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CHALLENGE

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Oaxaca, Mexico City THOUSANDS PROTEST SOCIAL SECURITY ROBBERY

OAXACA, MEXICO, May 16 — A march of over 300,000 on March 8, International Women's Day, reactivated the struggle begun last year when the mass movement of striking teachers and their supporters here was suppressed by the fascist governor Ulises Ruíz Ortiz (URO), in cahoots with the federal government. The largest contingent, organized by APPO (the Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca), belonged to Section 22 of the SNTE (National Teachers Union). This renewed struggle ran contrary to the local and national rulers' thinking that the movement was under control and dying.

The marchers were demanding the ouster of governor URO, immediate freedom for 30 jailed activists and a new convention for Section 22 to elect a new leadership. The sellout union leader Enrique Rueda Pacheco quit after betraying the struggle.

During the march, PLP members, including young comrades, distributed 3,000 flyers about International Women's Day, explaining PLP's pro-communist politics. We emphasized that workers and their allies need a general staff to fight directly for communism, the only real liberation from capitalism and all its politicians.

Then, on May 15 (Teachers' Day), tens of thousands of angry teachers, including those from Oaxaca, marched in Mexico City protesting the new Social Security for State Workers (ISSSTE) law. The cops repelled their attempt to demolish a fence built around Los Pinos (the Presidential Palace). They also burned a giant figure of Elba Esther Gordillo, the teachers' union national leader and government ally.

The new ISSSTE law is the bosses' attempt to hand over workers' savings for management by local and imperialist banks and financial institutions, supposedly to cover social security. This will enable the big bosses to make billions in profits. They justify the change by claiming workers' pensions now covered by social security are a burden for that fund.

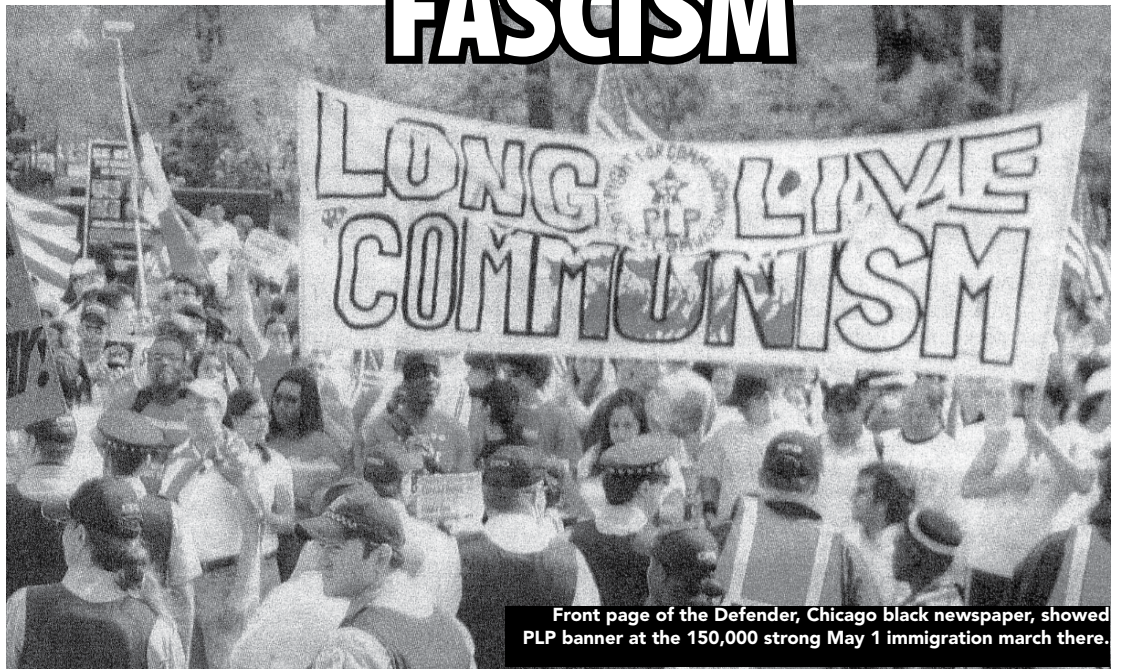
The new law also attacks health care and other public services covered by social security and would raise the retirement age from 60 to 65. If one is forced to retire early (because of health or other problems), you have to wait until age 65. All this affects more than 60% of those now belonging to the ISSSTE. The government claims social security has a billion-dollar deficit, which is basically due to the mis-administration of the system and the corruption of ISSSTE's top honchos. So now workers will have to pay for this plundering.

Imperialist companies will also get away with complete privatization of PEMEX (the state-owned oil company) and the CFE (the Federal Electricity Commission) since a majority of the bought-and-paid-for Deputies and Senators will vote for these so-called "reforms."

Some reformists say workers and their allies must get court orders stopping these plans, and should vote in the next elections for the lesser-evil political party (the opposition PRD) to punish the PAN (the ruling party) and their allies in the PRI (the former ruling party). But the PRD, just like the union hacks, are all part of the capitalist machinery, even though they might favor one group of bosses against another.

We in PLP support the struggle against the ISSSTE "reform" and call on workers to continue to fight with strikes and mass protests. The best lessons we can learn from this fight-back is the need to build a mass revolutionary communist party to eliminate all the bosses once and for all. Join the PLP!

Immigration 'Reform' Means: BOSSES WANT TO WIN WORKERS TO WAR AND FASCISM



Front page of the Defender, Chicago black newspaper, showed PLP banner at the 150,000 strong May 1 immigration march there.

The U.S. ruling class is in sharp internal conflict on immigration reform. Years of bitter in-fighting and finally months of bi-partisan negotiations have finally produced what many in their ranks praise as a "breakthrough." Massachusetts Senator Edward Kennedy, the lead Democratic negotiator, first said, "This plan isn't perfect, but it's a strong bill and...a worthy solution." The Los Angeles Times (5/18/07) criticized it for some objectionable provisions but laments that "...the single most objectionable aspect of the plan is that it probably won't pass." The Washington Post (5/19/07) derides it as "Trigger Happy — On immigration, the cost of wishful thinking may be high," but thinks it should be improved. President Bush hailed it as an "historic moment."

The New York Times May 20 editorial begs to differ: "Many advocates for immigrants have accepted the deal anyway, thinking it can be improved this week in Senate debate, or later in conference with the House Representatives. We both share those hopes and think they are unrealistic. The deal should be improved. If it is not, it should be rejected as worse than a bad status quo."

As usual, the U.S. liberal imperialists cover their real reasons with humanitarian-sounding phrases. They "bemoan" the fact that "The deal erodes.... [the principle] that citizens and legal permanent residents have the right to sponsor family members," and that, "The agreement fails most dismally in its temporary worker program.....[creating] an underclass that could work for two years at a time, six at most, but never put down roots... that will encourage exploitation..."

But humanitarian rhetoric aside, the real reasons concern war and fascism. "The good," according to the NY Times, is that it "..... is strikingly appealing....a plan to give most of the estimated 12 million immigrants here illegally the chance to..... become citizens eventually." But the Times, and the U.S. liberal bosses it speaks for, are against the deal because they know that as it stands it has too many serious obstacles to be useful in winning millions of immigrants and their children, many U.S.-born or -raised here, to fervent patriotism: to slave for low wages in their war industries and to kill and die for

the greater glory of U.S. imperialism.

The deal's path to citizenship is a hard, tortuous, onerous and extremely long one. Immigrants here since 1/1/07 have six months to a year to apply for probationary legal status or be deported. At this step they are fingerprinted and undergo a background check. If they pass and have "good" employment histories, they're granted "Z visas." After four years they can renew their "Z visas" for another four years, provided they pass an English proficiency test. At the end of that period, they pay a fine of \$5,000 and a \$2,000 processing fee to apply for a green card. At present there is a backlog of four million green card applicants that will hopefully be cleared in eight years. "Z visa" applicants go to the end of the line.

The whole process can take some 12 to 15 years. During all this time, these applicants can't leave the country to see their loved ones or bring them here! But the bosses did include the "Dream Act": undocumented children raised here will be granted residency and citizenship if they graduate from college or serve in the military.

This is not what immigrants have been led to believe. The liberal ruling class understands that the disillusionment of millions of super-exploited immigrants could turn their already simmering anger into a furnace of class hatred. They know these workers are crucial to many of their vital industries and they desperately need to recruit more of their youth into the military. This immigration "reform" is too flawed. The liberal section of the ruling class needs to discipline those conservative bosses who are focused on immediate profits and opposed to a more comprehensive immigration reform. This is, in part, why the U.S. bosses need fascism.

