

CHALLENGE



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Quake Exposes Capitalism's Inherent Fault Lines

On March 11, a massive 9.0-magnitude quake hit North-east Japan on the east coast of Honshu, the country's largest island, which, combined with the 33-foot waves of the tsunami it created, killed 4,100 people and ignited hundreds of fires. In the disaster's wake, entire villages, ports and even schools vanished. Some were evacuation sites for local residents situated on the coasts.

The tsunami hit Miyagi and Iwate prefectures the hardest, obliterating everything in its path, causing the highest death tolls, which could exceed 10,000. The quake's magnitude has led to frequent aftershocks, including a 6.0 quake on March 15 that hit Shizuoka, extending over the entire Kantou (Eastern) region.

Additionally, the quake disabled the cooling mechanisms of Japan's oldest nuclear power plant, sparking a meltdown that has forced the evacuation of hundreds of thousands in the surrounding area and causing widespread fear that is being spread by the mainstream media on a 24-hour basis.

While there has been some criticism of the warning systems that gave residents little time to evacuate, most mainstream media sources in the U.S. and elsewhere emphasized Japan's preparedness for such disasters and have praised the rapidity of rescues, evacuations and recovery efforts. As the world's third largest economy, Japan has taken significant steps to safeguard its vulnerability against such disasters through fortification in infrastructure and the training, beginning in kindergarten, on how to react to earthquakes and other disasters. Workers in all areas hold weekly practice drills.

Workers Most Vulnerable, Suffer the Most

The protection and preparedness against such disasters, however, is more evident in the capitalist centers like Tokyo or Sendai (the largest city in the Northeastern region, which suffered significant damage), but become lax moving toward the outer regions where the damage and loss of life was the most substantial. This is because most of the residents of these areas — like the small village of Saito in Miyagi prefecture which was totally wiped out — are predominantly working-class families: factory workers, farmers and fishermen/women, and the elderly who built homes there which are the most vulnerable to such catastrophic events. Moreover, tens of thousands of jobs will disappear, further intensifying the exploitation of the working class.

This factor connects the loss of life here to the earthquake in Haiti, or to the 2004 tsunami, which killed hundreds of thousands of local residents on the coastal regions of Indonesia, Malaysia, and Sri Lanka, among other areas, where they are forced to live in conditions unprotected by disasters.

The responsibility and culpability of the national governments in such catastrophes cannot be overlooked, their responsibility is inherently part of the overall picture of capitalism's failure to plan for social need globally, which in this case works on a number of levels.

Firstly, while loss of life in Japan's catastrophe is horrific, it is minimal when compared to Haiti's quake, where the death toll exceeded 200,000, or in the 2004 tsunami, with over 300,000 deaths. Thus, under capitalism some populations are "worth" more than others, according to the hierarchy of profit: as the world's third largest economy, Japan has a vested interest in protecting itself and its workers from such events, albeit minimally, while in "unprofitable" places like Haiti, Sri Lanka, or even the 9th Ward of New Orleans, there is no room for such planning.

This also reveals the inherent racist dimension of capitalist

planning: as a "developed" capitalist country, there is much less racism directed at Japan, emphasized on CNN and other mainstream outlets in their current coverage. Furthermore, most of the discussion on NHK (Nippon Housou Koukai), the largest Japanese news broadcasting system, and on international news is the threat of a nuclear disaster, which is unfolding by the minute.

NHK has been broadcasting the levels of radiations that may leak, with some emphasis on directing the blame both at Prime Minister Naoto Kan's administration and at Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) which owns the Fukushima plant. The latter has been cited continuously for violations and is outdated in terms of equipment and meltdown-controlling mechanisms.

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Nuke Plant Built on World's Hottest Quake Spot

Japan's heavy reliance on nuclear power is the by-product of decisions made by Japan's ruling class over the past four decades. Its 54 nuclear plants account for 30% of current power generation, projected to rise to 50% by 2030 as more plants are built.

In 1973, when an oil embargo hit the OPEC countries, staggering the world economy and particularly Japan, nuclear power made up only a small fraction of Japan's energy supply.

As the World Nuclear Alliance notes on its website, "Japan was dependent on fossil fuel imports, particularly oil from the Middle East (oil fuelled 66 percent of the electricity in 1974). This geographical and commodity vulnerability became critical due to the oil shock in 1973. Re-evaluation of domestic energy policy resulted in diversification and, in particular, a major nuclear construction program. A high priority was given to reducing the country's dependence on oil imports."

The placement of dozens of nuclear power plants above the planet's most active geological fault zone (called "the ring of fire," the site of 90% of the world's earthquakes) — and in one of the world's most densely populated regions — could be considered insane. But amid the capitalist world's imperialist rivalry, it was imperative for the Japanese bourgeoisie to secure an adequate domestic energy supply, since the country has little oil and gas and insufficient coal.

Moreover, the Japanese ruling class had previous experiences with energy crises well before 1973. As far back as World War II, one of the major driving forces behind Japanese imperialism's decision to launch preemptive war against the U.S. was the Roosevelt administration's embargo of U.S. supplies of fuel and scrap metal in retaliation for the Japanese invasion of China.

Despite the admitted technological prowess of Japan — the world leader in adapting construction methods to earthquake-proofing its buildings, as well as its high degree of preparedness of the population — this natural disaster has laid bare not only tectonic fault lines, but social ones.

The profit system is incapable of ensuring the safety, health and well-being of workers, even in a country as "advanced" as Japan. Only the abolition of capitalism and the establishment of a world based on workers' rule can guarantee a misery-free future for the working class. ☪

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If anyone has copies of the 1964 to 1968 issues of CHALLENGE, please send them in.

War Over Oil Looms: Saudi Arabia, Not Libya, Main Prize for U.S. Rulers

No matter what course of action U.S. rulers may take in Libya, their main focus is on energy's grand prize, Saudi Arabia and the greater Persian Gulf region. As important as Libya's 46-billion-barrel reserves are, threats to far richer sources preoccupy Obama and the oil-fueled imperialists he serves.

As of March 11, dictator Qaddafi was brutally retaking key oil towns from the rebels, indiscriminately slaughtering civilians and his opponents. Leading senators — Democrat Kerry, Independent Lieberman, and Republican McCain — have called for a "no-fly zone" entailing U.S. bombardment of Libyan planes, air defenses, and runways. But, on that very day, March 11, Obama sent war boss Robert Gates to embattled Bahrain, on the Persian Gulf — not to Libya's U.S.-backed neighbors Tun-

sia or Egypt.

Bahrain houses the U.S. Navy's Fifth Fleet, which polices the globally-crucial oil exports of U.S. protectorates Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, U.S.-occupied Iraq and U.S. enemy Iran.

Kenneth Pollack, a Gulf expert having worked at the CIA, the National Security Council, the Council on Foreign Relations, and the Brookings Institution, wrote a book in 2002, "The Case for Invading Iraq." Now he has written: "It is not clear that... Libya is enough of a national interest to justify... long-term military and diplomatic commitment. Just within the Middle East, there are countries of far greater importance to the United States that may well need us to invest those resources there to make sure they turn out right." (Brookings website, 3/09/11)

Iraq, following two U.S. invasions and sanctions that killed over two million, has, for now, "turned out right" for Exxon Mobil. Consequently, the latter now enjoys access to Iraq's West Qurna oil field, one of the world's biggest.

