

# RULERS' RACIST COPS MURDER AGAIN... AND AGAIN

## New York City

*In the weeks since a group of white, black and Latino cops murdered an unarmed black man, Sean Bell, the day before his wedding and injured his two friends with a total of 50 shots, working-class anger has erupted around New York City.*

### FIGHTING BACK AT THE CRIME SCENE

**QUEENS, NY, Dec. 2** — Over 400 angry workers took to the streets, rallying at the site of this latest racist police assassination and marching to the local precinct. The kkkops have terrorized this neighborhood, searching for the alleged "fourth man" they claim had a gun which would justify their murder. As one woman said, "the fourth person is every one of us."

PLP teachers and students led many chants: "black cop, white cop, all the same — racist murder is the name of their game!" Many people enthusiastically chanted with us. Hundreds took copies of CHALLENGE over the course of the demonstration. Many bystanders joined the march, chanted or honked their horns in support along the way.

Dangerously, the march was led by the nationalist New Black Panther Party. They condemn politicians from mayor Bloomberg to Al Sharpton and other black politicians for attempting to blunt the rage of the people. However, they fail to see the contradictions within their own rhetoric. For them the solution is "no shopping for 50 days except black business..." and a litany of anti-white sentiments. These misleaders pose as militant fighters for the rights of the oppressed, but merely seek to replace white capitalists with black ones, rather than seeing the system as the root cause of such evils as police brutality. Their dead-end nationalist ideas must be refuted with class-conscious internationalist ideas.

### MID-EVENING ANGER

**NEW YORK CITY, Dec. 6** — Hundreds of angry workers and students, mainly black, rallied at Federal Plaza to protest racist police terror. The protestors' militancy reflects the growing rage throughout the city following the latest police atrocity. Hundreds took CHALLENGE and leaflets from sellers weaving through the crowd. Many misleaders called for the resignation of police commissioner Ray Kelly and for a day of boycott in the busy Xmas shopping season. One woman spoke about the heroic struggle of workers in Oaxaca but pushed the incorrect idea that the workers and youth of that Mexican state have won their struggle against the rulers, although they now face massive repression.

The rally ended with a march through downtown Manhattan, with pro-working-class, internationalist chants echoing through the streets. A group of young black and Latin women chanting with a bullhorn led a contingent of PLP members and friends. When someone asked them to do a nationalist chant, they said, "Hell no, we're anti-nationalist."

More than 100 of the city's top black and



Latino elected officials, church and labor leaders are planning a massive pre-Christmas march along Fifth Avenue for December 16. Headed by FBI informant Al Sharpton, these capitalist cronies aligned with the other war party, the Democrats, realize they must calm the anger of these workers and youth, who are needed now, more than ever, to fight in the wider wars the rulers are planning to control Middle-East oil.

We in PLP will organize a contingent in this and other protests to show workers and youth that police terror is part and parcel of the profit system, and that the only real solution is organizing an anti-racist revolutionary communist-led movement to wipe out the cause of racism: capitalism. Join PLP!✪

## PL Teacher Calls for Unity with Anti-Racist Protestors

**NYC, N.Y., Dec. 6** — The United Federation of Teachers (UFT) led by President Randi Weingarten recently made a deal with the city giving teachers a small raise to help maintain their loyalty to the system. This is part of the UFT leadership's long-term strategy to divert teachers' attention into the electoral system instead of a real workers' movement.

But PLP teachers know that the union leadership stands hand-in-hand with our bosses. We always fight for unity with our true allies — our students and their parents. In that spirit, a PLP member rose at the UFT Delegate Assembly to protest the racist police murder of Sean Bell, saying, "This meeting should not take place, and we as teachers should leave now for 1 Police Plaza to say that we have had enough of these cops who brutally murder our children."

While most of the delegates are not yet convinced to defy the union leadership, the speech received applause, and several friends left the meeting to protest with us. PLP teachers will continue to struggle for working-class unity in our schools and in the union, to build a revolutionary movement to fight for a system without racist goons and their capitalist masters.✪

## Chicago

**Dec. 12** — On November 18, two undercover cops murdered 22-year-old Michael Smith in cold blood. They approached the young black man with guns drawn as he exited a South Side store. They never identified themselves as cops. Eyewitnesses say Michael put his hands up and offered no resistance, but they shot him anyway. At his funeral, 17 youths were arrested after clashing with police.

Four weeks after his murder, Alderwoman Dorothy Troutman held a community forum/press conference on police brutality and got more than she bargained for from PL'ers. There politicians stated that we must stand behind them and vote for them if we want change. Like Al Sharpton in New York after the shooting of Sean Bell (see left), they called for a citizens' review board to judge whether police shootings are justified.

One worker said police in the U.S. arose from two factions: southern slave-catchers and northern Pinkerton strike-breakers, and would always be the enemies of workers. Even some of the politicians agreed with residents' statements that it was the nature of the police to kill and terrorize workers.

Troutman stated that "unless you have an all-out revolution, you have no other choice but to support politicians." A young PL'er responded: "Why not revolution?! You yourself stated that it's the nature of the police to terrorize workers. All a citizens' review board will do is hand them over to a higher court full of crooked judges who will give them a slap on the wrist. Why do we keep reinforcing the system? The only solution is a revolution and the establishment of a worker-controlled, communist state that destroys the cops and the system that protects them."

A state representative lashed out at PLP, saying we should not "preach revolution" or anything that will cause young black people to die. Her comments contained more anger than anything she directed at the police. When an older resident attacked PLP for criticizing "her Aldermen," others supported us or defended our right to speak. When politicians and the cops stated that not all cops are bad, a person in the crowd shouted, "Only 99%!"

After the forum, the media left and the politicians fled behind closed doors. But the residents stayed and talked. We got contact information from several residents who initiated discussion with us based on our comments during the forum. We distributed CHALLENGE and a PL leaflet containing a communist analysis of racist police terror.

The ruling class will try harder to win us to fascism through more community-policing (snitching) programs, and liberal reforms of the police system. We will work harder to build a mass base for communist revolution to destroy them and their system. We have a world to win!✪

## This Week:

Bosses Fight Over Mexico's Riches; Reformers Mislead Angry Workers .....	3
Unions Selling Out Militant VW Strikers .....	3
Profit-Driven Diamond Bosses Fund Africa's Wars .....	4
Chávez Victory: Imperialists' Dogfight Over South America Sharpens .....	5

# Iraq Study Group Shows U.S. Will Defend Oil Empire With Workers' Blood

The competition for resources, markets and labor drives profit-hungry capitalists to spill workers' blood. This hard fact never appears in the pie-in-the-sky report of the Iraq Study Group (ISG) just released by its co-chairmen, James Baker and Lee Hamilton. With chaos in Iraq threatening U.S. control of the Middle East's oil, the liberal, imperialist wing of U.S. rulers cooked up the ISG to somehow reverse the Bush disaster in Iraq. Political reality, however, reveals Baker-Hamilton as both impractical and misleading.

The ISG plan hinges on Iraqi troops doing most of the fighting, and reducing U.S. troops while the U.S. engages Syria and Iran diplomatically. But working-class Iraqis have scant loyalty to the ineffective U.S.-puppet national "government." Tightly linked to anti-U.S. Chinese and European imperialists, the Iran-Syria axis is expanding its influence throughout the Middle East and thus has no reason to help U.S. rulers out of their jam. Finally, there is no "exit strategy."

U.S. rulers cannot abandon the region militarily. In fact, they need to maintain 14 military bases in Iraq. Forcible dominance over its oil is the cornerstone of their

worldwide empire. No matter whose voice Bush heeds — the ISG's report is just the most publicized of many — the Mid-East promises a future of growing instability and carnage.

## IRAQI WORKERS MUST ALLY WITH WORKERS WORLDWIDE

In the 1970's, the U.S. tried "Vietnamization," turning combat over to the South Vietnamese army. It failed miserably. But the updated version has even slimmer chances of success. The average Iraqi identifies with a sect, tribe or political organization rather than the "nation" of Iraq, which British imperialists invented in the 1920's. The NY Times (12/10) worries about this central pillar of the ISG scheme. "The Iraqi Army and police whose proposed reinforcement lies at the center of the Iraq Study Group's plan for American extraction are often less neutral institutions supporting the nation than a flimsy camouflage for Shia to settle accounts with Sunnis, while the Kurds bide their time and hope the child of chaos will be an independent Kurdistan." Such nationalism traps Iraqi workers into becoming cannon fodder for one or another local capitalist ruling class. Better to unite with workers of rival clans and U.S. GI's against their common enemy.

