Provocations, Avakian says, “A very profound analysis is concentrated in this statement by Marx, which gives from yet another angle an added emphasis to the importance of viewing things first and above all from the point of view of the world arena and the world struggle. Stepping back and viewing things from that standpoint, looking at the world map from this aspect, for example, it becomes clear that simply viewing the struggle in terms of how it should proceed in one particular country or one particular part of the globe cannot deal with the fundamental problems that mankind as a whole confronts in attempting to be, as Marx says, the trustees of the globe. And it context, in fact, lead to a qualitative change, to a qualitatively more rational approach to how to utilize the resources of the earth to further the emancipation of mankind and to advance human society. In a materialist sense, a country-by-country viewpoint, or a viewpoint of only being concerned about the advance in one nation or one part of the world, cannot even approach, let alone solve, this problem. So the land question in the final analysis is a global question.”

Chairman Avakian then goes on to point out two important problems: the people of the world need to solve to become “trustees of the globe.”

The first problem is the national question. In countries dominated by imperialism the masses need to wage a people’s war of national liberation. And in the future, the struggle to achieve national equality, even between states ruled by the proletariat, will remain a crucial part of the transition to this higher form of society that Marx referred to—a communist world.

The second problem is the question of small production. Small production and small ownership of land is widespread in the world today. And even after the proletarian seizure of power, “Land to the tiller” will remain a just, revolutionary demand. It will not be possible to abolish “overnight” all private property and private ownership of the means of production. And the problem of power will have to be faced and tackled. Small producers while at the same time struggling to transform them and their outlook. As history has shown, this is bound to be a complex and difficult process, full of twists and turns.

All this underscores the fact that we can’t approach the problem of “saving the planet” without taking a revolutionary internationalist approach. Only revolution can save our planet—revolutions aimed at getting rid of oppression in every part of the world. The issue here is not simply “protesting the species.” At the root of the serious ecology problems threatening the planet today there are big political and economic problems—imperialist domination and poverty. And if we want to solve today’s problems of ecology, we have to address the question of the profound imperialism of the world.

The imperialist countries, both East and West, dominate a great part of the world’s productive forces and enslave the great majority of the world’s people. As Lenin pointed out, parasitism is one of the most important features of imperialism. Whole sections of the imperialist countries are devoted to nonproductive activities, while the imperialists plunder large parts of the world and exploit the masses there as colonial slaves. And the spoils of this are passed along to sections of people living in the home country. This parasitism is backed by the tremendous weight of military production and the threat of destructive weapons that can destroy the planet. These are the features of the imperialism of the world today. This underscores the responsibility of people right here in the “belly of the beast” to rise up and overthrow this system.

Marx’s point is that we are not only the earth’s possessors and that we must hand it down to succeeding generations in an improved condition underscores the importance of ecology. But as Bob Avakian points out, “More than that, it helps us to see more clearly how human society is indeed the master of the globe, and how insane it is for different nations, and even different individuals within different nations, to be battling each other for control over little parcels of this earth in a way that can only maintain anarchy and stand as a great obstacle to human society consciously deciding how to best use—and at the same time preserve for the future and develop—the globe of which it is the trustee.”

The capitalists want to cover up the fact that it is them and their system that’s killing the earth and its people. These days it’s fashionable for corporations to talk about “ecological responsibility.” But the needs of this system are completely incompatible with ecological responsibility. And we are not all just common travelers on “Spaceship Earth.” Those who rule have the power of life and death over us. We live in a world marked by classes and class struggle, by oppressor nations and oppressed nations, by oppressors and oppressed. And the destruction of the earth and its people is one result of the exploitative social relations carried out and maintained by the capitalist class.

The people of the world cannot allow this class of oppressors to remain the owners and masters of the earth. The fate of the planet must not be left in the hands of a system that is completely outmoded and is already destroying the earth and its inhabitants. And no amount of individuals “changing their lifestyle” is going to solve this problem as long the people don’t have state power. Only revolution can save our planet. And only revolution can free humanity from the chains of exploitation—so that, in fact, we will be able to carry out our trusteeship over the globe and hand down to succeeding generation, a whole new world.

**Reyady for the future...**
Phony Communism Is Dead. Long Live Real Communism! Mao More Than Ever!

"Mao More Than Ever." Why do we say this on May First? Because, in today's world, when the oppressed look for revolutionary solutions, Mao's all-the-way revolutionary line and outlook stands out even more clearly as the only path to ending oppression. Mao Tseung was the baddest revolutionary of our time, and he was a real communist. This is a banner that class-conscious revolutionary fighters must pick up this May Day, as we lead our sisters and brothers in battle. And it's a good situation for doing so.

This year, as May First approaches, one of the big events in the world is the crisis in Eastern Europe, the "Soviet bloc." Oppressed people everywhere have good cause to celebrate. These are oppressive regimes that are in trouble. They are not "revolutionary," "socialist," or "communist." The rulers of the West say different, but their shit is weak. When the U.S. rulers say the Soviet-bloc system has had big officials lording it over the people, monopolizing wealth and power, oppressing people because of their nationality, language and culture, sending troops around the world to enslave others—we know exactly what this "foreign" system is because we live it every day in this "glorious free" U.S.A.

Quiet as it's kept, these Soviet-bloc states are capitalist countries in a capitalist mess. They're now becoming more openly capitalist, but they've been that way since socialism was reversed in the Soviet Union in the mid-1950s. Almost thirty years ago Mao Tseung—the great communist leader in the days when China was revolutionary—exposed this. He said socialism had been reversed in the Soviet bloc and "phony communism" was in charge. And he showed that this phony communism—or "revisionism"—meant that a new bourgeois class had come to power. He said these regimes had become new oppressors of their people and bitter enemies of revolution worldwide. Armed with this analysis, Mao and the genuine communist revolutionaries in China fought these Soviet revisionists for many years. And they led the masses to fight against a new bourgeois class in China, too, in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR). Even though Mao's bitter enemies—the Chinese revisionists—came to power there in a coup after his death in 1976, the experience of the Chinese people in this battle against phony "communism" stands as the highest point yet of revolutionary history. It is rich in lessons for the oppressed people of the world.

