

# CHALLENGE



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## **Katrina, Racism and the Need for Communist Revolution**

Nearly two years have passed since August 29, 2005, when Hurricane Katrina exposed the vicious racism of U.S. capitalism to the world. Today, New Orleans' population is barely more than half what it was, and 213,000 black workers and their families have been unable to return. Thousands of New Orleanians live in gutted-out houses with no electricity and must rely on volunteers for food. Death rates have risen 47%, due to the closing of hospitals and the city's unhealthy conditions. There are no plans to rebuild the lower Ninth Ward, previously home to 20,000 working-class black people, among those the ruling class and their government left to die. Those residents had weak, low, non-maintained, non-functioning levees which easily flooded, while rich neighborhoods, the French Quarter, commercial shipping and the business district were protected with high, strong levees that worked.

The New Orleans Housing Authority and HUD have spent tens of millions of dollars tearing down 5,100 structurally sound public-housing apartments. Fewer than 700 of the 109,000 families who applied for federal housing assistance have received it, even though Louisiana received \$10 billion in federal money.

In Biloxi, Mississippi, the government quickly aided the casinos, but the working class is still waiting.

These horror stories and others show that capitalism is about profits, not about serving the people. Local businessmen recruited tens of thousands of migrant workers to the Gulf Coast, promising good wages and working conditions. Instead, these mostly Latino workers are living out of cars or in tent cities. As usual, the rulers have attempted to pit black and Latino workers ("old slaves and new slaves") against each other.

The ruling class has used Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath to build racism in other ways as well. Most people remember the pictures of white families "finding food" and black families "looting" after the storm hit, the exaggerated stories of crime, and the utter disregard for basic human needs of mostly black families in the Superdome and Convention Center. There were also the shocking stories of black flood victims, denied access at gunpoint, to bridges out of the city. Recently, St. Bernard and Jefferson parishes have taken that racism a step further, passing ordinances to keep black people from building houses there. (Much of this information is from Bill Quigley, in Counterpunch, <http://www.counterpunch.org/quigley02262007.html>)

The capitalist leaders, from the mayor to the governor to the president, who refused to lift a finger to evacuate the more than 100,000 trapped black workers from the city, are still doing nothing. Working-class students, church and union members and others, however, have poured into New Orleans to offer what assistance they can. While Hurricane Katrina revealed the vicious racist core of the capitalist system and exposed U.S. bosses and politicians as merciless killers, it also showed the heart and soul of the working class and its potential for unity. This summer, PLP will again go to New Orleans — to volunteer, yes, but also to introduce the idea of communist revolution. Those affected by the ravages of capitalism in New Orleans have much to gain from joining PLP and helping to destroy the capitalist system. In its place, the working class will build an egalitarian communist society, in which all contribute what they can and receive what they need.

Glimmers of a communist future have shown themselves in the aftermath of Katrina. A multi-racial group of shipbuilders, led by black workers, struck last March in Pascagoula, Mississippi, against the warmaker Northrop-Grumman with some demands based on compensation for post-Katrina government neglect. Many workers in New Orleans selflessly risked their lives to rescue relatives, neighbors and strangers. They shared the meager provisions they had. Armed black youth organized society based on need. They provided protection and resisted threats and attacks from cops. Workers outside the New Orleans area raised money, collected needed items and organized relief. Many traveled to the devastated area to work in shelters, tend to the sick and evacuate people to hospitals. In a consciously anti-racist way, many sought out the most neglected populations and provided whatever help they could. This summer in New Orleans CHALLENGE readers and friends have an opportunity to be part of this positive movement. Join Us! ☺

# **Anti-Racists Hold Line vs. Fascist Minuteman**



**LOS ANGELES, CA, June 23** — Coming on the heels of the police attack on pro-immigrant protesters at MacArthur Park, over 500 people — black, Latino and white — confronted the Minutemen and one of their leaders, Ted Hayes, in South Central LA (historically a black neighborhood, with more Latinos moving in).

Hayes, who is black, has drawn much publicity telling black workers that immigrants are to blame for high black unemployment, trying to split the two groups. But the large turnout of black workers and youth at today's demonstration shows that many workers are rejecting these fascist lies. PL'ers came with CHALLENGES, leaflets, red flags and posters. As one youth who sold CHALLENGE said, "The bosses are trying to divide us, but today the multi-racial unity of the working class was stronger."

The Minutemen led a procession of about 50-75 anti-immigrant demonstrators along half of Crenshaw Blvd, headed for Leimert Park. The 500 anti-racists took the other half. Our communist leaflets and CHALLENGES were eagerly grabbed. We denounced the police for protecting the racist Minuteklan, blamed capitalism as the source of the racist attacks on the working class and expanding war, and called for communist revolution by a united working class to end these evils.

Residents were angered when they saw a cordon of cops protecting the Minuteklan, Hayes and a handful of black supporters. Many area residents, especially black workers and youth, joined the protest. Some yelled, "Ted Hayes, you're an Uncle Tom." When we chanted, "Leimert, MacArthur Park, New Orleans, Smash the racist War Machine!" many joined the chant.

The cops said if we didn't stop using the bullhorn, they would arrest us. Then a group of black youth, with their fists in the air, took the bullhorn and yelled "F#@+ the Police." Many joined in chants of "Racism is the bosses' tool. We won't be divided and we won't be fooled!" Residents cheered when someone said, "If the police weren't here, the Minutemen wouldn't last two minutes."

When the racist filth arrived at the park entrance with a permit to rally, black, white and Latino workers blocked them. Many locked arms and yelled, "Hold the line" to make it clear to the Minutemen and the cops alike that they would fight against the racists entering the park. The cops put on their riot gear. More people joined the line. Their anger was clear, so the cops decided not to clash with the multi-racial crowd, especially in the wake of the May 1 police attack on people in MacArthur Park.

The Minutemen were at a corner of the street surrounded by their cop protectors for two hours while workers and youth chanted and jeered them and the cops. Hayes used his sound system to attack the black workers demonstrating against him, calling them racist names — proving that racism against immigrants and against black workers are all part of the Minuteklan — angering the crowd even more.

At this march, PL'ers re-connected with some former co-workers and friends. This opens up many opportunities for the Party and reflects long-term work in fighting racist capitalism.

U.S. imperialism finds its empire not only in decline but being challenged by rising rival imperialists. But the agenda of the Minutemen and Hayes is secondary to the liberals' agenda of winning black and Latino working-class youth to nationalism, patriotism (loyalty to the rulers) and support for imperialist war. The liberal bosses, fronted by the likes of Clinton, Obama and Villaraigosa, have a life-and-death need to rely on these very same working-class youth and workers in the war industry and in the military that the Minutemen are attacking. They need a lot more cannon fodder for their wider wars. Therefore, the big imperialists want to pass the Dream Act (funneling immigrant youth into the military, promising citizenship) as a first step to instituting the "national service" draft for all youth.

Only revolution for communism, not reform, will defeat the fascists, big and little, and put the united working class in power. ☺



# New Liberal Think-Tank Pushes Rulers' War Aims

**Hillary Joins Killers Perry, Albright at Opening**

Liberal imperialists have just launched a new think-tank that makes the main issue in the 2008 presidential election rebuilding the U.S. military for deadlier conflicts. The Center for a New American Security (CNAS), headed by war criminals William Perry and Madeleine Albright, seeks "to develop strong, pragmatic, and principled national security and defense policies that promote and protect American interests and values."

In Washington on June 27, White House hopeful Hillary Clinton, praising hosts Perry and Albright, who had helped her husband bomb Bosnian, Serbian, and Iraqi civilians, delivered the center's inaugural address. Some view the CNAS as a shadow policy apparatus for Hillary. But it supports no single candidate, compelling them all to address the primary task of U.S. rulers, preparing for wars beyond Iraq and Afghanistan.

## WANT MORE LETHAL BOOTS ON THE GROUND

In her speech, Clinton lauded the authors of a 56-page CNAS study, "Shaping U.S. Ground Forces for the Future: Getting Expansion Right." Calling for an immediate addition of 100,000 foot soldiers to the Army and Marines, it says, "the U.S. military must become a truly 'full-spectrum force,' as proficient in irregular operations as it is in conventional war fighting." The Pentagon needs to get much better at combating underground Islamist insurgents throughout the Middle East, says the CNAS.