## ANTI-US ALLIANCE GROWING; FOCUS ON MIDEAST OIL

Pinning hopes on Syria and Iran, as the ISG does, to help stabilize Iraq is just as absurd as counting on loyal Iraqi soldiers. These nations are part of growing anti-U.S. energy and arms alliances, including China, Russia and French-led Western Europe. Signs point to this developing coalition headed on a collision course

with U.S. imperialism.

Iranian-backed Hezbollah's missiles hitting U.S. ally Israel were of Chinese design and manufacture and had passed through Syria. China and Russia provide technical know-how for Iran's nuclear program and obstruct U.S. efforts to curb it. In October, China signed a \$200-billion, 25-year "deal of the century" for Iranian gas and is negotiating for its oil. France's oil giant Total has a \$40-million Swiss bank account to bribe Iranian officials (L'Express magazine Dec. 7) for drilling rights in the huge South Pars field. In contrast, U.S. Halliburton got booted out of Iran when hardliner Ahmadinejad took power last year. China and Russia have welcomed Iran into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which fosters trade and conducts military exercises. Clearly, Iran's and Syria's interests lie in weakening U.S. influence, not in aiding Exxon Mobil's quest for Iraqi crude.

## IF OIL IS IN GROUND, U.S. TROOPS WILL BE ON IT

Don't hold your breath waiting for U.S. troops to exit Iraq. U.S. rulers simply cannot walk away from Iraq's oil treasure — the world's second largest — and jeopardize their chokehold on Saudi Arabia's still larger reserves. Professor Kalev Sepp of the U.S. Navy's postgraduate school says that even under the ISG plan, GI's are in for another "three to five hard years" in the country. (Council on Foreign Relations website) ISG chief Baker said, "We're going to have a really robust American troop presence in Iraq and the region for a very long time." (AP, 12/7)

The Pentagon has temporarily shelved its preferred option, "a classic counterinsurgency campaign [that] would require several hundred thousand additional U.S.

and Iraqi soldiers" only because "there are not enough troops in the U.S. military." (Washington Post, 11/20) But liberals, energized by November's elections, are pushing for national service when Congress reconvenes, to "solve" that problem.

We cannot predict how things will play out. Perhaps the U.S. will downsize its support for Israel, lately more hindrance than help. The U.S. Israel lobby is incensed that the ISG suggests dealing with Iran's Holocaust-denying Ahmadinejad, who calls for wiping Israel off the map. On the other hand, the Bushites may ignore Baker-Hamilton and use U.S. air and naval superiority to strike Iran.

Without knowing the details, we can say that U.S. rulers surely will defend their oil empire by every means necessary, however violent. And they will intensify efforts to mobilize the nation for ever larger, inevitably global wars. The Iraq war didn't arise from an individual's incompetence. It sprang from capitalist competition for profits. The Iraq crisis and the phony ISG solution heighten our class's need to obliterate the profit system. ☛

## WHAT WE FIGHT FOR

Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to smash capitalism — wage slavery. While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead:" capitalism is the real failure for billions all over the world. Capitalism returned to the Soviet Union and China because socialism failed to wipe out many aspects of the profit system, like wages and division of labor.

Capitalism inevitably leads to wars. PLP organizes workers, students and soldiers to turn these wars into a revolution for communism — the dictatorship of the proletariat. This fight requires a mass Red Army led by the communist PLP.

Communism means working collectively to build a society where sharing is based on need. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. Everyone will share in society's benefits and burdens.

Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of race.

Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women workers.

Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One International working class, one world, one Party.

Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. **Join Us!**

Contact us  
CHALLENGE PERIODICALS  
P.O. 808 Brooklyn NY 11202

www.plp.org  
email: cd188@juno.com;  
phone: 718-630-9440

CHALLENGE/DESAFIO (ISSN 0009-1049) published bi-weekly by Challenge Periodicals. 1 issue \$5.00. Subscription: \$15. Six months: \$10. Send address changes to CHALLENGE Periodicals, GPO 808 Brooklyn, NY 11202. January 3, 2007 Volume 39, No. 48

This CHALLENGE is a three-week issue. We will return to a bi-weekly schedule after January 3rd. We wish our readers a New Year filled with struggle for a better communist future!

## Don't Let the Bosses Build a Nazi-Like War Machine from the Ashes of Iraq

The Iraq fiasco has ushered in a dangerous period for the bosses' armed forces. Chuck Negal (R.-Neb.) warns: "We are destroying our force structure, which took 30 years to build (Washington Post, 11/26)." The ruling class agrees that Iraq is no longer "winnable" militarily, leaving the troops to die for a "lost cause." Compounding the problem, the organs of state power have not agreed on or committed to any plan for a swift tactical retreat, prolonging the danger to the Army's morale.

From the bosses' point of view, there is potential for much worse than grumbling in the ranks. The Pentagon's own studies reveal that GI resistance and rebellion reached its apex, involving 47% of the rank-and-file soldiers in 1971, during "Vietnamization" — the long slogging out of the Vietnam War.

The bosses turned to a volunteer army after Vietnam to rebuild a committed Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) and Officer Corps. Debates around reinstating the draft are, for now, a red herring. The bosses will eventually need a massive draft army to confront major imperialist competitors, but such an army requires committed cadre. Given current political restraints, a volunteer army fits the bill.

Nonetheless, the bosses anticipate bigger local wars in the near future, particularly to keep imperialist competitors from securing their own access to Mideast oil. "Even assuming an early exit from Iraq,"

warns the New York Times (The Army We Need 11/21), "the Army's overall authorized strength needs to be increased some 75,000 to 100,000 troops..."

The working class will pay for this expensive proposition, but the ruling class is also demanding lesser capitalists bite-the-bullet for the biggest bosses' strategic needs. "America cannot afford to dribble away money on corporate subsidies disguised as military necessities," the New York Times continues.

Numbers alone won't do the trick. Using racism, patriotism and faith in democracy, the bosses hope to win a committed cadre. "Congress must work harder at rebuilding the battlefield and the home front that a healthy democracy needs," is the way the New York Times puts the patriotic appeal.

The racist myth is that Arab culture has doomed them to clan warfare for hundreds of years. The truth is the imperialists have pitted one sect against another to secure control of Mideast oil. Under the bosses' racist scenario, the Army's mission was a noble one, even if doomed to failure, not imperialist occupation. The Nazis used similar myths about World War I to build their war machine for World War II.

Strategic ruling-class thinkers are focusing on what ideas the troops and youth (future troops) take away from this disaster. The New York Times demands the new defense secretary and the next Congress "repair, rebuild and reshape the nation's ground forces. *They need to renew the*

*morale and confidence of America's serving men and women and restore the appeal of career military service for the brightest young officers [our italics].*" The bosses can't wait 30 years to rebuild "our force structure" as bigger and bloodier wars lie on the horizon.

## Danger And Opportunity for the Working Class As Well

The only viable answer to the bosses' bigger and bloodier wars is communist revolution. There can be no talk of revolution without the support of large numbers of troops. Revolutionary communist ideas won't spring spontaneously from an Iraq disaster. It requires that comrade soldiers pursue tactics and strategy to build revolutionary communist class-consciousness among the troops.

Soldiers must be aware of the danger of the bosses' ideology, even if it's cloaked in anti-Iraq war rhetoric. We must fight for an internationalist anti-racist position from every vantage point to oppose the patriotism, faith in democracy and racism of U.S. imperialism. In this way, we can expose the bosses ideas used to rebuild their armed might, sharpening the struggle. Let's use every opportunity to pave the path to revolution. ☛

# Battle Over Communist Ideas In D.C. Union Election

WASHINGTON, D.C., Dec. 6 — PLP member Mike Golash, the incumbent president of Local 689 of the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU), narrowly lost his re-election bid by an (uncertified) vote of 1,199 to 1,046. Over 2,200 voted for other candidates. Election irregularities could overturn these results.

Regardless, more than 1,000 workers wanted the communist PLP'er to lead the union, based on their collective experience over the past 2½ years. Revolutionary politics came out the big winner in this battle.

The opposition relied on anti-communism to attack the fairest, most compassionate and most competent official the union ever had. They claimed he was using the union to build communism. But PLP has never hidden our revolutionary goals from the workers, or the need for them to join and lead our movement. Many workers fought this anti-communism. In a flyer distributed to about 1,000 union members, one worker wrote (excerpts):

*"The numerous circulars distributed to members are pure slander! 'He's a communist! He's a racist!' OK, here we go... Who doesn't know that Mike is a Communist!?!? That has been a known fact for the 30 years he has been employed with Metro, so anyone claiming to be shocked or saying had they known they wouldn't have voted for him is lying!*

**EVERYBODY KNOWS! Only, everyone doesn't**

*know what a communist is...*

*1. Communist: One holding a collectivist ideology...meaning that the power (production and distribution) belongs in the hands of the working people...! How many of us don't feel the same way!?! (Tell the truth!) Basically, Communism...means if you need more than your brother or sister needs, you get it even if it means that they have to pull their belts in tighter to accommodate you! (If the power belonged to the people maybe there wouldn't have been so much red tape and*

To win these future  
leaders of the revolution we  
must step up our  
struggle for communist ideas  
at Metro.

