

CHALLENGE



THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

volume 43 no. 18

September 7, 2011

suggested donation \$.50

PLP's International Summer Projects

Palestine: Confirms Anti-Racist Politics

TEL AVIV, ISRAEL, August 12 — Fifteen students and workers organized the first ever PLP Summer Project in Palestine/Israel. Throughout the project we met with students and workers who were fighting house demolitions (see CHALLENGE, 8/17/11); daycare workers fighting sexist exploitation (see CHALLENGE, 11/3/10); and participated in rallies and demonstrations protesting declining living standards of Jewish and Arab workers and students. We received a friendly reception when we distributed PLP literature in Hebrew and Arabic.

The Project not only inspired many of us to continue to fight for one international party but also validated our line: racism hurts all workers. Capitalists can divide workers politically as well as maximize profits by exploiting some sections of the working class and super-exploiting others. Here the Israeli ruling class exploits Jewish workers while super-exploiting Arab workers.

Destroy Arab Workers' Homes and Then Charge Them for the Demolition!

The government confiscates Israeli citizens' lands, justifying this by claiming that the Arab residents created extensions to the houses "without the proper permits," making them "unsafe." Israeli cops then evict the people and demolish their houses. And then they often charge the former residents for the demolition of their own homes!

This has occurred all over Palestine/Israel, from Jaffa to Lod to the West Bank. According to the Israel Committee Against House Demolitions, since 1967 the Israeli government has demolished nearly 25,000 homes in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip, besides thousands of other homes in other areas.

Those able to resist demolition are forced to live in miserable conditions, without access to basic food, running water and jobs. In areas where Arabs live near Jewish settlers, the Israeli government is constructing walls to separate the Arab workers from the town centers. Arab workers can only get food and go to work by traveling through a tunnel underground. If there is no Israeli soldier present to unlock the tunnel's gate, the Arab workers must wait until one gets there (if at all) or else they can't get to work.

Tent City Demonstrations

While Arab workers in Palestine/Israel definitely face the sharpest attacks from the Israeli ruling class, Jewish workers also suffer from these actions. When we arrived for the Summer Project, young professionals and college stu-



South Africa, August 15th — Over 200,000 municipal workers struck today demanding an 18% wage increase.

dents had begun pitching tents to protest rising rents and growing inequality here. Within two weeks those six tents turned into demonstrations of over 300,000 Jewish and Arab workers protesting the rising cost of living accompanied by stagnant wages and lack of social services.

These demonstrations are attracting Arab and Jewish workers throughout Israel, making them the largest against the Israeli ruling class in recent history. However, there is little criticism by Jewish workers about the apartheid state that the Israeli government has erected.

According to Avi Shauli from Ynet, Israeli rulers have spent over \$50 billion to occupy Gaza and the West Bank (exceeding \$700 million annually). In fact, they spend twice as much on the Jewish settlement residents as they do on other Jewish workers (NY Times, 8/3/11).

Fight Against Anti-Arab Racism Crucial to Workers' Power

These struggles show the strength of PLP's line on fighting racism. We have always advocated that the fight against racism is the key to uniting the working class and taking state power. Once Jewish workers connect their struggles to those of Arabs living in Palestine, it lays the basis for the working class to move forward towards building for communist revolution. However, Zionist ideas as well as Palestinian nationalism continue to divide the workers.

This is where CHALLENGE plays a big role. In the literature we distributed we cited the importance of Jewish and Arab workers uniting to fight for a worker-run communist state, not fighting for a capitalist one- or two-state "solution."

We know we have a long way to go in building a communist revolution, but this can happen only if we're involved in the struggles of the working class. Through this we can win workers to unite and fight for communism. The bosses have created the conditions for this fight. It's up to us to bring all workers this communist analysis and build PLP in Palestine/Israel.✪

EDITORIAL>>

U.S.-U.K. Imperialists Expand Fascism and War; Multi-Racial Working-Class Youth Battle Racist Cops
page 2

STRIKE>>

Verizon Strikers Fighting for the Whole Working Class
page 3

EDUCATION>>

Obama's 'Race to Top' Puts Workers, Students At Bottom
page 3

JAPAN>>

Nuclear Disaster; Under Capitalism Workers Pay with Their Lives
page 7

CAPITALISM>>

Competition: Built into Profit System, Deadly for Workers
page 8

MOVIE REVIEW>>

'Captain America: Making the World Safe for Fascism
page 8

Summer Projects in Haiti & Mexico, pages 4,5

U.S.-U.K. Imperialists Expand Fascism and War Black, White, Asian Working-Class Youth Battle Racist Cops

Workers produced every item working-class rebels took from shops in English cities. Workers also produce all the Middle East's energy supplies. So what constitutes real "looting"? Is it a London youth, who may never find a job, grabbing a pair of sneakers? Or is it racist British capitalists joining racist U.S. bosses to murder millions in seizing Iraqi and Libyan oil and Afghan gas routes?

The recent rebellions take place in a context of declining U.S.-U.K. imperialism. For survival, the depleted British Empire became the U.S.'s junior partner during World War II. Now, rising China, resurgent Russia, and regional powerhouse Iran have the U.S. & Co. on the defensive. So both U.S. and U.K. rulers are implementing an agenda of widening wars overseas and police terror to enforce massive economic attacks on workers domestically.

Since racism is fundamental to capitalism and its drive for super-profits, the racist super-exploitation of black and Asian workers has moved these

youth — subjected to the system's mass racist unemployment and poverty — to openly rebel.

Militant anti-cop uprisings in England come as a mainly healthy reaction to fascist policing. London's working-class Tottenham district erupted after August 4 when cops gunned down Mark Duggan, a black father of four, on "suspicion" that he had a gun. He, in fact, never displayed one. The rebellion quickly spread to other deprived communities across London, and to the northern cities of Manchester, Birmingham and Liverpool.

But although the killing was a source of anger, it was not the primary cause behind the rampage of thousands of black, Asian and white youth that lasted four days before the heavily-reinforced police could clear the streets. The torching of police cars, police stations and public buildings expressed the pent-up frustration and rage of an alienated generation with no opportunities, gripped by poverty, discrimination and joblessness. Many are the second and third generation of their family without jobs. For some African-Caribbean youth unemployment is as high as 50%. A 2007 UNICEF report found that British and U.S. youth had the worst quality of life of 21 developed nations.

"We're sticking it to the police" yelled one woman, "and to the rich" she added. A Tottenham protestor who appeared on a radio show described the events as, "A war against injustice."

Their fury against the rich echoed the anger most Britons have against the bankers who paid themselves huge bonuses after taking government bailouts and of the blatant looting by politicians of public funds for their private expenses last year. One of the most notorious cases involved the member of parliament who took £80,000 (\$130,000) of tax-payer money to subsidize his second home. This year's scandal of police officials taking bribes from the Murdoch news organization has only added fuel to the fire.

