

CHALLENGE



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THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

GROWING FIGHT BACK TO FREE THE JENA SIX:

HANG THE RACIST SYSTEM

"Now my son knows what it means to be black in America," declared the father of Mychal Bell, on the day the 16-year-old high school student was convicted by a racist jury of "attempted murder" and "conspiracy to commit murder." Mychal is one of the Jena 6; five others also face charges. As we go to press, tens of thousands of workers, students and youth are descending on Jena on what was to be his sentencing date. He has been in jail since January and is still there needing \$90,000 bail although his initial conviction has been overturned, in response to the growing anti-racist storm headed for Jena. He is still threatened with other charges.

The Jena 6 has captured the attention of the anti-racist movement amid a series of increased racist attacks across the U.S. Consider:

- The mass racist terror in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, when more than 100,000 black people were left behind to die;
- The closing of half the public health clinics in Chicago this past winter that serve an uninsured patient population 85% black and Latin. The Census Bureau just announced that another two million people lost their health insurance and a new wave of racist budget cuts awaits them;
- A prison population of over 2.2 million people, the highest in the world, 70% black and Latin, with millions more on probation, parole or awaiting trial;
- A rise in racist police terror, from the murder of Sean Bell in NYC on the morning he was to be married, to the cops' beating to death of a Latino worker in the Ramona Gardens public housing project in Los Angeles to the cop murder of an immigrant worker in Mt. Kisco, NY to the recent killing of Arron Harrison, an 18-year-old black youth shot in the back by Chicago police last month. In fact, the Chicago police murdered four young black and Latin men in August.
- Immigration raids, increased border patrols and racist deportations of undocumented workers, scapegoating them for (falsely) "stealing the jobs" of U.S.-born workers;
- The round-up and racist profiling of tens of thousands of Arab and Muslim immigrants in the name of "the war on terror."

While politicians from Hillary Clinton to Obama to Giuliani all rant about the "war on terror" and defend

the bloodbath in Iraq, the real terror we face are the increasing racist attacks on the working class. From infant mortality to life expectancy, by every objective measure, racism is more widespread and devastating now than at any time since the 1960's Civil Rights movement.

This is not just the Bush crowd's policies; it is built into the capitalist system of wage slavery. Racism is the fiber that holds the whole blood-soaked cloth together. Capitalism was built on slavery and then created the unscientific concept of "race" to justify it. Without the trillions of dollars stolen through the historical super-exploitation of black workers, and the political ideology to divide all workers, capitalism could not survive. The super-profits

stolen from Latino, Asian, immigrant and women workers have added to the fortunes of the racist rulers, all of which increases exploitation of all workers.

On the one hand, racist terror is needed to force us to accept a future of wider wars and poverty wages. On the other, racist budget cuts against the poorest of the poor are the important ways the rulers finance their wars to control the flow of Mid-East oil or any other challenges to their empire. Racism is the cutting edge of fascism. And only a mass, multiracial international revolutionary communist movement, led by black, Latin and women

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Reds Led International Campaign vs. Scottsboro Legal Lynching

On March 21, 1931, nine black teenagers, the youngest being 13, were jailed in Scottsboro, Alabama, falsely charged with raping two white women on a freight train. Legal lynching has historically been part of the racist Jim Crow system that dominated the U.S. since the Civil War, especially in the South. "The Scottsboro Case," the most infamous case of legal lynching, exposed the U.S. ruling class throughout the world. This charge was later repudiated, especially by one of the women, Ruby Bates. But after a few days, a kangaroo trial still sentenced the Scottsboro 9 to the electric chair.

The Communist Party rallied to their defense, sending the veteran communist lawyer Joseph Brodsky to defend the victims. While it was fought back and forth in the courts, the communists launched a national and international campaign to free the nine young men, organizing demonstrations, marches and rallies in cities across the country and abroad. The case became one of the most famous battles against racist frame-ups in U.S. history.

All this was occurring simultaneously with mass movements of the unemployed and among industrial workers for unionization, led by communists, reflecting the great ferment in the working class battling the effects of capitalism's Great Depression.



Forced by heavy mass pressure, the U.S. Supreme Court ordered a new trial, on the grounds that in the original "trial" the accused had inadequate legal counsel. Only after the communists' campaign had drawn worldwide protests did various reformist organizations — the NAACP, the Urban League and the A.F. of L. — join the international struggle. Great respect for the communists grew among masses of black people.

The fight saved the Scottsboro 9 from the electric chair but the savage Southern courts sentenced them to prison terms up to 99 years. It was only in 1950 that the last of the young men was released.

The case became known especially among the workers in the colonies owned by the imperialist powers. This became a powerful force that somewhat restrained the racist lynchers and exposed U.S. rulers as among the most racist in the world. The Scottsboro fight serves as a telling lesson that anti-racist forces organizing mass pressure among all sections of the working class can return blow for blow against the rulers' racist oppression. ☪

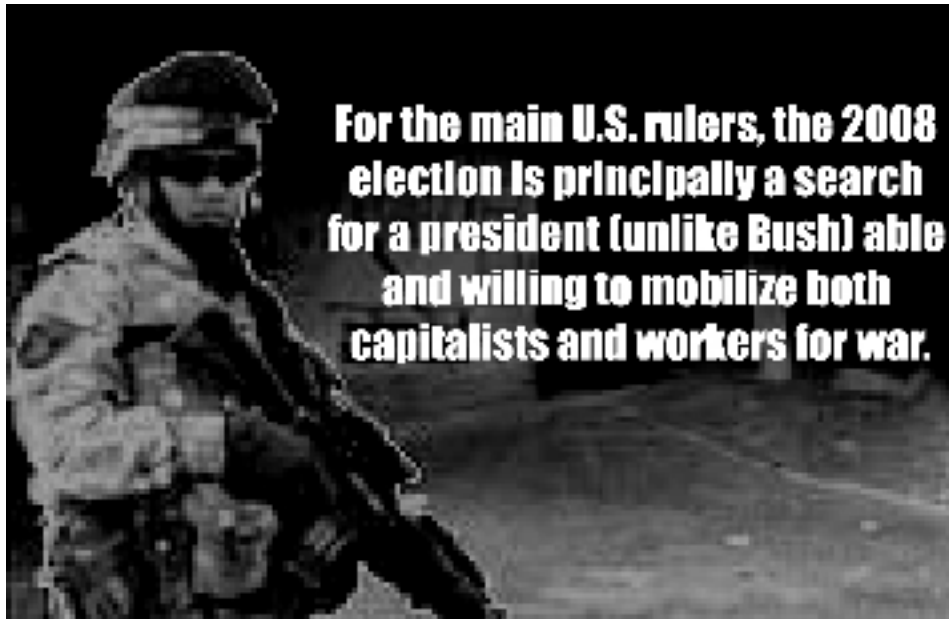


Bloody Iraq Chaos Sparks Oil Free-for-All

In his latest speech, George W. Bush said U.S. military engagement in Iraq would extend "beyond my presidency." On one hand, Bush is trying to dump the Iraq mess on his successor ("Bush Passes the Buck" editorialized the Boston Globe, 9/15). But a stronger motive compels U.S. rulers to keep troops in Iraq: it is not yet secure enough for Exxon Mobil and Chevron and their British partners BP and Shell to operate in.

Securing Iraq's oilfields for these oil giants was one of the most important reasons the U.S. and Britain invaded in the first place, in addition to controlling the Mid-East against imperialist rivals. While Bush had this as one goal, he also pandered to an electoral base of smaller capitalists who were unwilling to make the sacrifices (higher taxes and wartime government regulation) that a massive invasion would have demanded. So he and the neocons attempted to do it "on the cheap" — too few troops — and with no plan for the post-invasion, dissolving the Iraqi army, firing the Baath officials who could run the government, and so on.

A pre-invasion study by the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) had envisioned six million barrels of crude gushing daily from Iraqi wells. Currently, however, insurgent attacks and sabotage, plus the general instability, keep the daily flow below two million barrels. The Wall Street Journal reported (9/10/07): "For large multinationals, the lack of security makes any meaningful field-work difficult. But more crucially: Since the overthrow of Saddam Hussein during the U.S.-led invasion in 2003, there has been no legal framework for signing deals and



For the main U.S. rulers, the 2008 election is principally a search for a president (unlike Bush) able and willing to mobilize both capitalists and workers for war.

ensuring they last beyond the current government." An understated Chevron spokesman told the Dallas Morning News (9/11/07), "We want to see things probably much more stabilized than they are now," before investing in exploration.