*bureaucracy when it came time to rescue Katrina victims from their roofs before they died!)*

*2. Racist: Showing ethnic prejudice. This is an oxymoron because communists do not believe in racism! They believe all 'races' and nationalities should work together and get along for one common good (the sake of the people)!"*

Actually, Mike Golash led the struggle against racism, fighting the two-tier wage system for mostly young black workers.

This open battle over communist ideas lays the basis

for a more powerful workers' movement. The flyer's writer noted that several of her co-workers said they had no idea that communism meant racial and economic equality. The red-led Metro campaign deserves a red star for every worker who begins to recognize that communism is in their fundamental interest.

Some workers are stepping up their commitment to the revolutionary movement. Many young workers stated that it was time for them to take over the struggle that PLP has been leading. "Let's not rely on elected leaders to fight our battles," they argue. "Let's take ownership of the political battles ourselves."

To win these future leaders of the revolution we must step up our struggle for communist ideas at Metro. The fight against racism, imperialist war and cutbacks will be crucial, along with an increased CHALLENGE readership, especially winning new writers and distributors. We're continuing our study groups and now have a longer list of workers to include in these ongoing discussions about communism.

Meanwhile, the need for communist leadership has never been greater. On November 30, two more track workers were killed after being struck from behind by a train. This makes four killings in 14 months. The capitalist transit bosses have turned a deaf ear to our demands for a safer system and only care about making the trains run on time. To take effective action we must close down the system and break the bosses' anti-strike laws, despite the threats of being fired, fined and jailed.

We will confront the Metro Board of Directors on December 14 over these killings. Struggle against the bosses, plus CHALLENGE, study groups and building many unbreakable personal ties is how we prepare for the long-term battle for workers' power.✪

## Bosses Fight Over Mexico's Riches; Reformers Mislead Angry Workers

OAXACA, MEXICO, Dec. 10 — Today, 10,000 angry workers, including many teachers and their allies, marched here demanding fascist governor Ulises Ruiz's ouster and that federal troops end their occupation of the city. The top leadership of the social-democratic opposition PRD Party of "the legitimate President" López Obrador led the march. The leadership of APPO (the reform mass organization leading the struggle here) was arrested several days ago while in Mexico City to meet with the new government's officials. That attempted meeting indicated they still trusted the same rulers that brutally repressed the 6-month struggle here, while having illusions that the PRD is a lesser-evil capitalist exploiter.

The sharpening inter-imperialist, inter-capitalist struggle in Latin America and worldwide is affecting the working class of Mexico. Some bosses here are looking for a better deal for themselves (like multi-billionaire Carlos Slim) and don't want to be merely loyal servants of U.S. imperialism, as is the new President Calderón and his ruling PAN party.

Slim doesn't oppose privatization (several years ago he acquired Telmex, the former state-owned telcom monopoly, at a bargain price. He wants a share of the state-owned oil monopoly instead of having it serve U.S. interests. López Obrador represents that capitalist faction, and is winning millions while posing as a "friend of the workers."

Oaxaca itself is rich in natural resources — uranium, oil, gold, silver and coal — and the extreme poverty of its majority-indigenous population means cheap labor for the bosses.



A faction of the Mexican bosses opposes the plan for an integrated economy of the Americas with U.S. imperialism leading it. An example of this "integrated economy" is Clinton's 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which unleashed hell on millions of Mexican workers and farmers, as in Oaxaca. The Plan Puebla Panamá continues this "integrated economy." It is a megaproject to promote tourism and foreign investment to better super-exploit the cheap labor and resources of southern Mexico (Oaxaca, Chiapas, etc.). U.S. bosses back this, to counter its imperialist rivals' influence in the region.

Oaxaca's mass movement has been very militant but its leaders have many illusions. The APPO (Peoples of Oaxaca Organization) leaders are reformers who seek to oust the openly reactionary bosses (like Governor Ulises Ruiz) for "lesser-evil rulers" who are equally capitalist and deadly.

While involved in the mass struggle in Oaxaca, PL'ers expose illusions in "progressive bosses" as fatal for workers and their allies. The long-range solution is to build a mass-based communist Party from Oaxaca to Panama to L.A. and Baghdad to fight for a society without any bosses or their imperialist allies.✪

## Unions Selling Out Militant VW Strikers

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, Dec. 2 — As we go to press, it appears that the three-week-old strike by 5,300 Volkswagen workers at the Forest factory may be ending. The bosses and union leaders are taking a page from GM, Ford, Delphi and the UAW, offering buyouts and bonuses that range from 25,000 to 140,000 euros to workers who will go quietly. The bosses are moving production of the Golf model to Germany, eliminating 4,000 jobs at the Forest plant and 9,000 more at supplier plants and local businesses.

The unions also want "absolute guarantees" that the Audi A1 will be built at Forest in 2009. But VW said that depends on workers agreeing to work longer hours for the same pay.

This development followed a Dec. 2 march of 25,000, including VW workers from Germany, France, Spain, the Netherlands, Luxemburg, Great Britain, Italy and Portugal, to support the Forest strike. The turnout was smaller than the 80,000 workers who demonstrated when Renault closed its Vilvorde plant in 1997.

Workers from VW subcontractors also marched. Johnson Controls, a major U.S. parts supplier that builds seats for the Polo and the Golf on a "just-in-time" basis, recently announced layoffs of 230 of its 580 workers. Kraft ground coffee factory workers marched after learning two weeks ago that their factory will close. A huge banner stretched across the boulevard listing dozens of companies that are downsizing and restructuring.

Even worse than the nationalist, pro-capitalist union misleaders' rampant corruption (in 2002, the former central works council chairman pocketed 700,000 euros in payments from VW), these sellouts are sabotaging spreading the strike across all borders. As Lenin said during the First World War, when the imperialists fight each other, the liberals and socialists "run to the tent of their masters." This is especially clear in the global auto competition which pits worker against worker, factory against factory.

With Golf production moving to Wolfsburg and Mosel, Germany, the German auto union, IG



Metall, signed an agreement to lengthen the work-week with no wage increase. Wolfsburg is the main VW complex, with about 50,000 workers. On November 1, they started working an additional four hours per week for the same pay. One worker said, "We are working longer for nothing at all, just for the company." This has left many Forest strikers doubtful about IG Metall's "solidarity."

On July 27, VW announced two billion euros in profits in the first six months of 2006, up 50% over the first half of 2005. That's about 1,000 euros profit from every one of the 329,405 workers — every month! And their 2008 profit goal is 5.1 billion euros (6.7 billion in dollars).

The contradictions of capitalism and the inter-imperialist rivalry can never be resolved by unions, contracts or strikes. The bosses ultimately resolve their squabbles with war. Autoworkers are in a unique position to build an international PLP, across all borders, for communist revolution.✪

## ONE WAY TO FIGHT FOR JOBS

On Dec. 7, about 100 angry VW workers marched on the headquarters of Agoria, Belgium's largest employers' organization, clashed with cops in riot gear and forced their way into the lobby. The furniture began flying and workers stoned the building as they left, smashing windows. Within three hours, these bosses "discovered" they had 2,700 vacant jobs to offer!✪

## Dems, GOP Chop 10,000 Jobs, Destroy Patient Care

**NEW YORK CITY, Dec. 8** — The bosses' politicians — outgoing Republican Governor George Pataki and incoming Democratic Governor Eliot Spitzer — have endorsed a state commission's plan to close nine hospitals and four nursing homes, and downsize and/or merge 48 other hospitals across NY State. These racist cuts will lay off over 10,000 mostly black and Latino workers while tens of thousands of other workers will find it even more impossible to obtain affordable health care.

So far, the leadership of the largest union in the industry, Local 1199, SEIU, has no plan to mobilize tens of thousands of its members to fight this disaster. This is the same union that tells workers voting will solve their problems and uses workers' money to elect the very same politicians who serve the bosses' interests and are laying off these members. Their only "answer" is to "re-train" unskilled workers for other hospital jobs. But these laid-off "re-trained" workers will face a job market already decimated by the proposed mass layoffs — there will be no jobs.