Even the right-wing Telegraph newspaper (8/8/11) had to admit legitimate grievances, "Tottenham's unemployment is still among the highest in London. Black people are far more likely to be stopped and searched by the Met [Metropolitan Police] than whites."

Despite the media focus on burning stores, the so-called riots' main aspect was black, white and Asian working-class youth uniting in fierce battles against the killer cops. The Independent (London, 8/14/11) quoted one terrified cop, "We could hear time after time on our radios, 'Officer down,' 'Officer injured' and we knew it was bad."

Actually, that's pretty good, given London cops' reputation for racist brutality. The protests' weakness, however, lies, not in violence (which was unfocused at times) but the lack of a communist movement with the goal of destroying the profit system, the root cause of workers' ills.

Bosses' Media Ignore Libya Massacre for London Blazes

Britain's prime minister David Cameron, who has never done a day's work in his life, jetted back from vacationing in Tuscany to decry workers' "criminality" spreading across his country. But the real criminals are "NATO's air-strikes [on August 8th] at Majer [in Libya which] killed 85 people, including 33 children, 32 women and 20 men. Reporters and visitors were shown 30 of the bodies in a local morgue, including a mother and two children" (Counterpunch, 8/14/11).

Seeking access to Libyan oil unfettered by dictator Khadafy, British (along with French and Italian) bosses avail themselves of U.S. weapons and leadership. NATO supreme commander, U.S. admiral Stavridis, runs the Libya operation.

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.

While London Burns, Oil Wars Enrich U.K. Bosses

And in Iraq, British rulers' staunch military support for U.S.-led genocide pays off big time, though stability may never arrive. (On August 14, 42 coordinated attacks in ten cities killed 96 Iraqis and wounded 315.) "Iraq's oil auctions were portrayed as a model of transparency and a negotiating victory for the Iraqi government," said Greg Muttitt, author of "Fuel on the Fire: Oil and Politics in Occupied Iraq," quoted in the London Observer (7/31/11): "Now we see the reality was the opposite: a backroom deal that gave BP a stranglehold on the Iraqi economy, and even influence over the decisions of OPEC."

British forces based in Basra fought mostly near the vast Rumalia oil field, which BP (British Petroleum) had owned from 1927 to 1972. BP, to nobody's surprise, won the potentially 3-million-barrel-per-day Rumalia contract at the "transparent" 2009-2010 auctions. Now it's revealed that in the 2011 backroom deal Baghdad must pay BP for oil not even extracted from the wells should renewed warfare or OPEC quotas curb production. As for Afghanistan, British troops have concentrated on Helmand province, through which much of the proposed Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline may run.

PM Cameron Wants Nazi-style 'Community Policing' in Britain; Summons U.S. Top Cop Bratton

Just as in the U.S., British imperialists' war efforts cost vast sums of money. And, just as in the U.S., the rulers get that cash by stealing from workers with sharp, racist cuts in pay, jobs, health, education, pensions, etc. In Britain, mostly urban African, Caribbean and Asian workers (along with poor white native British and Irish) bear the brunt.

To enforce this exploitation, the bosses employ more intense fascist measures. However, Britain's police establishment is in disarray. Its two top Scotland Yard chiefs were forced to resign amid the Murdoch payoff scandal to squash the media mogul's bribery of cops. So to head off future rebellions, Cameron is calling in Bill Bratton, formerly top cop in Boston, New York and Los Angeles, to establish sweet-sounding but deadly "community policing." It resembles the Nazis' Judenrat scheme, which turned local Jewish leaders into a network of snitches that led millions to the gas chambers.

In Boston, Bratton employed black pastors. According to a 2008 report from Harvard's Kennedy School, "The ministers...helped the Boston Police manage negative publicity by the local media after several potentially explosive events [such as] the accidental death of a 75-year-old retired minister who suffered a fatal heart attack during a botched drug raid." Cameron wishes he had agents like these in Tottenham.

Fascism on the Rise

Fascism is being institutionalized. Government laws, surveillance through a vast street camera operation along with Cameron's deep cuts in social services impoverishing the working class have become the order of the day. Alongside this is the increasing influence of racist organizations like the anti-immigrant British Nationalist Party which recently took over nearly 10% of the local council seats in the extremely-segregated city of Bradford and has gained enough legitimacy to be included in nationally-televised political debates.

However, workers are not giving these fascists a clear path. Last year when the fascist English Defense League, which has held demonstrations against Asians nation-wide, rallied in Bradford, they were confronted by thousands of anti-racists and local residents, both white and Asian.

The rebellions in England hold important lessons in class struggle. They prove that a militant, multi-racial force of workers can take on and beat "highly-trained" cops. They also show the need for a revolutionary communist party and the outlook of seizing state power for our class, not just winning concessions which capitalism inevitably reverses. (See Verizon strike, p. 3.) Ultimately only revolution led by such a communist party can smash the creators of the world's largest looting system — capitalism — that gives us police brutality, poverty, mass racist unemployment and war. ☺

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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CHALLENGE/DESAFIO (ISSN 0009-1049) published bi-weekly by Challenge Periodicals. One Year: \$15. Six months: \$10. Send address changes to CHALLENGE Periodicals, GPO Box 808 Brooklyn, NY 11202, September 7 2011. Volume 43, No. 18

Verizon Strikers Fighting for the Whole Working Class

NEWARK, NJ, August 13 — Forty five thousand Verizon “wireline” workers struck their bosses last Sunday. Like the mass uprising of workers in Wisconsin, the decision by Verizon workers to go on strike is a breath of fresh air in the current climate of joblessness and economic crisis. With 25 million adults looking for full-time work, the decision to strike takes courage! We in the Progressive Labor Party salute this courage.

PLP members here have gone to the strike picket lines all this past week. We have brought fellow workers and students with us. We helped lead militant chants on the line of “Shut it down, shut it tight, the bosses can’t profit when the workers unite”; “The workers united will never be defeated” in English and Spanish, and “Make the bosses take the losses.” Many workers took CHALLENGE and a Party flyer analyzing the big picture. Workers clapped when we came back a second time with others. We had great political conversations with workers, and renewed at least one old friendship (see more next issue).

Along with many other bosses, Verizon chiefs are expanding the limits of recent attacks on the working class. Although Verizon posted \$22 billion in profits over the past four years, the bosses are demanding \$3,000 per year additional health care contributions per worker, the elimination of pensions for new hires, severe cuts on current pensions, givebacks on sick days, etc. As a further insult, Lowell McAdams, Verizon’s CEO, made \$20,650 an hour in total compensation in 2007.

This may be a long strike. Like all U.S. capitalists, Verizon bosses are in a dogfight for the number one position against domestic and “foreign” competition. To maximize their profits, Verizon has been downsizing and firing “wireline” workers, while expanding the lower-paid, non-union wireless division. Because the vast majority of Verizon’s profits come from that division, they have viciously opposed union organizing of those workers. A strike in 2000 challenged these anti-worker policies, but the Communication Workers of America (CWA) leadership caved in on unioniza-

tion demands. Since then, Verizon has vastly expanded their wireless workforce.