U.S. Rulers, Exxon-Mobil, Won Big in Iraq War, But Could Lose All in Saudi Destabilization

Stratfor, an outfit that provides geostrategic analysis to U.S. corporations, explained Gates's travel plans on its website (3/9): "Unlike Libya, where the effects are primarily internal, the events in Bahrain clearly involve Saudi, Iranian and U.S. interests.... Bahrain is the focal point of a struggle between Saudi Arabia and Iran for control of the western littoral [shoreline regions] of the Persian Gulf[Saudi] destabilization would change the regional balance of power and the way the world works."

In other words, upheavals in Saudi Arabia — home to more oil than any other country in the world — could end the biggest racket in the history of imperialism. Exxon Mobil, Saudi Arabia's biggest customer and investor, today controls the lion's share of the kingdom's production. Through Exxon and its U.S. and British allies — Chevron, BP and Shell — entire nations are beholden to U.S. rulers' terms for the supply of capitalism's lifeblood.

Obama, Pentagon Boss Gates Oppose Only Those Wars Not in the Rulers' 'National Interest'

Obama's "Defense" Secretary Gates opposes a "no-fly zone" in Libya only because it detracts from his imperialist masters' larger need to secure the Middle East. Note his February 25 warning to West Point that any future war secretary advising a U.S. president to send a large land army into Asia, the Middle East or Africa, "should have his head examined." Colonel Gian Gentile, an active-duty military fellow at the ultra-imperialist, Rockefeller-led Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), translated:

"The secretary is suggesting that, if a future secretary of defense advises an American president to send a significant land force into a foreign country to do nation building, the analysis has to show that that kind of effort... is worth the costs.... because it will be a costly and long-term endeavor." (CFR website, 3/2/11) Gates, hardly a pacifist, rewords Gen. Colin Powell's "Doctrine" which clearly specified that indispensable, imperi-

alist goals (like securing Saudi Arabia) require overwhelming U.S. military force.

The workers and youth rebelling against fascist dictators in North Africa and the Mideast have put their lives on the line in battling the police and the armies. They have struck in demanding jobs and freedom from poverty. They deserve the support of workers worldwide.

But for the working class, two deadly misunderstandings are woven into this upsurge. First is thinking that it represents "liberation." Without militant, class-based, communist revolution, one gang of exploiters will replace another in every country involved. Secondly is the assumption that any temporary reluctance of U.S. rulers to deploy deadly force shows "peaceful" intentions. In reality, U.S. imperialism's continuing existence depends on control of Mideast oil. Obama & Co. and their successors will fight for it to their last bullet and to the last drop of workers' blood.

It is up to the working class, and especially to communists, to mobilize our forces wherever we are — in shops, unions, schools, within the military, in churches and community organizations — to turn the class struggle against the ruling capitalists into a fight that goes beyond the immediate one for reforms. The rulers hold state power and always can, and do, take back these reforms. Their goal of maximum profits — and their system's inevitable crises which produce mass unemployment, racist exploitation and imperialist war — drives them to demand these give-backs from the working class.

Only a communist revolution that smashes the bosses' state power and their racist system altogether, creating a society run by and for our class — which produces all value — can free us from the misery of the profit system. ☸



New Jersey Workers rally in solidarity with Wisconsin workers. (see page 4)

Unionists in Haiti Back Wisconsin Workers

Our union has received word of the huge and difficult struggle which you are in the midst of waging against the Governor of your State, who is attempting to trample underfoot your legitimate rights by getting an anti-union law passed. These rights, which were acquired by means of tough battles and for which the blood of workers has been shed, must on no account be given away. Therefore there is an imperative...to carry on this fight until ultimate victory, so as to block the vote for such a law and to consolidate the gains which the Governor intends to take away from the comrades in the public sector unions.

In the name of the duty of union solidarity, we bring to you, comrades of the State of Wisconsin, our firm support in this struggle for the respect of union rights. We urge our comrades there to keep going, to hold firm, in spite of the enormous difficulties which stand in your path. Because victory is not far off!

OUR FIGHT

★ **Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.**

★ **Only the dictatorship of the working class — communism — can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today's world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.**

★ **Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world's workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.**

★ **While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.**

★ **Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. 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." Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit black, Latino, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.**

★ **Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women — sexism — and divisive gender roles created by the class society.**

★ **Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.**

★ **Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion's false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.**

★ **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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Why Articles Are Not Signed

The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP's criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a "following" around any particular individual. While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual's writing of an article.

PL'ers Back Wisconsin Workers

Expose 'Recall' Fraud

MADISON, WI., March 12 — Today over 100,000 workers descended on the capitol here to protest the bill introduced by Republican Governor Scott Walker and passed by the State Legislature, removing collective bargaining rights for public employees, including teachers.

Fourteen Democratic Party Senators hiding out in Illinois to forestall the bill's passage failed miserably because Walker maneuvered to pass the bill without them. However, flanked by bagpipe-playing musicians, flags and Jessie Jackson, they returned today to Madison welcomed as heroes: "Thank you Fabulous 14, thank you!"

Our PLP contingent was there to bring our message of communist revolution and working-class solidarity. We distributed 500 CHALLENGES and 1,500 leaflets.

Our first speaker announced on our bullhorn that we'd come from Indiana and Chicago and this received a huge "Yeah!" He thanked all the workers for their courageous stance against these latest anti-working-class attacks. He also noted that they are occurring in Indiana and Chicago as well and that we need to strike against this assault.

Then, referring to one of the popular chants of the day — "recall Walker, recall Walker!" he declared, "Recalling Walker will not work but smashing capitalism will."

The next speaker encouraged workers to read CHALLENGE and the Party's leaflet "Middle-Class Dream??? Or Working Class Power!!!" It reported that while the Madison-area Central Labor Council had voted for a General Strike, the AFL-CIO and its top dog Trumka had turned workers' militant

mass anger into a passive recall petition limited to the voting booth. The union leaders have sold out our class and will continue to do so.

The "middle-class dream" that union leaders and politicians want us to buy into has been a nightmare for most black and Latino workers due to the racist nature of capitalism. The former auto capitals of Detroit, Flint and Milwaukee have unemployment rates exceeding 50%! Among young black males it's around 75%. "It's not Walker it's capitalism!" said the speaker. "These attacks have been coming fast and steady under the Democrats too." Obama's bailout of the auto industry put many more workers on the unemployment lines while the auto bosses are now reaping huge profits.

'Thanks for keeping it real...'

Several workers stopped and took our literature. One AFSCME member told us he was looking for a job because he was about to be laid off. He said that when he told his union leader we needed to prepare for a strike the union "leader" replied, "No, that's not what we need to do." Another worker listened to our speeches for several minutes, took literature and gave one of our comrades a hug, saying, "Thank you all for coming and keeping it real."

There was much opposition to our line, too. The push for recall had definitely replaced the call for a general strike. Reliance on Democratic Party politicians has replaced the power of the workers



and students who early on had occupied the State Capitol and shut down the schools. In essence, today's rally became a dangerous "get-out-the-vote-for-the-Democratic-Party" event.

However, we should have brought many more comrades and friends with us. One Party friend contacted us because she knew if anyone was going to Madison we would be. But, self critically, we should have called her. We marched and hung out the whole day together, talking about communism and why only in a communist society could we share the fruits of our labors, without racism, poverty or imperialist oil wars. While she's still not ready to join, after today she's much closer.

Other comrades who went got valuable practice in putting forward communist ideas to work-

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Poly-Sci Students Attack Racist Campus Layoffs

NEW YORK CITY, March 12 — The Political Science club on our campus has provided a glimpse of the force that young workers and students can become in leading the struggle for change. These students are providing leadership in the multi-racial, working-class struggle against our school's administration, against the racist budget-cutters on the CUNY Board of Trustees and in the New York City and State governments. Communist ideas are not only present, but in a leading position.