These cuts are a direct attack on all aspects of health care and workers' lives and

are dismantling NY State's health care system. Meanwhile, the rulers are spending hundreds of billions of dollars of workers' taxes on their imperialist wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

As one worker stated, "The politicians and the ruling class must be held accountable for any healthcare cuts that would result in workers' deaths and more layoffs."

Pataki and the State Legislature established the Berger Commission to reduce Medicaid costs. While these politicians are always criticizing the health care system through the bosses' media, they are actually responsible for the crisis in the capitalist health care system — one producing increased misery for both patients and health care workers.

As joblessness among these predominantly black and Latino workers — mostly women — increases (they already have double the unemployment rate of white workers because of racism), it will affect healthcare delivery and their own health; more disease will spread throughout these communities. With already about three million uninsured workers in NYC, imagine the havoc sweeping through neighborhoods

already devastated by high unemployment. This will be an ongoing crisis of survival — finding appropriate care at a reasonable price.

The politicians say NY State's hospitals are in worse economic condition than in the rest of the country. This plan would save 19 billion dollars for the bosses. Mergers, consolidations and battles among remaining hospitals, insurance companies and the pharmaceutical giants for profits dominate the healthcare industry. As in all of capitalism, this competition, over time, creates conditions for layoffs and hospital closings.

The workers are always waging battles with the hospital bosses to retain whatever little benefits we have, but we must avoid being misled into the voting booths by a union leadership that defends the bosses system. We must unite workers across all borders to wage class war against capitalist exploitation.

Workers at one hospital linked these racist cuts to the police murder of Sean Bell (see page 1). Rank-and-file delegates signed a petition proposing a union resolution to support his family and condemn the racist police department.

Under this profit system, the needs of workers and patients (to improve health care) through preventative measures and to assure health care for all cannot be met. Our vision is for a healthcare system in a com-

SUMMER 2006 SUGGESTED DONATION \$3

# THE COMMUNIST

IST ★

PROGRESSIVE LABOUR PARTY

The new issue of The Communist Magazine is available: Please send \$3 to Challenge Periodicals, PO Box 808, Brooklyn, NY 11202

munist society that would improve the quality of life, one not based on making profits. Then we, the working class, will make healthcare decisions based on our needs. ☛

## PL'ers Strengthen Global Fight Against AIDS

**WASHINGTON, D.C., Dec. 1** — PLP'ers brought communist politics to mass activities on World AIDS Day to intensify the worldwide battle against AIDS. Medically, AIDS is "caused" by a virus, but the epidemic is caused by capitalism's need for profits-over-workers. In Africa, the imperialists and local warlords spend billions in wars for resources, but spend peanuts in treating AIDS and other diseases. Revolutionary struggle worldwide is the key to wiping out the system that prevents the solution to the AIDS crisis.

Today's White House protest and civil disobedience by 300 activists were important, but the distribution of CHALLENGES to protesters and winning people to take off work to attend the mass activities and work with us in this campaign were politically crucial. The multi-racial character of the protest and the protesters' militancy were inspiring to all. Later, we made new plans to advance the struggle. Much more is needed since AIDS affects 40 million.

### AT THE WHITE HOUSE

Activists called for full funding (\$3.3 billion) for Ryan White (federal HIV funding in the U.S.) and \$8 billion for the Global Fund to Fight TB, AIDS and Malaria. Speakers attacked the drug companies and government for keeping costs high. Paying for doctors, nurses and healthcare workers in Africa is now urgent for universal access to HIV medicines.

PLP'ers are active in the Metropolitan Washington Public Health Association (MWPCHA). They joined the rally with the MWPCHA banner and CHALLENGES.

At a recent meeting, students from a class in advocacy at the George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services described their creative "Save Lives —

Free the Condoms" campaign, which forced CVS stores in inner-city communities to partially stop the racist practice of reducing access to condoms by locking them up. Students plan to expand this struggle.

### PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

The Health Action Forum held a landmark HIV/AIDS press conference, joining local politicians, a minister, safety net providers and the county hospital to publicly address this issue. The difficult struggle to simply raise the challenge of AIDS in this predominantly black county reflects the class divide between wealthy outer suburban residents and the inner suburban poor. County politicians serve the developers and the black megachurches which refuse to acknowledge the County's epidemic and ostracize marginalized gay black men and substance abusers who face HIV without support. This, plus poverty and poor access to health care, further fuel the epidemic.

A County hospital PLP'er who has fought for years to focus attention on the area's high HIV/AIDS infection rate in the County spoke about the need to get testing and treatment to everyone and to boldly address the connected issues of substance use, housing, imprisonment and jobs. Calling for internationalism, she urged County residents to support the global anti-racism of World AIDS Day.

PLP can sharpen the debate over AIDS in coming months by emphasizing poverty, unemployment and the racist "war-on-drugs" jailing of black youth as the main obstacles to fighting the AIDS epidemic. In explaining how capitalism's attacks on workers cause the disease's deadliness, we can show that a system based on workers' needs — communism — instead of on profits is the real solution to public health challenges, including HIV/AIDS. ☛

## THOUSANDS MARCH ON SUPREME COURT TO FIGHT RACISM

**WASHINGTON, D.C., Dec. 4** — Led by hundreds of local high school and college students

(including 200 from Howard University and over 100 from Baltimore public schools), thousands marched on the Supreme Court today, demanding it uphold desegregation and affirmative action. In two cases being heard by the Court on appeal, white parents charged "reverse discrimination," challenging local government decisions that include "race" as one of several factors assuring racial integration. Student organizations from universities and colleges across the nation joined the rally.

Fighting vigorously against segregation and all the other forms of racism is always the right thing to do. However, even while boldly attacking racism, we must realize we're living under a political system run as a dictatorship of the capitalist class. The government, the military, the police, the courts and the schools serve their needs. No matter how many anti-racist victories we may temporarily win, until capitalism is destroyed the school system will continue to serve the needs of big business.

Firstly, probably the majority of jobs in the U.S. are unskilled or semi-skilled. It's advantageous for corporations to have a large pool of high school students with only low-level skills, forced to compete for low-paying jobs. Thus competition and fear of unemployment drives wages down as low as possible. The capitalists' need for highly trained folks is served by perhaps 20% of the students, who are allowed to get a better education. In general, the worse the schools, the better they serve ruling-class needs. The schools function, deliberately, to recreate the same unequal class structure in each succeeding generation.

Secondly, schools under capitalism have an ideological function. They teach, for example, that George Washington is to be respected as the "father of the country," ignoring his hundreds of slaves, treated worse than dogs. In general, schools are capitalist propaganda engines striving to teach loyalty to the system, hopelessness about creating a communist



world of true fraternity, support for imperialist wars and passivity in the face of exploitation and oppression.

On school segregation, the Supreme Court is likely to endorse the racist position that any remedies ensuring that most black students have access to quality schools are illegal. The court will do its best to maintain the racism flowing through U.S. history. Why? Because that's their job!

The government encourages racism to divide the working class, thus undermining our solidarity in unions, schools, and communities and benefiting the corporate class ruling the U.S. In spite of some school reforms mainly to indoctrinate youth and teachers in the rulers' agenda of war and fascism, racism will continue its historic role of yielding super-profits for the bosses: paying black and Latino workers less than whites (which drags down all wages) and using brutal cops to intimidate black and brown workers and youth.

But our aim is to force real change. PLP'ers ensured that D.C. marchers received communist ideas from CHALLENGE, about abolishing capitalism through revolution. Many of these students will continue to discuss politics and to participate with PLP, moving to the next stage, joining and helping to lead a revolutionary, multi-racial, communist party to destroy the system that for 500 years has generated racism for profit! ☛

# Profit-Driven Diamond Bosses Fund Africa's Wars

(Part 3 of a series of articles on how Africa's wars are caused by imperialism and their local hired goons).

The movie "Blood Diamonds," starring Leonardo DiCaprio, describes how diamonds were behind the 1990's bloody Sierra Leone civil war. Various warring factions sell these "conflict" or illicit diamonds illegally on the international black market to finance their wars in Africa. The diamond companies are doing their best to counter any bad publicity the movie might produce, particularly in this holiday season when diamond sales are very high. They're using their hired cultural goons to help them.

According to Reuters (12/5): "Human rights groups attacked U.S. hip hop mogul Russell Simmons' trip to an African diamond mine as a stunt to offset any possible public concern sparked by the upcoming Hollywood movie "Blood Diamonds."

Simmons defended his nine-day trip to South Africa, Botswana and Mozambique, saying he was concerned that too much attention was being placed on the illicit "con-

flict diamonds" and that he was trying to show the world how some African nations "benefited" from diamonds.