But more importantly they need fascism to control the whole working class in order to wage their imperialist wars for profits and control of oil without workers' opposition. One big step toward fascism is the "reform's" National ID card. But no bosses' plan can ever solve our problems and no fascist oppression can ever stop us from organizing to overthrow them. Class hatred and revolutionary communist ideas will lead the road to workers' power. ✪



Killer Wolfowitz Out, Deadlier Liberals Plan Wider Wars

Paul Wolfowitz, a top planner of the Iraq fiasco, has the blood of a million Iraqis and thousands of GI's on his hands. But workers have no stake in the outcome of this war criminal's recent ouster from the World Bank. Like Rumsfeld's resignation, it simply shows the liberal faction of U.S. imperialists, bent on enlisting allies for wider wars, asserting its power. The "Revenge of the Multilateralists," as the liberal Boston Globe (5/19) called the sacking, brings a massive U.S.-led coalition's intervention in the Middle East ever closer.

Popular wisdom says Europeans at the World Bank forced Wolfowitz from his perch, and they probably did play a big role, given their immediate and continuing opposition to the neo-con's unilateral invasion of Iraq. But it was a U.S. liberal, Eli Whitney Debevoise II, whose family has provided legal counsel to generations of Rockefellers, who pulled the trigger. The New York Times (5/17) hints heavily-handedly at just how Wolfowitz's job-for-girlfriend scandal came to light, "Mr. Debevoise, a Washington lawyer, arrived at his job at the bank in early April, the precise moment when the furor over Mr. Wolfowitz erupted." A subsequent (5/19) Times editorial, acknowledging that it's still Bush's choice, names Republicans Robert Zoellick and Robert Kimmitt as acceptable successors. Both belong to the CFR.

Wolfowitz's disgrace reflects an ongoing tactical dispute among U.S. imperialists dating back to the first Iraq war and the collapse of the Soviet empire. Two camps drew different lessons from these U.S. "victories." One, led by Wolfowitz, Richard Perle and others, reasoned that U.S. forces' now unrivaled technological superiority would ensure rapid victory in any future regional conflict. Regarding the Mid-East, they pushed for unilateral action with "off-the-shelf" troops that would not disrupt the economy at home or entail sharing the oil loot with allies.

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!**

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This group became known as the neo-conservatives.

Policy-shapers in liberal think-tanks, however, saw greater threats and needs and reached conflicting conclusions. In their eyes, the U.S. drove Saddam Hussein from Kuwait, precisely because U.S. troop strength at the time stood at high, costly Cold War levels and was bolstered by significant contributions from allies. Finishing the job by taking over Iraq, the liberals thought, would require a far greater mobilization, both of U.S. and allied troops, than the 750,000-strong 1991 force. That's why Colin Powell and James Baker opposed marching on Baghdad. As for sharing the spoils, liberals could do that if it meant stability and steady profits. Japan and even France got decidedly junior-partner — but still significant — oil deals in Kuwait for aiding the U.S. in Gulf War I.

IMPERIALISTS' DOGFIGHT OVER WAR TACTICS

In February 1992, Wolfowitz, then undersecretary at the Pentagon, authored the Defense Planning Guidance report, dubbed the Wolfowitz Doctrine. It downplayed the value of enduring alliances. Its original draft said, "[W]e should expect future coalitions to be ad hoc assemblies, often not lasting beyond the crisis being confronted, and in many cases carrying only general agreement over the objectives to be accomplished."

The liberals came out swinging. The New York Times published excerpts to encourage "debate," which came later that year in the form of "Changing Our Ways," a manifesto produced jointly by the main liberal think-tanks, the Rockefeller-led Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), the Brookings Institution, and the Carnegie Endowment. It stood Wolfowitz's go-it-alone stance on its head, calling for coalitions as a first, not last, resort. "[W]e must act cooperatively with others while retaining the option of unilateral action....Toward this end, the system of global collective security designed by the founders of the United Nations should be strengthened...."

"Changing Our Ways" insisted that fuel-thirsty allies chip in militarily for U.S. oil wars. "[O]ther countries also have a major stake in an assured flow of Gulf oil at stable, predictable prices. Although we will remain the principal guarantor of security in the Gulf, we should pursue collective policies that involve Europe and Japan." Prefiguring the Hart-Rudman reports' more dire demands for the sacrifice of "blood and treasure," the liberals' 1992 Anti-Wolfowitz Doctrine, seeks both "increases in taxes" and a readiness for military mobilization, "[W]e must preserve...a healthy industrial base, enabling us to reconstitute much larger forces if a major hostile power were to

Yes, the Rich Gets Richer and the Poor Much Poorer

Still another "study" has just been issued about the extreme poverty in the U.S., with proposals to alleviate (not eliminate) it. The "Center for American Progress" (CAP) reports that one of eight people — 37 million — live below the poverty line. That "line" is \$19,971 per year for a family of four. But that's hardly an accurate measure of poverty. And racist wage differentials make it even worse for black and Latino workers. Actually, one-third of the population — 90 million people — are "struggling to make ends meet." (NY Times, 5/12) And all this assumes that the workers making this pitiful wage are employed 52 weeks a year, which is hardly the case.

CAP says that the poverty-stricken have risen by five million in the last six years. Poverty wages are so low that even someone working full-time the year-round doesn't earn enough to raise a family of four. One of the CAP's "remedies" is to raise the minimum wage to \$8.40/hr, for a yearly wage of \$17,472 (assuming 52 weeks of work) — still \$2,300 below the poverty line. Some solution!

All the "studies" and proposals in the world ignore that poverty is built into capitalism. To stay in business, bosses are driven to make maximum profits, which impels them to cut labor costs as much as possible, e.g. drive wages down, not up.

The anarchy of capitalism produces unemployment. In its 400-year history there has never been full employment because the more successful companies drive the less successful ones out of business, leading to mass layoffs. Today



begin to emerge in Europe or Asia."

'ANTI-WAR' DEMS ENLIST BLOODTHIRSTY GENERAL

Clinton heeded the liberals by hiking taxes and balancing the budget (largely by slashing Welfare and stealing the Social Security surplus, as had his predecessors). But, while bombing the former Yugoslavia and Iraq, he failed to win the nation to militarize. Bush, Jr. chose not to even try and followed "cheap-hawk" Wolfowitz, whom he had made deputy defense secretary. Now Wolfowitz is out on his ear, and liberal wolves in sheep's' clothing are having their say. Anti-war faker and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi asked retired General William Odom to give the Democratic radio response to Bush on April 28 concerning Iraq. He uttered a version of his 2005 call for retreat, regrouping allies and reinvading the entire region.

"For those who really worry about destabilizing the region, the sensible policy is not to stay the course in Iraq. It is rapid withdrawal, reestablishing strong relations with our allies in Europe, showing confidence in the UN Security Council, and trying to knit together a large coalition including the major states of Europe, Japan, South Korea, China, and India to back a strategy for stabilizing the area from the eastern Mediterranean to Afghanistan and Pakistan. Until the United States withdraws from Iraq and admits its strategic error, no such coalition can be formed."

Wolfowitz is a murderous war criminal, but it would be a mistake to take any comfort in his demise. The imperialist slaughter being engineered by the liberal war-makers will be even worse. We must continue to expose and attack them as our deadlier class enemy. ☹

sharpening inter-imperialist rivalry adds to this joblessness and increased poverty. In 1955, Japan hardly produced any cars. But now, for example, Toyota has passed GM as the world's leading automaker, so GM's "solution" is to shatter the "American Dream" of tens of thousands of workers with massive job-cuts.

Many of the U.S. presidential candidates will again jab about "creating jobs" and "ending poverty" and "health care for all." Meanwhile both the Republicans and the Democrats do absolutely nothing to reduce poverty or about the U.S. being at the bottom of the imperialist countries in health care. They won't do a thing about the fact that 60% of the working class is not even eligible to collect unemployment insurance. Some churches decry the conditions of the poor, but all they offer is soup kitchens. The fundamentalists and "pro-lifers" (really anti-lifers) tell us God will take care of us, but meanwhile the U.S. has one of the highest rates of infant mortality in the imperialist world.

The union "leaders" — whose decades of sellouts have helped create poverty and mass job cuts — will again tell us "elect Democrats" to get "pro-labor" legislation passed to help the unorganized and reduce poverty. But during Clinton's 8-year reign, union membership declined, while Clinton massacred welfare, further increasing poverty. Yet when workers force strikes to demand better wages and benefits, these labor fakers don't lift a finger to organize

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PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

P.O. 808 Brooklyn NY 11202

www.plp.com

email:cd188@juno.com

Phone: 718-630-9440



PL'ers Bring Red Ideas to Oaxaca May Day March

OAXACA, MEXICO — On May 1st, international workers' day, over 80,000 workers and students marched here to commemorate the historic struggle of Chicago's workers for the 8-hour day and of the miners of Rio Blanco and Cananea (Mexico). They protested the fascist reforms of the Labor Law (ISSSTE) and demanded the firing of murderer Ulises Ruiz Ortiz, Governor of Oaxaca. The marchers also demanded the freedom of the political prisoners and whereabouts of those considered "missing," as well as punishment of those responsible for the repression against teachers of Section 22 of the SNTE (Teachers' Union) and others who participated in last year's mass uprising.