The most recent club activities highlight both the international character of class struggle in the fight against capitalism as well as the need for workers and students to engage in both theoretical discussion and practice. The first event was a teach-in, entitled "Youth Movement Rising". Three professors covered the events in North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, the student protests and rebellions in Europe and the role of U.S. foreign policy in all of these places. Unlike in the bosses' media which stresses the fight for democracy and freedom, the speakers focused on the class struggle, including the fight against racist unemployment and increases in food prices.

The final speaker was a student leader who enthusiastically linked the uprisings around the world to the situation in New York. He noted students' protests against budget cuts, against tuition increases, how we have held solidarity events for students in Haiti (including another teach-in last year). And he stressed the need to do more: for more students, teachers and workers to stand up against the attacks that the bosses launch at us.

Afterwards, the discussion reflected the communist-led nature of the event. One student asked if what we are seeing is a fulfillment of Marx's prediction that the underclass would rise up to defeat the bourgeoisie.

But these students walk the walk, as well as talk the talk. Our cafeteria is being renovated and a new service provider is being brought in. Many students are happy with this change because the old food service was terrible, with very few healthy options (U.S. urban areas have the highest rates of obesity and Type II diabetes). In the process, however, the nine long-time employees, all union members (in UNITE-HERE), and all black and Latino were laid off.

This racist attack did not go unnoticed by the Political Science club, which joined the professors' union, the cafeteria workers and other students for a campus rally. About 70 people rallied and chanted, "Union workers are under attack! What do we do? Stand up, fight back!" We also witnessed the utter fear that bosses (be they big CEOs or our relatively small-time administrators) have of a united, militant working class.

Our rally began in front of the cafeteria, but we quickly moved to the administration building. You should have seen their faces! Every single security guard on campus was there to stop us. They even called some NYPD pigs to help them out. This time we were not ready to challenge the cops and enter the building, so we rallied for 10 minutes in front and then returned to the cafeteria.

This struggle is not over and the Political Science club is committed to taking part and providing young leadership. The club is getting bigger, with more and more students attending meetings. PLP'ers are there, with CHALLENGE in hand, trying to consistently fight for a vision of a communist future. The club's focus will likely turn back to the budget cuts and the further tuition increases that are coming, but whatever the issue, the Political Science club will be ready to fight. ☺

D.C. Metro PL'ers:

Mass Struggle Needed vs. Arbitration Loser

WASHINGTON, D.C. March 10, 2011 — Over 150 bus drivers and other Metro workers picketed outside the bosses' headquarters today to demand that management withdraw its appeal to federal court of the arbitration award and agree to the contract that provides a 3% annual pay raise while cutting back on benefits.

Workers have been without a contract for three years! Anger is boiling over at the bus garages. What part of "binding arbitration" do the bosses not understand? What they do understand is that they are backed by the power of the government and can probably get away with whatever the working class lets them.

Arbitration Is A Loser for Workers

Arbitration is a win-win situation for the bosses. Invariably, the arbitration will force workers to accept less than they demand, forcing them to take the losses. That's why the bosses have the gall to try to renege on a contract that is already a give-back contract for the workers! That's why smashing the bosses and their government through a revolution to establish workers' power and communism is the only permanent way to solve our problems. And why flexing our collective muscles in this contract dispute through mass action is the only way to have any hope of stopping the bosses' attack today.

The union leadership has a different plan, though. At today's rally, after meekly moving workers away from the entrance to the building at the request of the Metro cops, they passed out post-cards to send to various politicians in the jurisdictions served by Metro to encourage them to support the union. What nonsense! Only the threat of a strike — most likely illegal — will make them pay attention. The politicians are all in the bosses' pocket.

PLP'ers have distributed well over 600 CHALLENGE's to Metro workers over the last few months at special union meetings and at the garages, while Metro PLP'ers have fought hard in the garages and at union meetings for a more militant approach that would show an understanding of how capitalism works to systematically exploit workers. The ideas of anti-racist class consciousness are being debated and discussed by Metro workers more and more, which may help to win many angry workers away from cynicism.

Over the next 90 days, the court will issue a final decision, and then we shall see how robust the mass struggle can be at Metro in today's climate. At the same time, several additional Metro workers have stepped forward to work with the PLP, so whatever happens in the coming three months, the communist presence at Metro will continue to grow. ☺

PLP's Ideas Are Answer to Misleaders' Give-Backs

TRENTON, NJ, February 25 — “Workers have dignity; the rich have our wealth!” This poster expressed the outrage of 4,000 New Jersey workers rallying in solidarity with Wisconsin state workers. Wisconsin governor Scott Walker, along with other governors — including NJ’s Chris Christie — is spearheading a bogus nationwide campaign, to destroy the largest remaining group of organized workers in the country: the public employee unions.

This campaign is funded by the billionaire Koch brothers through their Americans for Prosperity front group. After voting massive tax cuts for the wealthy for two decades — starving state governments of revenues and creating a false “budget crisis” — these same businessmen and their lackey politicians are now blaming public workers for their multi-billion-dollar state budget “deficits.”

Workers at the rally weren’t buying this line, however, with some holding up posters that said, “Union-busters are the new terrorists!” PLP members from NJ state colleges organized on their local campuses to get fellow American Federation of Teachers (AFT) members and Communication Workers of America (CWA) staff to attend. One teacher, who canceled classes and urged students to attend, got five emails from students after the rally asking how it went. Another recent graduate, now a social worker who will soon be in the CWA,

attends a Party study group and looks forward to helping build a worker-student alliance in New Jersey.

Forming a sea of red rain ponchos and hats in front of the State House, the 4,000 New Jersey workers — both private and public sector employees — didn’t match the turnout of the 70,000 Wisconsin workers who occupied their capital building a few weeks ago. Nevertheless, the protest was one of the largest in New Jersey and signals an upsurge in working-class solidarity.

Private sector workers, after years of layoffs, wage-cuts and disappearing benefits, see that they have a lot more in common with state workers than with the billionaire businessmen funding this nationwide campaign or the governors hypocritically fronting for them. It’s impossible to believe the rhetoric describing public employees as “privileged” with “bloated salaries and pensions” when more and more workers know that the top 1% of the population controls 43% of total national wealth and the bottom 80% has only 7% (2008, extremeinequality.org).

Unfortunately, at a time when workers need class-conscious leadership, most of the state public union leaders speaking at the rally actually endorsed the position of the politicians on givebacks. After giving lip service to the view that the banks

and their speculative practices — not public workers — caused the economic crisis, virtually every union leader stated that their unions would be willing to “negotiate” wage-cuts and reductions in benefits, to “share the pain.”

Their rallying cry, “Negotiate not dictate,” however, is a losing strategy that will put the ruling class in a win-win situation. They win if they can get rid of collective bargaining for public unions AND they win even if they can’t, so long as unions bargain away the salary and benefit gains their workers struggled for decades to win.

As the class struggle heats up, this defeatist line at the Trenton rally shows the important role that communist ideas must play if workers are to build a movement that will not be sold out by the current labor leaders. As communists, PLP members in these unions need not only to participate in class struggle but also to consolidate their personal ties with co-workers and discuss why the rules of capitalism make it a necessity to push to reduce wages and benefits in order to maximize corporate profits.

More than ever, as U.S. capitalism faces fiercer global competition with China and the European Union and must maintain a global military force to protect its interests, it needs to squeeze every penny it can from workers. ☸

As Hospital Workers Face Racist Cuts:

CHALLENGE Sparks Debate About Communism

NEW YORK CITY, March 10 — Class struggle may be at a low ebb, but our PLP club has been active organizing both in the hospital where I work and in the community, trying to stoke the flames and build for community and job actions. Ten New York City hospitals are in imminent danger of closing when the racist cuts in the New York State budget take effect on March 31. The initial wave of anger that passed over my coworkers when we learned of this fascist attack on poor New Yorkers has increasingly given way to cynicism and passivity — passivity which we Party members must fight! Participating in the class struggle at home and reading about workers rising up around the world in CHALLENGE are fundamental to overcoming this passivity and cynicism.