But victims of "blood diamonds" differ: "My country has paid dearly for these precious stones that people in this country give as a symbol of love," Sorious Samura, a Sierra Leone documentary film-maker, told a news conference held by Global Witness and Amnesty International.

Angola and Liberia have also suffered civil wars partly fueled by illicit diamonds, but the Ivory Coast has become the most recent focus. Conflict diamonds remain a problem despite industry assurances that more than 99% of diamonds are "clean."

"Russell Simmons is being played by the industry. It's another diamond industry publicity stunt," said Alex Yearsley, a Global Witness "conflict diamond" specialist.

Simmons tried to justify his tour of Botswana's Jwaneng mine, the world's biggest diamond producer in terms of value. But this mine is half-owned by South African De Beers, the world's largest diamond corporation, which

super-exploited black workers when Apartheid ruled South Africa.

In September, the World Diamond Council trade group unveiled a campaign to counteract any negative publicity stemming from the movie.

The rights groups and Simmons — who launched a Diamond Empowerment Fund to raise money for the development of African diamond-mining communities — agreed on another point. "The answer to the problem is not to stop buying diamonds," said Amy O'Meara from Amnesty International. "The answer is to make sure conflict diamonds aren't being bought in stores." U.S. consumers buy about half of the world's diamonds.

But that is no answer at all. Diamonds, blood or "clean," are mined by super-exploited workers under dangerous conditions. The answer is to organize a mass international communist movement to destroy the root of this profiteering in these blood diamonds — capitalism — and the imperialist and local bosses behind the wars killing millions in Africa. ✪

## Chávez Victory: Imperialists' Dogfight Over South America Sharpens

Venezuela's President Hugo Chávez recently won re-election by a large margin. He and the local bosses behind him now feel much stronger so he "is preparing for a bigger battle in 2007 — the fight with oil majors for control of...the nation's crude oil." (Reuters, 12/10) Chávez has the upper hand in that struggle.

Workers have nothing to celebrate. The South American bosses Chávez represents want a bigger share of the oil profits and exploitation of the working class by breaking from U.S. domination and allying with its rivals. This capitalist dogfight will be waged spilling rivers of working-class blood in local, regional and eventually world war.

### CONTROL OF OIL CRUCIAL

Energy — oil and gas — is Chávez's main weapon at this stage. To control as much as possible of this crucial resource Chávez must renegotiate the give-away contracts signed by the old pro-U.S. ruling class with the oil multi-nationals prior to Chavez's Presidency in 1998. This includes Chevron, Conoco, ExxonMobil, Norway's Statoil and France's Total Oil. Collectively they invested \$20 billion for 60% of four projects in the Orinoco Belt containing 235 billion barrels of tar oil. Chávez has ordered them to sell part of their holdings to the state oil firm PDVSA, giving it a 51% controlling stake.

When the U.S. was the undisputed top imperialist, such a move would have triggered a coup or military intervention.

When the U.S. was the undisputed top imperialist, such a move would have triggered a coup or military intervention. But as the failed 2002 anti-Chávez coup showed, times have changed. Ex-CIA director Porter Goss's 2004 testimony before a Congressional committee indicated that the U.S. debacle in Iraq is preventing it "from paying more attention to the threats in our own backyard." Ex-SOUTHCOM commander Bantz Craddock told the same Committee, "The rising presence of China...can't be ignored." All this has emboldened nationalist capitalists, their

continued on page 7

## Multiculturalists Are Rulers' Divisive Tool

**MEXICO** — Education is a powerful weapon for the expansion of ideas, used today by the capitalist state at all levels. But when communists fight the ruling class's racist ideology, we advance along the road to liberation.

The newest model of public education, used as an instrument of fascism, is "multiculturalism." U.S. and European capitalists have pushed multiculturalism in their own universities and in countries they exploit. Currently these ideas are taught in Latin America as "intercultural education." In Mexico, this is evident in recent and planned university events nationwide.

These educational centers are organized in the poorest areas, where the "brilliant investigators" make the racist conclusion that "the areas where there is the most poverty coincide with the existence of ethnic groups." Their philosophy focuses on rescuing the ancestral teachings, languages and culture of indigenous peoples, studying traditional medicine, and sustainability, ignoring the fact that those societies were based on oppression and exploitation. These ideas emphasize "ethnic differences" over working-class unity, mysticism over science, nationalism, regionalism and indigenism over internationalism. Professors are encouraged to push these divisive ideas — whether or not they believe them — because they're paid 26 times the minimum daily wage and because their hiring principle is for students to be taught by members of their own indigenous groups.

Researchers and organizers spend much time discussing multiculturalism as the road to liberation to divert students from uniting to fight back against oppression. They declare that multiculturalism is the main way to describe reality, the coexistence of "different" cultures. They emphasize the differences (small linguistic differences in dialects, or religious customs), and push "tolerance," avoiding confrontation involving the real differences: working-class integration and unity

against the capitalists. They call for combating ruling-class power and racism through "civic activity" and electoral politics rather than revolutionary action.

This ideology creates isolation, while building racism and nationalism, by encouraging people to identify with their ethnic group rather than all being members of the working class. Women are encouraged to recognize their "essence" and fight with other members of their same class based only on gender. Others are misled into spreading false reformist "roads to liberation" limited to their particular indigenous group, not the whole working class. All this diverts students from uniting for a society without classes.

Multiculturalism also rejects scientific thought because much of it comes from the Western world and pushes "traditional understandings" (part reality and part mysticism) long since abandoned as being obsolete. Communists explain that the problem is not science but the utilization of knowledge by the bosses to increase their wealth, while trying to hide that understanding from the working class, who need it for our liberation.

Young people come to these educational centers looking for answers to their problems. Some are won to these false ideas. However, many young students do not fall into this multicultural trap because of the contradiction between these education reforms and the reality of life. They're open to communist ideas. In fact, when communists in these universities have exposed the lies of multiculturalism, groups of students have joined PLP.

We can't allow these reformist movements to hold back our struggle. Serious science — Marxism — shows that differences are not based on "race," ethnicity or gender but rather on class: workers against bosses. We must fight to build a communist society that brings real change: the elimination of classes and the racism that the bosses use to divide us. ✪



On December 10, General Augusto Pinochet finally croaked, at 91. Some demonstrators, rejoicing his death, actually reached the Military School where Pinochet's body lay and spit on this anti-communist killer. The cops in Chile's "free market socialist" government of Michele Bachelet brutally attacked those celebrating his death as they protested his not having spent one minute in jail for his crimes against the working class. His regime killed and tortured thousands.

Pinochet seized power when Kissinger, the CIA and the ITT corporation organized a fascist coup against the pro-Soviet elected government of socialist Salvador Allende, who foolishly believed capitalism could be transformed peacefully into a pro-worker system.

Pinochet was not just another tin-can dictator. He preceded Thatcher, Reagan, Bush, Sr. and Junior, Yeltsin, Mexico's Salinas and Peru's Fujimori in imposing Milton Friedman's "Chicago School of Economics" neo-Nazi plan of what is now known as "free market" capitalism. (Friedman also died recently without paying for his crimes.)

When Pinochet took power unemployment was 4.3%. Ten years later it had grown to 23%. Real wages declined 40% under his military rule. He privatized hundreds of state industries and banks; abolished taxes on the wealthy and businesses; privatized pensions, eradicated union bargaining rights and cut social services. He himself stole enough to become a multi-millionaire.

Let's fight for workers' power — communism — to avenge the crimes of all capitalist butchers! ✪

# LETTERS

Send Letters to CHALLENGE PERIODICALS, V B N M  
PO 808, Brooklyn NY 11202 or email, cd188@juno.com

## Capitalism Globalizes Racism

The racist killing of Sean Bell in New York City might make many people dream of moving to a far-off country where racism is unknown. The sad truth is that capitalism has globalized racism. For example: in the French town of Nantes, according to the local newspaper "Presse-Océan" (10/12), the cops enacted an "action show" in a school to attract students to a police career. It included a demonstration of neutralizing and handcuffing a "bad guy." The person playing the bad guy was black and dressed in a striped jogging outfit to match the stereotype of a youth from the housing projects. In short, racism cannot be escaped — it must be fought.

