

CHALLENGE



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THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

Liberal Warmakers Ousting Inept Neo-Cons

Liberals pursuing a strategy of wider wars are exercising increasing control of U.S. military policy. Defense Secretary Gates, who took over neo-con Rumsfeld's post, recently chose Admiral Michael Mullen to head the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The liberal NY Times' June 13 editorial, "Good Choice for the Chiefs," praised Mullen for his long-range planning: "He has tried to reshape maritime strategies for a new era of unconventional threats and challenges. He has particularly pressed the idea of multiplying America's strategic reach by cooperating with other navies against common threats...."

MULLEN BUILDS SHIPS FOR FAR-FLUNG U.S. INVASIONS

Mullen's imperialist outlook makes him the darling of liberal U.S. rulers. As Chief of Naval Operations, he spearheaded the development of new types of ships geared specifically for ground invasions, unlike carriers and submarines. Mullen boasted to the Senate last month of the DDG 1000 destroyer now under design, "This multi-mission surface combatant, tailored for land attack and littoral [coastal] dominance, will provide independent forward presence and deterrence and operate as an integral part of joint and combined expeditionary forces."

The Littoral Combat Ship (LCS), another Mullen pet project, actually in production, has a similar mission. This shallow-draft vessel can support troops close to the shores

'Along with providing the hardware liberal warmakers need, Mullen grasps their international and domestic ideological requirements.'

they invade and even go up rivers. The Armed Forces Journal (12/21/06) foresees the LCS's usefulness in the looming U.S. conflict with China, "It may well be the ship best-suited to defeating the threats that face U.S. security partners along the Asia littoral.... China is engaged in territorial disputes with almost all of its maritime neighbors....The countries of Southeast Asia know that persistent instability along their coasts ultimately invites foreign intervention." The ships, however, might sooner see action in Saudi Arabian, Iranian or Pakistani waters. Mullen made the DDG 1000 and the LCS the Navy's top spending priorities.

Along with providing the hardware liberal war-makers need, Mullen grasps their international and domestic ideological requirements. Bush's decision to invade Iraq with few allies sank the U.S. in world opinion. As keynote speaker at the liberal Brookings Institution's forum on "The U.S. Navy Beyond Iraq — Sea Power for New Era" (3/3/07), Mullen said, "The United States can't do this alone in the future." He spoke, perhaps with too much optimism, of a "thousand-ship" U.S.-led international fleet and played up the Navy's "humanitarian" efforts, like tsunami relief. Aware of an acute shortage of liberals in uniform, Mullen, a

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A Working-Class World Is Possible...

Only by Fighting for Communism

The U.S. Social forum is meeting in Atlanta, Georgia with the theme Another World is Possible. We in the Progressive Labor Party believe that indeed another world is possible only through smashing capitalism and its racist warmaking profit motive.

Since the fall of the old international communist movement capitalists have launched an unprecedented political, economic and ideological offensive against the world's working class. The working class has fought back with great ferocity but always through channels poisoned by cronies of the bosses or with rotten capitalist ideas. Workers have been taught they can only "work within the system." Capitalist "reformers" aimed to discredit the idea of violent revolution to smash their state and replace it with a workers' state — communism.

Racism's Different Forms: Always Used Against Workers

From its birth, capitalism has used the idea of racism to divide and weaken the international working class and hold the system of wage slavery together. The idea of "race" was invented by bosses to divide black slaves and white indentured servants who were beginning to rebel against their masters in the Southern colonies. Now while black, Latino and immigrant workers are shouldering the main burden of U.S. imperialism in decline, all workers' jobs, wages, pensions and healthcare are being devastated. Racist ideas that are pushed in school and media are used to convince workers to blame other workers for their problems instead of the bosses.

Many workers saw through and fought to smash these racist ideas, from the times of the slave rebellions through the civil rights movement of the 1960s. As a response to anti-racist anger, bosses began to push the theory of "white skin privilege" which blames white workers for hundreds of years of capitalist oppression, asks them to feel guilty about their relatively better treatment from the system, creating the illusion that white, black and Latin workers are not part of the same class. It is simply the mirror image of the traditional racist ideology, and it is just as dangerous for the workers who believe it.

Fighting Nationalism and Smashing Borders Crucial

Another ideological weapon the bosses use against workers is nationalism, loyalty to the ruling capitalists. Nationalism asks workers to see members of our own class as enemies because they live across a border. This idea seeks to conceal from workers our one exploiting class enemy, capitalists, no matter their skin color or language.

Historically, all countries were born from the slaughter and coercion of workers by ruling classes fighting to gain new territory for exploitation and profit. The workers' role was to fight and die and kill other workers for "their" bosses.

Capitalist-created borders have had disastrous effects. For 60 years, Israeli and Palestinian workers have been marching behind their rulers to their deaths. "Undocumented workers" in the U.S. and Europe face massive repression because they're from different countries. These bosses' borders divide workers and induce them to pledge allegiance to their local ruling class, maintaining the latter's class rule.



May Day 2007 in Los Angeles

Don't Vote! Organize for Communist Revolution!

The bosses tell us, and many workers believe, that we can fix the system by voting. First only rich white male land-owners voted; then through political struggle most white men, then women, and finally black workers gained the right to vote. After 220 years most workers, except immigrants, have the "right" to vote in the bosses' elections. The result of all this voting? We live in a society where racist cops terrorize our cities, where one in three young black men is in the criminal justice system, where women suffer degrading sexism and bosses' wars for profit threaten the lives of workers worldwide. It doesn't make a damn bit of difference if Clinton, Obama, Edwards, McCain or Giuliani is President (*they all are for wider imperialist wars*), or if the Governor or Mayor is black, Latin, or white. We still have capitalism.

Under capitalism, the government and elections are controlled by the capitalist class, the rich rulers who control the factories, mines, mills and offices. They use all electoral parties to maintain their profit system. Their interests are directly opposed to the well-being of the working class. Our labor produces all goods and services, all value, and creates the profit the bosses steal. No matter who we vote for, they still own everything and control what we produce.

The rulers use elections to fight over which capitalist faction they represent will control the government to fight for their particular interests. They also use elections to distract workers from the depth of the rot that is the capitalist system, using them as they use racism and nationalism to control our loyalties. They hope that we will sign on to their ideological program: blame workers of other colors (or ourselves), commit ourselves to "our" ruling class and believe that we are changing things by participating in elections or reform movements controlled by various capitalists.

The problem with all of these "solutions" is that they all maintain a system where the ruling class survives by exploiting the working class. However "democratic" they look, the bosses are living off our labor power. The only way to truly and permanently end this is to destroy the entire class system. We need a world with only one class, the workers. Under a communist system, the workers would control their own labor power instead of serving as wage slaves to the bosses. We call this a dictatorship of the proletariat: instead of the racist warmaking bosses' dictatorship we all suffer today, under which they use the farce of voting to mislead us, the workers would make all the decisions collectively. This is not an easy idea, and it is not one any boss or politician will buy into, but it is necessary. We workers, students and soldiers must be prepared to fight for the future we deserve. ☺



Liberal Bosses' Ousting Inept Neo-Cons

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Harvard Business School alumnus, promised to boost ROTC on Ivy League campuses. "Having a service which only comes from the red states is a very bad formula," he said.

LIBERALS BAKER AND HAMILTON BACK IRAQ CARNAGE, SEEK WORLD WAR PROVOCATION

Another sign of the liberals' growing influence is Bush's ultimate acceptance of the December 2006 recommendations of James Baker's and Lee Hamilton's Iraq Study Group. "Speaking at a White House news conference, Bush for the first time fully adopted the blueprint outlined in December by the Iraq Study Group." (Los Angeles Times, 5/25/07) The "surge" it called for is now escalating the death toll among both Iraqis and GIs. Ever compliant with Pentagon budget demands, Democrats, too, are mimicking Baker and Hamilton, who said on June 11, "They would not cut off funding for the war." (ABC News, 6/12/07)

While they seek to subdue Iraqi insurgents and get the oil flowing again, Baker and Hamilton know that it will take more 9/11, Pearl Harbor-style attacks to mobilize the nation for the broader wars the rulers must wage. [See box.] The Army continues to miss its recruiting quotas. Hamilton thus welcomed a second 9/11 in eerily positive words. "He also warned that whether it's good policies or sheer luck, future attacks on U.S. soil were imminent." (ABC) Baker, openly favoring U.S. aggression, "said the United States needed to strengthen its defenses and 'be prepared to go on the offense.'"