Meanwhile, the U.S. brass must plan for an eventual great-power clash with China, Russia, India or Europe — or some combination thereof. One crucial mission the report identifies is invading the U.S. empire's crumbling cornerstone, Saudi Arabia, remarking, "deploying U.S. forces to operate in regions where it has vital interests." As noted in the liberals' 1979 Carter Doctrine, "vital interests" means U.S. oil companies' access to Mid-East crude.

## LIBERAL POLS NEED DRAFT BUT AFRAID TO SAY SO

But U.S. rulers face a quandary at home as stark as the challenges from foreign rivals: where to get the troops? The CNAS understands that candidates have to simultaneously demand and soft-sell militarization. "While the U.S. military has been mobilized since September 11, 2001, the nation has not. Perhaps the most consequential step the next president could take would be a Kennedyesque call for all Americans to contribute in some way to the nation's security, including by serving in the military."

After Vietnam, it has been hard to attract recruits to U.S. imperialism's war machine, other than committed racists and the desperate poor. Mere mention of a draft (to



which the rulers will ultimately resort) would torpedo any candidate. John Kerry's "national service" plank helped doom his 2004 bid. The CNAS hopes a second 9/11 will answer its prayers. Yet another paper from this fledgling, but prolific, policy factory, "After an Attack: Preparing Citizens for Bioterrorism," hopes terrorists will provide another chance to put the nation on a war footing.

At the CNAS kick-off, Clinton reiterated the liberal imperialists' calls for "strategic redeployment" from Iraq, that is, a regrouping for a massive Mid-East assault to counter "looming challenges in the region." Decrying the failed Bush-Cheney-Rumsfeld "go-it-alone" approach, she hailed "strong alliances that can apply military force." To build popular, international support for U.S. "moral authority" to lead invading coalitions, Clinton suggested humanitarian fig leaves. Disaster relief efforts, and action against genocide, human rights abuses, and even global warming, she said, could justify to the world, and thus ensure the success of, future U.S. overseas military adventures.

Hillary welcomed the Pentagon's recently-created Africa Command, which uses the plight of Darfurians and others to legitimize U.S. military presence in the Horn of Africa, a strategic world oil-shipping choke point.

## 'HUMANITARIANISM' MASKS WAR AGENDA

Clinton echoed the sentiments of another new think-tank piece, "America and the Use of Force: Sources of Legitimacy" from the liberal Brookings Institution. Written by Brookings fellow Michael O'Hanlon, who is also a CNAS adviser, and Robert Kagan of the Carnegie Endowment, it laments that, "In the wake of the Iraq war, the United States is suffering from a crisis of legitimacy. [F]or it is questionable whether the United States can operate effectively over the long term without the moral support and approval of the democratic world."

Acknowledging that the United States may resort to military action more, not less, often in the future, it describes the "paralysis" of the United Nations Security Council, in which U.S. adversaries China, Russia and France brandish vetoes. The paper sees charity work as U.S. imperialism's saving smokescreen. "Violence and chaos in Cuba following the death of Castro could prompt a US-led international intervention both to avert a humanitarian disaster and to ensure a desirable transition from the US point of view."

For global war, it envisions "creating a Concert of Democracies" that includes NATO and other possible allies, of varying might and loyalty, including India, Brazil, South Africa, Australia, Japan, South Korea and Sweden. O'Hanlon and Kagan conclude, "There is an effective and viable alternative to multi-lateral paralysis and unilateral action — working with our democratic partners in NATO and around the world to meet and defeat the global challenges of our age."

Clinton is not alone in embracing the rulers' ever-expanding war agenda. CHALLENGE has written of Obama's true-blue imperialism. Future articles will deal with pro-war liberals like Edwards, Richardson and Al Gore. As they try to justify coming bloodshed, we should bear one point in mind. The profit system that the liberals represent and defend has no moral legitimacy. Capitalism is based, and thrives, on theft, brutality and mass murder. Capitalists steal workers' labor in the form of profits. They rely on police, courts and prison terror to enforce their will at home. They slaughter millions in wars carving the world into spheres of influence. Electing a Democrat won't end the carnage. Building a party that organizes for wiping out this deadly system through communist revolution is a far better choice. ☸

## 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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## Court's Schools Decision: Racism Rules

On June 28, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a ruling banning public schools from using "race" as a factor in integrating schools. Seattle and Louisville used the "race" of potential students to maintain a balance of diverse students within their districts' schools. White parents sued both cities, claiming their children were discriminated against.

The Court used the very arguments from the famous 1954 case which ended legal segregation in schools, *Brown v. Board of Education*, to now ban using "race" to maintain integrated schools. In the *Brown* decision, "race" was the only basis on which children were assigned to schools in the segregated South. Therefore, the lawyers opposing segregation stated that, "No state has any authority...to use race as a factor in affording educational opportunities among its citizens." (NY Times, 6/29) That 1954 statement was quoted by the Court majority in this current decision as "proof" that efforts to use "race" now to keep schools integrated violated the intentions of the people who fought to win the *Brown* case! (Of course, the rulers at many government levels virtually ignored this ruling and actually re-segregated the schools, their status today. See next CHALLENGE on this history.)

This ruling has angered and disappointed many honest people who believe the myth that Supreme Court decisions are based on the law and not on political opinions. Nothing could be further from the truth. The original *Brown* decision was decided by a Court very aware of how bad Southern legal segregation looked worldwide while the U.S. was engaged in an ideological battle against communism — which promised true equality.

The decision was a message to the world that capitalism could offer the same promises as communism.

That was a lie then and remains so today. Capitalism absolutely relies on racism for super-profits and as a means to divide the working class. The fact that these two lawsuits were brought by white parents is significant. Rather than uniting as a multi-racial force demanding better schools for all students, workers are tricked into believing that some other "race" is getting a better deal. Meanwhile, the bosses are sucking money away from schools to finance their war budget.

The most dangerous lie is that voting will solve this disgusting Court decision. The Democrats will use this case to campaign for the workers' vote in the 2008 election. Much will be made of the particularly racist character of Bush's three Supreme Court appointments: Scalia, Roberts and Alito. Those three, plus the vile Justice Thomas, represent the views of "neocon" conservatives. CHALLENGE has exposed how this group is making a mess of the main liberal ruling-class wing's broad imperialist plans.

While this is certainly a problem for these liberals, we should have no illusions. Racist, overcrowded, underfunded public schools will not improve through voting for any candidate or changing the Supreme Court. They will improve only when the system has the best interests of all workers as its goal. That system is communism, not capitalism. ☸

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# Fight Over Pensions, Union Rules Becomes School for Communism

**PHILADELPHIA, PA.**— “Our pension is the best! I’d give up 1% of my raise to protect it!”

“But why are we workers always the ones giving stuff up? The bosses on the Board of Trustees are some of the richest people in the region. How come they never give anything up?”

“Well, the revolution isn’t here yet! We need to give up something to help the pension fund get past this crisis.”

“But we already gave up stuff to help the pension fund get past the last crisis! And we keep paying more to help our Medical Benefit Fund with its never-ending crises. And we keep losing jobs with the hospital’s continuing budget crises! It’s always a crisis for workers under capitalism!”

This battle of ideas (with a group of workers who are among the union activists and militants at our hospital) will continue over the next few weeks as the hospital workers union calls for union members to approve diverting one percent of our raise to “protect” our pension fund.

Compared to other workers’ pensions (or lack of pension) our pension is truly one of the best. When combined with Social Security, it has allowed the largely black custodians, dietary workers, nursing assistants and others to have the same income or better as when they were working. The union training fund offers opportunities to workers of all ages to become a nurse or x-ray tech, for example, instead of remaining a custodian or dietary worker. Racism and unemployment has left a huge number of black workers in horrible poverty in this city. As critical as many union members are of the union leaders, they nonetheless deeply value the reform accomplishments of the union over the last several decades. The mainly black union leadership has also fairly skillfully used the ideas of black nationalism to keep the union members’ loyalty.