CWA union bosses pose this strike as a defense against Republican “attacks on the middle class.” This idea keeps workers from understanding that it is the whole working class that is being forced to pay for the economic crisis of the whole capitalist system and their imperialist wars to control oil and gas overseas.

CWA leaders support Democratic politicians, who pose as friends of the workers, but are actually squeezing us more for the war-makers than the Republicans. Even beating back some of these attacks would take a united, militant strike that shuts down the company’s wireless division and organ-

ized mass community support to surround closed worksites. CWA sellouts will oppose these kinds of tactics every step of the way.

PLP members in the Northeast must go to the picket lines with friends, food and drink, leaflets, and CHALLENGEs. We must raise resolutions of support for the strikers in unions, churches, community organizations and student clubs. The international, class-conscious, anti-racist leadership of communists could have a big political effect on the strikers.

The bosses need us, but we don’t need the bosses. They exist to steal the value we produce, which comes only from our class. Nothing operates without us. Wireline workers, who built, build and maintain the Verizon wireless network, can also shut it down. Such an action would be a school for communism.

When the wage slaves of the world come to see our collective strength, no force on earth can stop us. PLP aims to lead that great power towards the overthrow of capitalism, and the advent of a communist system where all the value we produce will be used solely to meet the needs of our class.☺

Verizon Pays No Taxes, Steals \$12 Billion from Workers

This year Verizon is raking in \$6 billion profits and paid a \$10 billion dividend to its parent company last year while PAYING NO TAXES! Now, they’re demanding \$1 billion in give-backs from the workers who produced this gigantic profit.

Said Citizens for Tax Justice, “Despite earning over \$32.5 billion over the last three years, Verizon not only paid nothing in corporate income taxes, it actually received nearly \$1 billion...in tax benefits from the federal government during that time,” the same amount as the concessions they’re demanding.

If Verizon paid the official 35% corporate income tax rate, they would have owed \$11 billion. So that amount plus the \$1 billion government subsidy means they’ve stolen \$12 billion from tax-paying workers.

Meanwhile, the company’s top five executives grabbed \$257 million over the past four years. CEO Lowell McAdam gets \$55,000 per day! Capitalism means stealing.



Obama’s ‘Race to Top’ Puts Workers, Students At Bottom

WASHINGTON, D.C., JULY 30 — At a rally and march to the White House today sponsored by Save Our Schools (SOS), some of the 3,000 angry and enthusiastic teachers, parents and education advocates vigorously took up the chant started by a PLP member: “Obama and Duncan, you can’t hide! We charge you with Education genocide!” Duncan is Obama’s Secy. of Education.

SOS’s reform demands included: 1) Equitable funding of all public schools; 2) An end to high-stakes testing; 3) Local curriculum development; and 4) Teacher/community leadership on policy questions.

Participants were rightfully outraged by ongoing school “deform,” an effort by ruling-class

billionaires like Microsoft’s Bill Gates and NYC’s Mayor Bloomberg to replace public schools with charter schools, cut resources for education and maintain the most severe racial segregation since the 1960s. “Deform” would coerce millions of teachers to abandon serious education by threatening bad evaluations and loss of employment unless they “get with the program” and do little more than test preparation, all year, every year.

In just an hour’s time, 50 people took CHALLENGE with serious interest, clearly understanding — after a brief discussion — that it stands for communist politics and the fight against racism. Some gave contributions.

One of the keynote speakers, Diane Ravitch, who served in the Bush administration — while now opposing No Child Left Behind (which she previously supported) — failed to challenge the central tenet of Obama’s “Race to the Top”: an effort by U.S. imperialism to maintain its lucrative and bloody empire, in part, by out-competing its rivals to train large numbers of top engineers, scientists and mathematicians. This international competition and rivalry is the basic cause of imperialist war and massive human devastation.

Ravitch’s 2010 book, “The Life and Death of the Great American School System,” upholds her earlier essentially anti-communist attacks on those who view public schools, in her words, as institutions “devised by scheming capitalists to impose ‘social control’ on an unwilling proletariat or to reproduce social inequality” — which is precisely what they are. Though capitalists claim their public schools are “the door to equal opportunity,” they recreate the profit system’s class structure —

rich and poor, bosses and workers — in each new generation, while maintaining massive racist segregation.

A vivid example of what they want taught is contained in one state’s 2011 high-stakes test, which must be passed to graduate. The question was asked about the purpose of the International Monetary Fund. The “right answer” was “to help and support people in developing nations.” In reality, the IMF’s basic policy of “structural readjustment” prioritizes profits for the rich, spawning soaring food prices and expanding intensification of hunger. This test question and answer represents a purely capitalist point of view.

Such test questions will be part of a national curriculum, known as the Common Core Standards. In upcoming years, teacher evaluations and jobs will be tied to their students’ scores on tests, based on that kind of curriculum. As the U.S. ruling class prepares for more and bigger wars with their international rivals, beyond Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, they will tighten their ideological control of what gets taught, and intensify their efforts to propagandize for unthinking wartime loyalty to the needs of capitalist rulers.

As we build a multi-racial movement to fight school “deform,” we must strive to defeat the capitalist class and its dead-end ideology and win students to participate and play an active, leading role. This requires the spreading of PLP’s ideas to win masses to see the need for communist revolution and to join our Party. That’s the only way to establish a society in which there are no rich exploiting poor but only a working class free of bosses and profits, sharing collectively the value that our class produces.☺



PLP's International...

Haiti: Freedom School A Lesson Plan for Communist Education

PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI, July 29 — The last day of the PLP Summer Project's freedom school marked a big advance in organizing around the anti-racist, anti-sexist ideas urgently needed by workers in Haiti. After an inspirational class, much of it student-led, teachers and students broke through the cement-block walls of their tilekol ("little school," in Kreyol). They marched to the State University Hospital of Haiti, where they showed militant support for workers in the fourth week of a strike for lost wages and decent patient care.

The day capped a week of critical, participatory, political education that involved teams of Haitian and visiting teachers and about 50 eager young people. As opposed to traditional, top-down schooling under capitalism, which imposes conformity with the bosses' reactionary ideology and out-and-out lies, the tilekol aimed to equip its students to grapple with reality and change the world.

Our school was rooted in the practice of communist educators in the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, whose influence later ranged from the Freedom Summer schools in the U.S. civil rights movement to the work of Paulo Freire, the Brazilian writer who called for "transformative education" to liberate workers' minds.

Our first attempts to teach were bogged down by the challenge of translation in up to four languages (English, French, Kreyòl, Spanish), and also by traditional lecturing that was too dominated by the teachers. But by the second and third weeks, we gradually shifted to a more participatory style.

Seated on worn public school benches, three or four to a desk, the students became enthusiastically engaged in small-group discussions, writing projects, and video productions. Ignoring the heat, teachers and students together learned songs of struggle.