Hamilton helped formulate the Hart-Rudman reports

that, beginning in 1999, spelled out 50 recommendations for transforming the U.S. into a war-waging police state that could survive the next few decades in the face of growing threats from would-be imperialist rivals. Hart-Rudman is similar to but more explicit than Baker and Hamilton. Both warned of and hoped for a "hostile attack upon our homeland" after which "the American people will be ready to sacrifice blood and treasure, and come together to do so, if they believe that fundamental interests are imperiled." Bush blew the first 9/11 opportunity. Skilled liberal architects of world war are replacing inept

neo-con bunglers who can't manage a regional conflict, let alone militarize a nation, intensifying the move to wider wars.

The working class must be on guard against these liberal war-makers. We in PLP must win workers, soldiers, students and youth to join and build PLP, to see that the only way to free our class from this imperialist bloodbath is to organize for communist revolution. ☸

NUCLEAR HIT ON U.S. JUST WHAT RULERS NEED

On June 12, the NY Times published an op-ed article called "After the Bomb," outlining the steps the U.S. government would have to take if terrorists attacked a U.S. city with a nuclear weapon. But this was hardly a speculative piece. Its authors, William Perry, Ashton Carter and Michael May, have played key roles in U.S. war planning. Perry and Carter were secretary and assistant secretary in Clinton's Pentagon. May helped build the U.S. nuclear arsenal as director of the Lawrence Livermore labs.

In essence, they call for fascism: direct federal control over all police and fire departments, enforced imprisonment or evacuation of urban populations, and a centralized, bunker-protected presidential power structure. A reader's letter responded (6/17/07) with what the writers failed to say: "None of us can imagine the depth of rage and desire for vengeance that would sweep this country if the United States were attacked with a nuclear bomb. I have to believe that even the most liberal president would retaliate against someone with nuclear weapons." These liberals hope a terrorist ten-kiloton blast can win the U.S. public to full-scale war.

"After the Bomb" emanates from an April "The

Day After" workshop convened by Harvard and Stanford. Its members included serving and retired generals and admirals, homeland security officials, think-tank bigwigs, professors and journalists. The Rockefeller-allied Carnegie and MacArthur foundations funded the project. Perry and Carter, its directors, have been seeking a "galvanizing" incident at least since 1997, when they served on Harvard's Catastrophic Terrorism study group. It envisioned that "an act of catastrophic terrorism that killed thousands or tens of thousands of people and/or disrupted the necessities of life for hundreds of thousands, or even millions, would be a watershed event in America's history." The 1997 group helped pave the way for Hart-Rudman. With the rulers' overriding mobilizing task still unfinished, the same liberal foundations are bankrolling "The Day After." Having no shortage of enemies, the rulers needn't orchestrate such an assault themselves. ☸



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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Venezuela: Workers' Power and Bankers' Profits Don't Mix

(In our previous issue, 6/20, we discussed "freedom of the press" in Venezuela after the RCTV's open broadcast license was not renewed because of its open support for a right-wing anti-Chávez coup in April 2002. We explained how there's no such thing as "free press" under capitalism, how the mass media is increasingly run by a few conglomerates worldwide which dictate the news and entertainment we receive.)

The rightwing opposition, and its supporters in the media internationally, accuse the Chávez government of "going communist." Many honest workers and others believe Chávez's "Bolivarian Socialism of the 21st Century" will lead them to liberation from capitalist oppression. We in PLP don't believe it. Sure, Chávez has used the oil bonanza to help give workers and students some reforms. Sure, the old ruling class and the imperialists would prefer governments that in the past stole the oil bonanza and drove workers into deep misery. But in essence, capitalism is still alive and kicking in Venezuela, and big time.

Two recent articles make that quite clear. The NY Times (6/15) reports "Boom Times for Bankers in Venezuela," showing how increased public spending and the oil boom generating a rising economy have been very good for bankers: "In marathon speeches peppered with quotes from Marx and accolades to Che Guevara, President Hugo Chavez repeatedly vows to do away with capitalism in Venezuela. But it turns out that Mr. Chávez's economic policies have been generating a boom for those most capitalist of institutions — Venezuela's banks."

Business Week magazine (6/25) repeats this theme: "You might call it business' love-hate relationship with Chávez. Local and foreign companies alike are raking in more money than ever in Venezuela. Two-way trade between the U.S. and Venezuela has never been higher. Venezuela exported more than \$42 billion to the U.S. last year, including 1 million barrels of oil daily, and imported \$9 billion worth of American goods, up 41% from 2005. But since Chávez declared President George W. Bush Public Enemy No. 1, Americans prefer to keep a low profile, even

though the 1,100 member companies of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Venezuela employ 650,000 workers. 'Consumption has been going through the roof, and commercial relations between the U.S. and Venezuela are still workable, but on the political front there is confrontation,' says Saade [Chamber of Commerce president]. 'American business is caught in the middle.'

Can a "reformed" capitalism liberate workers? Capitalism, whether it's free market or "Bolivarian" and nationalist á la Chávez, is still based on exploiting workers' labor. Maybe Chávez can provide some reforms to workers, and make alliances with U.S. rivals (Russia, China, Iran), but in essence it is still capitalism. And since it is capitalism, the reforms — which have not really made a major indent in Venezuela's poverty rate — could be taken away for many reasons (the oil bonanza weakens, the worldwide economic crisis hits harder, and so on).

Meanwhile, the Chavista project to build the Unified Socialist Party of Venezuela is basically a capitalist-nationalist outfit that will unite workers, "nationalist businesspeople," union hacks and high government officials, but workers will not rule. It mimics Argentina's old Peronist Party: a bureaucratic top-down organization led by pro-Chávez careerists and bosses. This is the opposite of a real revolutionary workers' party, based on never uniting with any bosses or union sellouts, on fighting for real workers' power (communism) and the destruction of all forms of capitalism.

We in PLP fight for this kind of real revolutionary party wherever we have forces. We must try to bring our communist politics to workers and youth in Venezuela who have illusions about Chávez. This means working in the mass organizations where these workers are involved, but fighting hard to shatter their deadly illusions in Chavismo and his fake "Socialism of the 21st Century." ☸

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South Africa General Strike Shows Racism Cannot Be Ended Under Capitalism

JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA, June 15 — Two days ago, a massive strike of over 500,000 workers rocked this country. Unions are demanding a 10% pay rise. The government has agreed to a mediators' proposal of 7.25%.

Thousands of workers in red and yellow T-shirts danced and sang liberation songs through the streets of this city, the country's economic capital. BBC reported that marches occurred in 43 major cities and towns. In Pretoria, an estimated 10,000 people marched to the union buildings, the president's official home. In Cape Town workers picketed parliament. In the port city of Durban, protesters were also out in big numbers and those businesses that had opened shut down, fearing violence. The nearby city of Pietermaritzburg was as empty as a Sunday. Most taxi, bus and train services countrywide supported the strike, making it difficult for many private sector workers to get to work.

The African National Congress (ANC) government has sent dismissal notices to 600 strikers, including many nurses. It has also instructed banks to recall a full month's salary payments of striking public servants — many of whom were due to be paid today (Business Day, 6/15). The paper added that this is expected to fuel protesters' anger because they will be denied wages for all that time worked. The government has also sent soldiers to striking hospitals and schools. Military medics are now scabbing on hospital workers.

The COSATU union federation, whose leaders are part of the government, just like the SACP (South African "Communist" Party), are using the strikers as part of a power struggle inside the ANC government. Both groups support the candidacy of Jacob Zuma to lead the ANC in the group leadership's December election. Whoever leads the ANC will become its presidential candidate in the 2008 elections to succeed current President

Mbeki, the present ANC leader. Zuma is just another opportunist who was Mbeki's second in command until 2006 and has not opposed any of the government's anti-working class, free-market privatization measures.

The SACP ministers in the government are actually responsible for some of the attacks against the strikers. Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, for example, a SACP leader and its deputy chair until 2002, is the public service and administration minister. She was the one who issued the injunction preventing nurses and other health workers from striking.

Charles Nqakula, SACP chair, is the government's minister of safety and security. He heads the state's armed bodies and was responsible for the police assault on strikers a week before the general strike. Another SACP leader Ronnie Kasrils, heads the government's intelligence services. No doubt he will be very busy mobilizing the secret state agencies to combat "subversive" workers.