FRIEND IN FRANCE

## Answering Thanksgiving's Genocidal Racism

The 21st Annual Thanks-For-Fighting-Racism Feast — our area's answer to the genocidal political history associated with Thanksgiving — was a big success, with some new innovations. A standing-room-only crowd of over 75 people packed the house. Two turkeys, a ham and a roast beef were devoured, while the bullhorn substituted for a microphone to reach the far flung feasters throughout the house. The dinner raised just under \$800 for the Anti-Racist Legal Defense Fund. One supporter had, for several months, set out a bowl in her living room with "Fight Racism" on it. She had told all her visitors to put all the change in their pockets in the bowl every time they stopped by, and ended up with \$126 for the Defense Fund! Similarly, the winner of the 50-50 Raffle donated half of her winnings to the Defense Fund, with the other half going to her fundraising for the AIDS Marathon she is running in January.

We were also inspired by the author Timothy Sheard, who spoke about the real life role model for his novel's working class hero Lenny Moss. The role model's spirit of caring and collective action creat-

ed the basis for deep friendships both on and off the job. He went beyond the restrictive boundaries of "shop steward" and across racial and cultural lines. Sheard's stories reflect the true lives of workers. The audience responded warmly and many bought his books.

Connections were made between Baltimore high school students aspiring to attend Howard University and the Howard University Amnesty International students. These dedicated students came early to set up, decorated, and added the finishing touches for the affair.

Workers in the AIDS campaign, in the Metro campaign, participants in a workers' collective, and many others joined this celebration of anti-racism.

Another "breakthrough" this year — personalized M&Ms! We ordered red M&Ms that said FIGHT RACISM on them and the woman who took the order was so impressed by our Feast that she sent us a free extra bag!

Success creates welcome imitators. Norfolk, VA comrades celebrated their 2nd Annual Feast and a similar event was held on the West Coast. Hopefully those stories will also be read in CHALLENGE.

DC RED

## Oaxaca Teacher Sparks Discussion in LA School

Recently a friend from an organization supporting the Oaxaca workers' struggle visited our school and inspired students with her story. She participated in the 1985 mass teachers' struggle in Oaxaca, and was beaten and tortured by government agents. Fearing for her life, she escaped to LA, and has continued organizing and fighting here.

She explained that the struggle in Oaxaca is broader than demands for higher wages and better working conditions; it involves government privatization plans.

She invited students to join demonstrators the next day at the Mexican consulate to protest that government's repression of teachers and others struggling in Oaxaca. Several went, were excit-

ed by the event and helped lead chants like, "Las luchas obreras no tienen fronteras" ("Workers' struggles have no borders") and "Aquí y allá, el fascismo caerá" ("Here and there, fascism will fall").

These activities sparked much discussion among students about racism and imperialism in Mexico and here. We compared the fight between Bush and the Democrats here to the one in Mexico between Calderon and Obrador and talked about the need to fight for workers' power, not side with any capitalist boss.

LA READER

## Link GI Petition Campaign To Red Ideas

We have been following with interest the letters and articles in CHALLENGE discussing PLP's military work and the Campaign for Redress. In particular, the recent review of Cortright's book "Soldiers in Revolt" sparked some discussion in our club. We agree with the author that Cortright's politics and solutions are reformist. The book itself, however, is an excellent and inspiring resource as to how widespread soldiers' actions were against the Vietnam War.

As for the Campaign to Appeal for Redress, this is a reform movement that every member of PL could be active in. First, any struggle where active duty soldiers are speaking out against the government by the thousands is one we should be a part of. Thousands of soldiers have

the potential to spark a larger movement that gives PL more opportunities to build for communism and gives soldiers and workers a chance to fight imperialism. Of course the line is weak in the appeal for redress and should be criticized but we don't choose reform struggles based on how good their line is. No matter how strong a reform struggle's line, it is still just aiming to reform capitalism, not destroy it. Working in this campaign should give us the opportunity to make communism primary in a mass-movement reform struggle.

This is not just something for those in the military. Working to build a student-soldier-worker alliance and support for soldiers is a good first step. For example, we are planning to screen the documentary film "Sir No Sir" on a local college campus and then have a soldier involved in the Appeal for Redress speak afterward. This will be a good event to spark discussion and build some ties between students and soldiers. The movement against the war will be stronger and provide more opportunities for building PL if we can forge an alliance between students, soldiers and workers.

A COMRADE

## CHALLENGE Crucial Rx to Bosses' Media Barrage

I'm a new CHALLENGE reader. I send you revolutionary greetings. At the same time, the circulation of the paper must keep increasing world-wide, because this makes it possible for students, workers, and farm workers to understand that the depravity of the capitalist system is directly or indirectly killing our working class.

In those countries in which capitalism increases poverty every day, it's urgent that the paper be well utilized, meaning organizing study group meetings, and analyzing the articles and letters in CHALLENGE. Currently we are bombarded by the press that serves the murderous exploiters. That's why we need to study the content of CHALLENGE. These countries have rich governments among poor populations. That's why I think that the only option left to us is a revolution that pulls out the roots of the whole destructive capitalist system and installs a communist system through the Progressive Labor Party.

A NEW CHALLENGE READER FROM  
EL SALVADOR

## Ford's 'Way Forward' is Out the Door for Workers

At the Ford Chicago Assembly plant, workers are talking about the plant's future and if it's worth staying. We ask ourselves, is it worth the risk to go down with the ship or should we grab a lifeboat and live to fight the bosses another day? Many are thinking about leaving and trying to find new jobs. We also hear whispers of suppliers leaving the industrial park that was supposed to make Chicago Assembly secure.

But one thing is sure — workers don't believe the bosses or the union. That rush to the doors you hear is 38,000 UAW members, or 46% of the North American hourly workforce, taking early retirement or buyout packages. The workforce will be chopped nearly in half by September, as Ford's "Way Forward" plan closes 16 North American plants by 2010. Such is the legacy of the pro-capitalist UAW leadership that for over 50 years has run on nationalism and anti-communism.

Meanwhile, Toyota just started producing Tundra pick-up trucks at its new, state-of-the-art factory in San Antonio, Texas. According to former Secy. of Labor and Berkeley Professor Robert Reich, Toyota will employ more workers in the U.S. auto industry than either Ford or GM. The Toyota workers' wages are high only because of past struggles by UAW members. All auto wages will fall as most domestic production becomes non-union and the international working class finds itself trapped in a global race to the bottom.

About 40% of the workers taking buyouts live in southeast Michigan, another racist body blow to Detroit and Michigan, whose

unemployment rate is 6.9%, the country's highest.

Having lost over \$7 billion so far this year, Ford is hoping to survive as a smaller company and is throwing thousands of workers and their families overboard to stay afloat.

Ford's North American manufacturing chief said the "UAW met us more than halfway." He praised the UAW for delivering more than 30 local "competitive operating agreements" that will save Ford hundreds of millions of dollars in labor costs and "enable us...to run the plants with fewer workers." These agreements force workers to compete for new model production. The loser gets their plant closed. The "winner" has their wages frozen or rolled back. Ford's vice-president for labor affairs said the UAW leaders "get it. They have been a business partner with us." Meanwhile, Ford is paying hefty retention bonuses to keep middle- and upper-management.

At the Chicago Assembly Plant, 965 workers signed up for the buyout. By laying off another 100, Ford could eliminate one shift. Then if sales pick up, they will bring in temps at about one-third what current workers earn, without benefits. And it will only go down from there. Some temps from two years ago have already started returning for physicals. Not only will this help short-run profits, but will mean the biggest bang for the fewest bucks producing the hardware for endless imperialist wars.

These attacks show that as long as the bosses hold power, no gain is permanent, nothing is secure. The recent Democratic Party election victory won't save one job. Building a mass international PLP among auto workers for communist revolution will put an end to the global car wars, and the imperialist bloodbaths that follow.

A FORD READER

## Imperialists' Dogfight Over South America Sharpens

continued from page 5

politicians like Chávez and rival imperialists to defy the U.S.

Other imperialists are making inroads in Venezuela. Prior to 1970, the U.S. and the UK accounted for 97% of foreign direct investment there. Today that pair's combined investment is only 25.5%. Besides multibillion deals already signed with China for iron, oil tankers, oil rigs, rig factories and infrastructure, Chávez recently announced an investment fund of \$6 billion, of which China will contribute \$4 billion, as well as an additional \$5 billion to raise oil production and increase China's Venezuelan oil imports from 200,000 bpd (barrels per day) to 500,000 by 2009.

### Russian Imperialists Also Making Big Inroads

Venezuela imports \$6 billion yearly from the U.S., mainly in goods and services for the oil industry. To reduce its dependency on the U.S., Chávez is turning to Russia.

On Dec. 6, Chávez's Airbus presidential plane en route to meet Brazil's President was escorted by two new Russian military planes. Venezuela bought 30 Sukhoi planes for \$3 billion, plus Russian combat helicopters and

assault rifles. More Russian weapons are coming including two new arms plants being built in Venezuela to produce more AK-103 assault rifles and ammunition.