PETRAEUS AND BUSH BETRAYED EXXON & CO. IN IRAQ

The Democrats, loyal to the main wing of U.S. capitalists, represented by Big Oil, and more than willing to waste Iraqis and GI lives, favor continuing the bloodshed there until it's safe for Big Oil. Richard Haass, president of the CFR think-tank (funded by the Rockefellers) approves of the liberals' pro-war stance. "Even a lot of the Democrats...aren't calling for total withdrawal...a lot of them are talking about residual forces in certain places for certain missions.... [S]ixteen months from now, when a new president takes over, you are likely to see a U.S. presence of plus-or-minus 100,000 troops in Iraq, doing a lot of training, but still doing some combat missions in the central part of the country." (CFR website, 9/11/07)

MoveOn, a liberal group founded by Larry Rockefeller, among others, took out a full-page New York Times ad calling General David Petraeus, the top U.S. officer in Iraq, "General Betray Us." Petraeus is indeed a mass-murdering war criminal, but MoveOn wasn't motivated by concern for Iraqi lives. His greater sin, in liberals' eyes, is treason against Exxon Mobil and its kind by failing to safeguard the Iraqi oil infrastructure.

BIG OIL'S RIVALS CASHING IN

With the biggest U.S. and U.K. refiners — Exxon Mobil, Chevron, BP and Shell — sidelined for the moment in Iraq, rivals are attempting to cash in on the nation's oil treasure, challenging Big Oil's monopoly. With Bush's O.K., Hunt Oil of Dallas just signed a deal with Kurdish authorities in northern Iraq. This move undermines Big Oil's goal from the invasion's inception — a national law that would give the Big Four almost exclusive access to Iraq's oil at unheard-of profit rates. Again Bush is serving his donor base at the expense of the bigger U.S. bosses. Hunt Oil chief Ray Hunt raised millions for Bush's election

campaigns. The Hunt family is a long-time enemy of the rulers' liberal dominant wing. Ray's late father, H.L. Hunt, was implicated in the Kennedy assassination.

On Sept. 8-10, Conoco Phillips, another foe of the main wing, hosted a conference in Dubai, with co-sponsors Total of France and Lukoil of Russia, on "International Investment in the Iraqi Oil Industry," featuring Iraq's highest-ranking oil ministers. Clinton's Iran Libya Sanctions Act of the mid-1990s mainly targeted Conoco's operations in those countries.

BIGGEST BOSSES NEED WIDER WARS

The dominant Exxon Mobil wing cannot afford much longer to forgo Iraqi oil profits, or let rivals grab them. Their solution lies in wider wars (in the Mid-East in the short term, with China later on) requiring far larger military forces, higher taxes and the complete World War II-style unity of the entire capitalist class.

The CFR welcomed part of Bush's speech as "a new and clearer statement of strategic intent: a vision of an 'enduring' U.S. presence in Iraq meant to counter the nuclear and political ambitions of Iran." And the elite think-tank does not rule out a U.S. attack on Iran. "Most experts doubt the United States will launch a unilateral strike on Tehran, but acknowledge such an action would be the worst case scenario." (CFR website, 9/14/07) And the Wall Street Journal (9/10/07) reports, "The Pentagon is preparing to build its first base for U.S. forces near the Iraqi-Iranian border, in a major new effort to curb the flow of advanced Iranian weaponry to Shiite militants across Iraq."

Saudi Arabia, the crumbling cornerstone of U.S. imperialism across the Persian Gulf, "has begun setting up a 35,000-strong security force to protect its oil infrastructure from potential attacks. The move underlines the kingdom's growing concern about its oil installations after threats from al-Qaeda to attack facilities in the Gulf, as well as rising tensions between Iran and the U.S. (London Financial Times, 8/26/07)

For the main U.S. rulers, the 2008 election is principally a search for a president (unlike Bush) able and willing to mobilize both capitalists and workers for war. They need someone who can and will impose rigid discipline on all businesses in the interests of the largest ones. They need someone who can and will restore the draft, brutally crack down on dissent, and herd workers into war industries.

We must not be misled by Democrats or people like MoveOn, who in fact serve these profit-hungry war-makers, seeking to deploy U.S. troops region-wide. But without workers to produce for, and soldiers to fight these imperialist wars, the profit-makers are doomed. Only a mass, international PLP, winning workers and soldiers to destroy capitalism which drives these wars and the system's evils — mass unemployment, poverty wages, racism and fascism — is the way forward for the working class.✪

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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Ex-Fed Chief Greenspan Says Iraq War Really for Oil

(London Times, 9/16)

America's elder statesman of finance, Alan Greenspan, has shaken the White House by declaring that the prime motive for the war in Iraq was oil.

In his long-awaited memoir..., Greenspan, a Republican whose 18-year tenure as head of the U.S. Federal Reserve was widely admired, will also deliver a stinging critique of President George W. Bush's economic policies.

....His view on the motive for the 2003 Iraq invasion.... [says] "I am saddened that it is politically inconvenient to acknowledge what everyone knows: the Iraq war is largely about oil...."

Greenspan, 81, is understood to believe that Saddam Hussein posed a threat to the security of oil supplies in the Middle East.

Britain and America have always insisted the war had nothing to do with oil. Bush said the aim was to disarm Iraq of weapons of mass destruction and end Saddam's support for terrorism.✪

PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

P.O. Box 808 Brooklyn NY 11202

www.plp.org

email:cd188@juno.com

Phone: 718-630-9440

fight back



At D.C. March, PLP Marks Capitalism as Cause of War

WASHINGTON, D.C., September 15 — Today, thousands of marchers led by the ANSWER coalition called on the U.S. government to pull all troops out of Iraq. However, their “answer” leads the anti-war movement to back the Democratic Party warmakers. PLP presented the revolutionary alternative with a bullhorn rally near the main demonstration, linking the war, rotten schools and racism to the capitalist system.

We spoke about the growing fascist character of the U.S. — how the police are being militarized and the “war on terror” is an attack against the few rights workers still have. Above all, our rally denounced all politicians (Democrats and Republicans) as warmakers and racist. We called for workers’ revolution against the U.S. rulers

as the only way to crush fascism, imperialism and wage slavery.

We distributed over 800 CHALLENGES and hundreds of fliers about the Jena 6 case. We also circulated a petition against racist attacks in Jena and at the University of Maryland at the rally and during the march.

Pro-war groups including the Gathering of Eagles and Free Republic counter-demonstrated along the march route with as many as 1,000 pro-fascists in their ranks. They chanted “U.S.A” and spewed anti-communist lies. Some of them attacked protestors, including an anti-war Latino father who was carrying a memorial for his son, killed in Iraq.

It was a weakness that anti-war workers, students and soldiers, and ourselves, were not prepared for the presence of these fascist organizations. These gutter fascists are the goons the bosses have historically used to attack those who oppose their war, racism and economic attacks on the entire working class. Right-wingers like Michelle Malkin and other media mouthpieces openly organized for the counter-demonstration through the NY Post, and Fox News. It should be no surprise that not one of these fascists was ar-



rested whereas almost 200 anti-war demonstrators were arrested. The growth of these fascists must be fought by the more rapid growth of the revolutionary communist movement!

While the PLP banner proclaiming “Workers, students, soldiers unite! Smash imperialist war!” was in front of our bullhorn rally, other comrades took this message to the middle of the march to struggle for a revolutionary outlook. The positive response from the marchers to our red message shows the great potential for turning anger into revolutionary organization. As the rulers and their Republican and Democrat politicians prepare for wider wars (Iran seems to be next), we must multiply our efforts to win workers, students and soldiers to the understanding that capitalism is the cause of war, and the only solution is to organize to destroy it. ☸

1.2 Million Dead From U.S. Imperialist Invasion

According to a new study by the British polling firm ORB, 1.2 million Iraqis have met violent deaths since the 2003 U.S. invasion, a number exceeding the 800,000 to 900,000 believed killed in the Rwandan genocide. The study was conducted with face-to-face interviews in 15 of Iraq’s 18 provinces. Two provinces — al-Anbar and Karbala — were too dangerous to canvas and researchers were not given permission in a third, Irbul.

Previously the highest estimate had been 650,000 in the landmark Johns Hopkins study published in the Lancet, the British medical journal. The ORB findings parallel the rolling estimate on the Just Foreign Policy website of just over one million killed, based on the Johns Hopkins data.

How well the Bushites and bosses’ media have hidden this toll was revealed earlier this year in an Associated Press poll asking people in this country how many civilians they thought were killed in Iraq because of the invasion and occupation. The median answer was 9,890.