So winning these workers to communist revolution requires persistence, sensitivity, true friendship, an effort to understand the struggles of workers’ everyday lives and a good sense of humor — even as all these “accomplishments” are being taken away from us, particularly in this era of endless imperialist wars and unending capitalist financial crisis.

Two months ago workers organized a benefit for a union member disabled because he needed a transplant.

**‘A month later a larger group of union delegates and union members marched on the union hall to protest the efforts of a right-wing union delegate and the hospital bosses to slip a non-union member into a job over a union member.’**

Three hundred people came to a catered dinner and show that included 50 entertainers. The audience and the entertainers were multi-racial, black, Latin, Asian and white; the Vietnamese hip-hop group was one of the favorites of the night! The event was a tremendous success despite a propaganda campaign by the right-wing union delegates and the sexist ideas of some of the male union members that such an ambitious affair couldn’t be organized by a committee of almost all women, and particularly women from housekeeping and nursing. The point that such a benefit would be unnecessary under communism

was also made to many workers.

A month later a larger group of union delegates and union members marched on the union hall to protest the efforts of a right-wing union delegate and the hospital bosses to slip a non-union member into a job over a union member. In the ensuing screaming match, a union official was forced to admit her “friend” made a mistake. In the end, the union member got the job.

Actions like these build morale and confidence and strengthen our ties with the workers participating. But it can be a double-edged sword that keeps workers thinking that reform fights are all we need — just with more workers and more militance. That’s why we pointed to the recent CHALLENGE article from Mexico that reported on hundreds of thousands of workers marching and protesting.

Those are numbers we in this hospital dream about right now. The article made the point that without a revolutionary communist outlook, even large numbers of workers, no matter how militant, can still be trapped in capitalism and under the heel of one “lesser-evil” boss or union leader or another. Small groups or large, whether the reform fight wins or fails, the primary victory is when more workers become communists.

Union activists at this hospital are discussing what we should propose to the union members regarding our raise and the pension fund: Do we support the union leaders’ proposal? Do we strike? Are we organized to strike? How do we use this to better organize the workers to strike? How do we build better ties with the non-union workers, doctors and nurses? And most important: how can all this build for communist revolution? ☪

## Communist Ideas Inspire the Working Class At Oaxaca Mega March

**OAXACA, MEXICO** — On June 14, a year after the major battle in Oaxaca between the striking teachers and the army, more than 600,000 people participated in a Mega March in the streets here. The workers of Section 22 of the teachers’ union and the members of APPO (Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca) are continuing the struggle.



PLP prepared for this event in discussions and meetings and participated in the march, leading chants and distributing thousands of leaflets exposing this rotten capitalist system. The comrades added a revolutionary character to the march, while calling on teachers, youth, students and workers to join PLP.

The following weekend was filled with Party activities. Young students and friends of the Party participated in a communist school. It included a deep discussion on the Party document “Road to Revolution IV,” inter-imperialist rivalry, and an analysis of the movement in Oaxaca that inspired many workers around Mexico and the world.

One youth participant asked to join the Party, committing herself to strengthen the political work among women workers. Others agreed to continue participating in more PLP meetings.

Knowing that students and workers accept our ideas and literature motivates us to continue organizing, writing and discussing the Party’s ideas in order to recruit other workers to PLP.

Given that the road to revolution is a long one, we must redouble our efforts, with building confidence and deepening relations among the workers as our main task. Understanding that the working class is the only class capable of generating value, and that the bosses only suck the blood of the workers without producing even what they eat, we can organize to build a world without bosses and exploitation! LONG LIVE COMMUNISM! ☪

## NJ Human/Legal Services Workers Fight Attacks on Immigrants

**NEWARK, NJ, June 20** — Human services and legal services workers today discussed attacks on undocumented immigrants and what to do about them; the fight against racism; the war in Iraq; and the DREAM Act (see below). These workers were delegates to the National Joint Council (NJC) of the National Organization of Legal Services Workers, UAW Local 2320, held in Las Vegas.

This action was the culmination of a six-month-long campaign within a local union branch. A resolution was circulated in the branch pledging resistance to any law which required workers to turn in undocumented immigrants to the Department of Homeland Security, placing this call for action squarely in the context of growing racism, fascism and guest-worker slavery. It condemned

***‘Many legal workers were not aware of the racist history of immigration law, of the use of guest workers in low-wage industries, of the need for fascist laws in order to mobilize the U.S. population for war, and of the history behind the struggle of the abolitionist movement to wipe out slavery.’***

both the openly fascist HR 4437 passed last year, which criminalized undocumented immigrants and those who support them; and the DREAM Act, a proposed law which promises residency to young immigrants in return for service in the bosses’ military, meaning fighting and dying in imperialist wars to control oil.

There was a lively debate within the local branch. Some of our clients are undocumented, with citizen or permanent resident children, so this was not an academic question. Many legal workers were not aware of the racist history of immigration law, of the use of guest workers in low-wage industries, of the need for fascist

laws in order to mobilize the U.S. population for war, and of the history behind the struggle of the abolitionist movement to wipe out slavery. All these issues and others were debated during the campaign.

A weakness was insufficient discussion about the role of borders under capitalism. However, the need to destroy the profit system with a communist revolution has been discussed with many union members. During the debate over the resolution, more people saw CHALLENGE and other communist literature for the first time. More people in the local branch moved into action against racism. Several attended three different rallies — one to protest racist talk radio, one against racist police murder and the third to oppose attacks on immigrants.

Quite a few branch members supported open “resistance” against any law requiring them to collaborate with the bosses’ Homeland Security by turning in immigrants. The final version of the local resolution removed that language, instead pledging to continue the fight against racism by protecting immigrants “to the fullest extent of the law.” However, the debate caused many members to deeply examine what principles they were willing to uphold.

After the local branch asked the NJC to consider the resolution, one of the union’s national leaders asked the local to remove the language opposing the DREAM Act before the NJC, saying we shouldn’t upset our “friends” in the immigrant rights movement who support it. The local branch voted to keep this opposition. Ultimately, the NJC voted to remove only the language opposing the DREAM Act. But that vote was preceded by a sharp and extended debate. Afterwards, many delegates came forward to congratulate the delegate who introduced the resolution and stood up for its content.

A key lesson in this battle was that the final language of any pledge or resolution is less important than the political struggle and debate involved in it. The working class is one class internationally. An increased understanding among workers, soldiers and others of the need to build a movement to smash racism and unite workers worldwide, and the role of communists in that fight, is a step forward on the road to communist revolution. ☪



workers unite!

## Boeing and Subcontractor Workers, Unite!

# The Nuts and Bolts of Industrial Fascism

**SEATTLE, WA.**—"It's amazing what it comes down to," said Mike Bair, the Boeing vice president in charge of the multibillion-dollar Dreamliner program. "We're getting to the point that every bolt is important." (Wall Street Journal, 6/19) The company can't get enough fasteners, which connect airplane sections, from its primary subcontractor, Alcoa. This saga of the lowly fastener reveals the development of industrial fascism. The bosses have no other viable alternative.

The Boeing manager of a large subassembly plant admitted the company can't get fasteners on time because subcontractors can't hire enough machine operators "at the rates they are willing to pay." (See article Page 7 on similar subcontracting factory) When Boeing workers complained about forced overtime because of the last-minute arrival of fasteners, our CHALLENGE readers started discussions about what to do on the shop floor.

The company knew about this problem for a long time. They've been sending managers down to these subcontractors nearly every week.

Boeing is just greedy and has lots of money, some said. If we apply some serious pressure, Boeing will "do the right thing" and grant concessions to these underpaid workers.

Our comrades argued for a different approach. The logic of capitalism is that if you can't even get desperate workers to work under these horrible conditions, then you just make workers more desperate.

This is doubly true now. U.S. imperialism's weaknesses have become apparent in the last few years, highlighted by the Iraq debacle. The ruling class knows it must re-industrialize for the bigger wars ahead if they hope to remain top-dog. They must re-tool on the backs of lower-

paid, mostly non-union subcontractor labor. These new industrial sweatshops employ huge numbers of black and Latin workers.