Reformist and fake left groups populated the march, but PLP members and friends brought forward their communist politics. Along with a group who formed a barricade during the rebellion, our contingent of 50 marchers held a banner reading, "FOR A COMMUNIST MAY



DAY, FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF THE MURDEROUS IMPERIALISTS AND CAPITALISTS, THE CAUSES OF UNEMPLOYMENT, WARS, AND TERROR." We also carried our revolutionary red flag and chanted "Fight, win; workers to power!" "The workers' struggles have no borders!" "Long live communism! Death to capitalism!" We distributed 2,000 leaflets and revolutionary communist chants.

Some marchers posted walls with the message "MAY DAY! ARISE YE PRISONERS OF STARVATION, FOR JUSTICE THUNDERS CONDEMNATION; IT'S THE END OF OPPRESSION.... COMMUNISM WILL BE THE FUTURE, TOGETHER WE'LL MAKE HISTORY."

Afterwards, PLP members and friends held a social-political event. We urged all to participate with us in coming activities, including June 14, the first anniversary of the cops' brutal attack repelled by the militant teachers, and which sparked the long mass Oaxaca rebellion. Our goal is to massively spread the need to build an inter-



Angry teachers attack fence surrounding the presidential palace

national revolutionary communist Party (PLP) among the militant workers and youth involved in many reform struggles against capitalism, its cops and fascist politicians like Oaxaca's governor. The only way out of capitalism's hell, from Oaxaca to Baghdad to Los Angeles, is to win masses to build a party that fights directly for a communist society. ☪

PLP Exposes Two-Faced LA Mayor over Cops' Fascist Attack

LOS ANGELES, May 17 — This evening, several thousand workers demonstrated against the racist police attack on workers and their families who demonstrated in MacArthur Park on May 1st. Workers came wanting to express their anger, but found instead a patriotic staged event controlled by State Assembly Speaker Nunez, with full press coverage, and religious and political leaders trying to calm the workers' anger. Mayor Villaraigosa spoke in English and Spanish, saying, "We all have the right to peacefully demonstrate — it's the American way."

When PLP members distributed a leaflet titled "Fascist Cops and Villaraigosa Serve the Capitalists, Not Us," along with selling CHALLENGE, they got "high fives" and lots of agreement and encouragement from marchers. One worker said, "It's true — Villaraigosa is two faced." When radio announcer "Piolin" spoke, the crowd booed him because while last year he urged workers to march, this year he urged them not march but to write their Congressmen instead.

This orgy of patriotism in the face of the fascist police attack was due to the liberal leaders of the immigrants' rights groups like CHIRLA and MIWON, loyal agents of the liberal imperialists. PLP is building its forces in these movements and in the factories and schools to challenge them.

We plan to discuss with our friends in all the mass organizations and at our jobs and schools about how to respond to police attacks like the one launched at the end of the second march on May 1st in MacArthur Park. Such discussions will lead to better, bolder plans the next time the police attack a march. As the worker's letter in CHALLENGE (5/23) correctly pointed out, the workers' response to such attacks can be schools in which the PLP can grow.

PLP and our friends must give leadership when these attacks occur. With more preparation and discussions beforehand, workers can give leadership to help each other confront and expose the cops, defend the march, fight back, and/or lead an organized, orderly retreat if necessary. Our Party has led such actions many times.

As the anger and understanding of workers deepen, more and more workers will see through the bosses' lying promises. With organization and planning more workers will stand up to the cops' attacks and to the lies of the liberals like Villaraigosa and Bratton who cover for the racist, imperialist system. In this process, more workers and youth will join the long-term fight for workers' power with communist revolution. ☪



Picket College Lab for Its Fascist War on Youth

LOS ANGELES, CA, May 2007—Fifteen to twenty students, including several PLP members, protested against the grand opening ceremony of a criminology lab at a local university campus, linking it to imperialism and the police brutality at the May Day demonstration in MacArthur Park.

While local politicians including Gray Davis and Sheriff Lee Baca smiled at the ribbon cutting of this repression factory, students picketing outside chanted "L.A., MacArthur Park, New Orleans, stop the racist war machine!" and "L.A.P.D. you can't hide, we charge you with genocide!" As our signs noted, the racist violence of the police at MacArthur Park was not an aberration within the context of their role in maintaining the capitalist system. While figures like Cardinal Mahoney and Mayor Villaraigosa call for healing, we know that there can be no reconciliation between the working class and the ruling class or its lackeys, the cops.

Throughout the ceremony, protestors were relentless, loud and spirited in their chanting. When they were called a "bunch of thugs" for chanting during the national anthem, protestors pointed to the politicians and police saying "the real thugs are in there, ma'am."

Though the new criminology lab is being advertised to students as a beacon of pride, its pristine appearance and adjacent greenery mask its real implications. Situated in the heart of a campus with one of the lowest average incomes in the state, the criminology lab targets working-class youth, including many immigrants and black youth, to be the new troops for racist repression on the streets of L.A. and beyond.

This is part of a growing trend in the use of the universities to build up homeland security forces and prepare for wider wars. As inter-imperialist rivalry grows, the bosses must adjust their resources, finding new ways to gain from the exploitation of workers. On this campus, millions have been invested in the new lab, while many other sections of the schools fall apart and



Los Angeles May Day, 2007

tuition is raised 10% for the fall. Several weeks before the grand opening, an enormous career fair brought a dazzling number of "opportunities" to the campus: police departments, the defense industry, the U.S. Army, Marine Corps and Homeland Security.

This situation has challenged students to fight back against these fascist attacks on their class. At the career fair a small but strong group marched back and forth, chanting and handing out flyers explaining that the university lines up with the interests of imperialism and its brutality against workers. Leaflets passed out leading up to the career fair and the grand opening called for a system that meets the needs of workers. During these on-going struggles, students held meetings and study groups which made these connections by discussing CHALLENGE.

In our classrooms and clubs, we will continue to expose the causal link between the needs of imperialism and the increasing tuition, criminology lab and military-packed job fairs. Through these struggles, however modest the results, PLP can build communist leadership among students, workers and soldiers, leading to a communist revolution and the end of the racist, brutal exploitation of capitalism. ☪



workers unite!

Racist KKKops Strike Again, Kill Immigrant Workers

BRONX, NY, May 21 — On May 18, an off-duty cop shot and killed an unarmed driver, a 41-year-old black Honduran immigrant maintenance worker and musician, Fermin Arzu. On a narrow street, Arzu's van had inadvertently hit a parked car which then bumped the cop's parked car. The cop, Raphael Lora, ran after Arzu's van and, without identifying himself as a cop, confronted him. Frightened, Arzu drove off at which point the killer cop shot him three times, even violating the police department's own rules of not shooting at a fleeing vehicle if a cop is not threatened.

Arzu's relatives said the cop could have fired at the van's tires, rather than shooting the driver. "He had a dream like everyone else here," said his brother-in-law Ignacio Zapata, 38. "They took his life too early." Relatives and friends held a vigil outside the murder scene demanding that cop Lora be punished for his crime.

This evening several PLP comrades went to the site of the murder to join with neighbors and friends of the Arzu family. We distributed CHALLENGE and a flyer about the need for all workers to unite to fight back against these fascist executions by the cops. Many people there took our literature and discussed police brutality and the cops' role in attacking workers, especially black and immigrant workers, to terrorize them from fighting back against the bosses' racist exploitation.

One of Arzu's friends described how Fermin, like most immigrants, had come to the U.S. seeking the "American dream," of having a decent life for himself and his family and of how he worked hard trying to achieve that dream. But for all who loved and cared about him that dream became a nightmare as he was gunned down execution style by KKKop Lora.

Others spoke of the senselessness of this murder of an unarmed man and the necessity of acting to stop these killings. We said the only way to do this is to destroy a system run by rich people who care only for themselves, their profits and their possessions.

We then went to the home of Arzu's family to offer our condolences and support. His family is determined to fight for justice and the punishment of the Killer Kop. But there are those who want to convince them that this can be achieved only through lawyers and the courts.

The fact is workers will never get justice through the bosses' legal system. We must bring this case to workers in shops, unions, churches and all mass organizations and build the movement to fight racism and its source, capitalism.

The corrupt and murderous nature of the cops has leaped forward in recent weeks, copying more and more the system they serve. Earlier in the month, an NYPD cop shot his younger girlfriend (both Guyana immigrants) in the face because she postponed their marriage. He first tried to blame the killing on a rob-

bery. On May 19, two NYPD cops were arrested trying to rob a house in New Jersey. And when cops raided the wrong house in Brooklyn searching for drugs, they stole \$2,000 from an Arab family.