The students' evaluations of their tilekol were moving to hear. The key word was "pride" — in their newly-discovered capacity to analyze the horrific situation in Haiti and the wider capitalist world, and to understand how they could organ-

ize a movement to defend themselves and their families of workers, unemployed, and homeless residents of tent camps.

The students learned about the history of imperialism in the Dominican Republic and Haiti, how capitalism works, including the labor theory of value. We learned how it uses racism to divide and exploit workers and the need to end sexism and violence against women as well as the differences between charity, aid, and solidarity. We also discovered the role played in Haiti today by the police and the occupying army of MINUSTAH, the United Nations' "stabilization" mission in Haiti that functions as the brutal arm of imperialism.

They learned about The Communist Manifesto and the Paris Commune, and how those 19th-century words and deeds were relevant to their own experience.

Throughout the freedom school's final session, the classroom echoed with the students' dramatic production of the day before. It was inspired by a recent incident where MINUSTAH troops had chased student protestors with tear gas into their tent camp and ultimately killed a child there. As the tilekol's students staged their theater in the Summer Project health clinic's open-air waiting room, every seat was filled, and a dozen people watched through windows and the doorway.

In the spirit of the Chinese Cultural Revolution of the 1960s, we then took the school into the streets, as we had in a previous visit to the hospital workers' union hall (CHALLENGE, Aug. 17). We surged outside for the six-block walk to the hospital, where striking workers were waiting to start a courtyard press conference. The strikers' leaders lined up some of our visiting teachers for speeches of solidarity, translated into French. That was good, and seen on national TV, in contrast to the mostly negative media coverage of the strike.

But then things really took off, as we began chanting in English, "Same Enemy, Same Fight: Workers of the World Unite!" We'd also learned it in Kreyòl, so one of us stammered out, "Menm lenmi, menm lit; travayè nan lemond fè nou youn!"

The crowd took it, workers and tilekol students alike, belting it out as one. Someone began singing the satirical "Poukisa?", asking why the bourgeoisie's dogs ate better than they did, and the students ran with it. The workers joined in, elderly women strikers smiling into our students' eyes as they sang together.

Then came the dancing march, as they do it in South America and Africa. By the time it ended, we had circled the hospital grounds three times, singing all the way, and the hospital's police unit had called in UDMO, the regime's paramilitary thugs. Students responded without fear, changing their anti-MINUSTAH song to: "Why is UDMO killing us? We can't go on this way." We found ourselves marching ten blocks to picket the Ministry of Health, with the local press trailing. The reporters carefully edited out the inspiring scenes on the march, but they couldn't erase the working-class unity and communist spirit of the day.

The students were indeed proud of all this — and also sad, as one 14-year-old said, that there would be no tilekol for her on Monday morning. But the freedom school is not ending, after all. Local and international organizers of the Summer Project made a plan to continue tilekol into August and beyond. Local teacher teams will keep it going, along with guest lecturers from strikes, tent camps, unions, and community-based organizations. Every one of our students signed up!

On this wave of hope, as we prepared to return, we knew that we had started something important, with comrades together from Haiti, the U.S., and Mexico. Where would it end? One student, a young Seventh Day Adventist, told us that he'd heard a lot of bad things about communism, but that communism would be better than what they have in Haiti today. We teachers had learned a huge lesson from our freedom school students and from the hospital strikers. What Freire called "transformation" — our ability to change the world — lies in our own hands, united in struggle.✪

(In later issues: more comments from participants in the Haiti freedom school and clinic.)

Israel: Workers, Students Protest Rising Prices Demand 'All Power to the Workers'

TEL AVIV, ISRAEL, August 6 — In a growing resistance to capitalist inequalities, 300,000 workers and students of all religious and ethnic groups held a mass rally against rising prices in central Tel Aviv. This demonstration was the high point, so far, of the "tent movement" that began two weeks earlier, as it went beyond the initial focus on unaffordable housing to more far-reaching demands that challenged the bosses' dictatorship.

The backdrop for these protests is the rapidly-rising cost of living and rapidly-deteriorating wages in Israel, as the capitalists' regime, facing crisis after crisis, tries to milk the last ounce of profit out

of the working class. Despite a shortage of decent housing, many real estate developers refrain from developing land they've purchased to wait for the price to go up and maximize their profits. And, finally, the workers have had enough.

The protestors' main slogan was "The People Demand Social Justice," accompanied by "The People Demand a Welfare State." Many also denounced the current Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, and his "pig-like capitalism" (as if there could be capitalism which isn't "pig-like").

There were, however, far more militant slogans in parts of the rally, especially the bloc of the Power to the Workers union and a group of workers of all ethnic groups from Jaffa. Their predominant slogans were "All power to the workers!"; "A workers' state — not a slave state!"; "The answer to cutbacks: revolution!"; and "The people will overthrow the regime!" While this group's leadership actually meant "reforms" when it said "revolution," many of the rank-and-file truly want significant change in Israeli society. Some would like the working class to be in power. All in all, they are very open to new ideas about how and where to lead this fight.

Many of these demonstrators clearly see themselves as part of the working class. For decades, the bosses bribed Israeli workers with a few crumbs from their table and convinced them that

they were a "middle class" with different interests than those of blue-collar wage slaves. But as these white-collar workers saw their standard of living decline, they came to understand their exploitation by the tiny capitalist class. Now they see their true place in the class system — under the boot of the bosses and their state.

For the first time in many years, masses of Israeli Arabs and Jews marched together against the capitalist government, refusing to let racism divide them. This unity needs to grow even broader. The way forward is to link rising prices to the bosses' need to expand fascism in the West Bank and Gaza, where racist Israeli settlements get huge government subsidies.

We in the Progressive Labor Party welcome these militant mass protests by the working class. We believe, however, that a reformed "welfare state" cannot bring true social justice. After all, capitalists are constantly driven to maximize profits, and do so by robbing workers and spilling workers' blood in wars over resources and markets. Our only solution is a communist revolution by the whole working class, which will smash the bosses' state apparatus and replace it with a new state for the workers, by the workers and of the workers.✪



...Summer Projects

MEXICO: PLP Hits Home with Industrial Workers

'No Shortcuts...Struggle is the essence of life...'

The feeling I've experienced [during this Summer Project] has been invigorating. I see strength in the hope that the inequality in our world, caused solely by the power of money, would one day disappear for good.

I see so much suffering and am unable to do anything immediately, for I myself am empty-handed and feel that ideological work is not enough. I wonder if there is a shortcut. But history grounds me: for revolution to succeed, we must do profound ideological work following PLP's red line. Those foundations should be solid within each of us.

As Marx wrote, "struggle is the essence of life," and therefore, one shouldn't rely only on theory, but should dare to help our class fulfill their needs through practice. That way, one day, we'd fully understand the needs of the proletariat.

I should admit that although I am afraid, it's an honor to open my house to great comrades from Mexico and other parts of the world; I never imagined I'd be sharing the same roof with them. I won't see many of them again. But, I'm certain that every word, every CHALLENGE or flyer that we distribute, is contributing to the weakening and fall of those responsible for so much misery and pain.