I asked one coworker who has been very active organizing and reads CHALLENGE, “So what keeps you from joining the Party?” She said, “I have so much to learn. How are you different from any other Party? What if you end up like the Soviet

Union?” I responded, “What other Party is fighting this hard in so many countries? Or in our hospital and community?” I suggested we form a study group to answer some of these questions and raise more, to which she agreed.

Another coworker had told me, “A professor of mine back in college was a physicist in the USSR and always bragged about the science education there. Communists did great things and what you guys do is fantastic but your plan sounds unrealistic. Millions of workers? People are too soaked up in capitalist propaganda to just start thinking altruistically and for the benefit of mankind. I’m all for that but I need to see more before I would decide on anything.”

Three other friends and coworkers expressed similar sentiments. One of them, after reading and learning in CHALLENGE about the Party’s work in Bangladesh, where she was born, declared, “OK! I’d like to get more involved!” Thus we are planning a study group and collectively we’ll decide

on a curriculum to start answering some of these questions. We restarted our tradition of weekly home-cooked dinners for friends and coworkers, and now, as the struggle intensifies at our hospital, we can expand our limits and build a real collective leadership. In the meantime, these coworkers and friends will be struggled with to write more letters and articles to CHALLENGE.

The situation has many weaknesses, the biggest being that the main burdens of organizing are, for now, on the shoulders of one or two workers. But our club and our friends are learning from them and making inroads into the racist, sexist, individualistic “middle-class” illusions. Through increasing CHALLENGE distribution and readership and winning more coworkers to study groups we can build fights as monumental as in Wisconsin and Egypt with the Party at the forefront. Why the PLP? Because we’re the only Party working to give the entire working class a choice between illusion or total power. ☸

Quake

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Corporate Profits vs. Communist Planning

The meltdown is symbolic of how corporate interests are the priority under capitalism (TEPCO being one of the most profitable corporations, according to the Nikkei stock index), and how planning and the running of such facilities is done poorly. Under communism such events could be minimized or eliminated, since workers would have a social and critical awareness of how to operate nuclear plants properly, for the benefit of the social need, rather than according to the drive for maximum profits.

Finally, the disaster is already being played out through the lens of inter-imperialist rivalry. Obama reacted to the crisis by pledging “support” for Japan, including a significant aid package that most likely will entail the re-evaluation of Japanese-U.S. political and economic relations. U.S. rulers want to use Japan as a buffer against the rise of China. This means increasing the pre-existing tensions between Japan and China over control of the undeveloped gas fields in the South China Sea, as well as the power to exploit the mineral-rich islands that have sparked recent disputes. This provoked pro-nationalist protests

in both countries.

Additionally, with Japan’s ongoing economic woes deepening as a result of the current crisis, there has been discussion of the “disaster capitalism” model, which would allow multi-national corporations to privatize the disaster areas and rebuild according to the priority of profit, as is occurring in New Orleans, Argentina and elsewhere.

Capitalism, Liberal Reformists, Phony ‘Communists’ No Saviors

Capitalism *always* works to the detriment of workers everywhere. Workers in Japan, who have been brainwashed by anti-communism, need to recognize that capitalism will not save them from such disasters, nor will the false hopes of the reformist parties like the Democratic Party of Japan, or fake leftists like the Japanese “Communist” Party, which are the most vocally critical of the recent catastrophe.

All workers need to recognize that a system based on profit will ultimately fail to provide the necessary means to rebuild the world, and in fact has been the systemic cause of the devastation and after-effects of environmental disasters. We must unite to build the internationalism and solidarity of communism, creating a global community of workers who can run the world without capitalist bosses! ☸

Wisconsin

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ers who otherwise would not be exposed to them. Only the Party was championing the working-class to take state power.

While we call for a general strike to shut down the entire system and unite the working class, still this is just a tactical move. The only long-run strategy we can follow is winning millions of workers to fight for communist revolution.

We agreed that our political offensive must be recruiting and developing more comrades through this struggle in Wisconsin. We’ve formed a committee to organize visits to contacts we made in Madison and to plan regular trips there. We also want to have some Madison workers speak at our Chicago May Day dinner.

However this struggle in Wisconsin turns out, we have everything to win by seizing this opportunity to build the Party. The struggle for state power and the building of a communist society is not a mere dream for the international working class. ☸

Red Leadership Needed STRIKES SWEEP FRANCE; SAILORS BATTLE COPS

PARIS, March 10 — Strikes have erupted across France as workers continue their long tradition of downing tools and battling to resist the bosses' cops.

Marseilles Port Shut

The SNCM ferry company workers, on strike for 40 days, and having blocked the north and south channels of Marseilles' port, were attacked by up to 700 cops — six companies of riot police, plus members of the national police force and maritime gendarmes. They swung riot sticks and used tear gas, arresting 14 strikers.

But the sailors fought back, throwing bottles and turning hoses on the cops from one of the ferries the strikers have occupied. "They're the ones who want a clash," declared one sailor. "We're going to defend ourselves."

Now all the maritime unions have called for sailors to launch a national strike on March 17 against deregulation, a policy the shipowners have been using to push through layoff after layoff "in the name of free and unfettered competition."

Solidarity

The police assault brought an immediate and massive reaction as all port workers in every trade and occupation struck in support of the SNCM sailors. The port workers said they would not return to work until "all police forces have left the port area."

On March 9, dock workers refused to allow two ferries originally bound for the then-blocked port of Marseilles to dock in the port of Toulon. "We refuse to be a back-up and we don't want to be considered as scabs by our fellow workers in Marseilles," said union leader Kadda Zerga. The dockers only allowed passengers to disembark from the ferries.

The sailors are striking against company plans to reduce the number of ferry voyages between mainland France and Corsica, fearing this will lead to layoffs. Further strikes include:

- Thirty-five hundred JC Decaux workers struck on March 8 to demand a minimum 100-euro-a-month pay raise (US\$136), refusing the company offer of 1.4%. JC Decaux puts advertisements on a variety of billboards, bus stops, and in public transport. In 2010, its gross profit hit 173 million euros (US\$235 million).

- Strikes have hit the hugely profitable communications satellite producer Thales Alenja Space. Workers are demanding a 5% wage hike and equal pay for women workers, plus bonuses. Four hundred strikers blocked truck access to the Cannes factory and 800 blocked trucks from the Toulouse plant, preventing nitrogen deliveries.

- Rolling strikes hit Manitowoc-Potain, a crane manufacturer in central France where wages have been frozen for years. The CGT union agreed to a 60-euro-a-month increase (US\$82) but angry workers are threatening to walk out again for a higher pay hike.

- Steelworkers in Dunkirk and Florange have



"Marins en grève" — "Sailors on strike" is painted on the side of the ship.



Striking SNCM sailors in the port of Marseilles

engaged in rolling strikes against the Arcelor Mittal group, demanding a 45-euro-a-month wage hike (US\$61), double the company's raise. Strikers blocked the Basse-Indre plant and organized shift-end stoppages at three other mills.

- A 3½-day strike by Peugeot auto workers won better working conditions against speed-up, creating 23 additional fitters and forklift drivers on each shift and slowing the assembly line from 46 to 44 cars an hour.