Immigrant Marchers Welcome PLP Answer to Liberal Misleaders

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY, VA, September 2 — PLP’ers brought the message of multi-national, multi-racial revolution and internationalism to a gathering of thousands of mainly Latino workers at an immigrant rally in this D.C. suburb. This working class crowd received over 300 CHALLENGE enthusiastically. Our message sharply contrasted with the misleading message that “We are all Americans from Canada to Argentina” from Mexicans Without Borders (MWB), which organized this American flag-waving rally against recent anti-immigrant legislation passed by the Prince William County Council.

The fascist law calls for county police, in partnership with ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement), to interrogate persons regarding their immigration status. It also calls on county service providers to demand immigration paperwork for anyone who requests or uses public services (like health care and libraries) and deny services to undocumented workers and their children.

MWB thought that a weeklong economic boycott and a rally and march would make the County repeal the racist law. It is highly unlikely that this will happen in today’s increasingly fascist climate.

The “we-are-all-Americans” theme of the march was an insult to demonstrators since most were in the U.S. due to the brutal anti-worker policies of the U.S.-backed Central American rulers in the 1980s and 1990s. One disgusted worker shouted to the MWB speaker exactly where he could stick his American flag! Surrendering further, though, MWB said that “there might be some people along the march route who hurl insults or disagree with our cause [the Minutemen counter protestors], and it is important that we ignore them and fight for our rights, the right way.” In other words, bow down to fascists and turn the other cheek.

The students, workers and teachers at the rally liked our militant, anti-capitalist message. They were relieved to hear an alternative to the liberal sham on stage. Next time we need to show up with more forces, more Spanish speakers and more CHALLENGE-DESAFIOs to build a base in the ever-growing Latino community in the D.C. metropolitan area. ☸

Struggle Sharpens Against Patriotism, War and Bosses’ Racist Health Cuts

LOS ANGELES, September 11 — When “everyone please rise for the flag salute” came over the PA system, students all over the school sat down. In some classrooms the teachers sat down, too. In other classrooms, students were ordered to stand, but they stood silently, with their arms crossed defiantly. “They can make me stand up,” said one student, “but they can’t make me say the pledge, and they sure can’t make me believe in patriotism.”

Some students said, “We should have a sit-in in the principal’s office!” Others said, “We should put out a flyer.” “This is all about the war in Iraq.” “They’re just using the people who died on September 11 to try to get support for their war.”

Teachers had found out on Friday after school that this patriotic PA pledge and announcement—the first of its kind at the school—was planned. Teachers communicated with each other over the weekend, sharing ideas about the history of the pledge of allegiance, how it relates to the history of imperialist war and what the struggle has been against patriotism and the pledge. On Monday several teachers held discussions with their students on these topics.

Students in one class pointed out that they had already learned the history of the pledge of allegiance, which was written in 1892 at the height of lynchings of African-Americans, the use of the U.S. Army to stop a nationwide Pullman railway strike, and racist attacks on Italian and Jewish immigrants. Nevertheless, the pledge said “with liberty and justice for all.” The purpose of the pledge was to win the working class to patriotism to prepare for imperialism and war—then in Hawaii, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines—now in Iraq. Students in this class understood the purpose of the pledge very well; when they did a role play in class debating whether the U.S. should continue imperialist war in the Philippines, the pro-imperialists, with money hanging out of their pockets, couldn’t convince anti-imperialists, workers, immigrants, and African-Americans to support U.S. imperialism. In one last desperate try, they got together in a group and chanted the original ending of the pledge, “One country, one language, one flag!” Everyone could see that patriotism was the last desperate attempt of the rulers to win the working class to war. It didn’t work that day in class, and it still isn’t working with these students.

As a result of this discussion, several students put out a flyer, calling for students to organize to fight against patriotism and imperialist war. They went to another school club and they all decided to join together to fight against racist cutbacks in health services on campus and in the community (including the closing of King-Drew Hospital – see last issue), and the war in Iraq. More of these students are now reading and distributing CHALLENGE newspaper, and organizing the fight against racist cutbacks and war. The struggle continues. ☸

Back Japan’s Teachers’ Anti-Imperialist Action

As stated in a CHALLENGE letter from the National Educators Association convention (8/1), 1,500 Japanese teachers have been attacked for refusing to rise to sing the national anthem and salute the flag because they see this as a step to winning their students to go to defend the interests of the Japanese rulers in imperialist war. The American Federation of Teachers local at San Francisco Community College passed a resolution supporting these teachers and demanding an end to the attacks on them. The resolution calls for support demonstrations on Oct. 5, 2007 at Japanese embassies and consulates. The Japanese teachers say their fight is like the fight in the U.S. against the No Child Left Behind legislation. A similar resolution will be considered by teachers in LA at an upcoming United Teachers of LA delegate assembly meeting. Teachers in the U.S. should stand up to the bosses’ patriotism in the service of imperialist war with the same bravery as teachers in Japan. This will help build internationalism not only among teachers but among students, who are future soldiers, workers and teachers themselves. It can help build anti-imperialist, anti-racist struggle and one international communist PLP to take on all the imperialist war makers and ultimately destroy them with communist revolution.



workers unite!

Jena 6: Hang the Racist System



continued from front page

workers, soldiers and youth can smash racist wage slavery.

Whenever the masses are in motion, the bosses are playing with fire. They remember the ghetto rebellions of the 1960's, especially the 1967 Detroit Rebellion that forced President Johnson to send troops headed for Vietnam to crush the rebellion. As of September 19th, more

than 200,000 people have signed petitions to free the Jena 6. What was expected to be a rally in Jena of a few thousand may now be tens of thousands. So the bosses have called out their loyal cronies, Julian Bond, Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton, to steer the anti-racist sentiments of the masses back into the dead-end of electoral politics and into the clutches of the Democratic Party. PLP is active in this struggle to build the revolutionary communist movement and end racist terror forever.

Under capitalism, racist terror is protected while fighting racism is not. What kind of system is it where a black student feels he must ask if he can sit under the "whites only" tree? Where the school superintendent considers nooses hanging from that "white tree" to be a joke? What kind of system allows the racist white students responsible to go unpunished while terrorizing those who fight back with life-long jail sentences? Where the racist District Attorney can tell a student assembly, "I can end your lives with a stroke of a pen." Like the mother of one of the Jena 6 put it, "They want to keep institutionalized slavery alive and well." Such a system must be destroyed

with communist revolution.

We must take the struggle of the Jena 6, and against all forms of racist terror, to our jobs, unions, schools, campuses, community groups and barracks. Raise money and resolutions for their legal defense, demanding their freedom. The Jena 6 have struck an anti-racist nerve. More than 2,000 rallied at Howard University (see page 3). The Chicago Area UAW Civil Rights Council is sending delegations to Jena with a \$500 check for their defense, and will take up shop collections among Ford, Navistar and other workers. Chicago's Ford Assembly plant workers voted to send a donation and delegation on behalf of the Jena 6 and collect money from rank-and-filers at shift change.

The fight against racism can only be resolved by destroying the profit-system that breeds it. Fighting racism and for equality has always been at the heart of building the revolutionary communist movement and the Progressive Labor Party. These six young black students, by standing up to the racist terrorists in their school and running their courts, have created an opportunity for our movement to advance. Seize it! Free the Jena 6. Fight for communism. ☸

Howard Univ. Protest vs. Jena 6 Attacks Opens Door to Red Ideas

WASHINGTON, DC, September 5 — Today over 2,000 angry students filled Cramton Auditorium to capacity while hundreds more assembled outside, furious at the racist attacks by the Louisiana government on the Jena 6. Led by the student government and organized by the campus chapters of Amnesty International and NAACP, which had mobilized 400 volunteers to build for the event, students vowed to descend on Jena on September 20 to voice their outrage at this flagrant racist attack, collected \$8,000 on the spot to support the legal defense team, and declared that they would sponsor political education about the racist system throughout the semester. Soon thereafter, a planning meeting of the local Amnesty International chapter decided to hold additional actions about the Israeli occupation of Palestine and the U.S. military's creation of a new Africa Command to handle the U.S. capitalist interests on that continent.

Meanwhile, two days after this event, a noose was found hanging outside the Nyumburu Cultural Center at the nearby University of Maryland (UMD), almost certainly inspired by the publicity around the Jena 6 case. A fightback is developing there as well. PLP organizers circulated petitions on their jobs and at the anti-war march on September 15 demanding that all charges against the Jena 6 be dropped and that those responsible for the noose at UMD be found and expelled. Dozens of pages of signatures have been gathered.