Today, the majority of industrial workers are non-union, centered in these subcontractors. These subcontractors drive down everybody's working conditions. In Seattle, new hires start at an average of \$12.72/hour — less than half the wages of veteran employees. The time it takes to make maximum pay has increased from 5 years to 15.

Unfortunately, the main contradiction in the world today is between U.S. imperialism and fast-charging imperialist competitors. As long as this contradiction holds sway, we can expect this racist exploitation to intensify. If you want to know what fascism looks like, just ask these super-exploited subcontractor workers.

We can only change this dynamic by changing this contradiction. The working class must take on the bosses' system with communist revolution. Every new CHALLENGE reader, every new party member helps us wage the long battle to break out of this imperialist nightmare.

### Boeing And Subcontractor Workers Unite!

To intensify class struggle, we are building a campaign around two demands for our contract next year. Inside the factory, fasteners are called standards because they are built to predetermined standards. The company must not be allowed to accept any standards from plants that don't meet minimum labor standards. A related demand is that starting wages be raised and the time to maximum pay be shortened.



The capitalist wage system inexorably increases wage inequality. Throughout this campaign, we must win those with whom we fight this inequality to the need to smash capitalism.

As one friend said, "I'm an older guy. I'd like to retire with a decent pension, but what really matters to me is what happens to the next generation of workers — our kids." Such class-consciousness will help us build our revolutionary movement.☺

## Mexico: Fired Delphi Workers Fight for Severance Pay



**REYNOSA, MEXICO, June 30** — Last year, Delphi fired 250 workers here, many of them single mothers. Their excuse? "Failure to buy expensive safety shoes." But the real reason was Delphi's aim to slash production and the workforce. Delphi, one of Mexico's largest private employer, has refused to pay these fired workers severance pay mandated by law. To top it off, on April 27 the local labor board said it "lost" the paperwork for the severance pay demand.

On May 1, a militant group of workers picketed the board before joining many other workers marching on May Day against the bosses and their union hacks who sign contracts favoring employers. This action made the paperwork "miraculously" appear.

These workers need the kind of international solidarity and support the world's working class so much lacks in order to make a reality of the communist slogan "Workers of the World, Unite, you have nothing to lose but your chains." E-mail messages to: [tellote2000@yahoo.com.mx](mailto:tellote2000@yahoo.com.mx)

## As Fascist Auto Contracts Loom . . .

# Two-tier Chickens Come Home to Roost...



**DETROIT, MI June 28** — "We're selling out our children and that's what bothers me the most." That's how a Delphi worker in Saginaw, Michigan summed up the new four-year deal between Delphi, GM and the UAW that will accelerate the fascist restructuring of the entire auto industry. The new deal cuts Delphi wages by nearly 50%, closes factories and increases workers' healthcare costs. It will also spread the two-tier system to GM by reassigning about 1,750 Delphi workers to GM at the lower wages and benefits paid to Delphi workers.

Of the 17,000 UAW members at Delphi, only 4,000 earn GM wages. Most of them voted for a two-tier wage system in 2003 that created a workforce of permanent workers with lower wages and temporary workers. Now the chickens have come home to roost. For the first time, second-tier workers will vote to cut the wages of more senior workers. Those making GM wages will see pay cuts from \$28 an hour to \$14 or \$18.50 an hour. They will also have their health benefits slashed to match those of workers hired under the two-tier wage system. This is the legacy of the pro-capitalist union leaders.

GM will pay more than \$8 billion for buyouts and "buy-down" payments to soften the blow of the huge pay and health cuts. Workers who take a buyout must leave by September 15. GM will cover those costs with nearly \$2 billion in annual savings once Delphi's costs are "competitive."

Delphi will keep only four UAW plants, and negotiate new "competitive work rule" local contracts within 60

days. It will sell four plants, transfer ownership of three to GM or a third-party designated by GM, and close at least 10 more plants. GM and the UAW agreed to cut retiree health care, eliminate 30,000 jobs and close 12 U.S. plants in 2005.

Casting a growing shadow over the "competitive costs and work rules" is the Chinese auto industry. "China's auto parts exports have increased more than six-fold in the last five years, nearly topping \$1 billion in April...More than half of these auto parts go to the United States..." (New York Times, 6/7)

CHALLENGE has reported the stories of Delphi workers fighting back in Cadiz, Spain and Tangier, Morocco, plus the strikes of GM, VW, and Renault workers in France, Belgium, Germany, Russia, Romania and more. Recently there have been auto strikes in India and South Korea. In May, PLP participated in an international auto workers conference in Germany with workers from 17 countries. All of these struggles reflect the need, and potential for auto workers to unite our struggles globally.

A fighting communist movement can turn international class struggle into a school for communist revolution. We can build personal ties across all borders, support each others' struggles, and use those struggles to launch our own. The best the pro-capitalist union leaders can do is pay lip service to internationalism because when push comes to shove, the UAW serves GM and Ford, IG Metall serves Daimler and VW, and the Japanese Auto Workers union serves Toyota, Nissan and Honda. This nationalism/patriotism has led us to where we are today, and will ultimately lead us to war as our bosses fight for markets, resources and cheap labor.

We need to build PLP-led groups around CHALLENGE in every factory we can. These groups should be active in the reactionary unions (if they exist), organize workers to fight back, and oppose the nationalism and racism of the union leadership. These groups must take the fascist conditions being imposed by the rulers into full account. Auto workers have the ability to reach around the world, build international solidarity and spread the revolutionary communist politics of PLP. This is the answer to the future of wage cuts, fascism and war that the bosses have in store for us.☺



# IRAQ VETS MOBILIZING ACTIVE-DUTY GI'S AGAINST THE WAR

**GREENBELT, MD., June 23** — Over 50 Iraq war vets, GIs, and supporters held a cookout to kick off the Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW) summer bus tour. The tour will visit at least six military bases over a two-week period to recruit GIs to the anti-war movement. GIs from two military bases near Washington, D.C. were invited by word of mouth and through leafleting to attend the gathering.

The barbecue location was ideal, the park being located in a working-class black neighborhood which helped to diversify the audience. Although starting out mostly white, the barbecue became multi-racial as guys from the basketball court came over to have some food and chat about politics and struggle.

The launching of an active-duty IVAW chapter at Ft. Meade was announced at the cookout. Several active-duty airmen, sailors and soldiers detailed the incompetence of the chain of command and the need to end the war in Iraq.

Adam Kokesh and Liam Madden, two Marine veterans under attack by the brass for wearing their uniform and making "disloyal" statements (see CHALLENGE, 6/20 both urged the active-duty GIs there to join IVAW. During the cookout it was revealed that the brass had just filed similar charges against Reverend Yearwood, leader of the anti-war "Hip Hop Caucus" and an honorably discharged army chaplain. He must report to Georgia for a July 12 hearing at which he could be given a less-than-honorable discharge from the IRR (Individual Ready Reserve, essentially a civilian status in which a GI discharged from active duty has no chain of command and no drills but has a negative effect on future job applications).

Yearwood is a prominent speaker on the anti-war cir-

cuit, but his liberal political electoral strategy is misleading and dangerous. For example, at a recent address given to the Washington Peace Center, he called for people to become "solutionaries, not revolutionaries," belittling the efforts of those seeking to build a revolutionary mass movement against capitalism.

The bus tour's stops in Washington and Norfolk demonstrate the effectiveness of base-building among the active-duty GIs. The GIs from both cities came from the

***'A successful struggle against imperialist war will require mass resistance by GIs against the brass, in alliance with industrial workers fighting their corporate bosses, all led by revolutionary communists.'***

Appeal For Redress, an initiative in which we've been active. We must continue to build among these active-duty soldiers, demonstrating the weakness of the liberal IVAW strategy, thereby giving our friends the only solution to this capitalist nightmare, a communist society!

Despite the bus tour's success, we struggled with the organizers on two fronts, firstly to see themselves as organizers, not "media-stars." Their vision is for local folks to do all the work for them so that when they come to town, they can talk to media, take photos and give speeches. This is a top-down approach, which mirrors the imperialist/capitalist military and society we're struggling

to transform.