How did these forces who fought Apartheid become the best guardians of capitalism? Millions of workers and youth in South Africa and worldwide opposed and fought the super-racist Apartheid regime and its capitalist and imperialist backers, who made huge profits off the racist super-exploitation of the black workers here. Many of these anti-racist fighters wanted a communist-led revolution to smash capitalism, the source of racism. But the ANC and SACP leadership were not organizing



Half a million workers went on general strike.

real revolution. (Remember how David Rockefeller and the U.S. bosses welcomed Nelson Mandela as a hero some two decades ago?) So the big bosses, realizing they needed some small cosmetic changes to keep their racist system basically intact, made a deal with the ANC — knowing the latter would maintain the profit system — and dumped the old Apartheid rulers.

The ANC leaders have proven to be great managers of capitalism. A few black politicians and aspiring bosses have done very well, but life for most black workers is still very harsh. Poverty rates have risen. The key lesson of this struggle is that racism cannot be ended as long as capitalism rules, no matter the color or label of the rulers. ☺

Racist Police Terror in NYC Schools

NEW YORK CITY, June 16 — CHALLENGE readers have long known of the police reign of terror inflicted on black and Latin working-class youth in their neighborhoods. Now the NYPD — which took over school security in 1998 — has stepped up the abuse of students, and of staff who defend the students. With arrests in and around city schools growing, the stories are horrible: a 13-year-old arrested for writing graffiti on a desk earlier this year, and 30 Bushwick, Brooklyn students arrested on the street walking to a wake for a friend.

In March, the NY Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU) published a report entitled "Criminalizing the Classroom: The Over-policing of New York City Schools." Based on that report, Bob Herbert has written two columns in the NY Times: "Poisonous Police Behavior" (6/2), and "School to Prison Pipeline" (6/9). Herbert also reports on arrests of students nationwide for childlike behavior — a 6-year-old arrested in Florida when she had a tantrum in kindergarten, a 7-year-old arrested in Baltimore for riding a dirt bike on the sidewalk.

Both Herbert and the NYCLU detail the use of metal detectors and abusive, nasty security agents. They note that predominantly white schools don't have metal detectors or the same degree of NYPD abuse. They report on the "good kids" being harassed and arrested, kids who've never been in trouble.

The bottom line, as both Herbert and the NYCLU point out, is racism. For a long time, PLP'ers have fought the terror in NYC schools, terror caused not by students but by School "Safety" Agents and the NYPD. We've led struggles against the first metal detectors at Bushwick High School and fought in other schools against the installation of cameras in hallways. We've pointed out how black and Latin students have been criminalized but not white, middle-class students. All this is part of growing U.S. fascism. Students are being taught to obey the authorities, and that the metal detectors and NYPD will "protect" them from other students who might hurt them.

Liberals like the NYCLU and Herbert are getting a big play in the rulers' biggest media mouthpiece. The rulers are worried that if



police continue to harass students nationwide — criminalizing behavior that is not criminal — students will become angry at government authority in general, just at the time that the bosses need more working-class youth for their expanding imperialist wars.

The NYCLU calls for turning control of school security back to the Department of Education. This is the agency which has designated numbers of schools as so-called Impact Schools, turning them into armed camps. These liberals are calling for better policing and hands off the "good kids." They want at least some youth won to the system, not turned off and angry.

We in PLP, of course, want to win all students to fight the rulers' racism, reflected in the metal detectors and NYPD in the schools. This summer we will involve youth in many activities so they can learn, in struggle, how racist police terror is part and parcel of the bosses' system. We train youth to be political organizers since we see black, Latino, white and immigrant youth as a treasure that will guarantee the future of our Party and of the struggle for a system that eliminates racism: communism. ☺

Marches Protest Genocide Killing Oakland's Black Youth

OAKLAND, CA — It was three days after the massacre at Virginia Tech. A girl's scream of anguish swept down a corridor here. Her 16-year-old friend D., a fellow student, had just died in the hospital from gunshot wounds he had received the night before.

Earlier CHALLENGE had reported on a front-page story in Oakland's daily, The Tribune. "Youth's number 1 killer — Murder," the headline had read. In Oakland black males, like D., are murdered at a rate of 186 per 100,000.

In classes this day, though, we were not so much dealing in statistics as in raw pain, unending loss. "Except," one teacher observed in the after-school emergency staff meeting, "among those students who were not in D.'s social circle. They seemed emotionally removed, almost empty."

The teachers pondered this a while. Then they realized what in reality we already knew. Black life in official USA has little or no value.

Virginia Tech has about 25,000 students. Assuming no more killings, 32 out of 25,000 will have been murdered this year. That gives us a rate of 128 per 100,000 for one year. Compare that to Oakland's rate of 186 per 100,000.



Compare the media coverage of Virginia Tech's tragedy to Oakland's bigger and more continuous tragedy. The students who seemed emotionally removed were expressing what the larger society had already modeled for them — the death of young black males is of no particular importance.

The teachers at the school were self-critical. While they called themselves Social Justice Teachers, they questioned what they had done. The teachers decided as a staff not to mimic the larger society's indifference. That Sunday they organized a walk against violence. They took a route that weaved through the heart of the inner-city neighborhood our school serves. Some two hundred parents, students and teachers participated. The high point came when they arrived at D.'s home and his mother came out to join us. What a powerful statement. Here were fellow students, teachers, community members taking time out to note that

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NEA Delegates Must Defend Students Against Racist Attacks and War

Teachers are meeting the first week in July in Philadelphia for the Representative Assembly (RA) of the National Education Association. This is the convention of the biggest union in the country, 10,000 schools workers, in a crucial position in society. It occurs when the war in Iraq is tanking. Democrats, even as they attack Bush, are planning for a broader war to counter rival imperialists over control of Middle East oil profits. Reorganizing schools to better win teachers and students to support imperialism is crucial to the ruling class's plan of preparing the society for this broader war.

In the schools this war plan includes having military recruiters in the schools; a junior ROTC to track students into the military; surrounding students with a prison-like atmosphere with metal detectors and cameras to spy on them during school hours; advocating the "Tough Choices, Tough Times" proposal which, at 16, will push especially black and Latino students into trade school or the military if they don't pass certain tests; teaching the rulers' false view of history which pushes anti-working class, nationalist and racist patriotism, loyalty to the bosses' flag.

Teachers have a choice. We can support the Democrats, the patriotic path of least resistance, leading us to collaborate in their imperialist plans. Or we can join with students and their families, to build a movement to turn the bosses' wars into a revolution to get rid of imperialist wars and racist exploitation for good.

Why do we call the Democrats a party of war when they criticize Bush based on the war in Iraq? The Democrats attack Bush because of poor planning and too few troops in Iraq, not because they disagree with the need for wars to control the oil resources of the Middle East. After all, it was Democratic President Jimmy Carter who declared Middle Eastern oil crucial to U.S. national inter-

ests and worth going to war for. Democratic presidential front-runners, Edwards, Obama, and Clinton all say that "all options are on the table" in regard to a military attack on Iran.

This is because the United States ruling class faces fierce competition from other imperialist rivals, E.U., Russia, and China. All conflicts, from Venezuela to Darfur to Gaza, and especially in the Persian Gulf, relate to that

'Teachers have an important role to play, as our students will become the future soldiers drafted to fight the imperialists' ever-widening wars.'

sharpening rivalry, which will inevitably lead to World War III. Democratic and Republican politicians both support the long term goal of maintaining U.S. power in the world by any means necessary. This requires reorganizing society to prepare for the imperialist war made inevitable by the inherent competition of the capitalist system. Teachers must reject both the parties of imperialist war.

To prepare for war bosses need to reindustrialize the U.S. to solve the crisis they face in shipbuilding, tank production and steel supplies. More war requires American students to be trained as everything from engineers to welders and machinists so weapons can be produced domestically. No Child Left Behind is part of this plan. Standardized tests and curricular "reform" which de-emphasize creativity and critical thinking about the current situation

and instead concentrate on basic skills, technical education, and patriotism are preparing students to be part of the war machine. Punitive, racist measures in low-achieving schools disempower teachers and aim for the rulers' agenda to be carried out without opposition. Increasingly repressive security measures are part of the fascist control that war will require.