- Over 800 factory workers, engineers and technicians have been on strike since January 13 against Cézus-Aréva, world leader in the zirconium market, a metal used to isolate nuclear fuel in nuclear reactors. They're demanding a bonus equal to 1% of the gross annual wage plus a pay increase triple the company's offer of 1.1%.

- A five-day strike beginning January 26 by workers at MBF Technologies forced the company — owned by one of the main auto subcontractors making aluminum castings — to abandon layoff plans and legal proceedings to expel the workers from the plant; agree to keep the factory operating; not to end the 35-hour week; pay workers for the five days they were on strike; open wage negotiations; and not file legal action against any strikers.

- At the Spanish-owned Europac factory which makes paper and cardboard in Saint-Etienne du Rouvray, 160 workers struck for a 4% pay hike, a 75-euro bonus and against a two-tier wage system paying lower wages to new hires.

- Over 1,000 Thales Communications workers in the northern Paris suburb of Colombes, voted to strike on March 9 at a general assembly held on a freeway off-ramp, demanding re-opening of wage negotiations. From 5:30 A.M. demonstrators blocked access to the plant. Actions spread to Thales factories in outlying areas. The company designs and makes information and communications systems for the military market.

- Nine hundred auto parts workers at the Valeo plant in Issoire in southern France staged a work stoppage on March 8 to back up demands for higher wages in annual contract negotiations. It turned into a one-day strike, with pickets at the plant entrance. The Issoire plant makes electrical components for automobiles and auto engines.

A union leaflet protested that, "Workers are supposed to tighten their belts and be happy with crumbs, when 1.20 euros per share are to be paid...to shareholders...of a little over 78 million shares." The company's 2010 gross profit was half a billion dollars.

Without communist leadership to turn workers' fighting spirit towards revolution, the fascists plan to turn it into the dead-ends of racism and nationalism. The fascist National Front announced today it's establishing an "association for the defense of workers." Belying that, the fascists condemned the striking unions as "anti-democratic and repressive."

These strike actions demonstrate that workers' militancy remains intact here, despite defeat in last year's fight to stop the government from upping the retirement age. The only way to get off the treadmill of fighting for wage hikes that capitalism inevitably takes away is to turn that militancy into a commitment to fight for communism. ☸

Working 7 Days A Week, 12 Hours A Day Fighting the Politics of Profits and Pacifism

Capitalists are the worst plague for humanity. They impose their dictatorship on those that are the most humble and needy. Every day exploitation gets stronger, but yet many feel it is normal and are content with having a job, no matter how miserable.

The company where I work is a bootlegged construction company. Just like the rest of the capitalist system, it violates all of the bourgeois legislation; it doesn't pay social security, benefits, nor settlements and the salary is miserable. But despite this super exploitation, there are so many unemployed, workers are always knocking on its doors asking for jobs.

They make us stay up all night, 7 days a week, with a 12-hour shift. On Saturdays we work 24 hours until we finish our shift. Many workers accept this with resignation and without protesting, allowing the foreman to continue to push us. This shows us once more that as long as we continue to allow the politics of maximum profit and pacifism, we workers are condemned to just be beasts of burden.

Since ideas of change don't fall from the sky and we lack revolutionary organization here, I'm speaking to some of my coworkers. I've introduced them to CHALLENGE. Three of them are reading it, and one has had a very positive response to our communist politics. I have to do the job very carefully because the lack of class consciousness makes many of the workers consider us as a "problem" or their "enemy." If the boss finds out about our organizing, we will get fired quickly. This racist capitalist system divides us. It makes us compete with our own class brothers and sisters for lousy jobs, while our existence and that of our family's is more miserable every day.

This is why with patience, perseverance and persistence the PLP develops its revolutionary work without failing the workers on the farms or the cities, whether students or soldiers from different parts of the world. With all of us united under our communist line we will destroy capitalism, the bosses and politicians, because they are the ones to blame for all of our problems.

A Comrade in Colombia

LETTERS

We encourage all **CHALLENGE** readers to send in concise letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses around the world.

GIANT Supermarket, Giant Profits, Giant Fight-back Needed

I just returned from a rally at my local supermarket, Giant, in Washington D.C., that was organized by the Teamsters and our local Jobs with Justice chapter. Hundreds of workers from Teamsters, food, and government unions rallied with supporters against another union-busting attack.

Giant owners plan to move their warehouse workers to C&S, a company that busts unions and reduces pay to \$10 an hour while their top boss steals \$88 million a year off their backs. C&S already fired 1,600 workers in New Jersey and aims to move them all to a non-union shop in Pennsylvania. Teamsters from NJ and NY traveled to join us and urge us to fight back.

As one speaker said, "they use our work to get rich." He's right! Capitalists steal the wealth we create and then accuse us of being greedy for wanting a living to support our families! When I shared CHALLENGE with a retired Teamster, he told me he wasn't a socialist but thought everyone should be allowed to work for a decent pay. Another veteran activist said it's time to abolish capitalism, the system where a small minority of people own everything, pay us nothing, lie to the public about our issues, and divide us with racism to keep us weak.

Workers eagerly took a leaflet written by Metro bus drivers about building a revolutionary movement to unify workers everywhere to seize power and build a communist society.

The rally showed the strength of a united working class as black, white, young and old spoke out about sticking together against the bosses. If Metro and Teamster workers strike, they could shut this area down. AND if workers everywhere seized power and destroyed capitalism, we could construct a new society based on collective needs and equality.

Public health worker

Fight Israeli Apartheid, Repression

Shiekh Jarrah is a neighborhood in East Jerusalem, Palestine. The Israeli settlers, backed by the racist Israeli courts and police and funded by the U.S. real-estate tycoon Irving Moscowitz, are robbing the local Palestinians of their homes in all of Eastern Jerusalem. The local residents of the neighborhood, with the help of Jewish activists, demonstrate there every Friday at 3PM. I call all workers around the world to support this struggle against ultra-racist evictions, by solidarity letters sent though CHALLENGE or, if possible, by coming to the demonstrations.

A Worker from Tel-Aviv

Fascist Israeli Cops Maul Villagers, Protestors

On March 4, 2011, I took part in the weekly demonstration in Sheikh Jarrah in East Jerusalem. The Israeli authorities, acting in the interests of the racist settlers and the U.S. bosses who back them, have recently evicted a number of Palestinian families from their homes, and gave the houses to wealthy settlers.

This week, when we arrived at the Sheikh Jarrah Garden, over a hundred black-clad cops in ski masks were already waiting for us. Nasser, one of the locals, said that it is possible that someone notified the authorities about the demonstration.

As long as we stayed in the garden, everything went fine. But then we, the demonstrators — both Jewish and Palestinian — came to one of the recently evicted houses. I went with a local Palestinian woman and with a kid who carried a bullhorn and shouted our slogans on the stairs at the entrance to the house. The door was open and the three of us entered the house, shouting the slogans. At some point, a photographer had joined us.

Then, the photographer shouted, "The cops are coming! The cops are coming", and I immediately exited the building. Another demonstrator, who stood at the back of the demonstration, told me that she heard a cop telling the other cops to enter the house.

Suddenly, I saw the cops violently push the local Palestinian woman who was with us. When I

tried to catch her so that she wouldn't fall, I was hit by one of the policemen and my glasses fell and got twisted. My cellphone also fell and I asked the cops to let me get it, and they refused; after a long argument, I got my glasses back.

I saw the name badges of two of the officers who gave orders to use violence: Habashush and Cohen. One of the three demonstrators who were arrested tried to escape the violence, and was attacked from behind by the cops.