This outpouring of anti-racist and internationalist sentiment is inspiring. Speakers at the Howard University rally correctly linked the fight against this racist attack to the war in Iraq, to the Scottsboro case, and to many other instances of oppression caused by capitalism. This is the first time in recent memory that a political event was so well attended that it forced Cramton Auditorium to lock out hundreds of students due to fire laws! The energy from this rally lays the basis for many more students to learn about revolutionary change and the road to communism as the way to abolish the capitalist system that is built on and reinforces vicious racism and imperialism. A PLP study-action group is now being organized at Howard University from these activities, with the goal of circulating CHALLENGE-DESAFIO more broadly and learning the lessons of past revolutions to advance revolutionary change. ☸

Resolution By United Auto Workers LOCAL 2320, Backs The Jena 6

NEWARK, NJ - WHEREAS, the six black high school students from Jena, Louisiana are being framed for crimes they didn't commit; and,

WHEREAS, one of the students has been convicted by a racist judge and jury and faces a 22-year prison term [Ed. Note: see page 1 for later development]; and

WHEREAS, Mychal Bell, the first youth of the Jena Six to be tried, was improperly represented by a public defender who called no witnesses; and,

WHEREAS, we as legal service workers vigorously oppose the arrest of the six black students of Jena, Louisiana and condemn the conviction of Mychal Bell; and,

WHEREAS, the original constitution of the union as Essex-Newark Legal Services committed the union to the elimination of racism, sexism, elitism and poverty;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the ENLS Staff Association and the ENLS Attorney's Association, both branches of NOLSW, UAW Local 2320, support the six high school students from Jena, Louisiana and their struggle against racism; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that said unions also support the September 20th rally to support the Jena Six. ☸

Women, Girls 'bought, sold, raped, beaten' in Vegas Sex Trade

Thailand's sexploitation trade has nothing on Las Vegas, "the epicenter of North American prostitution and sex trafficking," according to a book-length report by psychologist and researcher Melissa Farley, entitled "Prostitution and Trafficking in Nevada." (NY Times, 9/3) After reading the report, Times columnist Bob Herbert says, "Vegas is a place where women and girls by the tens of thousands are chewed up by the vast and astonishingly open sex trade.... Females are bought, sold, raped, beaten, shamed and... physically and emotionally wrecked."

Nowhere, of course, does the liberal Herbert cite the source of this exploitation of women — the profit-driven capitalist system which rakes in billions from this degradation.

Those pulled into this sex trafficking are in their "early-20s, late-teens and younger. Child prostitutes by the hundreds pass through the Family Division courtroom....girls as young as 12, with the average age being 14." They also include "huge numbers of foreign women."

Although prostitution is legal in parts of Nevada, it is "illegal" in Vegas, yet it is "where 90% of the state's prostitution occurs." Huge mobile billboards promise "Hot Babes — Direct to your Room." Over 150 pages in the city's yellow pages advertise "college teens, mothers and daughters," and so on in every disgusting sexual come-on.

The sex "industry" is controlled by club owners, escort service managers, pimps and traffickers in whose pockets most of the money ends up, not to mention the banks which profit from the interest on loans to the plush hotels which contain the rooms where this sexual slavery flourishes.

But in Vegas, the country's fastest-growing city, the government is at the center of the prostitution payoff. Mayor Oscar Goodman, formerly a lawyer for the mob, boasts that the city would reap "tremendous benefits" if a series of "magnificent brothels" could be legally established, convinced that this "could be a boon"! (Although it seems to be quite profitable without any "legality.")

In the 1990s, Las Vegas tried hard to promote a family-friendly image, but, boasted Goodman, "That ended when I became mayor."

Hundreds of corporations and unions hold their annual meetings and conventions in this sex-trafficking center of the continent. They represent the "best" U.S. capitalism has to offer: women broken by sexploitation.

In the past, communist-led revolutions freed women from such oppression. In February, 1917, women garment workers led a massive general strike which helped spark the Russian revolution. Then the Bolsheviks liberated women in Russia and in the Caucasus from the yoke of the Orthodox Church and the Mullahs, Muslim religious leaders. The 1949 Chinese revolution rehabilitated tens of thousands of women forced into prostitution. Capitalism's return to those countries has brought back these capitalist evils. But, learning from both past achievements and failures, communists today fight all forms of oppression of women. Eventually, only communism — a society free of the profit motive that drives this horror — can destroy this unending sex slavery. ☸

Bush's Sunni Ally: A Mobster

Sheikh Abdul Sattar Abu Risha, who met Bush during his September 3 visit to the huge U.S. base in Anbar province west of Baghdad, was killed along with his bodyguards on September 13 — the same day Bush gave his national speech supporting General Petraeus's recommendations.

Bush praised Risha as a "hero" for having joined the U.S. "pacification" of that province. But Risha was labeled a "mobster" by the Direction Générale de la Sécurité Extérieure, France's CIA. (Le Canard Enchaîné 9/12)

Abu Risha, the Sunni tribal chief, "had recently changed sides, after having long knocked about with the insurgents. And in Paris, the reading of his CV — we dare not say his 'police record' — drew a few ironic reactions from the French general staff and the French foreign ministry. Indeed, Abu Risha built a solid fortune in smuggling via Syria and Jordan, in that frontier zone through which jihadists, arms and explosives often transit." ☸



Inter-Imperialist Rivalry Squeezing Japan's Bosses

The September 12 resignation of Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe after just one year in power, has triggered a major political crisis for this key U.S. ally in Asia, particularly in its relation to China. Abe, 52, was the country's youngest leader since World War II. Under his rule, the Defense Agency became a Ministry, a sign of Japanese imperialism breaking with its so-called post-war pacifism.

His resignation follows government scandals involving the resignation of four of his ministers and the recent suicide of his Agricultural minister, all shattering credibility in his government. Then, on July 29, the opposition won control of parliament's Upper House.

An Intelligence Brief by PINR.com explains how his resignation "leaves the Liberal Democratic Party (L.D.P.) leaderless as it approaches a showdown with the Democratic Party of Japan (D.P.J.) over the renewal of the law [allowing]...Japan's navy to support the U.S.-led mission in Afghanistan. Japan's navy has been providing refueling and water for the U.S. military in the Indian Ocean. This mission is controversial in Japan because many believe it...[violates] the spirit of the country's pacifist constitution, if not the letter of the law. The law in question expires November 1. Although the L.D.P.-controlled lower house could force the bill through if the D.P.J.-controlled upper house votes it down, it would be a procedural headache on such a short

timeframe and could cause a backlash from the public." The U.S. is pressing for the law's extension. Amidst this government crisis, Thomas Schieffer, U.S. ambassador in Tokyo, met with Abe's cabinet to insist on continuing Japan's naval support of U.S. efforts in the region.

Japan's capitalism also faces many other problems, including growing competition from China in Asia. It is the only top imperialist country actually facing a sharp re-

duction in population. Its racist immigration policies limit the number of immigrants entering Japan, which could increase its low labor costs to a level approaching the U.S. and European Union countries.

Even though Japan's economy has recovered from the long period of stagflation following the housing and banking bubbles bursting in the late '80s, it could face problems if exports to the U.S. suffer because of the U.S. subprime crisis and possible recession. This would widen the large income gap already existing in Japan caused by the anti-working class economic reforms of former PM Koizumi. The ending of government subsidies hit the rural heartland hard and workers were affected by the end of "lifetime employment" and the growth of lower-paid casual and temporary jobs.

Basically, Abe has become a victim of the inter-imperialist rivalry shaping events worldwide. He was forced to quit just a few days after meeting Bush and Australian PM Howard during the APEC meeting to "strengthen the war against terror."

Japanese imperialism needs to become a military power again, but the mass atrocities by the fascist Imperial Army in China, Korea and the rest of the Asian countries it occupied during WW2, have won it the mistrust of the masses in those countries. Moreover, WW II showed Japan is limited militarily because it's an island without the depth that protects China, Russia and the U.S. So it must ally itself with U.S. imperialism to fight the growing threat of China's imperialism.

Capitalism and imperialism offer workers a future of endless wars, racism and economic turmoil. It's time for the world's workers to begin organizing a mass international revolutionary movement to change that deadly future. ☺

'Capitalism and imperialism offer workers a future of endless wars, racism and economic turmoil.'

Morocco's Cops Attack Striking Miners

JBEL AWAM, MOROCCO, September 13 — Two days ago at 4 AM, the Royal Police invaded a camp set up by striking miners here since the start of their walkout on July 4, violently expelling the miners, their wives and children and arresting 29. Fellow workers and relatives of those arrested demonstrated at police headquarters yesterday, demanding their release.