Here at the RA and in schools and locals around the country, teachers must organize to fight against the conversion of the schools into adjuncts of the imperialist war machine. Organizing together with students and their families is necessary to build a broad opposition to this fascist war agenda. But make no mistake about it — building a "peace movement" will not stop the march to wider war because capitalist competition inevitably leads to inter-imperialist war.

Our students will be called upon to be cannon fodder, and exploited workers for the war machine.

But workers, teachers and soldiers can become revolutionary fighters against dog-eat-dog racist capitalism. teachers must join with our students and their families, especially industrial workers and soldiers, to build the Progressive Labor Party. Our party pledges to unite workers of all ethnicities who will lead the working class to counter the racist wars of capitalism with a revolution to build a communist society. While the bosses plan to use our labor for their profits and deadly wars, communists plan a future where the labor of teachers and all workers will be for the benefit of the workers of the world. Only such a movement can tap into the vast power and creativity of the working class to fight for our own interests rather than those of Exxon Mobile. Join us!☺

International Autoworkers' Unity Must Link Layoffs to Bosses' Wars



STUTTGART, GERMANY May 20 — "The fight against racism is at the heart of building international solidarity." That's how a black woman UAW member from Detroit addressed the almost 400 auto workers who today wrapped up a three-day conference on building international solidarity. Besides the large contingent of German workers who hosted the event, auto workers were represented from Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Colombia, France, India, Mexico, the Philippines, Romania, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Turkey, the U.S. and more.

They came from Daimler, VW, Bosch, GM-Opel, Ford, Toyota, Honda and Nissan. Most were permanent, union workers. Many were either non-union and/or temporary (contract) workers. It showed the enormous potential of industrial workers to reach around the world and not be bound by the bosses' borders. The backdrop for the conference was growing strike actions across Europe as GM plans to slash thousands of jobs. One of the high points of the conference was a GM Solidarity Charter that will be used to build solidarity among rank-and-file GM workers around the world. Reports from striking Opel workers in Belgium and fired mass leaders at VW in South Africa and Toyota in the Philippines helped set the tone.

But just as the numbers and international character, the participation of youth and women and

the general enthusiasm showed the potential, there were also serious limits. This was mainly in the "trade union" politics of the conference. The main line was that around the globe autoworkers are divided by nation and by job status; permanent vs. contract. The conference call was to overcome these divisions and unite to take on the bosses and reformist union leaders by going on the offense and fighting for a 30-hour work-week to create more permanent full-time jobs.

PLP members argued that nowhere are the challenges to U.S. imperialism more apparent than in the auto industry and the Iraq war. We were the only ones to introduce the war and inter-imperialist rivalry into the conference. We said that the social contracts that have existed in

the U.S. and Europe since the end of World War II are over and that global auto production has created a global race to the bottom for autoworkers. Workers must be armed politically and prepared for a future of sharper attacks and increasing poverty and productivity, and wider wars for markets, resources and cheap labor.

We also raised the need for workers to fight racism. We talked about how black workers have borne the brunt of the setbacks for U.S. auto bosses in Detroit, Flint, Toledo and other cities, while 15,000 non-union suppliers have sprung up across the South, paying half the auto wages to black, white and immigrant workers. Delegations from Spain and France also spoke about the need to fight racism, and many people talked to us about the issue, but it was never a key part of the outlook of the conference.

We distributed about 50 CHALLENGES, renewed some old friendships and made new ones. We look forward to working with the auto workers' council while struggling over the political outlook that will prepare the international working class for the seizure of power and communist revolution.☺

Youth Meet to Strengthen Communist Ideas and Practice

MEXICO — With the goal of analyzing and understanding PLP's ideas, an enthusiastic group of youth organized a two-day communist school. Students, homemakers, workers and teachers, members and friends of the Party, participated. The theme was PLP's document "Road to Revolution 4." Questions arose provoking discussion on racism, world wars, the history of the communist movement, and others. The presence of Party friends involved debate that clarified our position on other political organizations.

The main ideological struggle arose on: (a) the error of fighting for socialism as the road to communism viewed through the Russian and Chinese experiences; (b) the necessity to abolish the wage system under communism; (c) discussion of the sectarian, nationalist struggle of indigenous movements that exclude a great part of the working class; (d) the need to analyze writers with revolutionary ideas, instead of learning by rote; (e) the importance of not just studying communist ideas but actually building the Party in practice with the working class.

We discussed the principal of from each according to his/her capacity and to each according to his/her needs, agreeing that the word "commitment" could be substituted for "capacity" because it more clearly represents communist principles.

A teacher from another country at the School lauded the participation of these youth as showing "solid work and with much potential." On the slogan "from each according to his/her commitment, to each according to his/her needs": it's based on political commitment, more important than "capacity." Those most politically committed will contribute more than those less committed, even if they have the same "capacity." We struggle to motivate more and more workers and students to achieve greater political commitment.

The school's camaraderie helped those participating with the self-criticism of the activities carried out in the clubs. During the self-criticism, the need was stressed to read and learn from history and social movements to better carry out the ideological struggle and the building of the Party, including a vision of the communist system for which we fight.

We learned how to analyze the current situation and to explain PLP's ideas to friends of the Party. They have shouldered more responsibility as their understanding has grown, clarifying many doubts and beginning to read the Party's literature.

These activities helped show the comrades that there are people around the world who are fighting to destroy capitalism and build a communist system. Join PLP.☺



Warmakers' DREAM ACT is Nightmare For Immigrant Youth

PLP holds that the anti-immigrant reform bill the U.S. bosses are trying to pass is all about war and fascism. The latest twist that this proposed legislation has taken in the Senate proves the validity of this analysis.

Stalled by the rulers' bickering, Bush made a special visit to the Senate to get them to resurrect the bill. But anyone acquainted with it, and its many last-minute amendments introduced by both parties, would conclude that the chances of the bill passing in this session of the Senate are very slim, if not impossible. Then why resurrect it?

The reason is war. The Pentagon and the liberal imperialists hope that the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act, or DREAM Act, one of the bill's provisions, could pass. They are counting on it to help boost badly-needed military recruitment for wider war. Even as Bush was on his way to Washington to help revive the bill, Bill Carr, Pentagon acting deputy Undersecretary of Defense, said, "Talk is already taking place to see if at least the DREAM provision of the stalled bill can proceed." (American Forces Press Service, 6/11/07) "He said the measure should become law because it would be 'good for readiness' — especially at a time when the military...is struggling to attract high-quality recruits." (Boston Globe, 6/16)

This provision from its very inception was hailed by the rulers, their politicians like Obama, Clinton, and McCain, spokesmen like Michael O'Hanlon and Max Boot from the Council on Foreign Relations, and leaders in the pro-immigrant organizations like MAPA, Lulac and the National Council of La Raza as a "humanitarian" bill enabling "non-

privileged" undocumented students to go to college, who otherwise, (because of their immigration status) would be unable to. They all ignore or downplay the bill's military aspect.

There are some 350,000 undocumented minor immigrants who according to Carr, would serve in the short run, with "the bill applicable for an estimated 750,000." (Boston Globe, 6/16) "If you have been in the U.S. school system for a number of years, then you could be eligible to enlist. And at the end of that enlistment, then you would be eligible to become a citizen" (which may very well require residency first).

To earn citizenship these youth would have to serve two years in the military or complete at least two years of college. However, "amendments to the bill would render such students ineligible for some federal aid, including Pell Grants, and require colleges to enter undocumented immigrants into the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System." (Chronicle of Higher Education, 4/30/04) To entice legal residents and (if DREAM passes) undocumented youth to join the military, Bush has issued an executive order allowing non-citizens to apply for citizenship after only one day of active duty military service. But getting it takes a lot longer. Some soldiers, forced to do more than two tours in Iraq, are still waiting for their citizenship.

The bosses may very well eventually pass this bill and their immigration reform. The passage of DREAM is important to them because they will use it as an excuse to pass legislation to force all U.S.-born and legal resident youth to serve in the military. Eventually, their need to

Imperialists' Fight for Oil Behind Hamas-Fatah Civil War

The civil war between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority security forces in the Gaza strip has brought even more instability to the Middle East. There are now two separate Palestinian "states." Hamas now runs the overcrowded Gaza strip while the Fatah-Palestinian Authority runs the West Bank. The U.S., Europe and Israel have decided to back Fatah with money and weapons (the Israeli army controls a good chunk of the West Bank already). Meanwhile, the Palestinian masses are suffering starvation, mass unemployment and more misery and terror from the Israeli army.