Now the chickens are coming home to roost for these phony "communists." More than ever, Mao and his real communist vision are being shown to have been clearly right. In China, the new rulers (Mao's bitter enemies) have returned to unleashing the army against the people in bloody massacres to preserve their fiction of "people's rule." In the Soviet bloc, these revisionists, headed now by Gorbachev, are scrambling to adopt even more openly capitalist forms of rule in order to cope with the crisis and problems that state-capitalism has brought. These revisionists hold for a time behind the mask of "socialism" and tried to pickpocket the hopes and dreams of people for a new and just world. But their regimes—like all capitalist regimes—embodied neither hope nor solutions. That's why they are in crisis. Not because "revolutionary hopes and dreams proved unrealistic," but because capitalism, in whatever form, is oppressive. That's why people with revolutionary hopes and dreams should welcome the troubles of these oppressors of the East, just like we welcome the troubles of reactionaries in the West.

**Revolutionary Answers**

But welcoming their troubles is not enough. It is time to step up and step out with the only real, revolutionary answers to all these oppressive capitalist systems—East and West. If there's one thing this crisis in the East shows, it's that seemingly stable, oppressive regimes can rapidly fall into deep crisis. What has seemed to be permanent and all-powerful suddenly looks vulnerable. Today, this is the situation in the East, but tomorrow it can be the situation in the West. This is a lesson we must draw from these events. But there is another, equally important, lesson. Nothing short of real communism provides the solutions for the problems of the people of the world.

It's a good time to sum some things up. For many years these phony "communists" spread a lot of illusions about what revolution was and wasn't. They slandered real revolutionaries and glorified in the "practicality" of their way. But now "their way" is even more openly bankrupt. "Their way" of "revolution" was not revolution at all. It was not a radical change of all the old ways. It was not an overturning of society from bottom to top. It was basically just a change of rulers at the top. That was what Mao said, and today its truth stands out more than ever. "Their way" of "revolution," which they tried to force on the people of the world, was full of dangerous illusions. "Peaceful change," "partial change"—anything but real revolutionary change. Posing, like godfathers, as "natural allies" of the oppressed, they preached that true emancipation could be won by some other, easier route than the oppressed emancipating themselves through people's war. Mao, and the Maoists of the world, fought this phony "communist" line with real communism—with the vision and the practice of fighting for all-the-way revolution. Now the false paths of revisionism are in more crisis and distress than ever. So, for this reason, too—it's Mao More Than Ever, for those who want to be truly free.
This System Stinks

Is this a "victory for Western capitalists"? They wish. Do they expect the people and the genuine revolutionaries to be discouraged, to set their sights no higher than this present system? They must be joking. But the world, as their system dominates it, is no joke for the oppressed. It is truly a pit of horrors. Oh yes, their system has a certain "dynamism," as they like to call it. But it is shark-like dynamism that eats people alive. It produces a distorted world, to serve a few rich masters in a few rich countries. The other side of this "success story" life for a few is the reality of misery for many. Forty thousand children die each day in Third World countries, while Western banks demand still more "austerity" programs to make these countries even "more fit" for exploiting. And, while life in the Third World most starkly shows the reality of this system, here in the belly of the beast life is hell for millions and millions of oppressed. It's a time when the party's "answer" for the mass of oppressed people is more cops, armed with more clubs, guns, and jails.

No, this is not the "best of all possible worlds." This isn't even human—in the sense of a world aimed at serving human need and measured by its achievements in meeting those needs. Instead, private profit is this system's only measure and motor. People's creativity is suppressed, passivity and "dog eat dog" are the system's currency. As communism's founder, Marx, put it, this is "prehistory. This is primitive shit. And it doesn't have to be any more. The proletariat, the dispossessed "nobodies" of this system, can overthrow all this and create a whole new world.

Marxism-Leninism-Maoism Liberates

Today in the U.S. the attacks coming down on the people have been getting sharper and all kinds of people have been standing up or trying to find the ways and means to fight. For all of them, for a whole new generation of youth, this is the time for real solutions.

The rulers of the U.S. have always attacked real communism and tried to scare the people away from it. For oppressors, this makes sense. Communism is a philosophy totally opposed to their outlook. Everyone has one kind of philosophy or another, and the slaves cannot really fight the slavemaster on his own terms, with his own outlook. Having the wrong philosophy is like having no soul. Phony "communism"—revisionism—is really just bourgeois ideology dressed up in Marxist clothes. And other philosophies that people take up to fight their oppression, such as nationalism and feminism, are not really radical enough.

This is where Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, real communism, comes in. Nothing less will do. "Any other attempted solution to this, which will leave the foundations of imperialism untouched and bring no fundamental changes in world relations and social systems, is utterly incapable of providing a way forward out of this howling madness..." (Bob Avakian, Bullets, p. 31). We have a real solution. It is proletarian, communist revolution. It is a goal that is lofty and radical—the revolutionary overthrow of exploiting and oppressing systems and the continued struggle to overcome the class distinctions and divisions; the private property relations, and the social relations and ideas that come from those old relations. And this means abolishing them worldwide.

But communism is more than a vision and an ideal. It is a real historical movement and a revolutionary legacy. Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is a weapon that has been forged through a hundred years and more of experience of the world revolutionary movement. It has the power of that accumulated experience—of the victories and defeats, the mistakes and achievements of that revolutionary movement. It stands on the shoulders of the advances when the proletariat had power and began to transform the world—briefly in 1871 in the Paris Commune, for several decades in the Soviet Union until socialism was reversed by Khrushchev, and in China under Mao when the Chinese people achieved the greatest heights yet in bringing new, revolutionary relations into reality. It exists around the world today in the parties and organizations of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, who carry forward this legacy left by Mao.

We have Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and it really does shine a light for the struggle for liberation. But those who begin to understand this are the ones who have to shine it. We have to take it to the front of the battles of our people today, help them clear up their confusion as they fight their oppressors, and show others that there is a way forward and out of this madness. That's what is demanded of us—nothing less.

"Dare we really do this? We dare not fail to do it."