A communist worker



'Great road ahead...good to journey with PLP'

The first day of activities was very satisfying and encouraging. Twelve of us participated in a meeting, in which ten were members and two were CHALLENGE-reader friends who will be asked to join the Party.

The first part of the activity was a discussion of the work we'll be involved in during the Summer Project, as well as a brief report of the work each of us carries out in the Party and the length of our involvement. We also discussed the purpose of our Party, its final goal, and our politics. We shared our struggle against nationalism, sexism, racism, and the importance of building the base and CHALLENGE.

We shared the struggles in our "home countries." The importance of PLP is its internationalism. We benefit from the experiences of our class sisters and brothers. It's important to learn that in spite of the distance and borders, the condition of workers is the same, because the system under which we live is the same.

A young participant shared his experience in the Haiti Summer Project. It's important to organize these activities because of the enthusiasm and commitment they generate.

This is the first Summer Project in which I have participated and it gave me the energy to keep on building the Party; there is a great road ahead and it's good to journey with PLP.

A comrade

MEXICO CITY, August 7 — "We don't want crumbs, we want the whole cake!" With these words at a communist school attended by nearly 30 workers and their relatives alongside members of Progressive Labor Party, a comrade from Mexico summed up the class struggle at the heart of the PL Summer Project here.

The school covered political economy, the rise of fascism, the line of PL, and the necessity of a single international communist party. It followed a week of activity in an industrial area near Mexico City, an impoverished, drug-infested community of mostly factory workers. As we visited the Party's base in many houses and several workplaces, and then met with workers in the evening at a comrade's home, it was obvious how capitalism had failed to meet the community's most basic needs. Of every ten students who begin primary school, only one will graduate from high school. In many houses, water and electricity are sporadic. Some neighborhoods have none at all.

One worker we visited, Roberto, is a brick-maker. His neighborhood has no paved streets, no school. The bricks he makes go elsewhere; his own home is made of wood, plastic sheets, corrugated metal, and cardboard, with a dirt floor. For nearly two hours, Roberto talked about all the things his community lacked, from public transportation to sports facilities. He said that the three major parties' local politicians buy votes with pre-election pizza parties, but deliver nothing of substance to the workers. Roberto is a regular CHALLENGE reader and agreed to take several papers to distribute.

Jorge is a factory worker — "a true communist," as a comrade who works with him said after a small but intense struggle at their workplace. As a young man with no dependents, he volunteered to give up his own job to someone who needed it more. After the brief struggle, however, both workers kept their jobs. Our discussion with Jorge included his family members, all of them eager to ask questions about PL. We offered our analysis of the perpetual crisis of overproduction in capitalism. The system's relentless drive for maximum profits explains why skilled Mexican factory workers, once relatively well-paid, are now losing their jobs or getting lower salaries. It also explains why the workers' children, even those with university degrees, cannot find work, much like their cohorts in the United States, Europe, and worldwide.

This week of meetings and visits was very productive. We had inspiring conversations and distributed lots of literature. With comrades from a number of different countries participating, we showed PL's international character and built solidarity with our friends. Despite the pervasive sexism under capitalism, we found that husbands consistently encouraged their wives and children to participate in our discussions. We were also humbled by the generosity and hospitality of these workers with limited means. In all cases, people agreed to read CHALLENGE and to show it to their friends.

All workers and members of PL can learn much from our comrades from Mexico. They show how industrial workers — armed with class hatred, communist ideas, and a single international party — represent the only threat to capitalism. They are the future of the working class.☺

Making the World Safe for Fascism

continued from page 8

that began in the labor struggles of the early 20th century. The denial of these rights after the war would reignite the struggle when soldiers returned home. In the years leading up to the war, thousands of workers from around the world voluntarily risked their lives to battle the fascists in Franco's Spain.

Captain America's distortion of the past reveals many important details about the ruling-class politics of the present. Along with changing the character of working-class resistance against fascism, the film embraces characteristics of fascism that the U.S. ruling class admires.

Capitalism's fetishism of technology is revealed in both the creation of Captain America and in the military weaponry of the Nazis. Steve Rogers is turned into the hero through a special serum and machine. Using a mystical energy source, the villain creates a weapon that instantly dissolves its targets. The obsession with technology seen in capitalist society reflects a political reality: Vastly outnumbered by the working class, capitalists

constantly promote technology as the power to maintain their class rule while pushing workers further to the margins. Inventions like the atom bomb were meant to take workers, who are considered unreliable by capitalists, out of the equation when it came to imperialist war. Yet their technology is no match for a united working class, a lesson the U.S. bosses learned well from their war in Vietnam.

The embrace of the Nazi eugenics program stands at the center of the film, bolstering U.S. racism. After reducing workers' hatred of fascism to a "dislike of bullies," the film then proposes a "novel" solution: take a blond-haired, blue-eyed, white man and genetically alter him, turning him into a super soldier to fight the Nazis. They declare a plan to build a whole army of these "supermen," a "master race" if you will. They take Hitler's dream and turn it into a celluloid reality. The film exposes the U.S. ruling class's long obsession with racism and theories of genetic racial superiority (for more on this history see Edwin Black's "War Against the Weak").

Ultimately the film embraces the worst realities and myths of

Nazism and it wants the viewer to embrace them as well. It distorts the mass worker movement against fascism that eventually crushed the Nazis because the ruling class would prefer that history did not repeat itself. Captain America sells workers (with their children as the target audience) Nazi-esque open fascism by draping it in red, white, and blue and hiding behind the façade of "innocent" comic-book fun.☺



LETTERS

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

Pizza with a 'Communist Topping'

Throughout the fight at Brookdale Hospital, our PLP club has been struggling with CHALLENGE distribution and the ideas in "Build a Base in the Working Class," and Lenin's "What Is To Be Done?" A recent incident illustrates that even while building long-term ties, there are plenty of opportunities to expand our CHALLENGE readership!

While visiting with Brookdale workers at their homes to discuss CHALLENGE, I stopped to grab a slice of pizza in the mostly black and Latino working-class neighborhood of East New York. I, a white-skinned worker who was deliriously hungry, walked into the store and failed to notice all the young black workers' eyes on me.

While staring at the menu, I heard one of the workers behind me ask, "what're you doing in here, slick? What business you got being in here? What's your deal?" I turned my head and realized he was talking to me. "What, you a rookie undercover [cop]?" I nervously laughed and answered, "no man, I'm not undercover."

The police maintain an armed occupation of East New York, as in every other black and Latino neighborhood. There's no shortage of plainclothes KKKops walking around as if they rule the place. He — and apparently the other black workers in the store, judging by the number of folded arms standing around me — sized me up again. "So, Transit [cop]?" Then, remembering the several dozen CHALLENGEs in my bag, I said, "Actually, I'm a communist in the Progressive Labor Party." The look on everyone's faces was a unanimous, "who the hell is this guy?"