The Western imperialists and Israel are to blame

'The sad reality is that there is no "two-state" solution to the Palestinian question ... as capitalism and imperialism create wars and fascist and religious terror to cover their battle for the region's oil profits.'

for much of the situation. The London Financial Times (6/19) editorialized: "The West's attitude has been hypocritical. First, the U.S. and Europe encouraged elections, but when Hamas won, they cut off direct aid. Now the European Union is likely to resume direct aid to an emergency government [Fatah-Palestinian Authority] set up by decree."

The FT then adds: "...the movement [Hamas] won the last Palestinian elections because Fatah was seen as incompetent and corrupt....The harsh reality is that the Middle East will never be stable until the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is resolved."

The inter-imperialist rivalry over the oil-rich Middle East and beyond is behind this instability. The

imperialists' only solution is war: currently in Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon and Gaza, and Iran is in the cards. Even though the Israeli rulers like to see the Palestinians kill each other, in the long run this instability also affects its interests and those of its U.S. backers.

Meanwhile, the Bush administration has proven to be as inept in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as it is in Iraq. As Robert Malley of the International Crisis Group has correctly noted, "Almost every decision the US has made to interfere with Palestinian politics has boomeranged." It is strengthening Iranian-armed groups like Hamas and Hezbollah, making them more popular among the masses. Condoleezza Rice's many trips to Tel Aviv failed to get the Israeli rulers to make a deal with Fatah, basically because of Israeli intransigence.

Israel now has a real powder keg on its border: "Naturally, Israel won't tolerate the installation of a radical Islamic structure at its doors; even in the past the Jewish state favored Hamas to counter the then all-powerful Fatah." (<http://www.lemonde.fr/web/article/0,1-0@2-3232,36-923742@51-909163,0.html>). In the 1980's, Israel helped Hamas sabotage the first Intifada.

The sad reality is that there is no "two-state" solution to the Palestinian question or any solution to the Middle East powder keg as long as capitalism and imperialism create wars and fascist and religious terror to cover their battle for the region's oil profits. The only solution — even if it now seems somewhat distant — is organizing a revolutionary communist movement to unite all Palestinian and Israeli workers and youth to break with Zionism, fundamentalism, nationalism and all local and imperialist bosses. ☛



hold on to their blood-soaked oil empire in the Middle East will spawn bigger and more lethal wars. The rulers will have no alternative but to institute the draft. The now apparent passivity of the working class will eventually turn into unrest and rebellions. Danger and opportunity awaits us. We must live up to the challenge and continue to organize the youth, workers and soldiers for communist revolution. ☛

Marches Protest Oakland Killing

continued from page 3

D.'s short life was important, had value. It was a tiny gesture, of course, but they stood as a David against the Goliath of racist indifference fostered by the rulers in official USA.

Inspired by the moment, there was a call for a march on City Hall. The following Wednesday, after school, students and teachers marched on City Hall. We demanded, and eventually got, a meeting with the mayor.

Of course, two small marches will not change the world. In fact, as far as government action goes, nothing seems to have changed. The cynics are quick to point this out. But there *has* been a change. This tiny group of teachers, students and community members now see themselves as actors (rather than observers) opposed to this gigantic, genocidal crime that is being played out in Oakland and similar cities nationwide. ☛

Mass Unemployment Behind Black Youth Genocide

Officially it is called homicide, but fratricide or genocide would be more accurate. The accompanying article notes that Oakland, California's black male youth (15 - 24) have a murder rate of 186 per 100,000. Other major cities probably have similar statistics. It's such a huge problem it seems to paralyze reaction.

We're told it's black-on-black crime. Such a description simply leads to hand-wringing. But a report by the Alameda Public Health Department, "Violence in Oakland," says 86% of the suspects and 75% of the victims were unemployed. So it's actually black-unemployed-on-black unemployed crime. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to devise ways of lowering the murder rate.

But doing nothing except adapting to this genocidal murder rate cheapens the lives of all workers and youth. Like it or not, we're a class, a potentially revolutionary working class. If, through passivity, we endorse the cheapening of life "over there," we get the cheapening of life over here. This partially explains why, in the richest of rich industrial countries, millions die prematurely from lack of health insurance, why deaths from U.S. industrial accidents are far higher than any of its rival industrial powers, why the U.S. can lead the industrial nations in its heartless cuts in social programs just to pay for imperialist war. In the USA, working-class life is cheap.

PLP wants to organize to protest these homicide-genocides. At the very least, unions in the city could down tools as each youth murder is reported. Schools could organize demonstrations to protest their students being gunned down. Agitating and organizing around such actions can help the working class see our own strength while helping PLP'ers introduce CHALLENGE with its revolutionary communist ideas in a positive, active setting.

A system that murders its youth so casually deserves to be destroyed with communist revolution. ☛

<Letters>

'Again, the racist cops always manage to worsen any situation. But they can't help it since it is in the nature of any police department to be racist and terrorize innocent people, particularly Latino and black youth.'

A Former Parade Marcher

PLP at May Day in Manizales, Colombia

On May 1 in Manizales, Colombia, as internationalist communists we exposed the nationalist electoral forces. About 1,000 workers, teachers and students participated in the May Day event. We sold DESAFIO and distributed over 1,000 leaflets, pointing out that the only solution to the capitalist hell is communist revolution.

A comrade from our militant PLP group described the meaning of the red flag symbol of international working-class power, recited a poem by Maria Cano, a rebel woman who fought here for the shorter work-week and is known as the flower of the working class. PLP also paid homage to the Martyrs of Chicago whose murder by the bosses gave birth to May Day, the international working-class holiday.

Our challenge to the bosses' ideas inside the mass movement occurs in the context of the class struggle. The working class must be led by real revolutionary communists, not by social-democrat reformist traitors to the cause of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Long live the international working class!

A Comrade in Manizales, Colombia



PLP contingent in Bogota, Colombia May Day march.

failed to agree on a bill, Bush is trying to resurrect it and it may very well return with many of its original provisions. One of these states that those who do qualify may have to pay retroactive taxes. At this moment it is unclear whether that means payment from the time they started working in the U.S. to the present. Even if it was for, say, the last three years, it would mean for every year of non-payment of taxes, there would be a 15% penalty on the amount of income that was declared.

Considering that the bill provides for these workers having to leave the U.S. at some point, how will they raise the money if they must return to their country of origin where there will be few jobs (in Mexico due to NAFTA and in Central America due to CAFTA)? All this because of regulations imposed by U.S. rulers and reinforced by local capitalists which is what drove these workers to emigrate to the U.S. in the first place.

As if these retroactive tax payments were not enough, the "reform" demands that these workers learn English or be denied services here. One amendment to the bill says: "Unless specifically provided by statute, no person has a right...to have the Government of the United States or any of its officials or representatives act, communicate, perform or provide services, or provide materials in any language other than English. If an exception is made... [for] a language other than English, the exception does not create an entitlement to additional services in that language or any language other than English."

So, if a person is unable to learn the language because she/he was out of the country, or is aged, this appears to make them "unqualified." Will services be denied to senior citizens because of such an amendment? Are the rulers trying to eliminate more and more programs so these funds can be used in wars to kill other workers across the ocean?

U.S. rulers will expand their imperialist wars, probably to Iran or Venezuela. So they need to exploit workers even more to pay for these wars, and also to use undocumented immigrants as cannon fodder in the wars. The ruling class is having trouble controlling its oil empire, forcing it to make alliances with or concessions to other bosses.

The tax burden on immigrants in any possible bill is like holding out the possibility of some form of "legal" status and then taxing them for allowing them to find needed work (which some believe will lead to other benefits U.S. citizens have in health and education, many of which are shrinking anyway). Meanwhile, it will give the bosses the right to spill the blood of immigrant children in Iraq and elsewhere. The rulers want to enslave immigrants for the rest of their lives, paying for imperialist wars that benefit only the rich while workers are being screwed in a multitude of ways.

A Latino immigrant worker

Mass Arrests of Youth by NYPD at Puerto Rican Day Parade

The NYPD always manages to worsen anything. The cops arrested over 200 people, mostly youth, along the route of the June 10 Puerto Rican Day parade, one of the city's largest annual ethnic celebrations. The cops' excuse was they were making a sweep of "suspected members" of the Latin Kings gang. But most of those arrested were young people with no gang affiliation.