These killings are occurring as the trial of the cops who shot Sean Bell last November is about to begin, after all the politicians, from Mayor Bloomberg to Al Sharpton, have yelled, "This won't be allowed again." As PLP always points out, cops, no matter the color of their skin, are paid and trained to be racist goons for the bosses. ☹

MT. KISCO, NY, May 19 — Earlier in the week some 80 protestors denounced the murder of a Guatemalan immigrant in this small town 30 miles north of NYC. The NY Daily News reported (5/20) that, "The FBI has opened a civil rights investigation into the April 28 killing of homeless Guatemalan immigrant René Javier Pérez, who was found dying at the side of a road after an encounter with Mount Kisco cops. He was discovered in the wealthy Bedford hamlet, just north of town. The involvement of the feds — and the added specter of the deaths of two other Guatemalan men in town in recent years — have fueled theories of a racist serial killer or a conspiracy by cops against minority men. It has cast a spotlight on Mount Kisco as if it were some Deep South town in the 1960s..."

Some 2,000 Guatemalan workers have come here seeking jobs. They work hard to support themselves and their families back home. A tiny few have problems, like Perez, who drank too much. On the night of his death, he had been picked up by Bedford police at Kohl's, where he was allegedly harassing people. The cops dropped him off in Mount Kisco. Two hours later, about 10:45 PM, he called 911 from a laundromat and three Mount Kisco police officers responded in two patrol cars, minutes apart. About an hour after the encounter at the laundry, Perez was found unconscious on the wooded Byram Lake Road in Bedford. He died from internal injuries. The county medical examiner



ruled the death a homicide.

The cops — Lt. Edward Dunnigan and Officers Edward Dwyer and George Bubaris (an NYPD cop for four years in the Bronx) — were placed on desk duty. Their patrol cars were impounded as evidence, then released.

People should have no faith in the FBI or the involvement of the Guardian Angels and Fernando Mateo, a NYC-based businessman who claims to be "a defender of immigrants." Eventually, either the whole episode will lead to a whitewash or some mild punishment for some of the cops. No matter what, racist police terror will continue because that's the cops' job under capitalism. ☹

May Day Dinners Dish Out Plenty of Food for Thought

SEATTLE, WA, May 5 — A feeling of urgency to win workers to smash this racist capitalist system was very strong as dozens of Boeing and government workers; university, community college and H. S. teachers and staff; and families plus others gathered to celebrate May Day. After a delicious potluck, several spoke about the May Day marches in Los Angeles and Seattle that they had participated in earlier in the week. A L.A. march participant presented a slide show of pictures he had taken there. Both he and those that marched in Seattle spoke about the contradiction between waving the U.S. flag while, at the same time, suffering super-exploitation at the hands of the U.S. bosses. We tried to resolve this contradiction in the interests of our class by selling 300 CHALLENGES and passing out 500 Party flyers at the local march of several thousand.

Next, two young students welcomed everyone and read a short composition they had written about what May Day means. They made us all laugh by ending with a warning about a grown-up who would next speak for "five hours."

Happily, the main speaker, a H.S. history teacher, did not go one for five hours. The comrade did, however, cover 500 years of capitalist development in scant minutes. Cleverly interweaving working-class struggle, the march of capitalism, racism and imperialism as well as the birth of our Party, he led to one inevitable conclusion. We workers had but one choice: to build for communist revolution.

He asked us all to struggle harder to sell our revolutionary paper. We must get our communist ideas out to

workers, students and soldiers to counter the bosses' racism, nationalism and patriotism. He invited everyone to take off work or school to bring this multi-racial group (at the dinner) to next year's May Day march. Eventually we will destroy this sick system he described and work towards a truly international communist world.

Many lively conversations continued for hours. Some new Boeing workers took extra papers to sell for the first time. Everyone left with high spirits and plenty of CHALLENGES.

ASTORIA, NY, April 28 — Songs, speeches and dramatic readings celebrated May Day at a dinner in Astoria, Queens. The program was opened by greetings sent from soldiers who are involved in the mass movement against the war in Iraq. This greeting which celebrated the fight for communist revolution inside the ranks of the bosses' military held special relevance with two active National Guard soldiers, Iraq veterans themselves, and one recent vet, attending our dinner.

The entertainment highlights of the dinner were several songs including Rap and Regaton music with revolutionary lyrics, performed by a group of High School students and their teacher from Jackson Heights and a dramatic reading retelling the history of May Day.

Speeches by a high school parent about the world political situation, a Cuny Professor recounting the struggle to build the party in his union, and a young Party leader on being in this fight for the long haul, rounded out an inspiring evening. ☹

Imperialism Source of Haitians' Drowning Deaths

**CAP-HAT-
IEN, HAITI,
May 19** — Dozens of Haitian

immigrants whose boat sank near the Turks-Caicos islands were buried in a



common grave here, angering their relatives who couldn't identify their remains. People cried as they showed pictures of their dead relatives when their body bags were unloaded in this port city two weeks after one of the worst sea disasters in recent years here. Their bodies were so decomposed they couldn't be identified. Some of the drowning victims were also bitten by sharks. Some say the boat sank while being tugged away from the Turks-Caicos islands.

Haitian workers are again victims of the racism of capitalism and imperialism. Conditions in Haiti are now even worse than before Bush sent the Marines to kidnap and topple President Jean Bertrand Aristide a few years ago, and help an uprising led by right-wing goons of the former military dictatorship. Haiti is now occupied by a UN military force headed by the Brazilian army which regularly battles drug gangs in the huge slums of Port-Au-Prince, shooting at random at houses, killing innocent children and adults.

The Haitian workers are also victims of the racist U.S. immigration laws, which pack them into concentration camps and deport them if they ever reach the U.S. If the new immigration "reform" bill passes, these laws will become even more racist. ☹



May Day in Iran Caps Months of Mass Teachers' Struggles

TEHRAN, IRAN — Angry workers confronted the rulers' agents and their goons on May Day. At one official event workers shouted down a government speaker, chanting, "Incompetent minister, resign, resign!" Security forces tried to stop independent marches by teachers, students, and Yahev bus workers (who waged a militant strike last year). Many militant leaders were arrested. The workers also denounced the imperialist plans to attack Iran, saying innocent civilians will be the ones to die, just like in Iraq.

The May Day actions were the culmination of mass protests and actions by teachers during March and April. The government responded with mass repression, arresting hundreds of teachers.

One protesting teacher who had been arrested and detained for a day asked, "How am I, my wife, and my two kids supposed to live on 220,000 Tomans [\$240] per month when just our apartment rent is 180,000 Tomans [\$200] per month? All over the world teachers are among the most respected members of society, but here we not only get paid much less than other employees of similar academic backgrounds but they [the government] also does not even tolerate our protests, and sends their agents to beat us — we who still have chalk dust on our hands from educating their kids at school."

Plainclothes agents arrested the head of Iran's Teachers Union, Ali Akbar Baghani, for the second time here while he was teaching. Other teachers were also arrested in the same incident, according to the ILNA news agency. Baghani had been detained in March and released after two weeks in jail. On March 14, after two weeks of con-

tinuous protest in front of the Iranian parliament in Tehran, riot police and security forces using batons violently dispersed thousands of teachers, arresting many.

On April 7, security forces in Hamedan arrested 45 teachers who were active in the Hamedan Teachers Association, including its entire governing board. Some of the detainees remain in detention. On April 16, teachers in Sanandaj, Eslamshahr and Kerman avoided attending classes to protest the arrests of their colleagues and "unfulfilled financial promises."

"Half of the high school teachers in town have refused to go to classes," a protesting teacher in Eslamshahr told ILNA. "Why should the maximum monthly wage of a teacher with an academic background be only 375,000 Tomans [\$400]? Wasn't the government supposed to equally distribute the money from the oil trade?"

During the nearly two years of Ahmadinejad's presidency, what experts call a "mishandling of the economic administration" has led to a 17% inflation rate during the past year, causing an unprecedented price rise nationwide.

The worsening of the financial condition for most Iranians, especially workers, ordinary employees and the retired, have triggered numerous protests against unpaid and low salaries in many cities. (Interestingly, while Iran is on the front pages of the Western media, none of the massive class struggle has been reported.)



During May Day, Iranian workers carry a casket symbolizing the death of workers' rights.

According to a new Parliamentary study, the Ahmadinejad government's current economic policies will hike the inflation rate 23.4% in the coming year.