I handed out CHALLENGEs to all the workers and began an impromptu speech — starting with the Brookdale bosses' viciously racist attack on workers in East New York and Brownsville. Several were born at Brookdale, and were unaware of the hospital's dire condition.

Those who were hoping for an entertaining confrontation walked outside, but two of the workers (including the one who asked if I was a cop) remained to talk politics.

As they leafed through the paper, commenting on the photos of the Harlem Rebellion in the article about Comrade Milt, I explained that PLP is not just another political party, but a revolutionary communist party organizing all workers to fight the racist attacks. The international PLP is trying to organize workers worldwide to fight for communism. We believe that millions of workers must fight for armed revolution and smash the entire racist, sexist, imperialist capitalist system.

"Word?" He asked. "Yes! Armed revolution of millions of workers, against capitalism. The only way to smash racism." (I especially emphasized this not only to keep politics primary, but also in case there were any lingering suspicions about me being a cop.)

One of the workers, Aaron, has been a truck driver for a milk company for six years. We spoke about our respective jobs and union issues. I asked him if he'd like a CHALLENGE subscription mailed directly to his home, and we exchanged contact information. After he told me he hangs out with many of the workers in that store regularly, I promised to send him several copies to distribute.

As I walked out with my pizza slice to continue my home visits, Aaron called out "you better start sending me those papers!" That day, visiting and building stronger ties with our fellow workers at Brookdale was a step forward for our Party, for sure; but this was a bonus!

Red Pizza

Debating the Road to Revolution

Revolution was definitely in the air at the 2011 annual summer institute of the MLG (Marxist Literary Group). Partly because of PL's presence last year, this year's theme of revolution attracted nearly twice as many participants as the year before despite the scarcity of academic celebrities. Interest in radical politics is definitely gaining credibility among instructors and students. Communism is no longer an unmentionable word: a recent poorly advertised UK academic conference on "the idea of communism" drew over a thousand attendees.

While most MLG contributors consider them-

selves to be Marxists, few are communists. Many of those present this year included anarchists, socialists, anticommunist Marxists as well as a contingent of revisionists (fake leftists). Although our twenty-five years of work in the MLG have led to only a few people actually joining the PLP, we have maintained a left analysis of the various versions of Marxism popular at the MLG.

We have consistently criticized the impact of identity politics, postmodernism, neo-Marxism, and post-Marxism upon the study of history and culture. We have fought the anticommunism — specifically in relation to distorted conceptions of Soviet and Chinese history — that prevails even among academics who consider themselves to be anti-capitalist radicals. We have put forth the need to rely on the working class and to make the fight against racism and sexism an essential part of revolutionary struggle.

The PL papers this year that criticized the two-stage theory to establish socialism before moving to communism, were well received, despite these ideas having sparked skeptical or hostile responses at preceding conferences.

The present moment offers significant opportunities for the Party's membership and influence to grow among radical academics in the humanities. PL members in the MLG — as our comrades in the public schools are doing — need to seize all possible opportunities to make our voices heard.

Red intellectuals

Comrade Milt Rosen: No Retreat from Working-Class Communist Revolution

The remembrance for a great communist leader, comrade Milt, in CHALLENGE was both moving and inspiring. Milt, along with Mort, Wally and others, provided the leadership for rebuilding the international communist movement at a time when most had abandoned the revolutionary content of the ideas of Marx, Engels and Lenin.

A small group of revolutionaries split from the CPUSA and joined with a ragtag group of anti-racist, anti-imperialist students, of whom I was one, to form PLP. Milt was instrumental in welding us all together in a fighting party that put principle first, last and always.

Milt seemed to be at least one step ahead in analyzing the political ideas and strategy necessary to build a working-class party, but he also was the most patient in listening to, and learning from, the input of each and every comrade. Milt would sometimes not speak at a meeting until after everyone else had contributed their often-conflicting ideas. He would then summarize the discussion with an analysis that would often lead to everyone thinking, "why didn't I see it that way?" Criticism and self-criticism came naturally to Milt, and democratic centralism became a live process to even the most individualistic students (as I certainly was).

Another of Milt's crucial contributions to PLP's growth was his insistence on honesty in our political line. This had not always been the practice of the international communist movement. Industrial and agricultural workers had been approached with reformist ideas, with communism reserved for the "right" time. Milt always said, "we can't trick our way to communism." When PLP criticized the politics of the Vietnamese comrades that were fighting U.S. imperialism to the death, it didn't make us popular in many quarters. However, in the long run, it enabled PL and our friends (and eventually many others) to see the consequences of compromises with our class enemy.

Milt was a gentle soul when struggling with us all to make whatever contribution we were capable of, but he showed no tolerance for any retreat from the politics of working class communist revolution. Attacking racism, sexism (and eventually nationalism) was not just a tactic — they were the essence of our communist politics.

Our recent international growth is a result of the PLP's unwavering commitment to communist revolution in the face of the retreats of the old movement. It is a testament to the leadership of Milt and many others. We can honor their memory by continuing the struggle until the working class rules the world. Comrade Milt, we will miss you.

Old time NYC red



Many members and friends have asked what we are doing to remember Milt Rosen, founding chairperson of PLP. Progressive Labor Party has established a fund to honor Milt and Harriet Rosen. The International Solidarity Fund will be used to continue our work training young leaders in the 25 countries where we have members and to spread PLP ideas all over the globe. This will help turn the idea of one worldwide communist party into reality.

Memorial Service:

Los Angeles on September 25, 2011

Brooklyn, New York on Sunday, October 9, 2011 at 2 PM

Old First Church, Corner of 7th Avenue and Carroll Street

Make checks payable to CHALLENGE Periodicals. Write "solidarity fund" on the subject line or give to your local PLP club. Send to PO Box 808, Brooklyn, NY 11202

Capitalism's Unemployment Spawns Suicide

I am a 29-year-old student about to finish my masters' degree. My spouse is 26 years old and finished a bachelor's degree in biology two years ago, but has not been able to find a job since. Unemployment is a tremendous problem for young people. This wrecked her spirit since she faced ever-dwindling savings and did not receive unemployment insurance. In the last two years she deteriorated from a young, energetic science student to a bitter, angry woman crushed under the wheels of the job market.

A year ago she had enough. After not finding a job for a year, she was an emotional wreck. In desperation, she tried to kill herself to avoid being a burden to me or her mother. She almost succeeded, and was hospitalized for several days in an intensive-care unit with acute poisoning. After this suicide attempt, she was diagnosed with depression and began receiving anti-depressant treatment. She also started receiving a small disability benefit due to her depression.

However, this is not a personal mental illness like the system tries to say. This is not her fault. She does not want to be unemployed and receive a disability benefit. She wants a full-time job to earn a living. The capitalist system cannot provide her with a job and blames her for her anger and bitterness.

A system that can't provide everyone with a real job has to go. A system which drives so many workers to desperation has to be replaced by a new system that will allow everyone to work for the benefit of all and receive an equal share of the bounty produced by society. Both of us have joined the Progressive Labor Party and are now fighting for a future free from the horrors of unemployment and poverty.