The goal must be for the bus participants to enter towns and help empower the already existing organizing occurring among the active-duty GIs, industrial workers, students and our class as a whole. Instead of talking to media, we should be outreaching in the community against the repression of the brass and the bosses!

Secondly, the bus participants need to diversify and represent the GI Movement as a whole, which spans the so-called "races" and encompasses women.

A successful struggle against imperialist war will require mass resistance by GIs against the brass, in alliance with industrial workers fighting their corporate bosses, all led by revolutionary communists. The mass movement against the war, including IVAW, is quite far from implementing this strategy. Individual resistance is still the norm. While bold, such actions do little to concretely challenge the power of the brass and the bosses they serve. However, among IVAW members, active-duty GIs, and many supporters, there is growing discussion about how to move beyond such individual actions to concerted resistance, and about the need to link the fight against the brass and the war to the broader struggle against racism and the capitalist system.

PLP members engaged in these debates are working hard to bring more GIs from their military units into the mass struggle and into PLP's ranks to better advance revolutionary strategy. PLP believes that the only solution means becoming a revolutionary communist, for only when the capitalist system is destroyed along with its inherent drive for maximum profit and control over the world's resources as part of that drive, can we have a solution in the interests of the world's workers. ☪

## Colombia Mass Marchers Battle Uribe's Fascist Cops, Cutbacks



**BOGOTA, COLOMBIA, June 25** — Chanting, "The people are right when they say education health should be first"; "Let's take to the street to dump Uribe's paramilitary government," thousands of students and others have been protesting here against social services cutbacks by the right-wing government of President Uribe, the darling of the paramilitary narco mafias and President Bush. His new National Development Plan forces public universities to pay a high percentage of their employees' pensions. This will cost hundreds of millions of dollars, a major blow to public higher education.

Mass meetings at the National University here discussed the repercussions of such government plans. Since May 2 a permanent strike has been under way. Public universities in other regions have joined the struggle.

In Bogotá, six mass marches united campus workers, students, parents and some professors. The marches not only attacked the social services cutbacks, labeling it a privatization plan, but also attacked the firings of workers and the crimes of the paramilitary gangs who enter the universities. The marches were attacked by ESMAD (anti-riot cops) with their armored vehicles, tear gas, pepper gas and water cannons. Many students were arrested and injured, while also fighting

back with sticks, rocks and their fists.

Because of the mass protests, Uribe and his Education Minister lied to the press, claiming their budget plan aimed to actually raise the university budget and the quality of education. But tuition will jump 300% to cover the colleges' pension plan payments, and many working-class students won't be able to go to college. Already many students have become street vendors to pay for their education. With the new tuition hike, 80% of working-class students will have to drop out.

As the protests grew, Uribe called a so-called Town Meeting, where he was asked many questions and offered no answers. He just said students were "using" the protests to carry out "terrorist" actions. He then ordered the re-starting of classes and the tearing down of the protesting student camps. But students

were not intimidated by the threats and decided to continue the struggle.

Wasserman, the National University president, and faithful servant of the IMF-World Bank policies, officially shut the school a month after the struggle began, restricting the students' entry to the campus, aiming to weaken the struggle and divide students. PLP members and CHALLENGE-DESAFIO readers in these colleges are working very hard to continue the fight. Giving up now will doom public education.

Our Party is fighting to win students to understand that these sharpening bosses' attacks stem from the current state of world capitalism, with its endless imperialist wars, fascist repression and massive economic attacks against workers and youth. We're fighting to recruit more workers and youth to our Party, and build the kind of red leadership needed to destroy this system which values paramilitary death squads above the needs of the sons and daughters of the working class. ☪

## Chile: Need Intern'l Support for Miners' Strike vs. Subcontractors



**Chilean Miners confront cops**

**CHILE, June 30** — On June 25, some 28,000 miners, members of a newly-formed union, struck the subcontractors of the state-owned copper corporation here, Codelco. The death of a miner working in El Teniente sparked the walkout. The strikers blocked highways leading to the many divisions of Codelco, the world's biggest copper producer. Instead of responding to the strikers' demands, the bosses treated them like criminals and attacked them with riot cops. The strikers fought back, burning eight company buses. Codelco lost \$10 million on the strike's first day.

This is an important strike, not only for these miners but for millions of workers worldwide because they're demanding that subcontracted workers become permanent and receive the same benefits as the main corporation's workers.

They're also demanding medical benefits, housing and bonuses, to share some of the bonanza the company is enjoying because of the high price and worldwide demand of copper. The miners refuse to be treated as second-class workers, and want permanent status.

There are now 80,000 contract workers in Chile's copper mines, three for every permanent worker. The copper industry was nationalized during the Allende government, but beginning with the fascist Pinochet regime through the current "Socialist" Concertation government, the industry has been privatized bit by bit. International corporations now also make big bucks off these miners' labor.

There are subcontracted workers in all industries throughout Chile and the world. Many are not in unions. Those in unions are divided among different unions, like the "regular" miners and the subcontracted ones. So the demands of these strikers must be supported by the international working class. As capitalist globalization (imperialism) creates more division of labor, lowering wages worldwide, workers need a revolutionary anti-capitalist internationalist strategy. That's the kind of leadership PLP offers. Join us! ☪

# < Letters >

## Nixonite Feared SDS/PLP in 1970 Postal Strike

The bosses, our class enemies, sometimes see the stakes more sharply than we do. The article "PLP History: Lessons for Today: SDS Failed to Support 1970 Postal Strike" (CHALLENGE, 7/4) faults the PLP student leadership's "weakness on the crucial issue of class consciousness." On the other hand, H.R. Haldeman, President Nixon's chief of staff, truly understood the significance of a worker-student alliance.

The Nixon administration was depending on "the labor lieutenants of the capitalist class" to sabotage the strike. On March 20, 1970, Haldeman's diary reads: "Postal problem settled in late afternoon when union leaders agreed to get workers back in, then negotiate."

But the following day Haldeman had to write: "The settlement didn't work, because rank and file won't go back, have rejected leaders..." He added: "Threat now is of radicalization, a national strike, other walkouts, i.e. Teamsters, Air Traffic Controllers, etc., to cripple whole country at once." An effective worker-student alliance could have been a ruby spark in that explosive situation, and Haldeman moaned to his diary: "... and now SDS types involved, at least in New York."

But there was no explosion. On April 2, a satisfied Haldeman gloated: "Settlement day. Postal agreement. Knew we had it at noon when [Assistant Secretary of Labor] Ushery made deal with [AFL-CIO president George] Meany, but had to go through motions of negotiating session."

In addition to the lesson in CHALLENGE — that criticism and self-criticism are essential in developing class consciousness — there are two other lessons: The treachery of the union misleaders knows no bounds, and even our smallest actions are full of potential.

Old enough to remember Nixon

## Film Feeds Classless 'We' to Starving Children

Globalization has sharpened the contradictions of capitalism; people are seeking explanations for, and solutions to, the problems they're facing. The capitalist market has responded to this demand with a new generation of documentary films. In them, thanks to the financial viability offered by the TV and DVD markets, filmmakers enjoy greater freedom to present their personal take on the catastrophe that is capitalism.

But these films only offer reformist solutions, ones that never attack the cause of the problem — capitalism. Recent examples include Darwin's Nightmare and Supersize Me (both 2004), An Inconvenient Truth (2006) and, of course, all the Michael Moore films.

"We Feed the World," made by Austrian director Erwin Wagenhofer in 2005, is another such film, now showing in most European countries but still seeking a U.S. distributor. It was financed on a shoestring budget by the six-employee production company Allegrofilm and shot by a one-woman camera team. Consequently, Wagenhofer had complete editorial control, but never gets past reformism.

There are still many good reasons to see this film with your friends. There are entrancing (if romanticized) images of Rumanian farm hands and French fishermen and fish merchants working and taking pride in their work — images resembling old Soviet movies, except for the lush color.