Revolutionary Communist Party, USA
April 22 marks the tenth anniversary of the police assassination of Comrade Damión García, member of the RCP, on the eve of May 1, 1980. Each year, especially as May 1st approaches, we feel his presence among us—we the proletarians who have nothing to lose but our chains, who burn with a passion for liberation, who refuse to be enslaved. For all who feel this way, Damión García has come to symbolize a fearless devotion to the cause of all-the-way revolution—the only true road to freedom from the degradation and oppression of the imperialist system that comes down on the people of the whole world. We cherish and honor his memory. This year, more than ever, the memory of Damión García's life and his death inspires us, in the words of RCP Chairman Bob Avakian, to “Fear nothing, be down for the work of RCP Chairman Bob Avakian, to 'Fear nothing, be down for the work of the proletariat and oppressed everywhere, so it was equally hated by reactionaries of all stripes.' Damión García was one who feared nothing and was down for the whole thing. He was one of those three revolutionaries who stood proudly on top of the Alamo. When he was murdered by police agents in Los Angeles one month later, Damión was already known to millions, although to many not by name but by his picture on the Alamo. By murdering him in cold blood, the pigs were not only retaliating for Damión's righteous indignation and courageous defiance of those who rule over the people, but also desperately hoping to stop the gathering momentum for revolutionary May First and send a message to the oppressed that we can't fight the powers with our eyes on the prize of all-the-way revolution. But immediately, as word went out about this cowardly political execution, the people were angered and outraged, even while some understood that this is the nature of the enemy. Many millions lifted their heads, stifled their resolve and opened their eyes to look more clearly at the cherished cause for which Damión García lived, and gave, his life. As a prisoner in the Atlanta city jail wrote at the time, “Damión García is dead but in his death I came alive.”

Now, ten years later, the stakes are higher, for them and for us. Since 1980, things have not developed in a straight line forward for revolutionary forces around the world, and many things have not turned out as we expected. But in a very real sense, and even more important to grasp, there has been tremendous advance and progress in the level of struggle, ideological and political clarity, and organization of the international proletariat. Of major significance has been the unity forged in the formation of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement—enabling revolutionary communists to find each other, to join forces and lead the proletariat and oppressed people of the world to fight with a common purpose and goals, with true proletarian internationalism. It is a profound tribute that no matter how hard the revolutionary ruling classes try to stomp out and bury revolution, resistance bursts forth anew—often when and where it is least expected. This has been increasingly the case in the last several years. Outstanding in this regard is the revolutionary warfare being waged in the Andes Mountains of Peru, led by the Partido Comunista del Peru (Communist Party of Peru), which is bringing great joy to the revolutionary forces around the world and invoking the hatred and wrath of the reactionaries. This May marks the 10th year of the people's war in Peru.

From the vantage point of the imperialists, the situation in the world is too much out of control. But from the viewpoint of our class and the oppressed around the world it is not yet enough out of their control. Efforts to change the agenda to forge a different future must be urgently taken up.

In this country, the RCP/USA has called on the revolutionary masses to: Take a bold stand, with cold revolutionary politics in command, and not let them carry out their plans to pen us in, lock us up, humiliate us down, and kill us off, while they're putting up that front, telling that Big Lie that this is what we want!

A war on the people is being carried out under the guise of the "war on drugs." "Resesdence" units are installed in neighborhoods to isolate and ghettoize (gestapo-style) the oppressed,

"American Southwest," a symbol of the continuing oppression of people of Mexican descent in that part of the country, and a symbol of U.S. domination over Mexico today. The three throw down the Texas flag and raised high the bright red flag of revolution over this despicable shrine of the U.S. empire. While the pigs fumed, the red flag flew for an hour that day as the revolutionaries proclaimed the determination of proletarians the world over to fight relentlessly for the downfall of capital. This was a call heard and welcomed around the world, symbolic of what must be done to the entire system of imperialism—and soon! As welcome a sight as this was to the oppressed everywhere, so it was equally hated by reactionaries of all stripes.

Damión García was one who feared nothing and was down for the whole thing. He was one of those three revolutionaries who stood proudly on top of the Alamo. When he was murdered by police agents in Los Angeles one month later, Damión was already known to millions, although to many not by name but by his picture on the Alamo. By murdering him in cold blood, the pigs were not only retaliating for Damión's righteous indignation and courageous defiance of those who rule over the people, but also desperately hoping to stop the gathering momentum for revolutionary May First and send a message to the oppressed that we can't fight the powers with our eyes on the prize of all-the-way revolution. But immediately, as word went out about this cowardly political execution, the people were angered and outraged, even while some understood that this is the nature of the enemy. Many millions lifted their heads, stifled their resolve and opened their eyes to look more clearly at the cherished cause for which Damión García lived, and gave, his life. As a prisoner in the Atlanta city jail wrote at the time, “Damión García is dead but in his death I came alive.”

Now, ten years later, the stakes are higher, for them and for us. Since 1980, things have not developed in a straight line forward for revolutionary forces around the world, and many things have not turned out as we expected. But in a very real sense, and even more important to grasp, there has been tremendous advance and progress in the level of struggle, ideological and political clarity, and organization of the international proletariat. Of major significance has been the unity forged in the formation of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement—enabling revolutionary communists to find each other, to join forces and lead the proletariat and oppressed people of the world to fight with a common purpose and goals, with true proletarian internationalism. It is a profound tribute that no matter how hard the revolutionary ruling classes try to stomp out and bury revolution, resistance bursts forth anew—often when and where it is least expected. This has been increasingly the case in the last several years. Outstanding in this regard is the revolutionary warfare being waged in the Andes Mountains of Peru, led by the Partido Comunista del Peru (Communist Party of Peru), which is bringing great joy to the revolutionary forces around the world and invoking the hatred and wrath of the reactionaries. This May marks the 10th year of the people's war in Peru.

From the vantage point of the imperialists, the situation in the world is too much out of control. But from the viewpoint of our class and the oppressed around the world it is not yet enough out of their control. Efforts to change the agenda to forge a different future must be urgently taken up.

In this country, the RCP/USA has called on the revolutionary masses to: Take a bold stand, with cold revolutionary politics in command, and not let them carry out their plans to pen us in, lock us up, humiliate us down, and kill us off, while they're putting up that front, telling that Big Lie that this is what we want!