Two months ago, the cops arrested workers camping at the mine's gates. They were later released and forced to set up their strike camp a distance away from the gates. The 200 striking miners are demanding the rehiring of those who've been fired, and equal wages for casual and permanent workers.

The subcontracted miners are not even recognized as doing underground work, being labeled "surface" workers; the 14 to 16 monthly work accidents don't have medical coverage. There are four deadly accidents every year at this mine, owned by the Society of Mines. The miners declared that the mine's pollution is poisoning the local river.

As soon as Morocco's recent electoral farce ended (only one in eight inhabitants voted) without threatening the power of the right-wing repressive monarchy, the government launched an offensive against workers' struggles. Several months ago, CHALLENGE reported on a militant struggle by Delphi and textile workers here, evidence that Arab workers are fighting for their class interests.

International solidarity is crucial for these struggles. PLP champions the slogan, "Workers of the world, Unite; we have one common enemy: world capitalism!"

Protest messages demanding release of the miners can be sent to the Prime Minister of Morocco: Fax 00212-37761010 / 00212-37731010 or courrier@pm.gov.ma ☺

Facts Belie *Sicko's* Version of French Healthcare

PARIS, September 6 — Michael Moore was on the defensive at a press conference here. "[In *Sicko*] you show an idealized vision of the French, British and Canadian health care systems, which those who endure the reality will have a hard time recognizing," one reporter said. "What's the purpose of those sequences?"

Moore admitted he dumbed down *Sicko* so that people in the U.S. could understand the message.

"These different capitalist countries have managed to set up systems of solidarity," Moore said. "I'm aware of their inequalities.... I wanted to show the American public...that it's possible to envisage systems of that kind, to consider health care not as a privilege, but as a right. I give a superficial view of what's happening in these countries; but remember, eight out of ten Americans...don't have a passport."

Michael Moore oversimplifies and distorts the truth because it doesn't support his reformist agenda. He wants to demonize the American health care system without exposing capitalism's inability to meet workers needs all over the world. Yet, with the facts, U.S. workers can easily understand the full truth. The French healthcare system which has never favored the working class, is a good example. In 1982 the "Socialist" government created a Permanent Committee on Asbestos to monitor the on-the-job health threat. The asbestos industry controlled the committee and covered up the number of sick workers until 1997; then the government discovered "an epidemic." Today, asbestos-related diseases kill 3,000 workers annually; 100,000 will die over the next 20 years.

In *Sicko*, Moore uses outdated World Health Organization figures from the late 1990s. Consequently he ignores the three-pronged attack the bosses launched on the French health care system in 2004.

First, they slashed hospital budgets and disorganized the hospital system. Second, social security covers fewer and fewer people, forcing them to buy supplementary insurance. Third, rules changes for specialist care have made it less accessible to workers.

ATTACK ON THE HOSPITALS

Since 2004, supposedly "inefficient" local dispensaries have been closed, flooding the remaining big centralized public hospitals, especially the emergency rooms, with people having minor ailments being treated using expensive and inappropriate means.

In May, Dr. Michael Huguier, a government official, said the new, activity-based accounting system has created a wasteful number-crunching bureaucracy and reduced the types of hospital care available.

Budget-slashing "has resulted in a decline in the care public hospitals offer, to the benefit of the lucrative private sector [hospitals]," said the Communist Party-led CGT trade union....[causing] "staff reductions, worsening working conditions, the closure of beds, wards and hospitals, the selection of the most profitable patients, and focusing on technical and high technology activities."

ATTACK ON SOCIAL SECURITY

The government has also further reduced the medicines and treatments social security covers. As the CGT said: "The goal of the [April 2004] Doust-Blazy reform was...to reduce the propor-



tion of health care expenses paid for by social security and to open up a bigger and bigger field to private insurance companies." Supplementary insurance has become a 26-million-euro-a-year business for the bosses.

Not everyone can afford supplementary insurance: while 96% of the richest fifth of the population have it, only 79% of the poorest fifth do. In racist France, only 58% of immigrants from Arab North Africa, and only 54% of immigrants from black, sub-Saharan Africa have supplementary coverage (Insee Première no. 1142).

Health insurance eats up more and more of the family budget. Today 10 to 15% of the people here postpone treatment because they can't afford it ("*I'Humanité*," 9/5).

ATTACK ON SPECIALIST CARE

The April 2004 reform made family doctors "gate keepers" to specialist health care. People must see their family doctor before seeking specialist care. Otherwise, they pay more for the specialist.

But family doctors aren't paid for the extra "gate-keeping" work. Consequently, they don't do it, said the president of the family doctors association. Rich people can afford to by-pass the family doctor, but workers face an additional hurdle in getting specialist care.

This is the wretched situation in France, and it will get worse if the working class doesn't fight back.

The National Assembly will impose medical co-payments, effective in 2008, requiring a one-euro payment every time one sees the doctor; an 18-euro franchise on every bill over 91 euros; and a 50-eurocent co-payment on every medicine prescribed.

A handicapped association condemned the scheme: "Most of the handicapped live on ... 627.27 euros a month," yet they will have to pay these extra charges.

A CSA polling company survey showed 61% of the people here oppose the co-payment scheme. Over 40 trade unions, associations and left-wing parties are organizing a demonstration against it in Paris on September 29.

While it's important for workers in France to build this demonstration and other fight-backs against the bosses, they need to approach these struggles as stepping stones to communist revolution — the only road to decent health care for everyone. ☺

< LETTERS >

Neo-Nazi Skinheads Learn From Racist Israeli Rulers

Many were shocked to learn that a neo-Nazi gang of skinhead youth aged 16 to 21 were arrested in Israel in September. They were immigrants from the former Soviet Union (FSU). They were accused of causing bodily harm, illegal possession of weapons and denying the Holocaust.

They had desecrated two synagogues with swastikas and had beaten three religious students. They have also brutally attacked Asian immigrant workers. One Thai worker was stabbed and kicked. The gang beat another man forcing him to ask forgiveness of the Russian people for being a "Jewish drug addict." All their crimes were actually recorded on film.

The reaction has been both shock as well as asking for changes to the Law of Return, barring prospective immigrants with no personal concrete connection to Judaism, including the religious law specifying that to be Jewish means having a Jewish mother. Over one million people from the FSU have immigrated to Israel in recent years under the Law of Return. Many are not religious at all, but were escaping from the economic collapse of the FSU. Many have no loyalty to Israel or Zionism.

However, the racism and fascist ideas and actions of this neo-Nazi gang are no surprise. After all, Israel is a very racist state, having enforced apartheid for the Palestinian population. Arabs who are considered Israeli citizens have second-class status because of racism and the religious nature of the Israeli state.

The Zionists who founded Israel had connections with the Nazis during World War II. During Nazi executioner Eichmann's trial in Israel, he said that the Holocaust could not have succeeded without the assistance of the Judenrat (Jewish Council). Yabotinsky, one of the founding ideologues of modern Israel and whose ideas were followed by Begin, Sharon, Netanyahu and the Likud Party, was an admirer of Mussolini.

Israel's rulers are also rabid war-makers, just like the Nazis. Recently they bombed Syria, as a "trial run" against Syria's ally Iran, trying to widen the oil wars in the Middle East.

So no one should be surprised that there are real Nazis in Israel. After all, fascism and war are inevitable under capitalism.

An Anti-Nazi Red

GIs Respond to PLe's Exposé of U.S. Oil War

A small group of PLe's went to a town near a military base recently to talk to the GI's about the war, about their potential for changing the world, and to offer them CHALLENGE and a leaflet about the need to fight imperialism, racism and sexism inside the bosses' armed forces, and to fight to destroy imperialist war with communist revolution. The leaflet was based on a recent CHALLENGE article about the Veterans' convention. Almost all the GI's we approached were either very friendly or at least polite.

Some of the GI's wanted to talk. In several of the longer conversations, the effect of the bosses' propaganda was evident. However, these service people were very open to hearing our points and often ended up agreeing with us. The major lie that people we encountered believed was that the armed forces are helping the Iraqi's rebuild their society.

A young comrade reported that in response to a serviceman telling him that the purpose of the Iraq war is to keep the terrorists out of the U.S., he said that the war was really about the control of oil. The serviceman immediately understood this point and gladly took CHALLENGE and the leaflet.