More importantly, the film provides a wide-ranging criticism of the food industry. It does a very good job of revealing the market forces that are eliminating small-scale fishers and farmers and replac-

ing tasty wholesome food with bland processed food. ("Our children will never know the true taste of a tomato.") It furnishes plenty of useful statistics, like: "52% of the world gross domestic product is controlled by 50 multi-nationals."

The film also links the feast in the developed countries and the famine everywhere else. Gigantic corporations are chopping down the Amazon rain forest to plant soy beans, used to fatten European livestock, while Brazilian farmers starve. European-subsidized foodstuffs cost one-third the price of African produce, driving African farmers to become super-exploited undocumented farm workers in Europe. All this is documented with sometimes stunning images.

The film features grandfatherly Jean Ziegler (a communist 50 years ago but now a Social Democrat). This UN special reporter on the right to food thunders that "every five seconds a child under ten dies of starvation. A child that dies of starva-

tion is in effect murdered." But the only answer the film can muster to the question, "Why are they starving?" is a cowardly, "We can't or won't feed them." Who or what is the film concealing behind that "we?" It is the capitalist class and the capitalist system!

In short, see this film together with your friends, but take some revolutionary communist politics along with you.

A Film Buff



Jean Ziegler, a communist 50 years ago but now a Social Democrat, in the movie "We Feed the World."

## Court O.K.s Super-Exploitation of Homecare Workers

**NEW YORK CITY** — Since 1974 homecare agencies have robbed homecare workers of millions of dollars in unpaid overtime. Workers do 24-hour shifts, but are paid for only 12 hours, plus a \$17 night differential. In 2002, a Long Island homecare worker sued her agency over this crime, the case reaching the Supreme Court last year. On June 11, the Court ruled 9-0 to "uphold federal regulations that exempt homecare workers from minimum wage and overtime protections." (NY Times, 6/12/07)

Homecare agencies and government officials were "elated with the ruling, saying it would reduce labor costs and save them \$250 million more a year to the more than 60,000 homecare workers in New York City." (NYT, 6/12/07) There are an estimated 200,000 homecare workers in NY State, with the numbers expanding dramatically nationwide.

Since 1974 the ruling class and its state apparatus foresaw homecare as the least expensive option to care for the disabled, sick and elderly, keeping labor costs low (wage exploitation), the way capitalism always reaps profits. Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of mostly black, Latin and immigrant women lost industrial jobs, either overseas or to low-paid Southern subcontractors, where workers are super-exploited to enrich the bosses, helping maintain U.S. imperialism's #1 status worldwide.)

Such racist, sexist super-exploitation in the U.S. and globally, racist divide-and-conquer schemes and the rule of the almighty dollar represent capitalism's true "values."

When the above case began against Long Island Care at Home, it warned other agencies in the region to cut weekly hours to 40 or even to 32 in case a negative court ruling mandated retroactive pay to thousands of homecare workers.

Unionized homecare workers generally earn between \$7.50 and \$9.50 hourly. A 40-hour work-week means between \$300 and \$360 before taxes (\$15,600 to \$19,760 annually before taxes), well below the poverty line for families, many headed by single women. So much for the rulers' declarations about dignity, respect and "family values."

Given these rates, a "living wage" (commonly assumed to be \$10 an hour — itself a cruel hoax), means working 50-60 hours weekly at straight time or accepting 24-hour assignments — or get fired.

NYC's 60,000 unionized homecare workers belong to 1199-SEIU, the so-called "progressive" union. The workers know better. While 1199 recruits more low-wage service workers, takes money from workers for its Political Action Committee and supports and lobbies for legislation and the capitalists' so-called "lesser-evil" politicians, they are complicit with the bosses' racist, sexist crimes. They don't fight back with work stoppages, strikes or general strikes. They make deals with elected officials to get a few more pennies for healthcare, while proclaiming to oppose the Iraq war, which is devouring workers' taxes. (Even if the war ended, workers wouldn't get higher wages, because the rulers demand our "sacrifice" to maintain top-dog status over their capitalist competitors worldwide.)

PLP'ers and friends have been fighting the overtime/24-hour robbery and union complicity for eight years, centering



on homecare workers

in the 1199 Education Fund and their ESL teacher. We began with exposing this crime in student meetings. Our leaflets condemned racist, sexist exploitation and demanded overtime pay, an end to the 24-hour policy, and wage parity with unionized hospital workers who perform similar jobs for twice the pay, effectively standing up to the union's apartheid system: a Hospital Division and a Homecare Division. We leafleted union meetings and rallies. Workers took leaflets to their in-service trainings.

We petitioned the union and then NY State Attorney-General Eliot Spitzer and rallied at a Bronx agency. A Spitzer flunky rudely brushed us off. At that rally a union organizer, together with the agency director, attacked us verbally. When the union organizer — claiming that "his" members "like" 60-hour weeks and 24-hour shifts — almost got into a fist fight with a PLP member he was surrounded by 200 angry, shouting women. Later, at meetings in a local church we sought support from the congregation. Gradually we became known to the bosses and the union.

Last winter a group of workers and their teacher paid an "unannounced" visit to the union, where a "leader" asked sarcastically, "Has the revolution begun?" The same organizer from the above rally appeared at the hastily-arranged "meeting" and began to point and yell at the teacher, which prompted the workers to stand up and yell back. Another union "leader" shifted gears, saying the union was there "to help," lecturing us about the Supreme Court case, that we should "wait and see." "What happened to your lobbying, your PAC and your legislative agenda?" accused the teacher.

The PLP group's biggest weakness has been our inability to convince homecare union delegates we know — and others to become delegates — to expose the union and organize within its apparatus to fight back. Our friends are pessimistic and sometimes feel hopeless about any gains this can make, partly because they don't sufficiently understand PLP's ideas and long-term strategy.

However, the struggle continues to be a school for communism, with ups and downs. We have maintained a CHALLENGE readership of about 35, with three networks; hold study group (sometimes sporadic because of work schedules); and have recruited two workers to PLP. More than 25 workers have attended May Day or other PLP events. We care deeply for one another and respect ourselves as workers — small steps in a big struggle. We know these steps are important and we can't give up.

Capitalism is not our only option. We'll continue to confront anti-communist ideas from our friends and attacks by our class enemies over the long pull as we struggle to learn the lessons of the collapse of the old communist movement. Communism is not dead. While not imminent, communist revolution remains the way forward to destroy capitalism with its poverty, racism, sexism, barbarity and war. To learn about communism and fight back is our responsibility. Let the capitalist rulers dig their own graves.

# Inter-Imperialist Rivalry Felt on Factory Floor

**SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA** — “That’s it. We aren’t doing any more set-up work if they don’t give us set-up pay. If we stop, production stops coming from those machines. They can stop running for all we care, let ‘em sit,” Graciela told me as she marched back from talking to Emilio at his machines and confirming they would stand together through this struggle. “What do you think they’ll do to us?” she continued.

“I think you should fight these bastards!” I replied. They need us more than we need them. Besides who will do the work if you don’t? Not me.”

The machines sat silent on the factory floor, producing nothing nor any profit for over a week.

As inter-imperialist rivalry intensifies factory workers are increasingly facing off against the bosses’ attempts to produce more for less and remain competitive (profitable), especially in weapons production. By 2015, China aims to compete with Airbus and Boeing, the world’s two aerospace giants. They launched their most advanced fighter jet ever, and showed they can defend against U.S. spy satellites by downing one of their own with a single missile. Russia is cutting defense industry deals with EADS (Europe’s largest defense contractor), Italy’s Finmeccanica and has consolidated practically its entire aerospace industry into a single state-owned corporation, attempting to strengthen its war production capacity. The imperialist bosses are preparing for major wars against one another.

For industrial workers inter-imperialist rivalry means increased production goals, fewer benefits, longer hours, lower wages and anything else the bosses can do to increase efficiency and profitability since the survival of the every imperialist’s arms industry in the global market is directly linked to its ability to produce at low costs for their wars.

Workers aren’t taking this lying down nor standing alone. In the above factory struggle no one touched the machines on any shift. It forced the bosses to meet with them about their demands.