A war on the people is being carried out under the guise of the "war on drugs." "Resesdence" units are installed in neighborhoods to isolate and ghettoize (gestapo-style) the oppressed,
allowing all manner of pigs free rein behind the walls. Housing projects are turned into prisons, while new prisons are built and quickly filled. Police murders and police sweeps hit the people on a daily basis. A war on women threatens the return of back-alley butcher shops and demands that women submit to male domination. A war on immigrants means barricades, roundups, concentration camps and deportations. Racist pogroms and assaults on Black youth are happening. Like a desperate muttering, the enemy is viciously lashing out at the people at every turn.

In the face of the enemy's clampdown, there is growing struggle and increased desire—especially among the youth—to take on those attacks. It seems there are many brothers and sisters out there who would like to see this monster brought down and today wouldn’t be any too soon, but we have to pull together, organize and politically train those forces today to stand in the forefront of many millions more who will be there when the time comes. This was the role that Damián García joyously chose to play. Today many more are needed to take up his example, join the vanguard, and lead the masses. As Chairman Avakian has said: “As the example of Damián García shines brightly and lights up the only course worth taking—a determined preparation to be able to seize the time and make revolution right here in the U.S., so that the specter that so terrified and enraged the rulers ten years ago, of Damián and his comrades atop the Alamo, can become a raging material force that makes their worst nightmares—and our fondest dreams—a reality.

Our class, the international proletariat, has throughout history and from all over the globe brought forward many brave fighters, heroes of the people. And among those the most precious of all are those who not only rebel but who make the whole content of their lives the fight to abolish all class divisions and all oppression from the face of the globe so that humankind can be free to advance to a higher form of society. There have been many revolutionary martyrs whose lives were cut short in the service of the struggle, taken from us too soon. The commemoration of these comrades is an important part of the class struggle. Each side has their symbols, their models to look to and learn from. Damián García is among us. He is in the ghettos and battlions, the factories and schools, the prisons of the South Bronx and Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area and all the other cities of this country. And he is in the mountains of Peru, waging People’s War under the leadership of the Communist Party of Peru, and in the Azanian townships fighting against South Africa, and everywhere in the world where people chafe under the burden of oppression and rise up against it. A Puerto Rican brother said it quite well: “I think Damián García was a great revolutionary. His soul will never die, his spirit will never die. It’s among the masses of people now and it will always be there. It’s a great expression of what the working-class people should be doing. If he was the man to take a stand like that, I know there’s more out there who could take a stand like that and show the bourgeoisie that we can put them in their place, which is nowhere. I know we can overthrow this system if we just try hard enough and want it bad enough, which I know everybody does. But we can’t fight only with anger, we have to fight with consciousness and overthrow the system. Because for the future to come, if we want a future, we’ll have to overthrow the system, period.” On April 22, the fortieth anniversary of the police assassination of Damián García, it would be right on time if the red flag of revolution, the flag of our people that Damián held high over the Alamo, were flown everywhere that Damián García is present.

Damián García is dead
But in his death I came alive
Every day we are murdered bit by bit
I am 40 years old
A veteran, and a Black man
My brother has been murdered
Cold-blooded, gangster scam death
I’m running out of patience

Damián García is dead
But in his death I came alive

He held the blood-red flag as his own blood flowed
I never knew I had a flag
Until Damián García died
Rage is nothing new to me
And I’ve seen death before
But I’m 40 years old and running out of patience

Damián García is dead
What you gonna do?
I’m gonna take his place, motherfuckers
And if you slit my throat and open my belly
I was dying anyway bit by bit
I lost an eye in the army, got shot in the back by a pig
I’m 40 years old, run out of patience
Ready for Revolution

Written by a prisoner in the Atlanta city jail, 1980
A new factory stands in the middle of a farming area, five miles outside the city. The whole area has been transformed into a mixture of small factories, houses, open fields, and scattered warehouses containing stockpiles of industrial and agricultural goods. The people in this small community pay attention to questions of environmental protection as part of their daily lives. Teams of workers and peasants meet with scientists, technicians and students to study questions of philosophy and science. Together they work out ways to turn toxic waste—previously dumped into rivers and buried in the earth—into useful products. Knowledge is not seen as the private property of a small elite group of people with their noses stuck in the air. Instead peasants and scientists work together to find alternatives to harmful chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

People once illiterate and oppressed by landlords and government officials are now in control. Those who once had no say in running things are now counted on to solve the problems confronting not only their own community but the country as a whole. Everyone is encouraged to take part in mass campaigns to deal with pollution: Workers, peasants, and youth, who once had no future other than hardship and unending poverty. Older people, previously treated like useless "waists." Women who once had no life other than serving their husbands and children. And people with physical and mental disabilities, once locked away in institutions and shunned by society. These are the people now running society.

The government puts the health and welfare of the people before profit. Factories institute measures to prevent pollution and deal with industrial waste, even if it means losing money. And where there are still corrupt officials and factory managers implementing harmful policies, the masses are mobilized to make criticisms and then take matters into their own hands to turn the situation around.

Is this some utopian society we can only dream of but never achieve? No, in fact it is a picture of the recent past! This was reality in revolutionary China under the leadership of Mao Tse-tung. In 1949 the proletariat seized power in China, kicked out the imperialist dominators, and set out to build a whole new society free of oppression and exploitation. This is a history suppressed and kept a secret. But this history must be brought out and popularized because it has great revolutionary relevance and implications for people struggling throughout the world.

China was a poor, backward country with the scars of hundreds of years of oppression by foreign powers. But after the proletariats seized power millions of people were mobilized to make revolutionary transformation in all spheres of society. Industry was built at a very rapid rate but in a way that consciously paid attention to the problems of pollution and toxic waste. Science was put in the hands of the masses to develop advanced means of dealing with the problem of industrial pollution on a mass scale. And there were path-breaking advances in developing alternatives to harmful chemical pesticides, like the use of parasitic bees against crop-eating insects.

Not all the problems of pollution and environmental protection were solved in revolutionary China. For instance, they were not able to solve the problem of pollution from widespread coal burning before the counterrevolutionaries turned back the clock. But the important thing is that the masses began to chart a revolutionary road and approach to solving these problems. And this was done as part of waging the class struggle and continuing to build socialism. This was done by going up against all kinds of sabotage by forces in society that wanted to take China down the capitalist road. It showed that it is capitalist industry and not industrialization in and of itself that is the cause of pollution and environmental destruction. And it showed what can be achieved when the people have power and revolutionary politics are in command.