Russian Lukoil is investing \$5 billion in oil and gas projects. Gazprom won rights to develop gas fields containing 100 billion cubic meters in the Gulf of Venezuela. At a cost of \$23 billion, Russia will help build the 5,000-mile pipeline linking Venezuela, Brazil and Argentina, along with a pipe-making plant, and a hydroelectric plant in southwestern Venezuela.

This doesn't exclude other imperialists. ConnocoPhillips will be investing \$5 billion in oil development as will France's Total. Compared to U.S. direct investment in Venezuela of \$9.6 billion in 2005, one can see the aggressive pace of Chinese and Russian investments.

This trend spells war. Chávez and these imperialists know U.S. bosses won't surrender Venezuela without a fight. Workers need to take this rivalry seriously and chart our own course to turn the coming bosses' war into a fight for communism, workers' power.

(Next: Chávez's strategy to win workers to patriotic support for the Venezuelan ruling class, and PLP's alternative.)

## Black, White, Latino Wildcat Forces Rehiring of 75 Immigrant Workers

On Nov. 16 and 17, 1,000 workers — Latino immigrants and black and white co-workers — united to organize a wildcat strike at the Smithfield Pork processing plant in Tar Heel, N.C. to protest the firing of 75 immigrant workers. The walk-out forced the bosses to re-hire all 75.

The United Food & Commercial Workers union has been attempting to organize the plant (the world's largest pork processor) for ten years. The company said it fired the workers because it "couldn't verify their social security numbers," but the workers believe it was due to their support for the union drive.

The bosses have tried to use racism to

divide the immigrants from the native-born, but all the workers, black and white, united to defend their immigrant brothers and sisters. The company also agreed to meet with a group of workers elected by the rank and file themselves.

Under capitalism, no worker's job is secure, especially in this period of imperialist wars and the Homeland Security police state. No doubt the bosses have other tricks up their sleeves to try to defeat the workers' demands. What they really need is a revolutionary communist party to move past ten years of frustration onto the road to workers' power.

Red Coal



Below are excerpts from mainstream newspapers that may be of use for our readers. Abbreviations: NYT = New York Times, GW Guardian Weekly (UK) FT = Financial Times

### Iraqi's deaths don't count in US stats

...The study group found that United States officials had underreported the level of violence in Iraq, providing misleading information to American leaders and the public about the scale of the problem facing American troops.

The study group determined that one day in July, American officials in Iraq reported 93 attacks or significant acts of violence, but the study group's review found that 1,100 violent acts actually occurred that day...

For example, the report said that a killing of an Iraqi might not be counted by American officials as an attack ... "a roadside bomb or a rocket mortar attack that doesn't hurt U.S. personnel doesn't count." (NYT, 12/11)

### Taco Bell buddies run US Food Admin

...A little contamination can go a long way...[as in] Taco Bell...

While threats to the food supply have been growing food-safety regulations have been weakened...these industries have effectively been given control of the agencies created to regulate them.

The current chief of staff at the Agriculture Department used to be the beef industry's chief lobbyist. The person who headed the Food and Drug Administration until recently used to be an executive at the National Food Processors Association.

Cutbacks in staff and budgets have reduced the number of food-safety inspections conducted by the F.D.A. to about 3,400 a year — from 35,000 in the 1970s.

Neither agency has the power to recall contaminated food...or to fine companies for food-safety lapses. (NYT, 12/11)

### Should Saddam head Iraq study group?

To the Editor:

...Rather than embracing... "the White House's early aspirations that Iraq might be transformed into a democracy in the near future...the panel chose instead the formulation that Mr. Bush has adopted most recently: to establish a country that can sustain itself and defend itself."

Wasn't that precisely the situation that existed in Iraq before our invasion? (NYT, 12/8)

### Dems + GOP agree: US Must keep control

Members of the [Baker] study group said the most significant showdown between the panel's Democrats and Republicans took place during final negotiation late last month and involved an explicit timetable for the with-

## GERI TURNER

June 28, 1948 — December 1, 2006

Geraldine Turner had a heart of gold and a smile that could stop a hurricane. The daughter of a steel worker and one of 15 brothers and sisters, she met her husband Calvin when they both worked at Lafayette Clinic, which along with the rest of the Michigan Department of Mental Health has long since been closed down. For years she was a campus worker at Wayne State University, lifting and pulling more than she should have, and working with dangerous cleaning chemicals. This may have planted the seeds of the lung cancer that took her life.

For about 15 years Geri was a member of PLP. You can't think about Geri and Calvin's home without seeing it full of family and friends, workers and youth. And for all those years she tried in her way to bring the Party to her many, many friends and family, and on some level she succeeded.

She hosted many functions in her home. She invited her base of co-workers and other friends to many social and political activities. She involved them in buying, selling or cooking dinners for fundraisers — despite the pain from her job shooting through her shoulder, neck or jaw — raising thousands of dollars for PLP. She was a lot more than a warm smile and caring personality. She was tough as nails. She invited family and friends to march on May Day or fight the Klan. She always tried to impress on her friends that PLP was not a cult or secret society, and they could "come as they are" to the Party.

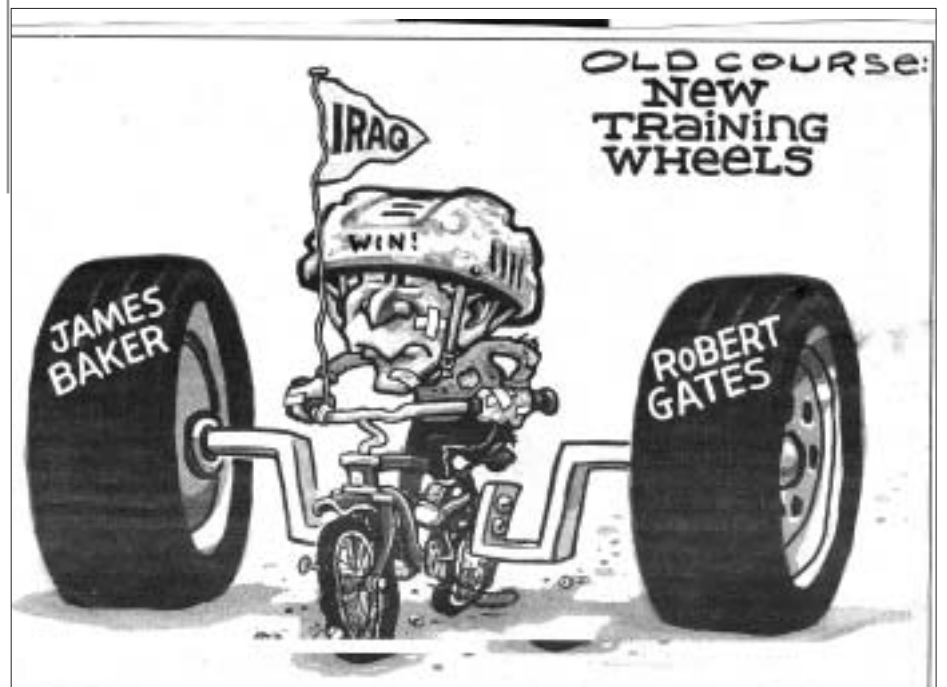
One night we were holding a fundraiser for striking West Virginia coal miners. No sooner had the cabaret started — and it was going to be big —



when the police raided it and shut it down. Geri had been working the kitchen and was taken out in handcuffs. There she stood in the back of the police van, dressed as sharp as ever, disappointment all over her face. As the van door slammed shut she defiantly yelled, "I'll never be nice again!"

But of course, that was impossible for Geri. She was probably nice to whoever was handcuffed beside her in the back of that van. It was these years of fighting for a communist future, these years of struggling together to build a new world that forged the ties that could never be broken, not by time, by distance, or even by going separate paths. During the last decade of her life, Geri stepped off the road to revolution and embraced her religion and her church. But that never affected the mutual love and respect between her and her comrades.

And so Geraldine, life goes on, and the struggle continues. And we carry you with us in our hearts.



drawal of American troops from Iraq. But they said that even that dispute never seriously threatened to derail the report, with the members so unified on most of the big issues.