Afterwards, parade organizers blasted the cops' tactics. One 16-year-old Catholic HS student, son of a fire department lieutenant, was arrested because he was with a group of youth with yellow t-shirts promoting the Def Jam record label. Apparently, the Latin Kings' colors include yellow.

In the past, the parade leaders had allowed the Latin Kings to march, but denied their request this time. "Technically, we told them their application was late," one parade official told Daily News columnist Juan González. But that official and several others connected to the parade leadership revealed yesterday that their committee has been under intense pressure for the past year from City Hall and the NYPD to exclude the Latin Kings and other street gangs from the parade.

However, the problem stemmed from the NYPD's and City Hall's racism, not from the suspected gang members. Since the 2000 parade, when dozens of women were sexually assaulted in Central Park after the parade had ended, the cops have taken a hard line against all youth at the parade. Although those attacks were not connected to any gang activity, one former parade official said, "The NYPD keeps using the excuse of terrorism and public safety to get us to remove the Latin Kings from the parade."

González's column stated, "Previous parade committee leaders had sought to reach out to the alienated young Hispanics who gravitate to violence-prone gangs. They figure you can't reform gang members if you don't treat them as members of society.... But whether you think the Latin Kings should have a right to march in the parade or not, that still doesn't excuse indiscriminate police sweeps in a huge crowd of perhaps two million people. To those of us who have decades of experience going to the Puerto Rican Day Parade, this kind of heavy-handed treatment by police has become maddeningly routine."

Again, the racist cops always manage to worsen any situation. But they can't help it since it is in the nature of any police department to be racist and terrorize innocent people, particularly Latino and black youth.

A Former Parade Marcher

'Reform' Would Tax Immigrants, Send Youth to War

"Immigration reform" means an attempt to maintain absolute control over the immigrant community as well as citizens across the U.S. The CHALLENGE article (6/6) made several good points, such as noting that under this bill not all 12 million undocumented immigrants would qualify for documents. But even though the politicians

to the report "OECD employment outlook 2004" — you might conclude that communists shouldn't bother with trade unions at all.

But abandoning the unions would be a big mistake. I think Lenin's words in "Left-Wing Communism" (1920) still ring true today: "To refuse to work in the reactionary trade unions means leaving the insufficiently developed or backward masses of the workers under the influence of the reactionary leaders, the agents of the bourgeoisie..." In Lenin's opinion, communists must wage a ruthless struggle "until all the incorrigible leaders of opportunism and social-chauvinism have been completely discredited and driven out of the trade unions." (By "leaders of social-chauvinism," Lenin meant the sort of nationalist union leaders that "A reader in Germany" condemns.)

Of course, communists mustn't limit their work in unions to union struggles. Lenin added that "we wage the struggle against the opportunist and social-chauvinist leaders in order to attract the working class to our side. To forget this most elementary and self-evident truth would be stupid."

Finally, Lenin pointed out why we've got to struggle to win union members to communism: "It is impossible to capture political power (and the attempt should not be made) until this struggle has reached a certain stage."

(I'm not quoting Lenin because I think he had all the answers, but because I think he's right on this particular point, and to encourage CHALLENGE readers to study his book.)

A reader in France

Pentagon Dumps Toxic Waste into World's Oceans

Dailypress.com (Virginia) details how the U.S. Army has "dumped 64 million pounds of nerve and mustard agents into the ocean, along with 400,000 chemical-filled bombs, land mines and rockets and more than 500 tons of radioactive waste either tossed overboard or packed into the holds of scuttled ships." There are at least 26 dump zones off the coast of 11 states and countries ranging from Japan to Norway to New Zealand.

Why are the bosses' press and environmental movements taking hold of this subject now? "Federal lawmakers are demanding the Army reveal everything it knows about where it dumped chemical weapons into the world's oceans," because these dumps may hinder the expansion of oil exploration. The U.S. ruling class has spent trillions on wars to control the world's supply of oil. This lust for profits, not environmental concerns, is what drives the U.S. rulers' policies.

The capitalists ordered these dangerous weapons to be dumped into the ocean from the end of World War II up to 1970. Records of the locations "are sketchy, missing, or were destroyed. The Army hasn't reviewed the World War I-era records, when ocean dumping of chemical weapons was common."

Brankowitz says that "short of a major research effort that would cost a lot of money, we've done the best we can." The U.S. ruling class has spent trillions on wars to control the world's supply of oil. They "can't" find a safer alternative to dumping toxic waste from a nuclear weapons testing area into the ocean, but they have hundreds of billions for the war in Iraq and, eventually, Iran. The contradictions facing U.S. capitalism constantly expose just how genocidal the criminals of the U.S. ruling class really are.

The environmentalist movement is blaming the U.S. military, but it was the bosses' failure to defuse the weapons they used to kill millions of workers that caused this tragedy. Capitalism has poisoned our world for centuries. Only when communist cooperation has replaced the endless drive for profits will workers be able to protect the environment for our class and our children. Fight Back!

Red Environmentalist

Italian Immigrants Then, Latino Immigrants Now

Recently, CHALLENGE reported on a May 1 demonstration for immigrant rights in Morristown, NJ. Immigrant laborers there, like elsewhere across the country, are victims of racist discrimination and harassment. Morristown Mayor Donald Cresitello complains about the town's laborers "problem." NYC's El Diario-La Prensa (June 16) reports on a book, "New Neighborhoods, Old Friends," by James Conzanzo, which details the treatment and situation of Italian immigrants who came to Morristown a century ago and its similarities to today's immigrant laborers from Latin America. Mayor Cresitello's immigrant descendants lived

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under the same rotten conditions suffered by today's laborers. They also used to hang out on corners looking for jobs, just like today's laborers.

"It is interesting that those who persecute immigrants today are the descendants of those victims of the same type of discrimination. The difference is that today they want to kick us out of town, spreading fear," said Pedro Labrador, a Morristown resident.

The book notes that from the end of the 19th century the new Italian immigrants arrived at Ellis Island, were ferried to New York City, and those with relatives in Morristown took a ferry to Hoboken and then a train to Morristown. Many were hired for regular jobs, but about a dozen or so stood at the corner of Speedwell Ave. and Flagler St. looking for work in construction and gardening. Today's laborers do it on Morris Street and on Lafayette and Speedwell avenues.

The Italian immigrants were hired for the worst jobs with the lowest pay possible. They were also accused of "making noise on the streets, drinking in public, committing crime," etc. They suffered verbal abuse, were segregated because of their nationality and for not speaking English, just like the attacks on today's immigrants.

From 1880 till 1924, when immigration quotas were established, over five million Italians entered the U.S. In the early 20th century, some 60 rich industrialists moved to Morristown, returning the town to its glory days from when, in 1777, George Washington established his Continental Navy headquarters. But discrimination continued against the new Italian immigrants. The book quotes Rose Vigilante, who said that in 1910 she worked in a laundry, where Irish workers ironed rich people's clothes on the first floor, while Italians were relegated to the basement, ironing pillow covers and bed sheets.

It's quite clear that racism against immigrants is as American as slavery against blacks and mass murder of Native Americans. Politicians, racist thugs like the Minutemen and Goebbels-like media stars like Lou Dobbs and Bill O'Reilly are parroting the same racist lies used over a century ago.

Congratulations to the PLP members and other anti-racist workers and youth who fight racism in all its forms. That's the only way to end this long-lasting monster and its creator, capitalism.

A Red Immigrant

'Sanctuary' Groups Need Action, not 'Legality'

Recently I spoke at an immigration forum at my church, where I was asked to provide "the big picture." I spoke of our world of "expanding wars for imperialist dominance, increasingly racist and repressive policies in the name of national security and a society becoming fully and legally militarized." I exposed the current immigration bill and how much of it has already been put into practice.

I made suggestions to widen and sharpen the fight-back. I called for a sanctuary movement, inspired by the abolitionists who illegally saved runaway slaves. Education, health, social service and legal workers must pledge not to reveal the status of immigrants. We must "shut down" racist vigilante groups and stop attacks on day laborers. We can organize demonstrations at the U.S./Mexico border to advance working-class solidarity. I asked participants to consider a working-class, internationalist outlook based on these ideas: workers struggles have no borders; we are workers, not illegals; and tear down the wall.