Following the death of Mao Tse-tung in 1976, a group of capitalist-minded high government officials launched an armed coup d'etat and seized power back from the people. Today the restoration of capitalism has brought rampant industrial pollution back to China. But the lessons of the Chinese revolution cannot be taken away from the people of the world.

The following story focuses on how the Chinese people successfully fought pollution and industrial waste. But even more, it is a story of how they did this as part of building a whole new society aimed at getting rid of class inequalities and all oppressive relations and ideas.

******

A Question of Power
How Revolution Fought Pollution

Revolutionary China in the 1960s: Titihar was a city of one million people. Fish from the Nunchiang River accounted for half the output of the entire province. But the number of fish in the river was dropping markedly. In the winter when the river froze over, large numbers of dead fish were found and the catch dropped to 17.9 percent of what it had been in 1960. The fish were dying because every day, industry was dumping 220,000 tons of sewage and water containing chemicals into the river.

In 1968 the Titihar Municipal Party Committee and the city's revolutionary committee set out to solve this problem. More than forty scientists and technicians from fourteen research organizations were mobilized to come to Titihar and work with local workers, fisher­men and technicians to survey the river. They found that between December and April, while the river was frozen, a yellow sticky mass was growing at the bottom of the river, giving the water a terrible smell. It was organic matter, a fungus, and it was growing because of large amounts of sewage and industrial chemical being dumped into the river. Water containing this yellow gunk consumed 22.5 times as much oxygen as normal water and this is why the fish were dying.

A team of workers, cadres and scientists was formed and the first thing they did was go out among the common people and ask their opinions and what they thought should be done. These ideas helped establish clear guidelines:

1. Benefit to the people should be the starting point.
2. Keep future generations in mind—solutions should be...
The early 1970s the yuan was equivalent to about fifty cents. In 1972 the factory produced 39 tons of sulfuric acid and calcium sulfate, 1,400 tons of low-cost, quality cement was produced, and more than 5,000 tons per year were produced which were used to construct more than 5,000 tons of low-cost, quality cement was produced, and more than 5,000 tons of solid residue of the furfural production. Raw materials recovered from wastes In a Shenyang pharmaceutical factory. From the metaphysical point of view, waste cannot be remedied by another small unit, a middle school-run factory, to produce some chloride which is used in various industries; between different factories, between different departments, and between different kinds of workers. It went against extreme specialization, put less emphasis on the differences between workers with different skills, and helped to narrow the gap between large and small plants.

**The Revolutionary Principle of Many Uses**

As early as 1956, Chairman Mao put forward the policy of the "three wastes" theory. At the same time, he also put forward the policy of the "three wastes" theory. At the same time, he also put forward the policy of producing useful goods. From the metaphysical point of view, waste cannot be converted into something useful. Left to itself, industrial waste poisons and pollutes the environment and harms the people. But when the composition of the samples is analyzed, the results show that the waste residue of the furfural production. Raw materials recovered from wastes In a Shenyang pharmaceutical factory. From the metaphysical point of view, waste cannot be remedied by another small unit, a middle school-run factory, to produce some chloride which is used in various industries; between different factories, between different departments, and between different kinds of workers. It went against extreme specialization, put less emphasis on the differences between workers with different skills, and helped to narrow the gap between large and small plants.

**The Revolutionary Principle of Many Uses**

As early as 1956, Chairman Mao put forward the policy of the "three wastes" theory. At the same time, he also put forward the policy of producing useful goods. From the metaphysical point of view, waste cannot be converted into something useful. Left to itself, industrial waste poisons and pollutes the environment and harms the people. But when the composition of the samples is analyzed, the results show that the waste residue of the furfural production. Raw materials recovered from wastes In a Shenyang pharmaceutical factory. From the metaphysical point of view, waste cannot be remedied by another small unit, a middle school-run factory, to produce some chloride which is used in various industries; between different factories, between different departments, and between different kinds of workers. It went against extreme specialization, put less emphasis on the differences between workers with different skills, and helped to narrow the gap between large and small plants.
Deep in the rain forests of the Upper Huallaga Valley in Peru, a sanitarium project to extract the hallucinogenic plant material known as "Spike" is underway. The U.S. government has funded this project under the banner of "counterrevolution on the Andes." But the locals are using the herbicide to extract silver from the hills and are making use of the silver leaves for thousands of uses, including cooking, currency, and other silver-based products. The local people are using the herbicide to do serious damage to the ecology of the rain forests and to the people living there.

The Upper Huallaga Valley is one of the areas throughout Peru where the revolutionary Alternative Peasant Front (INM) is putting into practice the "three-in-one" teams, which are made up of workers, technicians, and leading party cadre. These "three-in-one" teams are set up to ensure that the wisdom, initiative, and creativity of the ordinary people is taken into consideration and that all such methods are developed in China. Without asking for money from the state, in four months they built equipment which eliminated pollution and recovered more than 3 million yuan worth of liquid sulfuric acid each year.

Experiments they developed techniques to recover silver from industrial waste water as well as from discarded film and mirrors. In four years, from waste water, they extracted more than 3 million yuan worth of silver and recovered seven other materials, including gold, aluminum and magnesium sulfate—all using methods they developed themselves.

ENDING THE BIG CITY BLUES

The imperial powers of Europe, Japan and America exported capital to China in the last half of the nineteenth century and developed industries to exploit cheap labor and take advantage of unprecedented natural resources. Factories were built exclusively in the large coastal cities, where there were concentrations of workers and where it was easier to regulate products and export foreign markets. These huge cities became centers of population and industry. This spread out poisonous smoke and dumped toxic waste.

Capitalist experts accused Mao Tsetung of being a utopian romantic who was against modernization. But the fact is he developed a truly visionary critique of the capitalist city—and after China was liberated in 1949, new factories were set out to radically transform China's cities. In Shanghai the first stage included covering the open sewage channels and building boulevards above them. A bit of wind, a day in their father's field which had been deserted, and recovered more than 3 million yuan worth of liquid sulfuric acid each year.

The U.S. government has funded this project under the banner of "counterrevolution on the Andes." But the locals are using the herbicide to extract silver from the hills and are making use of the silver leaves for thousands of uses, including cooking, currency, and other silver-based products. The local people are using the herbicide to do serious damage to the ecology of the rain forests and to the people living there.
mainly peasants who have been joining the armed struggle being carried out by the Communist Party of Peru.