We distributed about 40 leaflets and 28 CHALLENGES. One young comrade said, "I was nervous even though I had done this before, but even the service people who disagreed with us took our literature. I had thought they might get in our faces, but some of them agreed that the war is not good, and a few really thanked us for our literature."

Another comrade got a serviceman interested in reading CHALLENGE after he explained, "We're in favor of soldiers, but against how they've been placed in Iraq to defend Exxon Mobil. Every capitalist government in the world recruits and enlists the sons of the workers to fight their wars for them, but we never see the sons of the ruling classes fighting. We want servicemen to think and question and to act in the interest of the class they're in — the working class." The GI then asked for the paper and the leaflet.

Another comrade emphasized that CHALLENGE has a lot about fighting the bosses' racism and the serviceman's face lit up. They discussed the case of the Jenna 6,

and how that showed that the U.S. courts and whole system defends racism and attacks anti-racists, that this system is racist to the core, from here to Iraq. Then an older black man passing by said, "I was in Vietnam for fourteen years." After we talked for a while and he got the paper, he said, "God bless you, and good luck." Young and older alike, we enjoyed this experience and intend to come back with more friends soon.

Excited PL'ers

New Fascist Rule Hits 8 Million Immigrants

With all the anti-immigrant racism being pushed by gutter racists (and by behind-the-scenes liberals), what follows is just the latest attack. On September 4, the Social Security Administration was prepared to send letters to 140,000 employers of an estimated 8,000,000 workers that anyone without a valid Social Security number must be fired. A recent ruling by the fascist Department of Homeland Security warns that failure to heed the regulation will face legal sanctions.

This attack was so blatant that a federal judge felt impelled to grant a temporary injunction barring implementation of the rule at least until an October 1st hearing on a court suit challenging the directive.

According to a column in the NY Daily News (9/2), "The new rule will mean an unprecedented mass layoff of millions of hardworking employees....The irony is that according to the Social Security Administration, 75% of the undocumented workers pay Social Security, Medicare and other federal payroll taxes. It is calculated that undocumented workers have paid a total of \$585 billion in taxes over time — money to which they have no access because of their legal status."

In other words, these immigrant workers have paid out over a HALF-TRILLION DOLLARS from which they will receive not one cent in benefits!

The degree of exploitation of these immigrant workers is further reflected in the fact that, for instance, because they are paid poverty wages, "New York restaurant owners....insist that...without these laborers there is no way their businesses could be profitable. Many of the 15,000 restaurants and bars in New York City...would go bankrupt and close their doors."

But a recent Administration inspector general report cited by the News also said that "more often" than not these so-called fraudulent Social Security numbers result from "clerical errors, misspellings and other mistakes," and, ironically, "More than 70% of the discrepancies involved U.S. citizens." So the attack on immigrant workers will end up as an attack on all workers, citizen and non-citizen. Truly, racism hurts all workers.

A Reader

U.S. Bosses May Go Down, But Not Easily

NY State University (Binghamton) Professor Immanuel Wallerstein spoke at the Univ. of Buenos Aires (UBA) recently as part of a South American speaking tour. His regular insightful commentaries on political topics are read worldwide and translated into Spanish. They oppose U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Demonstrating his pro-working class stance, on Sept. 11 the 77-year-old professor visited the 19-floor Bauen Hotel in Buenos Aires, taken over by its workers after the owner abandoned it. Like other workplaces seized by workers in Argentina and other South American countries, the workers face many obstacles, including the former owner's legal threats to take it back. Worker-ownership of the means of production under capitalism only offers temporary relief to the problems caused by the profit system.

Wallerstein showed his solidarity with the workers, meeting with subway workers to plan a fight-back against mass firings.

His UBA talk described "living in a post-U.S. world." He said the golden years of U.S. imperialist expansion are over. Now we "just have to wait" for the decline of the U.S. as a superpower and the emergence of new powers, like China, the European Union, India and the Mercosur (the South American Common Market) if the latter consolidates and expands itself.

He declared that all U.S. presidents, from Nixon to Clinton, have tried to delay what Wallerstein considers the inevitable fall of U.S. power. Now, he says, Bush — instead of simply delaying this development like his predecessors — has pushed the accelerator button all the way and turned what was a slow decline into a "noisy fall without turning back." His example was the debacle in Iraq as well as the long-range disappearance of a U.S.-led



unipolar world.

Wallerstein said that Bush's and the neocon's current strategy is to kick the Iraqi problem over to what they think will be a future Democratic Party President and then blame the Democrats for "losing Iraq."

There are many truths to Wallerstein's analysis; indeed, the U.S. is in relative decline. But it won't go down that easily. Whoever becomes the next President — Hillary Clinton, Obama, Edwards or any of the Republican politicians — will expand the war in the Middle-East. U.S. imperialism, led by its Exxon-Mobil, Chevron-Texaco oil barons, won't easily surrender Mid-East oil to local capitalists or to its imperialist rivals. Millions of workers' lives will be sacrificed on the altar of the inter-imperialist rivalry for world control.

Even given a U.S. decline, to become a second-rate power like Britain after World War II, capitalism and imperialism won't disappear. To accomplish that requires a different political strategy than Wallerstein's. It needs the organization of workers and soldiers worldwide to smash capitalism and to turn their coming global wars into revolutionary struggles for communism, for real workers' power.

An Internationalist Worker

Revolution Makes More Sense than Reform

We were leafleting for the first time at a small factory in Los Angeles. One worker already had one but he said right away, "We don't need this, we have a union, the UAW."

"Unions can't solve all workers' problems," I said. "Look at this disgusting oil profit war where our kids are fighting and dying in Iraq." He was as angry about the war as I was, but he said, "The union can't do anything about the war." I replied that while we can raise the fight against the war in unions, to really end imperialist war we need an organization that's prepared to fight for all the interests of our whole class.

Another worker had already read the leaflet. "This is a good company," she said. "They don't exploit us here." "All workers are exploited," I said, "that's how the company makes its profits. Maybe you aren't super-exploited here, but they do exploit your labor." All workers produce value that the bosses take as profits.

Many other people have the same idea that only undocumented immigrants, prison labor, and maybe those in the worst minimum-wage jobs are "exploited." It's true that these workers — most of them black, latino/a, and immigrants, many of them women — are the most exploited. But exploitation is the lifeblood of capitalism, and no worker escapes it.

The workers at this factory earn an average of \$19.00 per hour. It's more than double the minimum wage here, but only pennies compared to what the factory owners and CEOs pocket!

Later in the week I was visiting some friends. The guy had shown Challenge-Desafio to a couple of his friends who are active in a union — he thinks they might even work for the union. He didn't think they liked the paper very much. I told him about the union member who didn't think workers needed to organize because "the union takes care of us." I said that unions, at their best, only tried to reform capitalism. "A lot of people think that reform and revolution go in the same direction," I said, "but actually they go in opposite directions. Often union officials are among the most hostile to revolution. Their jobs are based on the idea that the workplace can be made 'fair' and they need to believe that the system can work, not that it needs to be overthrown." My friend had never heard that before, but he said it made sense to him. He and his wife and I talked for a few more hours about communism and how they felt about possibly joining the Party. As I was leaving, he took copies of the new issue of the paper and said that he had an idea of some other people who would probably like it more than the other guys did.

Summer Project Volunteer, L.A.

'No End in Sight'? That's War in An Imperialist World

Charles Ferguson's documentary, "No End in Sight: The American Occupation of Iraq," represents a big section of the country's wealthy ruling class who are very angry at how the Bush Administration has carried out the Iraq war. These anti-Bushites supported the invasion in 2003 to remove Saddam Hussein and secure U.S. control of the flow of oil and gas from the Persian Gulf. When the war began to go badly, however, they turned against Bush and the war.

Ferguson, who wrote, directed and produced the film (his first), is perfect for the role. A multi-millionaire and former business executive, Ferguson is a life-time member of the Council of Foreign Relations (an influential think-tank created by the Rockefeller family). His film is largely composed of interviews with people who had leadership roles in Washington and Baghdad in 2003 and now want to tell the world that their sound advice was ignored by the Bush administration. The talking heads include Richard Armitage, former Deputy Secretary of State; Jay Garner, who was in charge of the occupation before Paul Bremer; Lawrence Wilkerson, chief of staff to Colin Powell; Paul Hughes, director of strategic policy under Bremer; and Barbara Bodine, who ran the short-lived Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance.

What were the main mistakes the U.S. made during the occupation, according to the film? First, there weren't enough U.S. troops, a claim made for years by key Democratic Party politicians. The film's spokespeople maintain that if there had been more troops, they would have been able to stop the outbreak of the insurgency.