A Housekeeping Worker from Tel-Aviv

Worker-Student Alliance at NY College

Chants of "What do we want? Our Jobs Back! When do we want them? Now!" echoed in the quad as faculty and students joined terminated cafeteria workers in a militant rally.

When organizers from Unite-Here Local 100 contacted the Bronx Community College (BCC) chapter of the Professional Staff Congress (PSC) we gave them our wholehearted support. Cafeteria workers and their reps spoke at our chapter meeting and at a forum sponsored by the Political Science Club (see page 3).

The nine black and Latino workers had been told that February 25th would be their last day of work since the contract with CulinArt Inc. was ending. The BCC administration told the workers that they could submit their resumé's for consideration

Bosses' Capitalist Crisis A Horror for Workers Before Quake

Japan Before the Quake

The capitalist crisis that hit Japan in the early 1990's has sharply increased unemployment and homelessness, forcing many workers into "Capsule Hotels." The global financial crisis has worsened this situation, leading to a staggering 25% jobless rate, but has also sparked an emerging fight-back by workers, teachers and students.

In a country once boasting to be the stronghold of economic equality, now over one-third of Japan's workers are hired on "flexible" and temporary contracts. Over 200,000 have been laid off since October 2008.

Immigrant workers from Southeast Asia, China and Latin America are employed in super-exploitative factory jobs originally held by unionized Japanese workers making a "liveable" wage. The fascist right-wing uses this in its sharply increasing racist attack on immigrant workers.

"Contingent" (temporary) labor is a reality for young workers. High rents and constant jobless periods throw workers on the streets. An unknown number now survive for varying periods by sleeping in internet cafe cubicles, costing a fraction of even a cramped one-room apartment.

Those who are poorer still, both homeless and jobless, barely exist in "cardboard cities" of major towns and often are subjected to vicious police attacks during round-ups and evictions. The rising phenomenon "Karoshi," or death from overwork, is common at capitalist giants like Hitachi. Many workers must labor up to 80 hours a week to keep their jobs.

The liberal government of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) has vowed to "solve" the crisis by "fighting corruption" and reorganizing Japan's geo-political position, namely its relationship with China and the U.S. They promised to end the decade-long recession, to focus on reformist policies that benefit public need over corporate interest, and to redefine Japan's relationship to what the DPJ calls "U.S.-led globalization."

While not a military power, Japanese finance capital is central to the inter-imperialist rivalry between the U.S. and China, both in technological advancement and capital re-investment.

Recent articles in the NY Times and Asian Times Online reveal that Japan is closely aligning with China. The DPJ government is also urging the U.S. to move its massive military base from the country's Okinawa island. Japan's rulers' hope to remain neutral within inter-imperialist competition is unsustainable and will likely lead to Japan's realignment with either the U.S. or China, both economically and militarily. This will further

by a new vendor that would be taking over. The VP of Finance refused to reveal which company was coming in, claiming that the deal was not finalized.

At the rally, campus security hassled us about using our bullhorn. But they were surprised when the demonstrators militantly started marching right up to the Administration Building.

Chanel 12 News arrived but was barred from campus by security. So we took the rally outside where it could be videoed. The crowd swelled. Four students were among the speakers. They connected the events at BCC to workers' struggles in Egypt and Wisconsin.

One comrade distributed copies of CHALLENGE to students. The Party has always taught us that we must fight against any attack against workers. Whether it is nine layoffs or nine thousand layoffs. Because of racism, the rate of unemployment in the Bronx has always been high.

Right now, the cafeteria is closed but we are busy preparing for the next round of the struggle. If the new vendor does not hire the former cafeteria workers and recognize their union we will boycott the cafeteria and the BCC Administration will be faced with larger demonstrations than they ever imagined.

A Comrade

squeeze unemployed young workers amid the bosses' battle for global economic control.

Workers' Fight-Back

Workers and students have not stood idly by while corrupt Japanese rulers have run the country into the ground. In the early 2000s, militant unions like the National Railways Union, with over 200,000 members, have led demonstrations against rail privatization. The rank and file, some with links to the reformist Japanese Revolutionary "Communist" League (formed in the 1960's), have also led strikes against the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. They especially criticized Japan's involvement in refuelling U.S. warships anchored in the Indian Ocean for deployment in the inter-imperialist confrontation in Afghanistan.

Tokyo's teachers have been resisting Japan's re-militarization that began after 9/11, forcing many into a battle with the racist and openly sexist Tokyo Mayor who controls the Education Ministry with an iron fist. These teachers have also joined demonstrations opposing Japanese involvement in Afghanistan and have played a key role in curbing the ultra-nationalism emerging in the post-9/11 period.

Students at Keio University have rebuilt some of the militant organizations of the 1960's, which led massive demonstrations against the Vietnam War in 1968, and have protested discriminatory university policies.

Without communist leadership, however, many young workers have turned to the Japanese "Communist" Party (JCP), which has gained 14,000 members since 2008; one-fourth of these new members are under 18. This generation grew up without having experienced the relative stability existing in Japan during the post-war "boom" and has suffered harsh conditions, instilling second thoughts in young workers about their relationship to the profit-driven system of exploitation and wage-slavery.

The increasing presence of worker-led street rallies has galvanized the surge in communist sympathy. While this indicates a seemingly leftward shift amongst Japanese youth, the resurgent JCP doesn't offer revolutionary change. It favors the "peaceful transition to socialism" without destroying capitalism and its state, which will never permit "peaceful transition."

What's needed is an internationalist party that embraces class struggle with the outlook of eventually eradicating the life-sucking billionaire class and their state apparatus with a communist revolution. That's what the Progressive Labor Party is building. Join us. ☺

Workers Unite vs. Oppression of Women by Smashing Its Source: Capitalism

March 8 is International Women's Day (IWD), symbolized by the 1908 New York City march of 15,000 women demanding better pay and shorter hours. In 1910 the Socialist Second Internationale held the first International Women's Conference and established International Women's Day. It has since celebrated many women's struggles — including the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire and the women's march to the municipal Duma (council) in Czarist Russia in early 1917, which helped spark the Bolshevik Revolution.

Internationally, workers will commemorate this month and day to honor the struggle against the special oppression of women — sexism — and the capitalist system that promotes it, although the bosses and their media will use it to pay lip-service to women's struggles. We must recognize that this special oppression is an integral and necessary part of capitalism, which must be fought every day, not just on International Women's Day or during Women's History month.

Fight to smash capitalism in order to smash sexism

Exploitation of women hasn't always existed nor have conditions become better; it has simply changed in form. In primitive communal society men and women's labor were valued equally. In early class society, women were primarily unpaid domestic workers. As capitalism's needs shifted during industrialization, super-exploitation of

women in factories began. The ruling class uses the special oppression of women — like it uses racism and nationalism — as a tool to oppress the entire working class.

There are many ruling-class ideologies that claim to be anti-sexist, like Feminism. Feminism blames men for sexism and wants women workers to unite with their female bosses. The bosses misdirect many women workers' anger against the ruling class and diverts it towards men, a divide-and-conquer strategy. For men, instead of fighting sexism and revolting against the bosses, they're taught to take their anger out on women.

As communists, we fight for the unity of women and men on and off the job to smash the bosses!

Today, women are super-exploited globally, attacked by the U.S. racist destruction of welfare (especially for black and Latino women); paid \$2 a day in China's vast manufacturing economy and in Mexico's maquiladoras; subjected to mass rapes in the Congo's wars for diamonds and resources; victims of extreme anti-woman bias of Islamic and Christian fundamentalists; and murdered, raped and forced into prostitution in the U.S. imperialist war in Iraq.