The U.S. is not only carrying out a war against the Peruvian people but also on its own territory. It is what the U.S. did during the Vietnam War, when they dropped huge amounts of the poisonous chemical Agent Orange on the Vietnamese people and their land.

The U.S. rulers blame the people in Upper Huallaga for harming the rain forests — this turns things upside down! Domination by big powers like the U.S. and semifeudal exploitation have devastated the lives of the masses of Peruvians. Because of this, large numbers of Peruvians have been forced to turn to petty production of coca to squeeze out a living. Although peasants in the Upper Huallaga Valley also grow bananas, rice and other crops, they are not able to survive without small plots of coca. The people's war in Peru is aimed at overthrowing this downpressing system and setting up a new society on the basis of the masses.

It is the Peruvian government and ruling classes who benefit the most from this drug peddling, since the billions of dollars in income from the drug traffic help ward off the collapse of Peru's dependent economy. And behind the Peruvian rulers stands the U.S. government, which itself has been involved in drug trafficking to finance the Contras and other covert operations.

The U.S. rulers fear that Peru will be decisively lost to them and that other countries in Latin America, where conditions are also ripe for revolution, will follow. This is their main concern in Peru.

And in order to attack the Peruvian revolution, the U.S. is willing to poison the rain forests in Peru and cause even more suffering to the people. The U.S. government carries out their interventions in Peru in the name of "eradicating coca." Isn't it the men who rule the U.S. and their whole system that needs to be eradicated through revolution?

**CORRECTION**

In the "National Call for a Conference: Down with U.S. Intervention in Peru" by the Committee to Support the Revolution in Peru which appeared in RW No. 550, Emenda Brown was incorrectly listed as an encoder of the call. Ms. Brown, a Panamanian scholar and coordinator of Women's Workshop on the Americas, is scheduled to be a speaker at the conference in New York to be held April 21 at Hunter College.

The mass campaigns in China to deal with the problem of pollution showed: It is the social system and the political line taken that determine whether or not economic development will harm the environment. Pollution is inevitable under the capitalist system where high profits are sought and production is highly competitive and anarchic. The capitalist mode of production means that profit determines what is produced, the choice of techniques, and the location of industries as well as distribution. And all this determines the relations between people and the natural environment. Under the capitalist system this can only mean rampant pollution, harm to the health of the people, and continued destruction of the planet in a thousand different ways. And it will take a revolutionary society to deal with the continuing crimes of pollution by the capitalist system. Only by seizing power can the people deal with this problem.

Without the destruction of the capitalist economy based on exploitation and profit, it is impossible to utilize advanced technology, not for profit, but for the benefit of the people.

Without people's control of the newspapers, radio, and television, it is impossible to uncover and bring mass attention to the problem of environmental destruction and conduct the kinds of mass campaigns needed to popularize successful solutions and arouse millions to take up this problem.

Without supervision by a politically conscious people, it is impossible to stop corrupt officials and heads of industry from running things with complete disregard for the health of the people and the environment.

Without revolutionary control of society, it is impossible to struggle against knowledge itself being treated as the private property of an elite section of society. Without power it is impossible to break the monopoly on knowledge and skills by technicians and supervisors; educate and train the masses to take up political, philosophical and scientific questions; and unite the leadership and creativity of the masses with scientists, intellectuals and experts to work together to solve the problems of pollution and environmental destruction.

Without forcing scientific research from the control of capitalist government and corporations, it is impossible to develop new technologies to solve the problems of waste and destruction caused by industries.

Without a revolutionary government committed to proletarian internationalism, it is impossible to address and solve the problem of pollution accumulating and destroying the environment on a world scale.

Only by seizing power and proletarian revolution can the masses understand and solve the problem of pollution and environmental destruction.

**A QUESTION OF POWER**

The mass campaigns in China to deal with the problem of pollution showed: It is the social system and the political line taken that determine whether or not economic development will harm the environment. Pollution is inevitable under the capitalist system where high profits are sought and production is highly competitive and anarchic. The capitalist mode of production means that profit determines what is produced, the choice of techniques, and the location of industries as well as distribution. And all this determines the relations between people and the natural environment. Under the capitalist system this can only mean rampant pollution, harm to the health of the people, and continuing destruction of the planet in a thousand different ways. And it will take a revolutionary society to deal with the continuing crimes of pollution by the capitalist system. Only by seizing power can the people deal with this problem.

Without the people's armed power seizing control of industry, machinery, and scientists, it is impossible to eliminate the mad anarchy of capitalism and stop companies from polluting and producing harmful and useless things.

Without a revolutionary government that leads the masses to exercise all around dictatorship over society, it is not possible to unleash the people's enthusiasm for building a new society free of exploitation and the people will not be able to take up and solve the problem of pollution.
We've Seen the System...

**CRIME OF IMPERIALISM:** Ruining the Earth's Atmosphere and Climate

Because of capitalism, we now have two historic changes going on with the earth's atmosphere:

1. Chemical pollutants, especially chlorofluorocarbons, have created a hole in the ozone layer over the Antarctic. (Chlorofluorocarbons are gases used in aerosol spray cans, in refrigerators, air conditioners and in styrofoam. The ozone layer is a special zone of charged oxygen high in the atmosphere that absorbs some of the harmful radiation from the sun.)

   Continued use of these pollutants will destroy the ozone layer. More radiation from the sun will reach the earth's surface causing cancer and mutations in living things.

2. The uncontrolled burning of gas, coal, wood and waste by imperialist society is starting to measurably increase the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. If this trend continues, the new composition of the air will trap more of the sun's heat. Acting like a greenhouse, the changed atmosphere would raise the earth's average temperature over the next decades. And an increase of only a few degrees will have catastrophic effects: Major areas of food production will be shifted hundreds of miles affecting billions of people. Rising ocean levels flood coastal areas.

   U.S. imperialism says its civilization is a model for the world. But what imperialism is doing to the earth alone reveals what a lie this is! The U.S. has 6 percent of the world's people, but it consumes close to 50 percent of the energy produced in the world. The rulers of the U.S. and other imperialist countries profit from a brutally lopsided world system; they rip off the whole planet and waste vast amounts of its resources.