These teachers and other militant workers are showing the potential for building a mass anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist war and non-religious movement in the Middle East. Workers are learning through their struggles that the religious holy rollers are as much their class enemies as the imperialist warmakers. It is up to us communists to forge a revolutionary movement throughout the region out of such mass struggles. ☺

Morocco's Delphi Workers Take to Streets Against Massive Job Cuts, Firings

TANGIERS, MOROCCO, May 16 — Delphi, the formerly GM-owned auto parts company, is on a worldwide rampage, cutting labor costs and eliminating jobs from Detroit to Cádiz, Spain to Tangiers. An April massive general strike led by Delphi workers facing a plant closing shut down Cádiz (see CHALLENGE, 5/9). (Delphi wants to move to cheaper labor Poland.) Across the Mediterranean, Delphi workers here are also fighting back.

In 1999, Delphi began producing electric cables for cars here, with 600 workers. As production increased, working conditions worsened for the now 4,000 workers, many highly educated (having college degrees but the lack of jobs forcing them to become proletarians). The bosses arbitrarily worked them 10-12 hours a day plus holidays without overtime pay. Delphi broke every code in the already weak labor laws here.

Delphi worker Mokhtar Khouchna (interviewed by LaHaime.org) said the workers joined the National Moroccan Labor Union, linked to an Islamist political party (PJD). But they soon realized that it resembled all other unions here and worldwide, sold out to the bosses. Union reps are even paid higher wages (about 1,100 Euros monthly — \$1,400) to keep social peace.

But the workers continued fighting back, not only for economic demands but against being treated like slaves and to stop supervisors' sexual harassment of women workers. Last December, five months after the union was formed, Delphi fired 466 workers.

When Delphi refused to grant the workers' demands, they took to the streets. They also refused to work holidays and Sundays without extra pay, demanding two days notice for work on those days, and on a voluntary basis.

Delphi used court officers to make workers sign a document saying refusal to work holidays and Sundays broke the law, despite the Labor Code saying the opposite. Then Delphi began firing workers, initially the leadership. On December 8, workers inside the plant protested this union-busting attack but anti-riot and regular cops, plus military units, moved workers 500 meters away from the plant. Then Delphi met with the local Labor Department and listed 92 workers to be banned from working anywhere in Tangiers. Workers continued demonstrating daily, without any support from the local or national union leadership. These hacks fear losing their perks with Delphi, other companies and even the government.

Delphi then met with the Ministry of Labor in Rabat, the capital city, and added 374 more workers to the banned list. Meanwhile, the cops arrested 32 workers to force them to sign a document saying they'd stop protesting.

Then Delphi workers united with women garment workers from Dewherst, 400 of whom were fired for organizing a union. Both groups held joint demonstrations, and daily protests at the provincial governor's



Cádiz, Spain — Women workers support Delphi Workers.

house, supported by other mass organizations and unions. A demonstration of some 1,200 at a Chamber of Commerce event forced the Economy Minister to enter through a back door. Cops constantly harassed the workers, but the entire city now knew about their struggle. "Our strength stemmed from being well organized," said one worker.

On February 28, at a protest outside Delphi, a well-armed cops' contingent arrested a workers' leader. Workers held firm, declaring they were fighting for their rights. The arrested leader was released but the cops threatened all workers if they persisted. Then armed cops brutally attacked, injuring 18 workers and arresting 250. One rank-and-file leader hid in a nearby plant and called his local union leadership when the cops surrounded the plant, but the hacks did nothing.

Now the union misleaders are trying to cut a deal in arbitration, allowing the company to fire the workers while granting severance pay. But the workers decided their best weapon was to continue protesting. In desperation some workers decided on a hunger strike (generally not a good tactic since bosses couldn't care less if workers starve to death).

Despite this lengthy struggle, the gang-up of Delphi, the government, the cops and the union hacks defeated the rank and file. But these militant workers proved that workers in a Muslim country will conduct class struggle and learned an important lesson about the anti-working class nature of the bosses and their state, a lesson Delphi workers in Cádiz and worldwide should learn.

In this era of endless wars and sharpening imperialist rivalry, the struggle against capitalism must be international. Industrial workers like Delphi play a crucial role, across all national and religious divides. Out of these struggles, communists can win workers to forge a revolutionary leadership to fight for a society without any bosses and their agents. That's PLP's goal. Join us! ☺

Poverty

Continued from page 2

solidarity strikes among masses of workers. They whine about companies "using the law" to stifle unionizing. But capitalist laws are set up to do just that, and these union "leaders" refuse to organize workers to break these bosses' laws.

"Black leaders" protest the racism of Imus but Jesse Jackson and Barack Obama completely ignore the mass layoff of predominantly black healthcare workers in Chicago, not to mention the declining health services to the city's black and Latino patients, all of which add to the poverty figures (which will show another increase in the next "study").

And liberals among the politicians and the media decry the double rates of unemployment among black and Latino workers and triple among the youth, but, of course, never trace the source of that racism to the super-profits reaped from it by U.S. corporations who they serve.

Finally, some of these capitalist spokespersons lament the cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in both lives and money. Then they all vote to fund the war while "apologizing" for doing so but say "we have to be patriotic and support the troops" and "can't leave Iraq in chaos," while tens of thousands of Iraqis and hundreds of GI's continue to march to their graves. They can't find the money to increase unemployment insurance and insure health care for millions of workers' children but they can spend a trillion dollars to protect Big Oil.

Racist super-exploitation has been part of capitalism since it started. Recently exhibits on slavery "discovered" that it laid the basis for the advances made by the U.S. economy over the past several centuries.

So what can workers do? We must fight the cause of poverty — capitalism and its pro-war racism and patriotism. Workers must unite and attack all those trying to divide us — racist demagogues and goons like the Minutemen, KKK, etc. "Communist revolution is the only solution" may sound like a cliché, but only a system that eliminates profits, wage slavery and the racism tied to both can enable the working class to reap the full benefits of the value we produce. This past May Day, PLP again showed the potential of building a mass revolutionary Party. Join us to turn that potential into a reality! ☺



Letters

'As the march went through downtown, a thunderstorm drenched us, but it didn't dampen anyone's spirits. There was cheering, chanting and clenched fists throughout the march.'
-An Old Friend from Austin

Austin Workers Greet May 1st Marchers

Your worldwide May Day reports inspired me to tell you about the May Day immigrant rights march in Austin, Texas, where there were over 5,000 people (maybe 7,000). The city was under a tornado watch, but a speaker at the State Capitol said, "WE are the tornado!" The speeches were loud, the music was great, and the workers and families and university and high school students were filled with tremendous energy.

Workers from other countries know what May Day is! Speakers talked about "el día internacional de los trabajadores," and remembered "los mártires de Chicago."

As the march went through downtown, a thunderstorm drenched us, but it didn't dampen anyone's spirits. There was cheering, chanting and clenched fists throughout the march. The march kept getting bigger and bigger. Construction workers donned their hard hats. Restaurant workers came out on the sidewalk and applauded. When we got to City Hall for another rally, the crowd was much too big to fit in the Plaza. It spilled out into the surrounding streets and blocked Cesar Chavez Street (a major downtown thoroughfare) for a long time.

A downside for me is that there were very few Anglos and African Americans at this inspiring event. There were several of us from my union, but we do not begin to have the unity, internationalism, and working-class consciousness that we need. Thanks, PLP and CHALLENGE-DESAFIO, for working to change that!

An Old Friend in Austin, TX

Workers in Paraguay and New Orleans: Same Enemy, Same Fight!

Following the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina (read capitalism and racist neglect), the bosses' speculation and exploitation of workers has continued. Over 900,000 hurricane-damaged vehicles were sold to used car dealers in the U.S. and abroad. Insurance companies were involved, but worse yet, selling used cars recovered from "natural" disasters is not a crime if the exact damage is listed. However, most "Autos Katrina" sent abroad do not come with this information.

The Paraguayan newspaper "ABC Color" reports that 90% of the used cars entering this South American country are from Hurricane Katrina. These cars have damage histories marked "unknown," erased or covered up, to maximize profits. This puts at risk the Paraguayan worker struggling to get by, who just wants a cheap yet safe vehicle to get to work every day. The drivers don't know about the vehicle's possible damage and therefore risk their lives. Paraguay's capitalist rulers are well-known for their corruption, which is rampant throughout the government, so this type of scam is not unusual.

Thus, the bosses take advantage of the workers' misery — from New Orleans to Asunción (capital of Paraguay) — to sacrifice their lives on the altar of the bosses' true god: the almighty buck. Racism is also evident in this scam since most Katrina victims subsequently ripped off were black and Latino. Again the slogan applies: "Same enemy, same fight; Workers of the world Unite!"

Red Guarani

'More Repression, Means More Struggle'

"Welcome to McArthur Park," said the cops over loud speakers — the same cops who attacked the demonstration for immigration reform on May Day with rubber bullets, tear gas and batons. After the May 1 attacks, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Police Chief Bratton, Cardinal Mahoney and the "organizations to defend immigrants" planned a march for May 17 to "reconcile the community and the police."(!)