The production leader in charge of their area commented, “These people aren’t here working their lives away because

they want to, they’re here because they have to be. They [the bosses] should just give them what they want. They deserve it. If they’ve decided they won’t do the work I’m not going to make them.” He didn’t touch the machines either!

As always the bosses tried to divide the workers, agreeing only to meet with them separately. They were told they “weren’t qualified enough” to be paid for work they were already doing. This enabled us to point out that the profit system’s inter-imperialist rivalry and wars caused this attack, and how we are vital to stopping it.

But most importantly we talked about the Party and CHALLENGE. “Why won’t they just pay us what we deserve if they lose money when the machines aren’t running,” Graciela asked later. “The system isn’t set up for that,” I explained. “It’s not about what you deserve or need, it’s about their profits. That communist newspaper I was reading showed the way we’re exploited at this plant is the future for all factory workers because the bosses need to produce cheaply for their profits and wars.”

Since this struggle Graciela and I have become much closer friends through barbecues and family gatherings, and have had many more discussions about the ruling class, their plans for immigrant workers, racism, sexism, communism, you name it. Graciela and another factory worker we met through her are now regular CHALLENGE readers, have joined a PL study group and are considering joining the Party. There will be more struggles.

Industrial workers and their families are at the heart of capitalism’s contradiction: the need to increasingly exploit those that fight in, and produce for, their wars. The bosses understand that increased exploitation of these workers is not a choice but a necessity for their imperialist ambitions, producing sharper struggle. But struggle for what?

A crucial way forward for our Party is in the factories, bringing communism to these workers, and to building CHALLENGE networks and PLP, eventually turning these schools for communism into *struggles* for communism. ☘

## Social Forum

continued from page 8

ple” and were not part of the planned role-playing activity. Such mis-leadership derails revolutionary class consciousness and encourages compromising with the murderous bosses.

Coalition-building with the bosses was the order of the day, encouraging us to “frame the issues” within the confines of capitalism so that “we can really achieve something.” This usually doesn’t even lead to short-sighted success in this era of major social cutbacks to pay for the bosses’ endless wars and police state. It means only disaster for any real social changes and for the need to fight all the bosses (Republicans or Democrats, liberals or Necons). PLP brought the only real long-term solution: organize for communist revolution.

Many workshops were based on identity politics, stressing the differences between workers and youth and teaching organizers to encourage these racist divisions. The practice of “caucusing” — separating workers into “race” or gender groups — reinforces racism and sexism, and does nothing to promote the kind of unity needed to fight the racist rulers. “White-skin privilege,” not capitalist ideology, was blamed for racism.

Black and Latino youth were often encouraged to struggle for “success” (making it in the system) and to beg for recognition of workers’ rights. These sorts of goals will fail and leave our youth defeated, or will just train future misleaders.

Workers can’t beg for their rights from a government that protects the profits of racist war-maker corporations first and foremost. Our message to Forum attendees: reformed capitalism is a dead-end, not progress. The only advance is to vanquish capitalism. That can only be done with communist revolution. Join 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

### US Iraq plan: Leave without leaving

Meanwhile in Iraq, the American plan to withdraw U.S. troops beginning this year now exists in a version that disregards whether the surge works or not. A big part of the U.S. force would be pulled back into the big, fortified U.S. bases already prepared. The rest would be shipped home....

This reduced, “permanent” American force in Iraq would supposedly intervene from its bases to support the Iraqi government (assuming that it survives) and Iraq’s (by then privatized?) oil industry installations, and to operate against al-Qaida. (William Pfaff, Tribune Media, 6/14)

### Loan-shark profits now go to big biz

Corporate America has decided there’s gold in draining the low-income masses of what little they have. Loan sharks and con artists once dominated this territory, but big businesses have moved in and are proving to be far smoother than the mugs who break legs. Their legal fine print can trap the uneducated in outrageous debt contracts without rousing the authorities....

As Business Week notes, the thing being sold doesn’t matter. It’s just the “bait” to saddle someone with punishing loan terms....

Payday lenders offer workers cash advances on their next paycheck. Wells Fargo and US Bancorp have entered this booming business, charging annual interest rates of 120 percent....

Milking America’s poor is now a global opportunity. (Creators Syndicate)

### Soldier to vet — a disaster journey

More than one million men and women...have been cycling home all too anonymously from two war fronts, wounded and otherwise damaged and not making much noise yet.

Their troubles range from the mushrooming brain traumas from roadside explosions to outdated benefits to the costs and cares of World War II....

The government’s backlog of benefits claims to the hundreds of thousands, with the data transition from sol-

dier to veteran status a computer disaster....

At home there’s homelessness on the rise for veterans who also discover that the GI Bill can’t cover the cost of public college. Their unemployment rate is three times the national average. (NYT, 6/18)

### CIA bad old days? US today is worse

Comparisons between different historical eras are always tricky. With an incomplete account of C.I.A. misdeeds in its first quarter century from the so-called family jewels....Such a comparison is inevitably flawed....

“These documents are supposed to show the worst of the worst back then....But what’s going on today makes the family jewels pale by comparison.” (6/27)

### Roosevelt task: rescue US capitalism

Part biography, part policy study, this highly readable book recounts how Franklin D. Roosevelt reinvented the presidency....Roosevelt [Jonathan] Alter writes, resuscitated American capitalism.... (NYT, 7/1)

### ‘Nothing to live for,’ so Russians drink

Almost half of deaths among working-age men in Russia are caused by drinking illicit alcohol....Increased alcohol consumption has been linked to rising mortality in the early 1990s during the transition from communism....

“I started drinking heavily when I left the Russian army at the age of 25....

Ultimately it’s a disease of the soul. Men and women drink in Russia because they don’t have any spiritual goals. They have nothing to live for.” (GW, 6/22)

### Fine art of government hypocrisy

The BBC’s Yes Minister...episode titled “The Moral Dimension” [showed] a major sale of British electronics



was won by bribing the purchasing country’s finance minister....

“You’re telling me,” said a shocked [minister] “that winking at corruption is government policy?”

“Oh, no, Minister,” Sir Humphrey assured him, “That would be unthinkable. It could never be government policy — only government practice.” (GW, 6/22)

### Child labor ‘deep-rooted’ in China now

Chinese newspapers are constantly peppered with accounts of the death and injury of child laborers, and of disputes that arise because of unusually low wages, or the withholding of pay....

“In order to achieve modernization, people will go to any ends to earn money, to advance their interests, leaving behind morality, humanity and even a little bit of compassion, let alone the law or regulations, which are poorly implemented,” said Hu Jindou, a professor of economics at the University of Technology in Beijing. “Everything is about the economy now, just like everything was about politics in the Mao era, and forced labor or child labor is far from an isolated phenomenon. It is rooted deeply in today’s reality....” (NYT, 6/21)

# PL History: Protest of Kent State Massacre

## Anti-war Movement's Last Gasp

In the spring of 1970, the anti-war movement seemed to be gaining in vigor, numbers and militancy. Campus demonstrations continued, many of them sharp. Less publicized but even more significant, rebellion within the military, including desertion, "fragging" (GI killings of officers) and outright defection to the North Vietnamese and Vietcong, gave the bosses and brass fits.

However, this appearance of strength belied a fundamental political weakness, which was to prove decisive in the movement's unraveling. The class consciousness that would have supplied the only antidote to the treacherous negotiations between U.S. imperialism and North Vietnamese nationalists never gained the force necessary to turn the movement in a revolutionary direction. This was due to the strength and influence of revisionism (the presence of ruler's ideology within the ranks of the working class) in the former Soviet Union, China and Vietnam, and also to our Party's numerical and political weakness. This weakness manifested itself in a number of ways, none sharper than our failure to mobilize significant support for the national strike of U.S. postal workers in March (see CHALLENGE, 7/4).

By the 1968 U.S. presidential election, every candidate, even the openly racist George Wallace, had promised to

stop the war. Nixon won narrowly against the Democrat Humphrey, promising that he had a "secret plan" to do so. To press for tactical advantage at the negotiating table, he announced on April 30 that the U.S. had invaded Cambodia, thereby widening a conflict he had sworn to end. Mass outrage was swift and widespread. Millions demonstrated on campuses throughout the U.S., many violently.