Because of this lopsided situation, if even one large country of the Third World like China were able to successfully copy the West and start to consume fuel at a rate similar to the U.S. - the resulting production of carbon dioxide would speed up the greenhouse effect. Or similarly, if oppressed people in the tropical countries of Africa and Asia were even able to develop the same level of air conditioning and refrigeration technologies that U.S. imperialism has developed, the released pollutants could trigger epidemics of cancer by destroying ozone in the air.

The so-called "advanced countries," both East and West, can't serve as the "model" for anyone. If the rest of the world even tried to copy this kind of society, life itself on the planet earth would be threatened!

   The answer of U.S. negotiators to this problem at an international conference on the hole in the ozone west let the imperialist countries keep their refrigerators and the Third World can't have it! This situation is kept the poor countries poor. But the real solution in this lopsided setup where imperialist countries beg the resources of the world cannot continue any longer.

---

**CRIME OF IMPERIALISM:** Ripping Out the Lungs of the Planet

Big forests counteract the greenhouse effect, because trees take carbon dioxide and turn it back into oxygen. But while imperialist industry pumps out carbon dioxide, imperialist finance destroys the world's remaining forests at a shocking rate: tens of thousands of square miles a year.

All the countries with huge tropical forests are oppressed countries in the Third World. These countries are caught in a brutal vice caused by their debts. But imperialist banks, unable to pay even the interest on their billion dollar debts, these countries are forced to exploit any and all natural resources with complete ruthlessness - just to stave off financial collapse. Forests are cleared to export wood for debt payment. And they are being burned to clear new ground for cash crops and cattle ranches - also to pay debts. International bankers even "help" by giving new loans to finance the destruction of the forests.

   In the Amazon, home to the important Amazon rainforest, is on the edge of a biutal vise caused by the international banks. Because of this lopsided situation, if even one large country of the Third World like China were able to develop the same level of air conditioning and refrigeration technologies that U.S. imperialism has developed, the released pollutants could trigger epidemics of cancer by destroying ozone in the air.

   The answer of U.S. negotiators to this problem at an international conference on the hole in the ozone west let the imperialist countries keep their refrigerators and the Third World can't have it! This situation is kept the poor countries poor. But the real solution in this lopsided setup where imperialist countries beg the resources of the world cannot continue any longer.

---

**CRIME OF IMPERIALISM:** Spills, Leaks, and Bombs

The names of Bhopal, Chernoby, Prince William Sound are famous. Oil spilling every single day there are massive leaks and spills - most are covered up and unknown to the people. Just a few examples:

   All living things in the whole Rhine River in Europe were killed in 1986 when in the water after a pesticide plant caused a massive spill. News of this "Free murder" was suppressed in the U.S. media.

   Because imperialism has built its society on petroleum consumption, oil is pumped across the globe from oppressed countries that produce most of it to oppressor countries that consume most of it. Massive spills of oil take place all the time, flowing the oceans with slicks and "tarballs." In recent years spills like the Exxon Alaska spill have happened off the coasts of oppressed countries in the Caribbean and the Middle East. And nothing is done (or even
And It’s Wrecking the Planet

Imperialists say their “modern agriculture” is “the most productive in history.” But the truth is they enforce harmful agricultural methods in oppressed countries in order to serve imperialist profits. Fields that were used to produce food for local people now produce cash crops for the world market. Small peasant farmers using traditional methods are replaced by a few capitalist plantations who buy chemical pesticides and fertilizers from imperialist monopolies.

This imperialist agriculture poisons people while it impoverishes them:

- Western imperialism forces Third World countries to use chemicals that are considered too dangerous for use within so-called “advanced countries.” The chemical pesticides that accidentally killed all life in the Rhine River cannot be legally used in Europe for food production. But they are produced in Europe for shipment to the Third World.
- Cow’s milk sold in Guatemala has DDT levels 90 times higher than is legally allowed in the United States. People in Nicaragua and Guatemala carry 31 times more DDT in their blood than people in the U.S.
- The World Health Organization estimates that every minute of every day someone is poisoned by pesticides in the Third World. At least 5,000 pesticide deaths a year are estimated. Many side-effects like still births, deformed babies, cancers, etc., are currently impossible to estimate.
- Within the U.S. the massive poisoning of largely immigrant farmworkers is scandalous and intolerable. At the same time, the rate of poisoning in the Third World is 13 times higher than in the U.S.
- In most cases these pesticides contribute nothing to “feeding the hungry.” In Indonesia, the estate-style farms that grow export crops (cocoanuts, coffee, sugar cane and rubber) consume 20 times the pesticides used by small food-growing peasant farms that are cultivating seven times more acreage than the estates.

Imperialism deliberately poisons millions—even while it robs them and dominates them at the point of a gun. A social system that turns even food production into a death industry must be overthrown.
How Capitalism Sabotages Recycling

Every year, in the U.S. alone, close to 200 million tons of solid waste from the cities is buried in the earth or burned in incinerators. This amounts to 80 percent of all the garbage cities produce. This means only about 10 percent is recycled. And these figures don’t even include the solid waste from factories, mines, and farms which is about twenty times the amount of city waste. Nor does this include the tons of liquid chemical waste and garbage dumped in waterways.

Many people recognize that recycling is necessary and crucial to the very life of this planet and its inhabitants. Recycling one ton of steel does not conserve the raw materials needed to make a new ton of steel—it also averts 200 pounds of air pollutants, 100 pounds of water pollutants, and almost 0.003 pounds of mining wastes. Recycling newspaper saves 23 percent of the energy that would be needed to produce it from trees.

But the very structure of capitalism stands as a direct barrier to society’s ability to conserve resources in a thoroughgoing way. The whole way resources are owned under capitalism—largely by private capital—prevents the widespread implementation of recycling programs. Recycling efforts continually run up against the law of profit. Capitalist enterprise constantly seeks to exterminate the cost of recovering spent resources, to make the recycling of resources an unprofitable activity. And, in some cases, recycling has actually become a way to sustain and increase the wealth of capitalists and their far greater ability to feast on the earth.

The Very Structure of Capitalism Undermines Recycling

Under capitalism the way the prices are determined make it unprofitable to conserve and the anarchy of production and the market work against recycling becoming an integral part of the productive process.