Women already make up more than half of the super-exploited sub-contracted manufacturing jobs in the U.S., while remaining the principal childcare givers. Women are still paid less than men for similar work, keeping all workers' wages

lower. The majority of women workers receive no wages for their work. Unpaid housework (cleaning, shopping, cooking) and child-rearing is also essential to producing the labor power that creates profit for the bosses and the next generation of workers. Because this work is done in the home and is seen as "natural" for women, it is not seen as profitable for the capitalists.

Black and Latino women face triple exploitation — as wage workers, as well as victims of racism and sexism. On top of this there is the unpaid labor they perform in the home.

Capitalist culture — music, poetry, movies, television — is more profitable because it perpetuates capitalist sexist gender roles that help maintain the system. The special oppression of women divides the working class, and dehumanizes women. Economic exploitation makes women a commodity, leading to degrading them as sexual objects and prostitutes, victims of physical violence, rape and enslavement worldwide.

We must ensure that more woman — especially as soldiers and workers — take the lead in the effort to destroy the system that created and maintains the special oppression of women, racism and its exploitation of all workers. Only by black, Latino, Asian and white men and women workers uniting can the entire working class end the oppression of capitalism. Communism is the only system that values women as workers and allows all workers to reach their full potential. JOIN US! ☘

RED EYE ON THE NEWS

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

U.S. uses 'aid' as imperialist tool

GW, 3/4 — If anyone is still suffering from the delusion that aid is all about charity, devoid of foreign policy interests, they should wake up now... Countries are frank about their mixed motives.

The largest recipients of U.S. aid, to take the world's biggest donor, are not the poorest countries but those the U.S. sees as strategically important. In 1962, President John F. Kennedy remarked: "Aid is a method by which the United States maintains a position of influence and control around the world."

Women big force in Egypt revolt

NYT, 3/6 — ...Egypt's popular revolution was the work of men and women....At its height, roughly one quarter of the million protesters who poured into the square each day were women. Veiled and unveiled women shouted, fought and slept in the streets alongside men, upending traditional expectations of their behavior.

The challenge now, activists here said, is to make sure that women maintain their involvement.... "Revolution is not about 18 days in Tahrir Square and then turning it into a carnival and loving the army....We have simply won the first phase." Roughly 25 percent of Egyptian women work outside their homes....But...42 percent of women cannot read or write and almost no women are political leaders.

Europe uses dictators vs. migrants

NYT, 3/10 — The turmoil in Libya and elsewhere in the region has toppled or undermined North African dictators who negotiated a web of benefits from Europe, including aid and diplomatic standing, in return for stopping immigrants seeking to cross the Mediterranean. Without the assistance of those [dictators], many in Europe worry that they will face new waves of...immigration not only from the liberated areas in the north, but from much of sub-Saharan Africa as well.

The immigrants would arrive at a time when much of Europe — struggling with high unemployment and lethargic economies — is already awash with anti-immigrant sentiment...and many coun-

tries say that they are simply incapable of absorbing poor migrants.

"In Italy, there is really a panic," said Anna Triandafyllidou, a migration expert with the Hellenic Foundation for European Policy. "Everything is up in the air, and no one knows what to do."

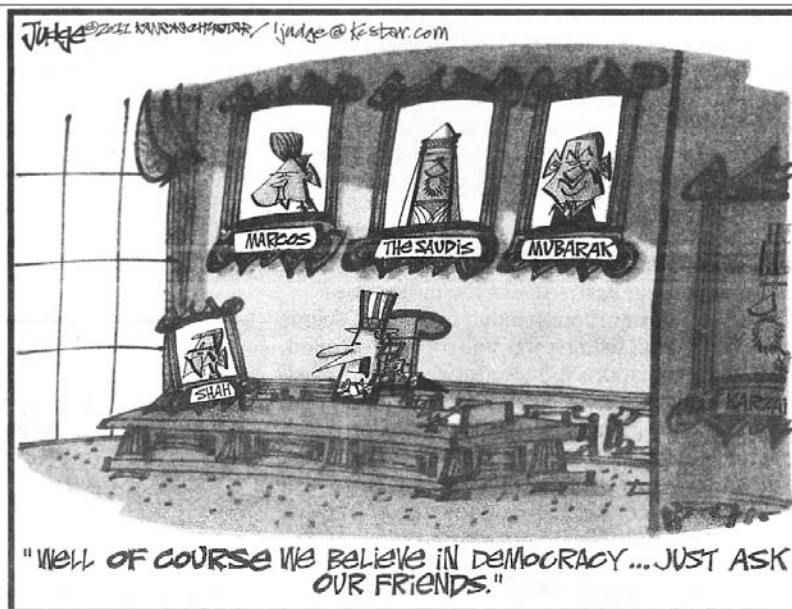
Unable to build the kind of border fence that the United States has erected to keep Mexicans [out], countries like Spain and Italy have spent years forging close relationships with North African leaders, persuading them to prevent migrants from trying to sail the rough seas of the Mediterranean. In return, Morocco, Tunisia and particularly Libya sometimes used brutal tactics to keep immigrants from ever getting near European shores....Now....hundreds of young men...were eager to tell visitors their message: "We want work."

Using crisis as anti-worker trap

NYT, 2/25 — ...From Chile in the 1970s onward,...right-wing ideologues have exploited crises to push through an agenda that has nothing to do with resolving those crises, and everything to do with imposing their vision of a harsher, more unequal...society.

Which brings us to Wisconsin 2011....The governor's budget bill would deny collective-bargaining rights to public-sector workers....But his attack on unions has nothing to do with the budget. What's happening in Wisconsin is, instead, a power grab — an attempt to exploit the fiscal crisis to destroy the last major counterweight to the political power of corporations and the wealthy. And the power grab goes beyond union-busting. The bill in question is 144 pages long, and there are some extraordinary things hidden deep inside.

For example, the bill includes language that would allow officials appointed by the governor to make sweeping cuts in health coverage for low-income families without having to go through the normal legislative process...."The department may sell any state-owned heating, cooling, and power plant or may contract with a private entity for the operation of any such plant, with or without solicitation of bids....This sounds...like a perfect set-up for cronyism and profiteering....Indeed, there are enough suspicious minds out there that Koch Industries, owned by the billionaire brothers who are playing such a large role in [governor] Walker's an-



ti-union push, felt compelled to issue a denial that it's interested in purchasing any of those power plants. Are you reassured?...Union-busting and privatization remain [the] priorities.

Sounds like we need communism

NYT, 3/7 — Education is the key to economic success. Everyone knows that the jobs of the future will require ever higher levels of skill....

But what everyone knows is wrong....Computers, it turns out, can quickly analyze millions of documents, cheaply performing a task that used to require armies of lawyers and paralegals. In this case, then, technological progress is actually reducing the demand for highly educated workers.

And legal research isn't an isolated example.... High-wage occupations that grew rapidly in the 1990s have seen much slower growth recently.... Conversely, jobs that can't be carried out by following explicit rules — a category that includes many kinds of manual labor, from truck drivers to janitors — will tend to grow even in the face of technological progress.

Most of the manual labor still being done in our economy seems to be the kind that's hard to automate....There aren't many assembly-line jobs left to lose. Meanwhile, quite a lot of white-collar work currently carried out by well-educated, relatively well-paid workers may soon be computerized. It's no longer true that having a college degree guarantees that you'll get a good job, and it's becoming less true with each passing decade.

So if we want a society of broadly shared prosperity, education isn't the answer — we'll have to go about building that society directly....We need to guarantee the essentials...to every citizen.