"This is a play, these hypocrites," said a youth in the march for "reconciliation." "I hate the police and I'm not afraid of them. I grew up amid the repression in El Salvador, when the police violently attacked marches and were answered with workers' violence as well. More repression means more struggle. The massacred will be revenged as the slogans say." These and other similar comments were part of the discussions during the march.

Participating in mass reform organizations gives us the opportunity to meet many honest workers who can be influenced by our communist ideas. At the same time, we can expose the essence of capitalism and the role of the police in terrorizing the working class. These will be the workers who will respond under our leadership, so that we won't be running away but put forward strong fists with the politics of the working class.

In my factory, I've had a lot of political discussions with my co-workers, especially with those who went with me to the May Day march where we witnessed part of the first incident that ended with the attack that dispersed the demonstration. At the time, we thought we were seeing only an isolated case when the march had already ended, not the beginning of a bigger attack that happened a whole hour later after we had marched to our homes.

Had we been present with the group during the attack, as we were on May 17, we would have tried to give political leadership as we have done in many other immigrant rights' marches and against the racist Minutemen and their earlier version, the VCT (Voices of Citizens Together).

A worker

Need to Prepare for Cops' Attacks

[Editor's Note: The May 23 CHALLENGE contained a mistake in the translation from Spanish to English of the letter entitled "Red Flag vs. Bosses' Flag." In the last paragraph, the response to the question of whether we will be ready to respond to a greater attack by police on all workers fighting back, should have read: "Only if we join and help PLP grow," not "Only if we join the only party capable of leading the workers in these struggles and eventually the seizure of power."]

The May 1 LAPD attack on immigrant workers and a letter in the May 23 CHALLENGE, "Red Flag vs. Bosses' Flag," provoked an important and broad discussion on how PLP should function at all marches and demonstrations we attend. The letter described a comrade's successful struggle to win fellow workers to participate in a May Day march carrying red flags and supporting revolutionary politics. It is possible, though, that the letter may also have inadvertently given the wrong impression of how we should respond to police (or KKK, Nazi, etc.) violence at such demonstrations.

It is difficult to know from the description given whether there were forces that could have been mobilized to counter the police attack on the youths, but certainly that would have been the preferred strategy. The quote from the next day that "it was a good decision to leave, but maybe we should have stayed and fought" puts the emphasis on the wrong option.

This attack by the police provides an important opportunity for all clubs to discuss the need to make plans for possible police attacks at all events we are a part of (which we have done in many such events in all areas where PLP has forces). Wherever we are part of working-class struggle, we should be prepared to defend workers under attack by the cops or their agents with whatever forces we have. In our own demonstrations we organize self-defense forces to protect those who have joined us in protest. When we join demonstrations organized by others who have illusions in the government and don't prepare any response to police violence, we should make our own plan in advance how to respond to the ruling-class violence that should never be a "surprise."

Working-class confidence in communist leadership will come from years of experiencing our ability and willingness to meet the bosses head-on in struggle after struggle. We must meet their violence with working-class violence whenever that is possible, while also showing that the bosses' violence can only be finally defeated by overthrowing the entire capitalist state. Let's learn this lesson because short of state power there are many struggles and fights we can lead to expose the capitalist system and show the need for a communist future. (And even then struggle against the restoration of capitalism will continue for a long time.)

NYC comrades

Obama War Talk Mimics Nazis at Nuremberg

In "Obama Update: More Imperialist Than Ever," CHALLENGE (5/23) notes that U.S. presidential candidate Barack Obama swore loyalty to the war-making imperialists in his April 23 speech to the Chicago Council on Global Affairs. Obama's words indicate exactly how far he's willing to go.

When Obama said "no President should ever hesitate to use force — unilaterally if necessary — to protect ourselves and our vital interests when we are attacked or imminently threatened" (my emphasis), he signed on to the June 1, 2002 Bush doctrine on pre-emptive or preventive war.

A pre-emptive war is a war of aggression, and the



1950 Nuremberg principles say that the "planning, preparation, initiation or waging of a war of aggression" is a crime against peace punishable under international law. The Sept. 30-Oct. 1, 1946 judgment of the International Military Tribunal says that "to initiate a war of aggression...is the supreme international crime differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole."

When Obama said amen to the Bush doctrine, he lined up alongside the Nazis and Japanese militarists who were sentenced to hang for carrying out such a doctrine: Hermann Göring, Alfred Rosenberg, Wilhelm Keitel, Alfred Jodl, Hideki Tojo, Koki Hirota, Seishiro Itagaki....

A friend

Bosses' Negligence Caused Subway Death

Additional details have come out about the death of NYC subway track worker Marvin Franklin (CHALLENGE, 5/23) which make it even more horrible and pins the blame where it belongs — on the bosses. Three workers — Franklin, Jeffrey Hill (who was injured) and Michael Williams — all had signed up for overtime that Sunday (April 29) for extra money to help support their families. Their job was to clear debris and equipment from a completed construction project. Their supervisor told them to cross the tracks to retrieve a four-wheel dolly. The foreman stood nearby with a flashlight, saying he'd watch for approaching trains.

"We...always look both ways," before stepping onto a set of tracks, Hill told a NY Daily News reporter (5/20).

When Hill saw a light above Franklin's head piercing the darkness of the Brooklyn subway tunnel, he thought it was the foreman's flashlight. "Then I...realized it was a train.... I couldn't do anything, the train was there."

There was no warning from the foreman that a train was approaching. But when it roared around a curve at the Hoyt-Schermerhorn station, Hill knew there would be no escape. "I knew I was dead," "I knew...this is how I'm going to go. This is it."

The side of the train pounded him into the platform's concrete wall, crushing his ribs and battering his spine as he wedged himself into the 8-inch gap between train and concrete. But it pulled Franklin behind Hill and down the tracks. "I saw the look on his face when the train was dragging him," said Hill. "He was just twisting between the platform and the train," and finally fell under it as it screeched to a halt.

"I saw a boot sitting on the platform," said Williams. "I look down and see Marvin [Franklin]. He's lying there under the train....eyes closed....not saying a word."

Franklin, 55, a married father and artist who sketched images of the homeless in the subways, died on those tracks, the second track worker killed in five days.

His co-worker Hill, a father of two and graduate of Pratt Institute where he studied painting, was happy to see Franklin on the crew. Both painters, they had been talking earlier about their different mediums, said Hill. "He was in good spirits."

The transit bosses immediately announced "safety re-training" classes, intimating that somehow the workers were not following the rules and that caused the accident. Both surviving co-workers are outraged at these suggestions that they took a shortcut which led to their friend's death. "We were doing exactly what we were told," said Hill.

As CHALLENGE reported last issue, the bosses' use of short-handed work crews and stinting on funds for safety is what murders these workers. The bosses' racism towards the lives of the overwhelmingly black and Latino work-force is a killer.

A Brooklyn comrade

Competition, Not Cooperation, Marks U.S.-China Thirst for Oil

Daniel Yergin, a leading expert on oil and author of "The Prize — the Epic Quest for Oil, Money and Power," a book on Big Oil, wrote in the London Financial Times (5/21) how the U.S. and China should cooperate instead of compete for the world's oil resources when both countries meet at a Strategic Economic Dialogue.

First Yergin acknowledges the sharpening rivalry among the U.S. and China for world resources: "For some, it is too late. In their view, the rivalry risk is already here. They see a mercantilist China single-mindedly moving to pre-empt world oil supplies. Some Chinese, for their part, fear their country being denied access to supplies and worry about the vulnerability of its lengthening supply lines.... China's demand for oil, while less than 10% of the world total, is increasing quickly because of rapid economic growth. Its oil market is now the second largest in the world — 40% larger than Japan's — and it has gone in less than 15 years from self-sufficiency to importing half its total supply."

Yergin says it's good for the U.S. and Europe that China is seeking, buying and developing oil production worldwide, since that will bring more barrels to the market. Even though China's total production outside its borders is just a fraction of that controlled by any one of the Big Oil companies, the real risks are not from competition in the global marketplace but rather arise when oil and gas development gets caught up in "larger foreign policy issues, of which those involving Iran and Sudan are currently the most obvious. What the Dialogue can do is emphasize the very large common interests the two countries share as the world's two largest petroleum consumers. The U.S. imports 60% of its oil; China, 50%. Between them, they account for almost 35% of [total] world consumption. Both benefit from stable markets, open to trade and investment."

This may be true, but Yergin fails to see that politics are (as Lenin used to say) concentrated economics. A case in point is Sudan. The China National Petroleum Company (CNPC) is Sudan's largest foreign investor,

with some \$5 billion in oilfield development. Since 1999 China has invested at least \$15 billion in Sudan. It owns 50% of an oil refinery near Khartoum jointly with the Sudanese government. The oil fields are concentrated in the south, site of a long-simmering civil war, partly financed covertly by U.S. bosses, to break the south from the Islamic Khartoum-centered north.