Red Student



Japan's Nuclear Disaster Under Capitalism Workers Pay with Their Lives

Despite its recent absence from the news, the Fukushima nuclear disaster in Japan has been moving from bad to worse. After more than two months of befuddling and dodging, the Japanese government finally admitted the Fukushima plant suffered meltdowns in three of its reactors, releasing more than double its previous estimate of radiation since the March earthquake. (Moreover, government objection to independent testing around the site means these estimates are unconfirmed and probably understate the real amount — (London Telegraph, 6/10).

On June 4, robots entering Reactor 1 reported the highest levels of radiation since the crisis began: 40,000 tons of irradiated water remains in the plant's lower levels that might or might not be sealed and an unknown amount has leaked into the ocean and surrounding area. (USA Today, 6/4) And questions remain regarding how much radiation has entered the nearby Tokyo water supply. (NY Times, 3/23) Now the Japanese government has admitted that melted fuel might have broken through the containment vessels in Reactors 1-3 which, if true, represents a significant escalation of the disaster. (Bloomberg News, 6/6)

Hundreds of workers in Japan have accepted virtual death sentences by entering the plant to try to contain the meltdown, and 270 retirees and older workers have volunteered to go to Fukushima to help with the containment. One stated, "I will be dead before the cancer gets me." (Reuters, 6/6) These workers' sacrifice represents the finest qualities of the working class.

The capitalist class has performed in its usual cowardly way, pushing workers into the plant while hiding safely in Tokyo trying to cover up the scope of the disaster. In a particularly crass move,

the Tepco top brass (operators of Fukushima) has to cut workers' wages 25% to pay for the disaster. (Bloomberg, 4/26) Furthermore, the government refused to expand the evacuation zone "to avoid compensation payments to still more evacuees." (NYT, 8/9). Under capitalism, workers pay for disasters with both their wages and their lives.

Nuclear Power A Continuing Disaster under Capitalism

The Fukushima disaster cannot be overstated. The meltdown is currently rated as a level 7 nuclear disaster (the highest possible rating), matching the 1986 Chernobyl meltdown, which, by some estimates, may have caused one million deaths. (ENS, 4/26) This is significant since the Chernobyl disaster occurred in a less populated area and was contained far more quickly than the currently unfolding Fukushima disaster.

But nuclear plants don't have to melt down to become deadly. A 2004 U.S. study found Strontium-90 — a radioactive byproduct of nuclear fission — in baby teeth. The concentrations of children with this radioactive byproduct were extremely high in communities located within 40 miles of nuclear power plants. (USA Today, 1/2/04) Furthermore, U.S. nuclear power plants have not received thorough and regular inspections, leading companies to continue operating them despite serious problems in safety equipment, in order to maintain high profits. (USA Today, 11/6/03; Democracy Now, 3/27/09; 3/14/11)

Nuclear Power: A Cover for War

The bosses love nuclear power for a variety of reasons. The heavy subsidizing of the nuclear industry (true in all countries) represents huge profits for private firms. Current promised nuclear

subsidies in the U.S. represent the transfer of \$36 billion from the working class (who pays almost all taxes) to private industry. (MSNBC, 2/16/10)

But the real reason for the growing emphasis on nuclear power is war. The increasing imperialist competition and war for control of energy-producing regions, most notably Central Asia and the Middle East, has led to increasing domestic development of nuclear power in imperialist countries. U.S., Japanese and European capitalists have all placed a heavy emphasis on developing nuclear power to offset their growing dependence on foreign sources of oil and natural gas.

Furthermore, ruling-class support of nuclear power provides a convenient cover for the ongoing development of nuclear weapons. Nuclear power plants are required to produce the various fuel components for nuclear weapons. As capitalists increase their commitment to imperialist war — while public support for these wars wavers — nuclear weapons are seen as important "force multipliers" on the battlefield. A recent report has confirmed that the various nuclear powers, rather than reducing their arsenals, are in fact updating and improving their nuclear weapons systems. (Agency France Press, 6/6)

Nuclear power has been sold to the working class under the lie that it is environmentally "sound," but the promise of the atom in the hands of capitalists remains today, as it did in 1945: war, death and terror. As a Party we should show our respect and admiration for the brave workers currently battling the Fukushima disaster by building a movement that can crush the murderous capitalist system that created the disaster in the first place.☺

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

Marx: when wages fall, profits rise

LAT, 7/22 — ...Profit margins (the share of a company's revenue that goes to profits) of the Standard & Poor's 500 companies are at their highest levels since the mid-1960s....The [50-year] decline in wages and benefits...is responsible for about 75 percent of the increase in our major corporations' profit margins.

Or, to state this more simply, profits are up because wages are down...

British Youth explode, but lack plan

NYT, 8/10 — With 10,000 additional police officers deployed across London on Tuesday night, looting and arson dipped sharply...violence ticked up again in several other major cities, including Birmingham, Manchester and Liverpool.

...Police action might fail to put more than a temporary curb on the disorder. Sudden flare-ups continued....The police force appeared to be stretched near its limit....One redeployed unit traveled from Manchester only hours before scores of youths stormed into that city's center, setting fire to cars and buildings...in what local officials described as the worst mayhem to hit the city in modern memory.

...The pattern of the current disorder was similar to that of the last major racial rioting in London, which occurred in 1986. Now, as then,... "parts of the community seem to have been a tinderbox waiting to explode" because of joblessness and cuts in government services...

Both parties: all villains, no heroes

8/10, NYT — ...Obama has spent a lifetime creating his persona — superior, wise, above all

parties and interests, all-seeing, calm, unflappable.

But...the president never identifies the villains who cause our epic problems. It's unclear whether that reflects his aversion to conflict or a fear of offending donors, or both....And it has led to Americans regarding the nation's capital as a place of all villains and no heroes.

BP squeezes more out of Iraq oil

GW, 8/5 — BP has been accused of taking a "stranglehold" on the Iraqi economy after the Baghdad government agreed to pay the British company even when oil is not being produced....The original deal for operating Iraq's largest field — half as big as the entire North Sea — has been rewritten so that BP will be immediately compensated for civil disruption or government decisions to cut production.

This potentially could influence...policy decisions made by Iraq...

The changes are likely to anger...those who saw the [U.S. and] UK's involvement in toppling Saddam as part of a "war for oil".

If \$\$ fails, U.S. will just kill

GW, 8/5 — Western security agencies were probably behind the killing of an Iranian scientist, analysts have said. Darioush Rezaeinejad, 35, was shot dead in Tehran, the third murder of a scientist in the city since 2009, "I suspect Rezaeinejad was assassinated because of his relationship to Iran's nuclear programme," said... a U.S.-based analyst.

New China: execs buying women

NYT, 8/10 — ...In...the metropolis...he...had acquired just about everything men of his socio-economic ilk covet: a Mercedes-Benz, a sprawling antique jade collection and a lavishly appointed duplex for his wife and daughter.