"... All of these people believe that if there were vital U.S. interests at stake, then there shouldn't be any real problem in getting Democrats and Republicans to agree." (NYT, 12/8)

### Under new gov't label — nobody's hungry!

...The Agriculture Department has decreed that the 11 million impoverished Americans who can't always put food on the table don't suffer from "hunger" after all — they just experience "very low food security." (Kids, get a head start prepping for the SAT questions of the future! Sample analogy: "Very low food security" is to "hunger" as "alternative interrogation methods" is to — Did you guess "torture"? Well done! You've been paying attention!) Washington Post, 11/17)

# Racist U.S. Rulers are World's Biggest Jailers

Such is the height of hypocrisy of the U.S. ruling class that while it proclaims itself the champion of "human rights," it continues to expand its own concentration camps. The 2.2 million behind bars — a 2.2% rise over the previous year — represents the largest prison population in the world, hundreds of thousands engaged in forced labor at pennies per hour. With 5% of the world's population, the U.S. has 25% of the world's prisoners. Even China, with four times the U.S. population — has fewer prisoners. A record seven million people — one of every 32 adults in the U.S. — were either in prison, on probation or on parole at the end of 2005. (AP, 11/30)

U.S. racism is responsible for 70% of these inmates being black or Latino. Yet the overwhelming majority of all inmates have been convicted of non-violent crimes, which "in other countries would usually lead to community service, fines or drug treatment — or would not be con-

sidered crimes at all — [but] in the U.S. leads to a prison term." (Atlantic Monthly, Dec. 1998, p. 52)

California alone has the biggest prison system in the industrialized world, more than France, Germany, the U.K., Japan and the Netherlands COMBINED, although those five countries have 340 million people, ten times California's.

While men outnumber women in prison, the female population is growing faster; 7% of all inmates are women (not including those in local jails). This has a particular impact on thousands of children left behind. "Policies that create harsher sentences for nonviolent drug offenses are disproportionately responsible for the increasing rate of women in prisons and jails," according to Marc Mauer, executive director of the Sentencing Project.

The tremendous disproportionate increase in black and Latino inmates results partly from the sentencing procedures for possession of crack cocaine vs.

powder cocaine. Federal law prescribes a 5-year sentence for possession of 5 grams of crack and the same sentence for possession of 500 grams of powder cocaine. In other words black or Latino youth in inner-city neighborhoods get the same sentence for possession of one-hundredth the amount of crack as compared with possession of the powder variety mostly used by middle- and upper-income whites. Could the racist nature of the criminal INjustice system be any clearer?

Even more insidious is the fact that tens of thousands of prisoners are forced to work making products for some of the largest corporations in the country — Boeing, Dell, Microsoft and IBM, among others — at "wages" as little as 20¢ an hour or 75¢ a day!

Factories paying these wage rates are built inside prisons while workers outside are laid off. This is capitalist profit-making



in the raw, still another reason why communist revolution is needed to destroy this system.

(For more information, see the PLP website [PLP.org] for the pamphlet, "Prison Labor: Fascism U.S. Style.")

## Obama Another Wall Street 'Rising Star'

Illinois Senator Barack Obama is a rising star in the Democratic Party constellation, projected as a strong VP candidate in 2008, and a Presidential candidate in 2012. Therefore it is interesting to read a critique of Obama—a mild one by communist standards, but valuable nevertheless—by Ken Silverstein, the magazine's Washington editor, in the November 2006 issue of Harper's magazine.

Silverstein reports that:

"[Obama] quickly established a political machine funded and run by a standard Beltway group of lobbyists, P.R. consultants, and hangers-on... Obama's top contributors are corporate law and lobbying firms (Kirkland & Ellis and Skadden, Arps, where four attorneys are fund-raisers for Obama as well as donors), Wall Street financial houses (Goldman Sachs and JP Morgan Chase), and big Chicago interests (Henry Crown and Company, an investment firm that has stakes in industries ranging from telecommunications to defense)."

Silverstein shows how Obama has been one of the biggest promoters of ethanol (made from corn), which he has advertised as an alternative fuel supply that can break the nation's dependency on foreign oil. Ethanol production is entirely dependent on billions of dollars of federal subsidies — one engineer described it as "the massive transfer of money from the collective pocket of the U.S. taxpayers to the transnational agricultural cartel." Obama has introduced numerous measures to benefit conglomerates such as Archer Daniels Midland that produce ethanol.

Silverstein also documents Obama's pro-imperialist politics quoting from his speech to the ruling-class Council on Foreign Relations how the U.S. needed "to manage our exit (from Iraq) in a responsible way — with the hope of leaving a stable foundation for the future." Obama, like the Democratic



Party, wants to maintain a strong U.S. military presence in the Middle East in order to control the world's largest reserves of oil and gas.

We in PLP maintain that the government works only to serve the long-term interests of the ruling class (owners of big business). Politicians serve those interests regardless of which political party they belong to, but liberals like Obama are the most dangerous because they pretend to be friends of the working class while sugarcoating the ugly reality of capitalism. Obama will also be used as a nationalist lightning rod to try to mislead black workers into supporting and fighting in imperialist wars.

Silverstein calls attention to how ruling-class money and politics are tied together:

"Campaigns have grown increasingly costly; in 2004 it took an average of more than \$7 million to run for a Senate seat. As Carl Wagner, a Democratic political strategist who first came to Washington in 1970, remarked to me, "...Senators were creatures of their states. Today they are creatures of the people who pay for their multimillion-dollar advertising campaigns. Representative democracy has largely been taken off the table. It's reminiscent of the 1880s and 1890s, when senators were chosen by state legislatures who were owned by the railroads and banks."

Wagner is wrong that "representative democracy" ever existed under capitalism, where the golden rule of politics has always been the one who owns the gold makes the rules! Politicians are tightly controlled by corporate interests and elections won't change that, but revolution can. ☛



## CHALLENGE Became Flag of Harlem Rebellion

In June 1964, the first mass black rebellion of the 1960s erupted in Harlem, protesting racist police brutality and demanding jobs, and the fledgling PLM (Progressive Labor Movement), forerunner of the PLP, was in the thick of it. The ruling class tried to blame PLM, not racist cops, for the rebellion, calling dozens of PLM members before a Grand Jury, indicting 13 for criminal contempt, imprisoning four for civil contempt, and eventually convicting six.

On July 16, 1964, racist cop Thomas Gilligan had shot 15-year-old unarmed black high school student James Powell three times in the back, killing him. For the next three days Powell's classmates held protest demonstrations. Then, on July 18 thousands of Harlem residents took to the streets in protest, calling for Gilligan's prosecution, the resignations of Police Commissioner "Bull" Murphy and Mayor Wagner and demanding jobs. (The jobless rate in Harlem was 25 %.)

The cops were ordered in and savagely attacked the protestors, clubbing them indiscriminately and injuring hundreds of men, women and children. The people fought back and battles raged for several days. Nearly 200 people were arrested and 35 cops were injured.

The very first issue of CHALLENGE had just been published four weeks before. Hundreds were distributed daily, along with thousands of leaflets. PLM was the only group supporting the rebels. All the other organizations, from liberal to the phony "Communist" Party were helping the rulers to try to end the protests. So the rebels marched holding the CHALLENGE front page as their flag. In addition, a PLM poster with the cop's picture was pasted up all over the city proclaiming, "Wanted for Murder — Gilligan the Cop." Two PLM members later served prison terms for having printed the poster.

On the 18th, PLM called for a mass demonstration for the 25th. On the 24th Murphy banned the action, but PLM defied the ban and

WANTED  
FOR  
MURDER



GILLIGAN, THE COP

Exec. Thomas Gilligan of The 11th Division

PL Poster

the leaders of PLM's Harlem branch were arrested, charged with "inciting to riot." An injunction prohibited PLM members from appearing between 110th and 155th Streets, from the Hudson River on the west across town to the East River, the first such edict in the city's history.

Then the rulers convened a Grand Jury to try to "prove" that PLM had "instigated" the rebellion. All the PL'ers refused to cooperate with this ruling-class instrument. Daily picket lines were held at the Grand Jury courthouse. Of course, it ignored the fact that racist police brutality had triggered the rebellion, as it sought to make PLM the scapegoat. It didn't work. Everyone knew of the conditions in Harlem and the daily racist actions of the police.

Today's headlines continue to bear this out, with the latest police murder of Sean Bell, which follows a long line of such brutalities, from Eleanor Bumpers (an aging disabled grandmother killed in her own apartment), to Patrick Dorismond, 26, to Amadou Diallo (shot down in a hail of 41 bullets), to 13-year-old Nicholas Heyward playing with a toy gun, to Anthony Rosario (shot 14 times while lying face down in a Bronx apartment), to Hilton Vega, to Malcolm Ferguson (killed a few days after Diallo) to Gidone Busch (a mentally retarded Brooklyn man shot 17 times after the first four bullets killed him) to Timothy Stansfield, and on and on.

PLP continues the fight in which it cut its eye teeth in 1964 to destroy the profit-driven capitalist system which breeds such racist atrocities. ☛