CNPC built an oil pipeline from its concession blocs 1, 2 and 4 in southern Sudan, to a new terminal at Port Sudan on the Red Sea where oil is loaded on tankers for China. Eight percent of China's oil now comes from southern Sudan. China takes up to 65% to 80% of Sudan's 500,000 barrels/day of oil production. Sudan last year was China's fourth largest foreign oil source. In 2006 China passed Japan to become the world's second largest importer of oil after the U.S., importing 6.5 million barrels a day of the black gold. With its oil demand growing by an estimated 30% a year, China will pass the U.S. in oil import demand in a few years. That reality is the motor driving Beijing foreign policy in Africa. (Source: U.S. AID)

China has just signed an oil deal linking it with Africa's two largest nations — Nigeria and South Africa. China's CNOC will extract oil in Nigeria via a consortium that includes the South African Petroleum Co., giving China access to what could be 175,000 barrels a day by 2008. It's a \$2.27 billion deal that provides state-controlled CNOC with a 45% stake in a large off-shore Nigerian oil field. Previously, Washington considered Nigeria to be an asset of the Anglo-American oil majors, ExxonMobil, Shell and Chevron.

Such a scenario doesn't lead to cooperation, but rather to more turmoil among the imperialists and their allies in Africa, the Middle East and elsewhere. (Next: an analysis of the "humanitarian imperialism" of the "Free Darfur" movement.)

Chrysler's New Bosses, UAW Hacks Jointly Screw Workers

Chrysler's buyout by the private equity firm Cerberus represents a wholesale slaughter of North American auto workers. It will destroy jobs for tens of thousands of Chrysler workers and benefits for retirees, with Ford and GM next. It's a classic case of how capitalism chews up the working class and then spits it out with nothing left but skin and bones.

With this deal, Cerberus will immediately cut 13,000 jobs and \$300 million in retirees' health benefits. But CNNMoney.com reported (5/14) that Cerberus will close five plants and cut another 30,000 jobs. And the Indianapolis Star reported (5/17) that, "Cerberus [will] ask the United Auto Workers for a 30% cut in wages and benefits." The last of the jobs black workers won in the 1960s' rebellions will be wiped out by this racist assault. Trillions for imperialist war, death for workers' living standards.

If Chrysler workers don't agree, Cerberus would take the company into bankruptcy, allowing it to legally cancel the union contract and wipe out health and pension benefits, a maneuver that already has victimized the steelworkers. UAW president Ron Gettelfinger praises this sale to Cerberus as "in the best interests of the workers"!

Cerberus is a private equity fund, meaning its stock is not publicly traded and therefore not subject to regulations. It pools huge amounts of private capital seeking the largest returns in the shortest time. Such funds net returns of 22.5% on investments, compared to the 6.6% average of most leading companies. It doesn't create profit through developing new products but plunders the assets of existing companies and then dumps them, along with their workers.

Cerberus bought Albertson Supermarkets and the Mervyn Department Store chain, eliminating 5,800 jobs. Such firms undermine the long-term viability of the outfits they buy in the chase for immediate super-profits.

Cerberus's chairman is John Snow, Bush's former Treasury Secretary who oversaw the massive tax cuts for the rich. Bush, Sr.'s former Vice-President Dan Quayle works on its international operations. And one of its biggest investors is W's former Defense Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, as anti-working class and a warmongering crew as one could gather under one roof.

The real kicker here is the swindle being engineered by the UAW hacks. In exchange for UAW approval, the company will off-load its retiree health benefit liabilities to a fund controlled by the UAW, which would make the union responsible for cutting the benefits of retired auto workers. Now Chrysler — Ford and GM next.

The Wall Street Journal reported (5/15) that the Big Three automakers have "about \$95 billion in combined future and current health

care liabilities," to which the companies would contribute but the union would make "solvent" by cutting benefits left and right. The Journal says this "would make the UAW one of the largest private-sector providers of health care in the U.S." And the salaries of these union hacks would rise accordingly. Talk about "business unionism"!

These are the monsters that capitalism creates to oppress workers. The only immediate answer for autoworkers would be organizing international unity across all national boundaries to join with militant workers across Europe who are fighting such massive job cuts. But only a communist understanding of how the profit system intrinsically must screw the working class can provide any long-term solution: workers' revolution to seize state power and put all production in workers' hands. This can only happen by building the party committed to such a goal, the PLP.



Below are excerpts from mainstream newspapers that may be of use for our readers. Abbreviations: NYT=New York Times, GW=Guardian Weekly, LAT=Los Angeles Times

Not Genocide if profit is the motive!

...A Dutch businessman, Frans van Anraat...[was]selling chemicals to Saddam Hussein. The chemicals were used in poison gas weapons in the 1980s and against Kurdish villagers. Prosecutors had demanded a conviction for complicity in genocide, but the appeal judges rejected that, saying Mr. van Anraat was driven not by genocidal intent but by greed. (NYT, 5/10)

Anti-worker deals get Dems' OK

To the Editor

Paul Krugman is right that dealing with the negative impact of trade on American workers requires universal health care and a wide variety of pro-worker policies ("Divided Over Trade," column, May14). The reason we do not have such policies is of course the opposition of American business and its Republican allies.

Yet for 20 years Democratic leaders from Bill Clinton to Charles B. Rangel have continued to collaborate with Republicans in....such deals... (NYT, 5/18)

Pope can't take joke?

Italy now knows the answer to... "How many comedians does it take to infuriate the Vatican?" The answer is one, and his name is Andrea Rivera....

...On state television, he trained his wit on the Vatican's stance on evolution and euthanasia. "The Pope says he doesn't believe in evolution. I agree, in fact the church has never evolved," he said. He launched into a routine about the church's denial of a funeral to Piergiorgio Welby, a muscular dystrophy sufferer who opted to

have his respirator switched off in December. "I can't stand the fact that the Vatican refused a funeral for Weldy but they didn't for Pinochet or Franco,"....the Vatican indicated it was deeply unamused in a strongly worded article...(GW, 5/11)

US supplies guns for genocide

...The U.S....is the world's largest supplier of small arms. Last year we provided nearly half of the weapons sold to militaries in the developing world, many to unstable regions already engaged in conflict.

These low-tech weapons are responsible for hundreds of thousands of deaths over the last decade, including the genocide in Rwanda. But when the U.N. member states met in November to curb the trade of guns and other light weapons, the United States was the only country to vote against the historic measure. (Minutemanmedia.org)

No immigrants? Hire some prisoners!

Ever since the Colorado Legislature declared war on illegal immigrants last year, farmers in this neck of the woods have been worried that undocumented workers who make up at least half of the area's farm labor will be too scared to make a return migration.

...A pilot program with the Colorado Corrections Department...could supply them with 10-member crews of low-security female prisoners....



...But the fact that a group of Colorado framers has turned to prisoners to meet labor needs says a whole lot about why so many U.S. employers prefer illegal immigrant labor in the first place — it's cheap, dependable yet impermanent, and, well, they have no rights either. (LAT, 5/2)

No sick leave for low-paid workers

...In the lowest quarter of U.S. wage earners, nearly 80 percent...get no paid sick days at all....

Food service workers are among those least likely to get paid sick days. Eighty-six percent get no sick days at all. They show up in the restaurants coughing and sneezing and feverish, and they start preparing and serving meals. You won't see many of them wearing masks....

As overwhelming majority of Americans favor paid sick days for full-time workers... (NYT, 5/15)

PLP History: PL'ers in SDS Forged Campus Worker-Student Alliance

(Part V of PLP's history in the 1960s and 1970s in building the Students For A Democratic Society — SDS — was published in our April 25 issue. This series has covered PLP's forging of a Worker-Student Alliance — WSA — and our battle against right-wing nationalist forces until the latter was defeated in its attempt to win a majority to an anti-WSA position at the 1969 convention.)

SDS: Part VI

The right-wingers who split from SDS after the June 1969 convention had only anti-communist opposition to PLP as a basis of unity. Their unholy alliance quickly degenerated into faction fighting.

One gang joined the "Weather Underground," preaching a bizarre ideological gospel that blended liberal politics, drugs, petty terrorism and infantile individualism. A few eventually managed to blow themselves up by playing with explosives in a Greenwich Village, NY, town house. Their major action was a ludicrous rampage in the fall of 1969 through a wealthy Chicago neighborhood. They broke windows in stores and parked cars, giving the FBI a good excuse to put a few of the "Weather" leaders on the "most wanted" list and to discredit the millions of young people still sincerely searching for effective mili-

tant leadership against U.S. imperialism's ongoing Vietnam slaughter.

The other crowd organized sects based on the idolatry of Chinese Communist leader Mao Zedong and their own chairmen, respectively Mike Klonsky and Bob Avakian. The Klonsky crowd distinguished itself through gross personal corruption and the opportunistic justification of every right-wing move made by the Chinese leadership. The Avakian faction was built around a similar recipe of leader worship and opportunism. They disguised it in a simple-minded pre-hiphop aping of the slang Avakian's followers condescendingly attributed to urban youth.