Some people say if the “marketplace” were just let alone, it would automatically lead to more conservation. They argue that as a resource is depleted, the value in recycling will go up and so eventually entrepreneurs will enter the “recycling business.” But under capitalism, depletion of natural resources also increases the value of natural resources that remain untapped. And the latter resources become, the madder the drive to rip them from the earth. Check out how elephants are being made extinct—hunted down and slaughtered as their ivory becomes increasingly rare and therefore more valuable. Under capitalism, when a resource becomes threatened, it is not protected. It is more greedily grabbed.
Recycling Through Exploitation

How do these big companies make profit from recycling when grassroots efforts so often fail? One reason is the sheer scale of their operations. BFI’s director of recycling in San Mateo told the EPA that they collect almost 100 tons of recyclables per day from homes and businesses. The great bulk of the program’s revenue comes from recycling these materials, whose value (at average market prices) is far greater than what customers pay BFI to haul them away. Still, every time the price of recyclables falls, BFI must stockpile materials for weeks until the prices recover. These are the periods when a smaller, nonprofit center would most likely fail.

Recycling is also profitable for these companies because they exploit labor. Not only is there the unpaid labor of residents cleaning, sorting, and bundling recyclables for pickup, but many urban centers employ Black and other oppressed people at near minimum wages for the hard labor involved in collecting and processing materials. In San Mateo, the county provides recycling companies with day-laborers—people receiving welfare or mental health care. And recycling companies also profit off of the extreme impoverishment of homeless people who are forced to rummage through garbage and spend hours collecting aluminum cans—only to be paid pennies. Still, even these big for-profit recycling-valuators have not been able to achieve satisfactory rates of recycling. A 1989 survey of seventeen curbside recycling programs in the U.S. found they recovered an average of only 15 percent of residential trash, even though an estimated 90 percent is capable of recovery by existing methods.

Inclincers vs. Recycling

The EPA has mandated that cities recycle 25 percent of their refuse by 1992. This “regulation” amounts to a permit for cities to burn or bury the remaining 75 percent of their trash. It allows incinerators to continue belching poisons like dioxin into the air, earth, and water. When the U.S. nuclear industry faltered in the late 1970s, many of its firms tried to restore their profits by aggressively promoting city trash incineration. Between 1983 and 1987 alone, 173 city incinectors were purchased at an average cost of about $300 million. Currently about 300 more incinectors are being considered.

These incinectors are direct, long-term obstacles to recycling. Profitable only if they ran at 85 percent or more capacity for twenty to thirty years, their contracts require cities to put enough trash into them or pay the difference. So garbage that could and should be recycled is sent off to be burned, under-cutting any serious effort at large-scale solid waste recovery.

Barry Commoner, in his new book Making Peace with the Planet, brings out how the government shields the incinerator industry against recycling efforts. Last year a proposed new trash incinector in Spokane sought licensing from the EPA. Recycling advocates pointed out that under the Clean Air Act of 1970, the facility would have to remove from the trash anything that would create hazardous waste if burned. Since this would make incinectors unprofitable, the National Resource Recovery Association—a pro-incinerator industry group that is part of the U.S. Conference of Mayors—wrote a letter to EPA Director William K. Reilly stating that “EPA can lawfully set only emission limits... it cannot prescribe particular technologies or waste management strategies such as recycling to meet these limitations.” In other words: Corporations are not to be denied the freedom to pursue profits any way they please, even when this means placing disregard for the problem of pollution. In June 1989 Reilly ruled in favor of the incinerator industry, allowing the Spokane plant to be licensed.

In the United States a whole mass movement has developed around recycling. But these efforts have been constantly sabotaged by the workings of capitalism.

Under capitalism, where profit is in command, industries cannot and do not concern themselves with the health and welfare of the people and the planet. There is unrestrained pollution, constant efforts to cover up and “get away” with toxic dumping and the production of all kinds of products that are harmful to the environment and difficult to recycle.

Under capitalism the cost of separating and extracting recyclable materials from garbage is a lot less profitable than just using up more raw materials and depleting the earth’s resources. But in a revolutionary society where the proletariat has seized power, the private ownership of products of profit will not stand in the way of making recycling an integral part of all economic activity. In such a society, recycling will not be run in a way that kills people and the planet. Only a new state power is in the hands of the people will it finally be possible to carry out methods of recycling and conservation in a thoroughly-going way.

Increasing numbers of people are joining the “recycling movement” in this country. And many people sincerely think that everyone just does a “small part” we can put an end to pollution and depletion of the earth. But under capitalism these efforts can only be wasted. And the truth of the matter is, all the time and energy being expended by people trying to “recycle capitalism” would be much better used to working to overthrow this system!

The problem today isn’t that just not enough people are recycling. The problem is the people don’t have power.
"We have been correctly emphasizing that world war is not necessarily part of the development of a revolutionary situation in any particular country, including in the U.S. In other words it is not an absolutely necessary part of the ingredients that would go into making up the possibility for a beginning. What I'm saying here is another part of emphasizing that ours has never been and should not be a 'world war only' viewpoint. Again, to be provocative, we are not advocates of world war. We are not people whose highest aspirations are to see a world war so that maybe somehow we can do something good in the context of that. We are advocates of revolution and proletarian internationalism and the proletarian world revolution: that is what we're working for. Of course, we always welcome crises, particularly profound crises of the imperialist system, not only in particular countries but worldwide. We recognize this heightens possibilities, but we're not hinging everything certainly on the outbreak of world war. And neither must we, in my opinion, in a sort of passive sense hinge everything on even a more favorable eruption of contradictions on a world scale, on a more favorable forcible readjustment of relations on a world scale. We shouldn't hinge everything, including the question of how to approach making a beginning in the U.S., on this. We have an active, not a passive, role to play both in terms of what we do in the U.S. in particular and also in terms of our contribution to the world struggle.

"In looking at this from a slightly different angle, we have to forge a clearer picture of what a revolutionary crisis—or a situation that would lead to the possibility of an actual armed insurrection with a real possibility of winning—what such a situation or such a crisis looks like in a country like the U.S."

Bob Avakian
Chairman of the RCPUSA
from "Making New Leaps in Preparing for Revolution"