It was only natural then, he said, that two years ago he took up another costly pastime:... "Keeping a mistress is just like playing golf," he said.



"Both are expensive hobbies."

As China has shed its chaste "Communist" mores for the wealth and indulgences of a market-orientated economy, the boom has bred a generation of nouveau-riche lotharios yearning to rival the sexual conquests of their imperial ancestors....90 percent of the country's most senior officials felled by corruption scandals in previous years had kept mistresses.

...Indeed, an entire industry has sprung up that lures young women with promises of sexually-oriented shortcuts to success...One such "college concubine agency"...claimed to connect university students with wealthy admirers for up to \$100,000 annually.

Dem speeches no help to workers

NYT, 8/9 — President Obama tried to restore the plunging confidence of investors, insisting the United States remains a triple-A country whatever Standard & Poor's might think. It...did nothing to reassure the most important shareholders: ordinary Americans living from one paycheck to another, worried about their jobs or wondering how they will replace the one they lost.

Anyone hungering for a robust vision to invigorate the economy and increase employment is still hungry.

Competition: Built into Capitalism, Deadly for Workers

Capitalism arose gradually hundreds of years ago, mainly through competition among various trades and businesses. They grew into giants that continue to devour their smaller rivals. As corporations try to beat each other to market to sell their products, some inevitably outdo others, leaving the losers with products they can't sell. But to maintain profits as much as possible, the smaller rivals cut their costs by laying off workers. Even those able to sell their products continually replace some workers with machinery and then speed up the rest.

Capitalists call this process "productivity" and claim that, despite the inevitable layoffs, it is good for both workers and capitalists. After all, they say, this represents progress.

So the underlying cause of unemployment is instability in profits caused by competition among capitalists, combined with their control over employment. Competition is built into the system. Capitalists cannot do away with it, even if they wanted to.

Competition is so commonplace that we rarely notice its harmfulness. We're taught competition is "natural in human society." We're even trained to enjoy competition through such things as sports and contests. We're taught to focus on winners, rarely being reminded that for every winner there are losers, unless we're among those losers. This process of competition produces losers, psychologically and often monetarily.

Competition inevitably harms some, and often most, whether participants or fans. It fosters individualistic concentration on one's own welfare, whether real or imagined, and works to destroy class solidarity. Therefore, competition is not good for workers and certainly isn't "natural."

A fundamental aspect of capitalism is its use of racism: both to set up competition between white workers and black, Latino, Asian and others, dividing our class and reaping super-profits for the bosses, as well as dragging down conditions for all workers.

Capitalists must maximize profits and expand their business in order to survive. But as winners eat up losers and grow, eventually monopoly results, and competition in that line of business ends — until foreign capitalists move in. For example, Japanese auto manufacturers began to crowd out GM, Ford and Chrysler in the 1970s. Capitalist competition inherently has a tendency to abolish itself, although prolonged through international rivalry.

Each nation's capitalist class is forced to grab resources, cheap labor and markets. Often this grab requires war; the capitalists become imperialists. Inter-imperialist rivalry is now the cause of every war on the planet, whether local or a world war.

While imperialists invent excuses to fight, in order to gain the loyalty of "their" workers — such as "weapons of mass destruction"; "humanitarian reasons"; "we were attacked"; and scores of other pretexts — the real reason is always international economic competition. To induce "their" workers to fight for them, imperialist governments are forced to lie — the bigger the lie, the more likely workers may believe it — impelling the illusion that, "if it were untrue, no government could get away with it."

Inter-imperialist rivalry is why the U.S. ruling class, through its government, is sending working-class men and women (usually not their own sons and daughters) to kill other workers, and to risk death themselves, in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. That's why U.S. rulers fought in Korea, Vietnam and in the first Gulf War. That's why World Wars I and II developed, first among European and Asian bosses and later involving the U.S., and killed tens of millions of workers and others. Competition, with its inevitable outgrowths, is truly a death sentence for millions.

Additionally capitalist competition causes the waste of natural resources and continual pollution of air and water. Pollution heats the atmosphere with oil, coal, and natural gas-derived global warming and the melting of glaciers that provide water to drink, wash in, and to grow food.

The resulting rise in sea level will eventually

force billions to move inland and create dislocations that will have unimaginable consequences for the working class (see the article "Global Warming Driven by the Profit System – Only Communism Can Create a Better Sustainable World," in the Winter 2010 issue of "The Communist" magazine, also available on the PLP website).

Communism the Answer

The opposite of competition is cooperation. Only cooperation can produce winners with no losers. Only the complete absence of competition can produce general well-being. Why should we settle for a system that always produces losers? Particularly when losing under capitalism often spells death. Capitalism is like a gigantic gladiator sport, in which only some who enter the ring will leave it alive, and even the survivors suffer varying degrees of misery.

Communism will produce cooperation without losers. Sporting events can be for exercise and fun without keeping score. Economic winners under capitalism are always capitalists, while the losers are workers. We must destroy this death-dealing system and replaced it with communism.

Communism is run by the world's working

class under the leadership of its communist party for the benefit of our entire class worldwide. Work will then allow us to contribute to the welfare of our class, not just ourselves and our families. We will be able to distribute our needs without money. We will produce only what we need, instead of billions of unnecessary products whose only purpose is capitalist profits. We will eliminate waste of resources and pollution that sickens and kills millions.

Then we will eliminate wars — wars caused by competition between capitalists, that kill millions of workers while capitalists sit home counting their profits. For our long-term future, capitalism-caused climate change will then be brought under control, though it has already started on a course that will be increasingly difficult to reverse. Global warming already causes, and threatens to accelerate, violent weather events that kill hundreds of thousands, though such deaths will become preventable even in the face of such events.

Join and build the PLP to hasten the day that this noble goal is reached around the world. We and our children and grandchildren deserve no less. ☺

'Captain America:' Making the World Safe for Fascism



"I don't like bullies." This is the reply of Steve Rogers (the soon-to-be Captain America) when asked why he was trying so hard to join the military and fight in World War II. This simple platitude, repeated throughout the film, serves to distort the political analysis of an entire generation of the world's working class. For millions of workers, the fight against fascism was not just a question of battling "bullies" like Hitler and Mussolini. The world's working class fought the Nazis because it saw both the danger of fascism and the

promise for workers that the Soviet Union embodied.

In many ways, the distortion of political motivations in Captain America is just as bad as the racism of films like "300" and "Transformers 2" because it obscures the history of our class and its ability to understand and evaluate complex political situations. Captain America fights with a multi-racial, multi-national squad of soldiers, including a Japanese-American and black soldier (the film fails to address the U.S. Army's racist policy of segrega-

tion during WWII). Where is the story of their understanding of racism, capitalism or imperialist war?

Japanese in the U.S. often went to war under duress, as the only escape from the internment camps and as a way to try to prove that they deserved citizenship. Black soldiers went into war fighting for the Double-V: Victory against fascism abroad and victory against racism at home. This demand came out of the political struggles for civil rights

continued on page 5

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