Two speakers explained the "New Sanctuary Movement" in 25 U.S. cities. In the "Old Sanctuary Movement" of the 1980's, congregations "hid" Guatemalans and Salvadorans fleeing the death squads from U.S. immigration officials, but the "New Sanctuary Movement" is limited to supporting those facing deportation hearings. Faith communities can "sign on" to these levels of commitment: 1) to educate the congregation and adopt pledges of support, 2) to advocate changes in immigration law, 3) to help immigrants by finding "good" lawyers, writing letters, going to their hearings and possibly giving public sanctuary inside religious facilities for immigrants facing deportation. However, the movement opposes "hiding" immigrants, "underground" activity or "blocking" doors against immigration officials.

I was the only one to suggest that we should not trust the "legal process," facing today's high levels of racism and repression. We need to open discussion about "fear and risks," because a real commitment to "sanctuary" isn't a question of legality, but of "indignation, justice and working-class solidarity." We must be prepared to "take action, take steps to fight back, otherwise it will be too

late."

The "New Sanctuary Movement" involves many honest people. But its leadership's narrow perspective greatly limits its usefulness and disarms its participants politically and tactically, tying them (often unknowingly) to the fascist maneuvering of capitalism's ruling class. Communists in this movement must build relationships, fight for communist ideas and lead class struggle based around those ideas. Let's do it!

Another red churchmouse

New Campus Group Spreads Pro-Worker Politics

(The following updates the June 20 CHALLENGE article entitled "Campus Political Struggle Backs Immigrant Workers, Fights Nationalist Attacks.")

The new student group established by the majority of students who left the nationalist organization because of its reactionary politics has formed multi-racial alliances across campus clubs, stressing anti-racist and anti-imperialist politics rather than cultural or religious identities. It has tried to expose the divisive "multi-cultural" ideas of the campus Cultural Center that predictably supports the right-wing position of the nationalist organization. The latter has tried from the beginning to stop our militant actions.

Study groups on topics such as imperialism, racism, sexism and reform vs. revolution were scheduled weekly, inviting new students and members to discuss the political aspects of campus organizing. This fight for anti-imperialist politics and multi-racial unity has sparked a number of rallies against the war and recruitment on campus by the military and other police agencies. There have also been documentary screenings of "soldiers-speak-out" films to involve vets on campus, and films about worldwide labor struggles.

The group also planned a modest but successful campus May Day rally and celebration that again stressed multi-racial unity and the need for all workers, students and soldiers to unite against imperialism and the fascist capitalist system.

Since the break from the nationalist organization, CHALLENGE readership has risen. The new group has produced an increased level of struggle on campus against imperialist wars and racist super-exploitation, one that promises to continue into our Summer Projects and the next school year.

RED EYE ON THE NEWS

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

Looking behind the 'war on terror'!

...The war on terror is a two-sided coin. One side reads: "Global War on Terror." The other side reads: "Anything goes." (Bill Press, 6/3)

Primary's 'pro-labor' Dem is a fake

...Edwards's antipoverty ideas...themselves, far from being radical or populist, basically sound — there's no other way to put it — Clintonian.

In fact, the more you talk to Edwards, the more apparent it is that the populist label doesn't quite fit. While he talks incessantly about economic injustice, Edwards isn't proposing anything...that would strike a serious blow against multinational corporations or the top tier of American earners. Even in his rhetoric, Edwards seems to deliberately avoid stoking resentments or pitting one class against another....

... "He evinces a lot of concern for the middle class and middle-class anxieties. But he's not in any way attacking the rich or corporations....He's not explaining one fundamental fact of modern economic life, which is that the very rich have all the money."

When I asked Edwards if he blamed large corporations or the wealthiest Americans for inequality, he appeared briefly confused by the question.

"No — no," Edwards repeated, shaking his head. "I just don't think blaming helps, to be honest with you. What's the point?" (NYT, 6/10)

Capitalism's joblessness ruins teens

From January through May, according to the center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University in Boston, "the national teen employment rate averaged only 33.1 percent, tying for the lowest employment rate in the past 60 years."

The youth labor market in the U.S. has all but collapsed....

"That's why people go on the hustle," said one young

man. "Got to get the money somewhere." (NYT, 6/16)

If college brings you \$ — banks get it

As college tuition has soared past the stagnant limits on federal aid, private loans have become the fastest-growing sector....These loans carry variable rates that can reach 20 percent, like credit cards....Students are piling up debts as high as \$100,000....

"When a student signs the paper for these loans... we're indebting these kids for life." (NYT, 6/10)

Scratch a war, find a profit motive

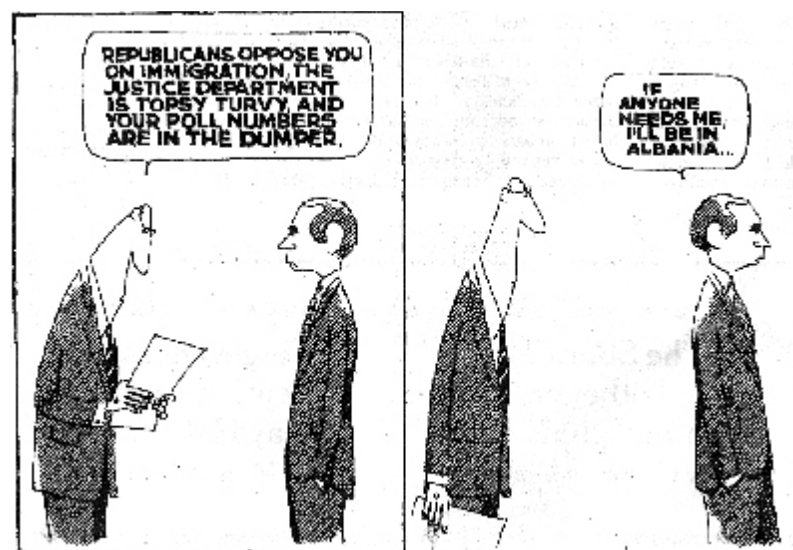
A report by the anticorruption organization Global Witness found that profits from smuggled and mishandled cocoa had helped pay for the civil war that has split the country for the past five years. It said that at least \$118 million from the cocoa trade in Ivory Coast, the world's biggest producer, was used...to fuel the conflict and enrich its leaders. Valuable mineral resources like diamonds, oil and gold have spawned and fueled vast conflicts across Africa for decades. (NYT, 6/9)

People find democracy a false hope

This is election season in the Middle East. Syria just held presidential and parliamentary elections. Algeria held parliamentary elections. Egyptians will be asked to vote next week on a new upper house of Parliament. There will soon be elections in Jordan, Morocco and Oman, followed by elections in Qatar....

...Elections, it appears, have increasingly become a tool used by the authoritarian leaders to claim legitimacy.

"There is a state of depression and lack of trust, or faith, among the Arab masses in the regimes and little



belief that these elections can lead to the change aspired to"....

"Yes," replied Hussein Jaffal, 31, "there is democracy, but there are no freedoms."

It is that view that seems to be spreading.... "Democracy itself has lost credibility as a way of government," said a Western diplomat based in Algiers....

"The system is rigged to bring to power people who are already in power,".... (NYT, 6/7)

US rulers can junk the 'rule of law'

The case of Li Guirong, a graying 50-year-old who now hobbles on crutches, reflects China at its worst — government by thuggery. But each time I start this column. I feel that President Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney have pulled the rug from under me. Do I really have the right to complain about torture or extra-legal detentions in China when we Americans do the same in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba?

I keep remembering a heated conversation I had...in China years ago. I reproached an official for China's torture and arbitrary imprisonment... "If you Americans ever faced the threat of chaos, you would do just the same," he said.

"Impossible!" I replied.

Yet I owe him an apology, for he has been proven right. The moment we did feel a threat, after 9/11, we held people without trial, and beatings were widespread....(NYT, 6/7)

PLP History: Lessons for Today: SDS Failed to Support 1970 Postal Strike

(Part VII described the massive anti-war march on Washington and the PLP-led illegal breakaway demonstration on November 15, 1969, at the U.S. Labor Department backing 147,000 striking General Electric workers. PLP now directed its strategic focus toward building a campus worker-student alliance as a step toward unity between students and the industrial working class.)