MORE ITEMS AVAILABLE AT WWW.PLP.ORG

UN An 'Indispensable Tool' for U.S. Bosses in Haiti

Liberal-minded people who still have illusions about the UN should take a hard look at MINUSTAH, the United Nations Stabilization Mission to Haiti. The UN has deployed troops there since 2004, when Jean-Bertrand Aristide was removed from the presidency. Haiti has a national police force but no standing army, and MINUSTAH performs the role of the army in any capitalist state, protecting the conditions under which imperialist and local capitalism can flourish.

In this case the capitalist army is an occupying army. UN blue helmets, and troops from many South American countries with Brazilian officers, mask its role as "a financial and regional security bargain for the US government...a good deal for the US...an indispensable tool in realizing core US government policy interests in Haiti" (US embassy cable, Oct. 1, 2008, released by WikiLeaks). (see box) MINUSTAH's mandate says its troops are there to keep the peace, help to rebuild civil society and provide aid and security to the population. What the people of Haiti actually experience is systematic brutality, part of any imperialist power's dominance over the working class.

MINUSTAH is responsible for the murder of Haitians marching against rising food prices in 2008, and the suppression of demonstrations in 2009 demanding a higher minimum wage. In early 2005, the commander of the UN forces reported that he was under extreme pressure from the international community (i.e., the United States, France, and Canada) to use violence to repress Haitian citizens.

During the April 2008 protests over food prices, the Brazilian commander feared that firing on demonstrators "could ignite opposition in Haiti, Brazil, and other contributing countries to his troops' presence in Haiti" (WikiLeaks cable). In 2010 MINUSTAH invaded the State University campus, confiscating radical students' computers and detaining a student they then threatened with death if he continued his activism.

In its efforts to quell any kind of opposition, MINUSTAH has invaded the area of extreme pov-

erty in Port-au-Prince known as Cité Soleil many times over the last seven years. Its soldiers enter Cité Soleil armed to the teeth, supposedly hunting gangsters. In the process, dozens of innocent men, women, and children have been killed by MINUSTAH fire in Cité Soleil. When the ruling class plans to "create the necessary conditions for Haitian authorities and international donors to implement a national strategy for the poorest areas" (UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon), you can be sure that it means terrorizing citizens in these areas and wiping out the opposition.

The U.S. ruling class, prior to the January 2010 earthquake, hoped that MINUSTAH, its "indispensable tool" and "security bargain" in Haiti, could extend its stay until at least 2013. It is certain that the imperialists and their local politicians will continue to extend that deadline.

A premature departure would threaten imperialist gains made by opening the Haitian market to free trade. It could lead to a decrease in foreign investment. Working-class political forces unfriendly to U.S. investment would have more of an opportunity to organize and possibly take power. Without MINUSTAH to protect them, Bill Clinton and his cronies would not be able to implement their plans for sweatshops paying \$5 a day.

We have been inspired by the writings and actions of our Haitian friends over the past few months. Their organizing among workers and students continues, despite the constant threat from MINUSTAH and police forces. We hope that work leads eventually to organizing for a communist revolution in Haiti.

The violence of MINUSTAH mocks the hypocritical lie of President Préval in 2008 that violence was not going to solve the problem in Haiti. People there live in the midst of imperialist violence every day, violence supported by Préval and the Haitian ruling class. This is a violence that brings, hunger, poverty, cholera, and destruction!

Revolutionary violence, communist armed struggle, would bring hope and a plan to rebuild

society in the image of the working class and for our needs. We must give the workers' fight in Haiti our complete support and spread their story far and wide, demonstrating the power of the working class under any and all conditions. ☪

U.S. Embassy Cable Spills the Beans on UN Role

(From Weekly News Update, Tuesday, February 1, 2011)

An October 1, 2008, a confidential U.S. diplomatic cable was released by the WikiLeaks group and published by the Spanish daily El País on Jan. 28. In the absence of a strong Haitian police force, UN troops provide "a security force of last resort," the cable said, and a withdrawal of MINUSTAH could lead to "resurgent kidnapping and international drug trafficking, revived gangs, greater political violence, an exodus of seaborne migrants, a sharp drop in foreign and domestic investment, and resurgent populist and anti-market economy political forces." [Ed.— emphasis added]

The cable goes on to say that in addition to providing "real regional security dividends for the U.S.," MINUSTAH helps U.S. policy by "developing habits of security cooperation in the hemisphere that will serve our interests for years to come."

Other cables, released by WikiLeaks the week of Jan. 17, suggest that pressure from the U.S. resulted in a MINUSTAH "anti-gang" operation that led to several deaths and dozens of injuries among civilians in Port-au-Prince's impoverished Cité Soleil section. In a June 10, 2005 meeting with Brazilian Under-Secretary for Political Affairs Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, U.S. ambassador to Brazil John Danilovich and an unnamed "political counselor" complained that "MINUSTAH has not been sufficiently robust," apparently referring to concern by mission commander Gen. Augusto Heleno Ribeiro about causing unnecessary casualties. Less than a month later, Gen. Heleno ordered the bloody operation in Cité Soleil.

March for Communism and Intern'l Working-Class Solidarity on May Day

May Day is the working class's international holiday celebrated by tens of millions of workers worldwide. It was born out of — and honors — the Chicago workers' historic struggle for the 8-hour day. On May 1, 1886, 350,000 workers shut down the city. It's a day when workers around the globe march for their common demands and continues to this day, signifying international working-class solidarity.

In 1884, the AFL passed a resolution to make eight hours "a legal day's labor from and after May 1, 1886." Workers were forced to labor "from sun-up to sundown," up to 14 hours a day. The Chicago Central Labor Council then called for a general strike on May 1, 1886, to institute the 8-hour day.

On that day, Chicago stood still as "Tens of thousands downed their tools and moved into the streets. No smoke curled from the tall chimneys of the factories and mills," reported one paper.

On May 3, the cops murdered six strikers at the McCormick Reaper Works. The next day thousands marched in protest into Chicago's Haymarket Square. A bomb was thrown by a police agent. Four workers were killed, seven cops died and 200 workers were wounded in what became known as the Haymarket Massacre.

Nine demonstration leaders were framed for "instigating a riot." Four were hung. A mass protest movement forced the Governor to free those still alive when the government admitted the frame-up.

The tens of thousands who won the 8-hour day saw it eroded, so another general strike was called for May 1, 1890. At the July 1889 meeting of the International Workers Association, organized and led by Karl Marx, the U.S. delegate reported on

the struggle. The Association decided "to organize a great international demonstration, so that... on one appointed day the [world's] toiling masses shall demand..." the 8-hour day. "Since a similar demonstration has already been decided upon by the American Federation of Labor...this day is adopted for the international demonstration." This international solidarity is vitally needed today.

As it progressed, the international communist movement took up the struggle and organized May 1st celebrations every year. In the U.S., it was championed for many years by the old Communist Party, with 250,000 marching in New York City in the 1940's. But when that party abandoned its principles, May Day was resurrected by the Progressive Labor Party in 1971 which advanced more revolutionary ideas. May Day marches have been organized by the PLP for the past 35 years, in cities such as Washington, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Boston, Philadelphia, Detroit, Houston, Delano, California and others, as well as

PLP contingents in Latin America.

While the bosses try to smear May Day as being "imported from Soviet Russia," it remains as a signal contribution of the world's workers that grew from the actions of those Chicago strikers over a century ago. On this May Day we march for the universal demands of all workers, regardless of capitalist-created borders: against imperialist war, against racism and sexism, for unity of immigrant and citizen workers, against wage slavery, against fascist police terror and for the communist solution to all these attacks facing the international working class.

How prophetic were the last words of Haymarket martyr August Spies as the hangman's noose was tied around his neck and he declared, "There will come a time when our silence will be more powerful than the voices you strangle today!" ☪

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