Yet some of the evidence presented in the film contradicts this claim. For one, Bodine and Hughes both say that U.S. commanders received orders from Washington not to stop looters from ransacking national museums, libraries and government buildings, even though this would have been an easy task. This disregard for Iraqi national treasures caused tremendous resentment world-

wide towards the U.S. occupation. Then the widespread arrest, detention and abuse of young Iraqi males — many of them the sole breadwinners for their families — fueled even more hostility toward the brutal occupation.

Above all, the most egregious error, say the critics in the film, was the decision in May 2003 to disband the Iraqi army, as well as another decision to remove members of the Baathist Party from government jobs and ban them from future public service. Sending half a million soldiers home with guns but no jobs, where they could be recruited by insurgent groups and local militias, meant trouble for the U.S. occupation. It also created a pool of thousands of unemployed functionaries, technocrats, and academics who had every reason to hate the U.S. occupiers and to help the insurgents.

One of the critics astutely says, "The biggest beneficiary of the occupation has been Iran." The removal of Iran's enemy in Iraq (the Sunni-based Baath Party) and the coming to power of Iraqi leaders with long-standing, deep ties to Iran also creates a major dilemma for U.S. imperialism, which must either make a deal with the Iranian government or prepare to invade Iran. This was the result of ousting the Baathists and relying on Shiite political parties.

It seems the Bush administration had concluded that it couldn't trust the Baathists or its army and thought it could recruit a more compliant government from its CIA contacts (men like Chalabi and Allawi), as well as Shiite politicians who, it thought, would be eternally grateful for being brought to power.

The main weakness of the film is that it criticizes the U.S.'s tactical decisions without ever saying that the



invasion and occupation were wrong. Therefore, the film reinforces the Democratic Party's position that the war is Bush's failure rather than a logical outgrowth of U.S. imperialism. The fact that workers and soldiers in Iraq have suffered so immensely with over 1.2 million dead and millions more suffering great hardships (four million have fled their homes) is not seen as the problem. For Ferguson and those officials he interviewed — who at first were eager to help the U.S. conquer and control Iraq — the problem was not the goal of the war. It was the sloppy execution.

People who oppose the war must not be encouraged to sit around thinking of better ways for imperialists to kill and maim all over the world to serve the profits of Exxon-Mobil, etc. We should spend that time thinking of ways to win more workers and students to fight against a system based on endless imperialist wars and is incapable of meeting the needs of working people all over the world. ☹



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

Terror vs. schoolkids recalls Hiroshima

During a week of mayhem in Iraq, in which terrorists have rightly been condemned for targeting schoolchildren, it is sobering to recall that this week is also the 62nd anniversary of a U.S. attack that deliberately took the lives of thousands of children on their way to school in the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki....

"That fateful summer, 8:15 a.m....an enormous blast — silence — hell on Earth. The eyes of young girls watching the parachute were melted. Their faces became giant charred blisters. The skin of people seeking help dangled from their fingernails.... Others died when their eyeballs and internal organs burst from their bodies — Hiroshima was a hell where those who somehow survived envied the dead...."

The victims in Hiroshima and Nagasaki were available soft targets, much like the children playing in Iraq....

Of course, 'we' had our justifications, as terrorists always do.... (Robert Scheer, 8/10)

Oil politics bringing starvation

Challenged by President George Bush to produce 35bn gallons of non-fossil transport fuels by 2017 to reduce US dependency on imported oil,...thousands of farmers...are turning the corn belt of America from the breadbasket of the world into an enormous fuel tank.... consumed, not by people, but by cars.

The era of "agrofuels" has arrived....Across the US, 20% of the corn crop went to ethanol last year....It is proving horrendous for food prices....Meat, too, will cost more because chicken and pigs are fed largely on grain...."

...850 million people around the world are already undernourished. There will soon be more because the price of food aid has increased 20% in just a year....The price of staple tortilla quadrupled in Mexico in February and crowds of 75,000 people came on to the streets in protest. South Africa has had food prices of nearly 17%

and China was forced to halt all new planting of corn for ethanol after staple foods such as pork soared by 42% last year. (GW, 9/7)

Top pols know voters can't win

New York City's Boss Tweed used to say, "I don't care who does the electing, so long as I do the nominating." (NYT, 9/9)

Big US\$ aid for terror-run nation

Which country of 80 million is a close ally of America, has jailed 100,000 political prisoners, maintains a police force of 1.4 million — four times the size of its standing army — and is a place where 200 critics of its president have disappeared without a trace since 1990?

If you guessed Egypt, you are right.

Next to Israel, Egypt ranks as the second-largest recipient of American aid, raking in more than \$45 billion since 1979....

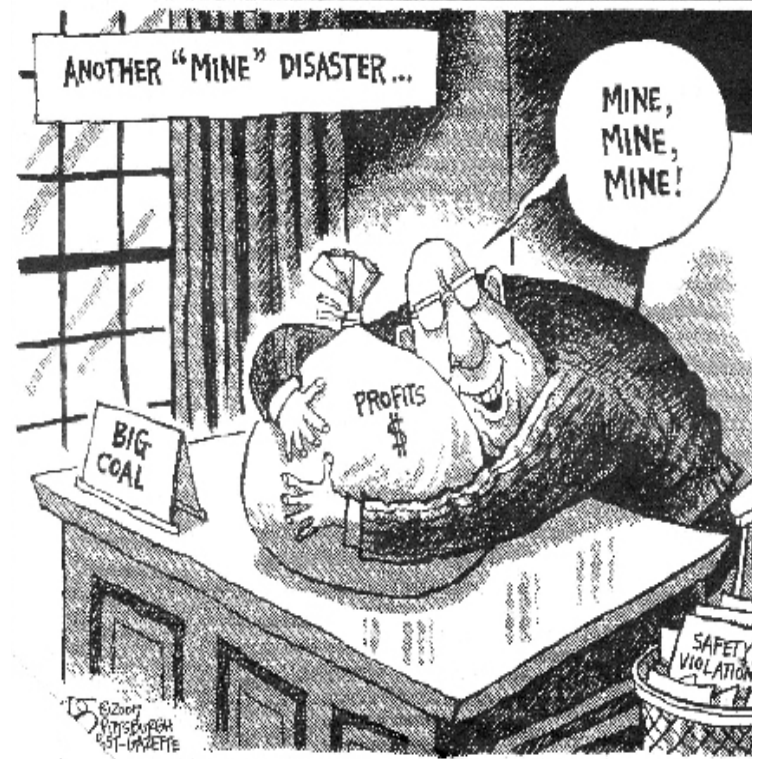
With this money, Mr. Mubarak has instilled terror, crushed political dissent and turned people into ghosts. (NY Sun, 8/23)

Red China ended opium addiction

Historically, governments feared opium because they saw it devastate China. After World War II, China had 40 million addicts, including the last empress. Mao cracked down ruthlessly, burning crops and executing dealers; by 1960, addiction was virtually gone. (NYT, 9/10)

GIs with Iraq-related cancer ignored

Blaming America's use of depleted uranium munitions in its 2003 "Shock and Awe" campaign for a surge in cancer there....the study is an outgrowth of claims by Iraq war veterans that exposure to depleted uranium and other toxic substances there has negatively affected their



health....

"Between the chemicals in the air overseas, the shots they give you, and not eating well or sleeping more than four hours a day...your body isn't strong enough to fight anything off.

"Right now, it's cancer, cancer, cancer....People like us don't get benefits," Sergeant Valentin says.

Because cancer is a disease and not a war wound, we don't qualify. No one even knows we're on the oncology ward. The press, celebrities, and politicians...want publicity shots with amputee soldiers. (NY Sun, 8/6)

Ordering lead paint = more profit

Why is lead paint...turning up in so many recalls?...

The simplest answer...is price. Paint with higher levels of lead often sells for a third of the cost of paint with low levels....

Ms. Zhang, a sales manager in Big Tree Toys, a company in Shantou in southern China....insisted that if her company used leaded paint, it disclosed that.

It depends on the client's requirement," she said. "If the prices they offer make it impossible to use lead-free paint, we'll tell them that we might have to use leaded paint. It totally depends on what the clients want." (NYT, 9/11)

PL History: May Day Marchers Repulse Boston Racists

Part II of a three-part series.

In 1971, PLP had revived the tradition of annual May Day marches, in part to pick the red flag out of the mud through which Soviet and Chinese revisionism and the CPUSA had dragged it and to hold it high once again. Thirty years almost to the day, after Hitlerite fascism had been smashed in Germany nothing could be more appropriate than to hold May Day in South Boston, the stronghold of a burgeoning U.S. fascist movement.