SDS: Part VIII

During the 1969-70 academic year, the war in Vietnam raged on. Massive student protest, much of it militant, continued at campuses across the U.S. Desertion and outright defection rose to unprecedented heights within the U.S. military.

Meanwhile, beneath this surface of mounting class struggle, the betrayal of people's war in Vietnam was already under way. As early as 1968, Vietnamese leaders had begun negotiating a deal that would allow U.S. imperialism to re-gain at the bargaining table much of its battlefield losses. However, the deadly fruit of this class collaboration had yet to ripen.

After the split at the June 1969 convention, SDS chapters began building the campus worker-student alliance (CWSA) under PLP's leadership. Despite many political weaknesses, it launched important, useful political struggles over the next few years. In November 1969, when the Harvard administration was still reeling from the previous spring's student strike, SDS members there organized a sit-in protesting the university's racist hiring and pay policies.

The Columbia SDS chapter organized a significant struggle to demand funeral benefits for the family of a campus worker decapitated during a preventable elevator-shaft accident. After initially attempting to avoid all responsibility and after a disciplinary hearing intended to punish student protestors — which the protestors turned into a trial of the university's racism — the Columbia administration eventually caved in. Important struggles uniting students and campus workers erupted at Yale, UCLA and many other campuses.

Under PLP's leadership, SDS held a successful convention at Yale and, in the fall of 1970, organized more than 1,000 workers and students to march through Detroit and picket the General Motors headquarters to support striking GM workers. The Party continued to grow and to improve its political line, further distancing itself from revisionism — the old communist movement's betrayal of

Marxism-Leninism, allowing rulers' ideology within the ranks of the working class — with the publication in 1971 of Road to Revolution III.

However, amid these generally positive developments, events exposed a glaring political weakness within the CWSA and the PLP student leadership. On March 17, 1970, a wildcat strike began in Branch 36 of the New York Post Office. Within days, it had become a national strike, involving more than 200,000 workers at nearly 700 locations.

The strike was essentially "illegal," but because other government workers threatened to join it if President Nixon prosecuted the strikers, he limited his attack to impotent efforts at scabbing, including use of the National Guards and Reserves of all the major military services. This proved completely ineffective. Many of the Guardsmen and Reservists were workers themselves, who carried out acts of sabotage in sympathy with the strikers. The U.S. mail system was absolutely crippled. Wall Street and the normal functioning of business were severely affected. (E-mail and the internet did not exist then.)

The postal strike provided the newly pro-working class SDS with an unmatched opportunity to organize solidarity demonstrations and actions, particularly on campuses where it had chapters. Yet, except for a few small, perfunctory actions of this type and a small demonstration in downtown Manhattan, we did little to support this historic strike.

With 37 years of hindsight, we can make a sober, balanced self-criticism of our inability to rise to this occasion. Part of the problem was objective. SDS was primarily a single-issue organization, whose dramatic rise was tied to protesting the Vietnam War. Vietnamese workers and peasants were being sold out, and the anti-war movement was dying at the time of the postal strike, although it had not yet become conscious of its demise. Leading massive



1970 Postal Workers Chant: "STRIKE! STRIKE! STRIKE!"

solidarity actions commensurate with the postal strike's importance may therefore not have been in the cards.

But attributing our dismal performance to "objective conditions" would be foolish and irresponsible. The truth is that the PLP student leadership failed to grasp the postal strike's profound significance, took a business-as-usual approach to a situation that called for extraordinary aggressiveness, and in so doing, revealed its own significant weakness on the crucial question of class consciousness.

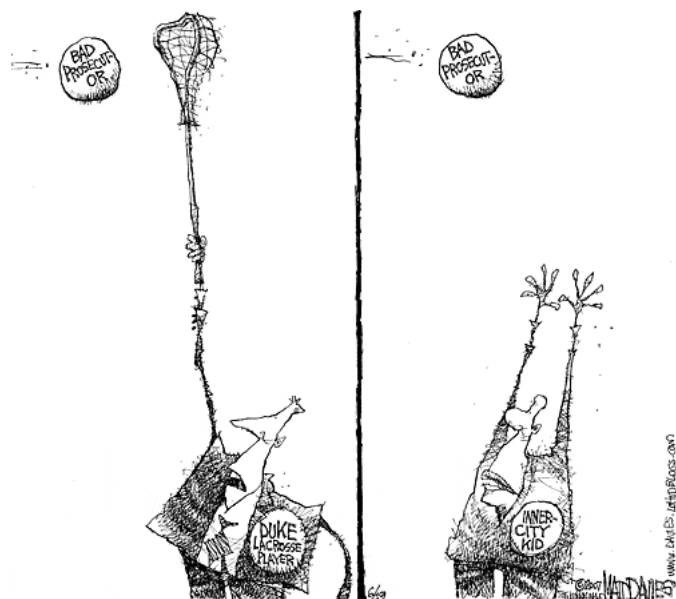
The Chinese revolutionary leader Mao Zedong once said that a minimum of ten years' practice, struggle and criticism-self-criticism were necessary to turn an intellectual into a good communist. At the very least, our feeble response to the postal strike proved him right on this score. The main lesson here, as in so many other cases, is that we could have done more — a lot more. However, reiterating this self-criticism after so many years can enable our young comrades and friends to absorb this lesson and to act accordingly when future opportunities of this type arise, as they inevitably will.

(Next: Nixon's invasion of Cambodia, the Kent State massacre and the May 9, 1970, March on Washington.)

THE HAZZARDS OF DUKE

Capitalist justice is racist to the core. On the one hand, a North Carolina prosecutor was disbarred for wrongly charging three white middle-class Duke lacrosse players with rape (although the case never went to trial). But a Chicago prosecutor could wrongly charge and convict more than a dozen black men, and have them serve about 100 years collectively, even though their "confessions" resulted from torture in a South Side police station. This prosecutor turns out to be none other than the current Mayor Daley who has since been elected over and over again!

This system has got to go.



Factory Worker's Experiences Carry Over Shop to Shop

"Hey dude, are you working at your grandparent's house this weekend?" asked Greg.

"Yeah, man," Chris replied, "I'm going tomorrow and Saturday."

"Wow, what are you guys doing, remodeling or something?" Carlos asked.

"No we're cleaning out lots of stuff that my grandparents have collected over the years," Chris explains. "It's been almost thirty years so they have a lot of stuff to go through and throw out. Yeah, it's hard because we're getting them ready to sell their house and move them into one of those senior apartment places."

"Man," said Greg, "it sucks the way old people are treated in this country. Other cultures would have three or four generations in one house helping each other pay the bills and take care of the family's kids and elders."

"Yeah," Chris replied, "I'm glad we're able to do it with them before it's too late. It's definitely brought the family closer together, I guess anytime we go through something tough collectively we get closer. Many people all over the world face these problems. This system isn't set up to meet workers' needs. As long as you can work for the boss, you're 'useful.' But then they cast you aside and social security isn't enough."

This is even truer as the bosses cut benefits to pay for more wars.

After several months working in a new shop I had this conversation on our break with an inter-racial group of young industrial workers — two white workers, one Mexican, one black and one Asian. We don't have great conversations every day. It's taken some time to just start having serious exchanges about more important stuff. Of course, we chat about the weather or about what

we did over the weekend, all part of this puzzle called organizing, but we must always remember why we're in these shops.

We do want to make friends, without whom we can't recruit workers to the Party. On the way we should always be aware of the political limits and how we can struggle to expand them. Sometimes we want to push things along so quickly we forget most people don't necessarily have many serious conversations regularly with their co-workers. That takes some time and struggle. Sometimes it's also difficult to be self-critical and realize that maybe we're restricting the limits in the way we struggle.

This conversation really helped me think about how this group has taken shape and to compare it with other experiences in my old shop. I tend to be impatient, to rush things, which often short-changes my co-workers and the Party. I move on too quickly, forgetting that the limits are less than where I want them to be. We learn through our mistakes and can share our lessons through CHALLENGE to help others in their organizing. Reviewing these experiences can really help us better understand ourselves and our organizing.

From working in these factories I've learned much about what the working class is and who I am as a worker and a communist. The experiences have expanded my tactics as an organizer for the Party. They continually shape my theories and practice after careful analysis and discussion with my PLP club. Particularly, my experiences have taught me to apply a dialectical approach, to look at both sides of the contradiction and understand when to use different political tactics, to be effective in bringing workers closer to the Party.

An Industrial Worker