PLP and its pro-working class base within SDS set out to build a worker-student alliance in fact as well as in name. The campus movement had many militant actions to its credit, including battles with police, mass anti-war mobilizations, and campus strikes. But as history and the 1968 general strike in France had proved many times, students may serve as an important catalyst, but they cannot change history or seize power without leadership from the working class.

To launch the alliance in flesh and blood, PLP proposed a program of unity with campus workers. The Party fully un-

derstood that workers in heavy industry (particularly war-related industry), transportation and communications occupied a strategically more crucial position than campus workers. However, campus workers were the ones with whom anti-war students came into daily contact — in the dormitories, on the grounds, in the lecture halls, laboratories and libraries, and in the cafeterias and dining halls. Without them, the universities couldn't function. Furthermore, campus workers were — and remain — brutally exploited by university bosses. A large number were black and Latin, and many of the worst-paid were women. The campus was therefore an obvious place for SDS chapters to make the "Less Talk-More Action-Fight Racism" proposal a concrete reality.

In the fall of 1969, the remaining pro-PLP SDS chapters set about launching the Campus-Worker-Student Alliance (CWSA) on several dozen campuses. The climate appeared favorable in some respects. Although the campuses were quieter in October 1969 than they had been a year earlier, the fighting in Vietnam and mass outrage about it continued, along with the militancy of U.S. industrial workers emerging in a significant strike wave. Building unity between the strikers and the anti-war movement became an urgent task. The massive

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"peace" demonstration scheduled for November 15 in Washington, D.C., quickly symbolized this challenge.

(Next: The half-million anti-war demonstration, the GE strike and the worker-student alliance.) ☪

GI's and Vets Should: Turn Imperialist War Into Class War

The Turning: A History of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War, Andrew E. Hunt, New York University Press, 1999

"I got a Purple Heart [in Vietnam], and I hope to get another fighting these motherf-----s [pointing to the Capitol steps]."

— Vietnam Vet Peter Branagan

"The Turning" follows the Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) from its inception as a small speakers bureau in 1967 to its virtual demise in the mid '70s. At its height in 1971-72, VVAW had 25,000 on its rolls — including two thousand stationed in Vietnam. The Turning is filled with interesting historical details about this period. Nonetheless, Hunt's illusions about the bosses' media, identity politics, and capitalist reform limit his book's usefulness.

The Revolution Will Not Be Televised

Hunt equates success with media exposure. Publicity, rather than political content, is his measuring stick. Operation Rapid American Withdrawal (RAW), "a four-day, simulated search-and-destroy mission between Morristown, New Jersey and Valley Forge, Pennsylvania," was a success because "the media provided extensive coverage."

On the other hand, VVAW leaders "were disappointed with [the Winter Soldier Investigation (WSI)], because of scant media coverage." The WSI panel of Vietnam veterans gave eyewitness accounts of U.S. imperialism's atrocities in Vietnam. On January 31, 1971, it convened in Detroit to reach blue collar workers like the vets themselves.

"Unlike the Winter Soldier Investigation, Dewey Canyon III (DC III) drew the attention of the American public [i.e. the press]." DC III began on April 18, 1971, with a march and lobbying Congressmen under the tutelage of (recent presidential candidate) John Kerry, but split with Kerry's Democratic Party politics (and their money) when thousands of militant veterans threw their Vietnam War medals on the Capitol steps. The Turning implies media coverage was the main way to recruit. Hunt uncritically reports on the "success" of Playboy ads.

Racism and Nationalism: Imperialism's Tools

Hunt equates political progress in VVAW with nationalism and identity politics. Hunt concedes nationalist movements "absorbed the energy of countless young Chicanos [and young blacks], including many Vietnam veterans." Trying to have it both ways he then asserts, "Liberation [i.e. nationalist and feminist] struggles in the early seventies, particularly among Chicanos, African-Americans, and women, made VVAW a more diverse organization..." Nowhere does Hunt discuss how racism and sexism are used by bosses to amass greater profits off lower pay for black, Latin and women workers as well as to divide and drive down wages for all workers. This class analysis could have led to a larger more multi-racial organization of men and women.

This omission is glaring as he does go to great lengths pointing out VVAW's working-class character. "Half of the veterans surveyed at Dewey Canyon III were raised in blue-collar households." Even as Kerry testified before Congress, working-class vets hung a sign in the national office saying "Free John Kerry's Maid."

Many of the black and Latin vets that did join gave invaluable leadership. The active-duty VVAW chapter our Party led in the Northwest was 50% black and Latin. It recruited some of the most militant leaders — black, Latin and white. Class-based, anti-racist struggle helped the chapter grow and withstand ruling class attacks and prosecutions.

Active-Duty Soldiers: A Missed Opportunity

VVAW came into its own at the same time as the active-duty GI movement. Nearly half of the Army's active-duty soldiers resisted or rebelled during VVAW's most successful years. These radicalized soldiers swelled VVAW's ranks as they were discharged.

Despite widespread sympathy for soldier rebellions within VVAW, the national office, with a few exceptions, did little to organize the troops. While a thousand troops in Vietnam signed a VVAW anti-war petition, VVAW could have done a lot more.

From its inception, there was a struggle within VVAW between "'bring our brothers home' and 'prevent the next war.'" Even as many in VVAW began to use the word imperialism in an effort to understand the U.S. bosses' endless wars, the organization never developed a strategy that could attack its root cause: the capitalist system.

Communist revolution is the only way to smash imperialism. Masses of soldiers must be won to the workers' side if such a revolution is to succeed. Armed with this ideology, our Party led a significant active-duty VVAW chapter for nearly two years (see "Red-Led GIs Blast Racist Brass" in upcoming PL Magazine). Unfortunately, active-duty chapters were the exception.

Hunt never explores this weakness. He focuses on VVAW's moral and public relations contributions to the peace movement. Anti-imperialist rebellion among the troops is not high on his agenda.

The last hurrah for VVAW was aptly named The Last Patrol. Beset by government agents, prosecutions and political weaknesses, the organization decided to focus on the Republican convention in 1972. The Democratic Party liberals represented the main danger to the masses that were now lining up against U.S. imperialism. The Party led thousands at that convention to expose the hypocrisy of these liberal ruling-class servants. VVAW chose to concentrate on an easier target: Nixon. It was the last national effort they were able to mount. VVAW eventually drowned in a sea of phony leftist politics.

Today, Iraq veterans are examining this history. Iraq Veterans Against the War just staged a present-day version of Operation RAW in D.C. We have to weigh the weaknesses as well as the strengths of anti-war Vietnam veterans. The Turning's historical details will help us find those strengths and weaknesses, but we must be careful not to rely solely on the author's interpretations of those facts. ☪

Imperialist Rivalry Behind Latest Lebanon War

The Lebanese army siege of Nahr el-Barred, one of many Palestinian camps in Lebanon, and home for 30,000 people, has turned into a bloody mini-war. The army, which didn't fire a shot to defend Lebanon when Israel warred on Hezbollah in 2006, is now using heavy artillery and tanks against a small Jihadist group inside the camp, supposedly allied with al Qaeda, while the people in the camp suffer the consequences. Thousands have already fled.

Life in the camps is miserable. The Christian Science Monitor (5/22) reports: "The camps were set up generally on the outskirts of towns and cities and initially consisted of little more than canvas tents. Over the years and as their population... swelled, the refugees built simple homes from cinder blocks and cement, turning the encampments into small villages that often lacked proper sanitation, electricity, and water. While more than 200,000 Palestinians are believed to live in the camps, the United Nations reports that 424,650 Palestinians live throughout the country."

The sharpening imperialist rivalry in the oil-rich Mid-East is behind the region's turmoil. The Lebanese government is blaming Syria for supporting the Jihadist group, saying Damascus is trying to reassert its control over Lebanon. But the Syrian government actually had arrested the Jihadist group's leader since it considers Political Islam-Jihadism an enemy. The U.S. and Saudi Arabia were actually courting several Sunni Jihadist groups in Lebanon as a counterweight to the pro-Iranian Shiite Hezbollah which defeated the 2006 Israeli invasion. (Seymour Hersh, The New Yorker, Feb. 2007) The Jihadists have flourished because of the traditional Al Fatah Palestinian leadership's sellouts in the camps, the West Bank and Gaza.

Lebanon's "Communist" Party "alternative" is to support one faction (Hezbollah) in this inter-capitalist-imperialist rivalry. The difficult task ahead for any revolutionary-minded workers and youth in the region is to build a new communist movement, breaking with Political Islam, Zionism, nationalism and all bosses and imperialists. That's the only way out of the Mid-East's misery and endless wars. ☪