In the months leading up to May Day, the fascists had <http://www.fjtv6.com/images/2007/LiveFreeorDieHard.jpg> a clear advantage. They carried out regular acts of racist violence in the neighborhoods of South Boston, East Boston, Dorchester and Charlestown, particularly in schools where ROAR (Restore Our Alienated Rights) had a base. With the media's and politicians' help, ROAR was developing an image as a political force. The Boston Police Patrolmen's Association funded it. The sellout union officials of the Massachusetts Building Trades Council endorsed its racist anti-busing position. Kevin White, Boston's liberal mayor and key Kennedy ally, dispensed patronage jobs to ROAR leaders and their cronies.

In the spring of 1975, ROAR president Louise Day Hicks, who sat on the Boston City Council, led a march of 1,500 racists in Washington to protest "forced busing for integration." Meanwhile, leaders of other unions, some of whom pretended to support integration and oppose racism, did nothing. The NAACP confined itself, as usual, to press conferences and legal maneuvers,

This was the context in which PLP called for the May Day march in "Southie." When word went out to demonstrate under the red flag of revolution in ROAR's own bailiwick, 2,500 workers and students — the largest number of participants in a PLP May Day before or since — came from throughout the East Coast to call for multi-racial uni-

ty against the rulers and to chant "Death to Fascism!"

Egged on by the applause of Boston's Tactical Police Force, ROAR's bullies tried to smash the march before it could start. About 80 of these goons charged the small PLP security force that had assembled near Columbia Point to greet the busses transporting the marchers. Twenty-five anti-racist fighters, who had been preparing physically and politically over several weeks for just such an eventuality, met them head-on and kicked the hell out of them.

The element of surprise was important here: the anti-racists had come armed with obvious weapons, like steel-tipped rubber truncheons and steel pipes wrapped in copies of CHALLENGE, which they were only too happy to let the cops confiscate. The racists therefore believed they were charging an outnumbered, defenseless victim. In their overconfidence and arrogance, they overlooked the spike-buckled belts on the anti-racists. This shock and the PLP's political determination turned a potential rout into its opposite.

When the cops saw their pals on the receiving end of a thrashing, they moved in to arrest and beat up several anti-racists. But the march went on, despite a barrage of rocks the racist thugs threw from a safe distance. Here the extra-thick cardboard posters the May Day marchers were carrying served as an effective weapon of self-defense.

May Day '75 was the talk of the town for days. This was the first time anyone had stood up to ROAR's racist bullies. Communists in the Progressive Labor Party, in unity with hundreds of anti-racist friends and allies, had proved that the victory of these gutter racists was not written in stone.

The problem now became transforming the battle of May Day into an ongoing offensive against ROAR and its sponsors in the liberal ruling class.☺

(Next: Boston '75, A Summer of Struggle, A Lifetime of Commitment, A Call to Action)

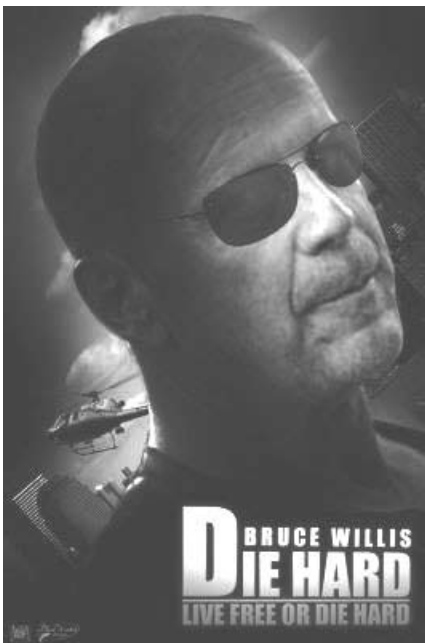
Training to Smash the Fascists

A member of the PLP security squad that repulsed the ROAR attack before the 1975 May Day march wrote about the Battle of Columbia Point:

"For weeks before [the march], we assembled our own 'spring training': meeting in [New York's] Central Park with our red hats, organizing ourselves into groups of three responsible for each other, learning how to immobilize an attacker three-on-one. We were big and little, women and men, white and black, mus-

cular and flabby, white collar and blue-collar and jobless, new Party member and veteran...we had faced the ferocity of the Fascist Movement [in Boston] firsthand and then returned to our home bases to report to comrades all along the East Coast that fascism was not a future figment, but was the present reality in Boston, and that we'd better get ourselves ready to beat up on it before it beat us." ("Communist Magazine," Fall, 1992)☺

Fascism was this Summer's Movie Fashion



With the ongoing Iraq War and growing competition from imperialist rivals, U.S. capitalism finds itself in increasing crisis. Many of this summer's blockbuster films not only reflect this crisis, but also the domestic fascism that must accompany international unrest. On the one hand, domestic fascism means the U.S. bosses clamping down on workers who disagree with their actions, often beginning with racist attacks on Arab and immigrant workers that in turn lead to attacks on all workers. On the other it means the bosses are fighting harder to win workers to be loyal to such repression and wars.

Both Michael Bay's Transformers (released on July 4th) and Len Wiseman's Live Free or Die Hard display an America in crisis, demanding greater sacrifice. They are aimed at 20-30 year-olds who remember the 1980s films and cartoons. And with a PG-13 rating, the bosses hope to attract a newer, younger generation to die for U.S. imperialism.

In Transformers, the Autobots (the Good guys) battle the Decepticons (the Bad guys) for control of the "Cube," a device that controls the fate of the universe. As the film unfolds, the Decepticons attack U.S. soil and breach the Pentagon's security systems, and eventually face off against a U.S. military/Autobot alliance.

In an attempt to recruit working class youth to sacrifice themselves for U.S. imperialism, the film depicts the two main characters, both high school students, fighting

along side U.S. soldiers to beat the Decepticons. "You're a soldier now," yells Captain Lennox in the final scenes of the film, pushing the main character to deliver the Cube to the U.S. government as fast as possible.

In an interview with the U.S. Air Force, Bay explained this decision to push military recruitment. He revealed how filming at a U.S. Airbase and using military personal in the film gave the film more credibility and also acted as a recruiting tool. In fact, Dreamworks officials have said that the level of military cooperation on this film is unprecedented and very much appreciated. By erasing the boundaries between Hollywood entertainment and military recruitment, U.S. imperialism will continue to lay the cultural foundations of fascism necessary for its survival.

Also crucial to the survival of U.S. imperialism is its manufacturing base. As the Autobots fight to protect the U.S. from the Decepticons, they periodically transform into actual General Motors vehicles. As Dino Bernacchi, GM's associate director of branded entertainment said, "These cars are the stars, literally, in the movie." Amid stiff competition from overseas markets, GM is hoping that its exposure in the film will translate into greater profits.

Like Transformers, Live Free or Die Hard paints a portrait of U.S. capitalism in crisis. Every aspect of the system, from Wall Street to the Pentagon, has come under attack from a group of cyber-terrorists. The film bases

itself on a 1997 Wired magazine article titled "A Farewell to Arms." The article argues that in an ever-increasing technological world, Washington must rethink its outdated information and weapons systems in favor of more sophisticated ones. The film takes this idea further, arguing that along with these more sophisticated systems, brute force (combined with a mix of sexism, patriotism and racism) is still a necessary component to the survival of U.S. capitalism.

In the film, an aged Bruce Willis is paired with the college-aged

Justin Long, a reoccurring character on Apple's Mac vs. PC advertisements familiar to most younger people. Willis symbolizes U.S. capitalism's more traditional reliance on brute force. Long's character represents the need to combine this with a hipper, "user-friendly" version of fascism.

Long's appearance also reflects a growing trend in universities across the country. In exchange for grants from the Department of Defense, many universities have decided to focus their computer science research on cyber counter-terrorism. Overall, the film feeds the fear of an imminent terrorist attack on the U.S. And it calls for both a more advanced system of surveillance and more police and military forces on the ground.

Ultimately, both films are aimed at working class youth and act as recruitment ads for U.S. imperialism. The bosses hope that workers will continue to passively accept the calls for increased military recruitment and greater government surveillance. In the meantime, films like these are silently laying the groundwork for fascism in the U.S. By talking to coworkers and people around us about the messages in such films PLP members and friends can lay a different groundwork. Ours will lead to a communist revolution that will smash the deadly ideas and oppression promoted by the bosses' oppressive culture and replace it with working-class culture that promotes international unity!☺

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