Kent State University was one. By May 3, 1,000 National Guardsmen occupied the campus. On May 4, the Guardsmen attempted to break up a large anti-war demonstration. The protesters refused to leave. The Guardsmen opened fire, killing four students — two participants and two bystanders — and wounding nine others.

Five days later, between 100,000 and 150,000 demonstrators marched on Washington to protest Nixon's invasion of Cambodia and the Kent State murders, a fraction of the half million who had marched on the U.S. capital less than a half-year earlier. PLP and the Worker-Student Alliance remnants of SDS organized another "Warmaker-Strikebreaker" demonstration at the Department of Labor, to break away from liberal politicians and attempt to turn the movement toward the working class. Fifteen thousand people participated in this illegal action, twice



Photo from Kent State Massacre, April 4th, 1970

as many as those who attended the break-away action in support of General Electric strikers at the same site the previous November.

A nationwide student strike ensued, involving over four million students at more than 900 U.S. colleges and universities.

But this was the anti-war movement's last great gasp. The negotiations and revisionism had disarmed the movement politically. Outrage and anger at the bosses' limitless talent for atrocity, while necessary, were not sufficient to maintain the offensive. Only PLP stood in the way of a fatal marriage between the movement and the liberal wing of the ruling class, and PLP was not strong enough to reverse the process. By 1968, for all intents and purposes, this marriage had already been consummated. The war and the movement would continue until 1974, but, thanks to the class treachery of the Soviet, Chinese and Vietnamese leadership, the U.S. ruling class had managed to maneuver its way out of the most colossal military defeat in its history. ✪

(Next and final installment: Lessons of PLP's experience in the movement against the war in Vietnam.)

## Racist Media Play Down Cops' Murders at Black Colleges

The massacre at Kent State quickly gained international notoriety, with photographs of the dead and wounded sparking worldwide indignation. All the victims were white. This was not, however, the first time that the bosses' state apparatus had murdered young people on a college campus.

On February 8, 1968, cops opened fire on an anti-segregation demonstration at the historically black South Carolina State University in Orangeburg, killing three young men and wounding 27 others, all African-American. None of the cops was convicted of anything. This was the first incident of its type on a U.S. campus,

and because of racism, it received little media coverage. The PLP organized protests and solidarity actions on campuses where it had a presence throughout the U.S.

In the wake of Kent State, another murderously racist police action occurred at an historically black campus, this time Jackson State, when on May 14-15 cops fired 460 rounds at student protestors in less than a minute, killing two and injuring 12. Again, there was significantly less publicity than at Kent State 10 days earlier, and again, despite "hearings," inquests and "commissions," there were no arrests, much less convictions.

One of the anti-war movement's main shortcomings was its weakness in fighting racism. The PLP-led Worker-Student Alliance's "Less Talk - More Action" proposal at the 1969 SDS convention was proving prophetic. The time had long since come for the PLP and its allies to address this vital strategic question. ✪

## PLP Promotes Communist Politics at Social Forum

**ATLANTA, July 2** — Some 10,000 people gathered this past weekend in the U.S. version of the World Social Forum. It was a dangerous exercise in disguising capitalist reform politics as "progress" by misusing powerful working-class ideas (like anti-racism) while spouting "revolutionary" phrase-mongering.

Workers, vets and youth attended hundreds of workshops and lectures over the three-day gathering. Many positive trends were revealed among class-conscious participants, including a broad, but under-developed hatred of capitalism. Many recognized the significance and importance of organizing migrant and immigrant workers, workers in New Orleans, fighting the brutality of racism and sexism, and linking issues.

"The government tried to kill us. They wanted to get rid of the poor so that they could build casinos and homes for the rich," said two New Orleans residents speaking at the forum. "You can't count on these politicians to come and solve the problems we have!" They agreed with, and took, CHALLENGE from a PLP member who pointed out that while rebuilding is important, as long as capitalism exists workers and their homes are in danger.

Other PLP'ers also had some success, distributing 900 CHALLENGES and lots of buttons worded in Spanish, "Workers Have No Borders." We set up a PL table and talked with many interested people. Unfortunately, most of the convention followed a more misleading program.

The primary goal of most workshops was teaching new ways to compromise principled and honest feelings to generate "success" — "changing the system from within." In one workshop about youth and environmental activism, participants were discouraged from thinking about what to do if the military defended capitalist investments since such topics would "just depress people"

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## Why Did Miami Herald 'Discover' Racism in Latin America?

A recent Miami Herald series on black people in Latin America featured several countries: Nicaragua, Brazil, Cuba and the Dominican Republic. The articles pointed out the obvious, that racism exists against black people in those countries and throughout Latin America. No disagreement there. Of course, the Herald fails to identify the cause of racism.

Before the rise of capitalism, people were not divided or even enslaved because of their skin color. Racism was born with capitalism. The emerging capitalist class developed it for five centuries to justify the economics of slavery of Africans, the massacre of black and Indigenous people in the "New World" and as a political weapon to divide whites from the direct victims of racism. So as long as there is the capitalist profit system there will be racism, even if it takes different forms in different regions of the world.

Statistics show that blacks in the region — as Indigenous people — are more likely to be born into poverty, to die young, to read poorly and to live in substandard housing. Authorities are only now starting to count the black population, but the World Bank estimates it's anywhere from 80 million to 150 million, compared with 40.2 million in the U.S.

The most interesting part of the Herald's series concerns black people in Cuba. Again, coming from the Herald, which — along with its Spanish version, El Nuevo Herald — is a mouthpiece for anti-Castro right-wing politics, one has to take what it says with a grain of salt. But there is racism in Cuba, not as much as pre-1959 when the U.S. controlled the island, or even as strong as in Miami itself, but there is racism. The Herald admits this: "Many black people still support Castro, saying that without him they would still be peons in the sugar cane fields. One black Cuban diplomat said he had no hope of an education, and his grandmother no medical care for her glaucoma, until the revolution came along."

But the article adds: "'Everyone is not equal here,' said Ernesto, 37, as he dodged traffic on a Havana street. Tall and athletically built, he once hoped to be a star soccer player. He now gets by selling used clothing, and said he's continually hassled by police just because he's black."

In last year's book, "100 Hours With Fidel" by French-Spanish journalist Ignacio Ramonet, Castro admitted that while the revolution had brought progress for women and black people, discrimination endures: "Black people do not

live in the best homes; they're still . . . performing hard jobs, sometimes less-remunerated jobs, and fewer blacks receive family remittances in foreign currency than their white compatriots," he said.

The Herald says that the new push for change concerning racism in Latin America is fueled by support from African-American politicians and civil-rights groups via globalization — the technological ability to share common human experiences. Indeed, once-isolated Latin American countries now have access to pop-cultural channels such as MTV and BET, which broadcast social messages worldwide.

Of course, that's not the "solution" to racism in Latin America or the U.S. The same black politicians and MTV-BET culture pushed by the Herald haven't dented racism very much in the U.S., where 70% of the 2.2 million prisoners (the world's biggest jail population) are black and Latino; where the infant mortality rate among black children in some Southern states is worse than in some of the world's poorest countries; where racist police brutality is a constant; where racist unemployment is an epidemic in cities like Detroit and Oakland.

U.S. bosses, through the Herald and their politicians and mass media, seem to be trying to use racism in Latin America as a weapon against their rivals in the region. One reason, anti-U.S. politicians like Venezuela's Chavez, Bolivia's Hugo Morales and Ecuador's Correa have made inroads among the masses is because of the hatred dark-skinned workers, peasants and youth have for Latin America's old racist ruling classes. So the U.S. media and politicians are pushing the BIG LIE that if dark-skinned workers and youth in Latin America follow the U.S. model (which they claim is constant 'improvement'), not the Chávez model, racism can be alleviated.

The reason racism persists in Cuba despite many advances since 1959 is because state capitalism dominates Cuba. The fight against racism is a long one. But to destroy it the first premise is to eliminate its cause: capitalism in all its forms. Then, in a communist-led revolutionary society without the economic or political basis for racism, a sharp ideological struggle will be waged against any form of racism and all types of discrimination. ✪