

CHALLENGE



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Occupy Oakland Shuts Banks, Marches to Blockade Port

General Strike Hits Racist Attacks



OAKLAND, CA., November 2 (10 PM EDT) — Thousands of protesters this evening shut down the Port of Oakland, the fourth busiest container port in the United States, in response to Occupy Oakland's call for a general strike. Workers and youth were galvanized by the cops' attack on a local Marine veteran, racist cuts in education and libraries, and a wave of police assaults.

Students and teachers walked out of their schools to join longshoremen, nurses and other workers, forcing the shutdown of banks, national chain stores and downtown businesses. They then prepared to march to the docks to blockade the Port of Oakland.

This is the kind of militant action the OWS movement can mount to hit the rulers where it hurts, by shutting the flow of profits. ☺

Needed: Bold Communist Action, Not Voting Bosses Aim to Pacify Occupy Wall Street

As Occupy Wall Street (OWS) helps to sow mass anger against the billionaires, the liberal wing of the United States ruling class is working full-tilt to make sure that it does not boil over and out of control. On October 12, a group of about fifty protesters toured the Upper East Side of Manhattan, stopping to rally before the homes of some of the ruling class's biggest billionaires: Rupert Murdoch, David Koch, Howard Milstein (chief executive of Emigrant Savings Bank), and JPMorgan Chase CEO Jamie Dimon. They made their final stop at hedge-funder John Paulson's 86th Street townhouse, just east of Fifth Avenue.

The disciplined marchers chanted, "They got bailed out, we got sold out!" Led by Michael Kink, a veteran Democratic Party operative and shill, they brandished a dozen oversized foamboard checks in the amount of five billion dollars, "paid to the order of the top 1%" and drawn on "the 99%." (The \$5 billion, according to Kink's Stronger Economy for All Coalition, will revert back to the rich if the New York State millionaire's tax is allowed to lapse at the end of this year.)

A former Legal Aid attorney, Kink currently works as a chief policy adviser and senior counsel to Democrats in the New York State Legislature. The bosses can trust him to lead a demonstration through the heart of a prime residential district, knowing that he would confine any protest within the legal limits. Kink did not let them down. He called the suffocating police presence

along the march route "very positive," less than a week after hundreds were netted and dragged away on the Brooklyn Bridge amid indiscriminate beatings and pepper-spray attacks. Kink is the liberal bosses' stooge.

At each fat cat's home on Kink the Fink's harmless tour, the demonstrators laid their symbolic checks on the front doorsteps of this or that billionaire. Revolutionary justice would have dragged those billionaires out of their plush apartments and put them before workers' tribunals for their crimes: engineering an economy based on racist unemployment; waging imperialist war; wrecking the global environment for profit. In mass uprisings as old as class society itself, rulers have been eliminated without mercy; in the 20th century, workers under communist leadership in Russia and China disposed of their ruling classes. Eventually, however, these socialist revolutions degraded into state capitalism because of their failure to eliminate the profit system, the system still in place worldwide today.

Wars to carve the world into spheres of interest are, as the Russian communist leader Lenin said, the ultimate expression of capitalists' drive for wealth and power. The billionaires' imperialist wars are primarily paid for by taxes on the working class; that's the way Presidents Kennedy and Johnson funded the genocide in Vietnam, and how the Bushes bankrolled their invasions of Iraq. The profit system cannot be reformed. Only its eradication through commu-

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Obama Threatens Endless U.S. Oil Wars

Barack Obama, desperate to serve U.S. imperialists for four more years, is spinning their worsening predicaments as his personal triumphs. "As promised, the rest of our troops in Iraq will come home by the end of the year....After nearly nine years, America's war in Iraq will be over," Obama boasted on October 21.

But there's no way U.S. rulers will not protect Exxon Mobil's \$50 billion investment in Iraq's oil fields. Thirty-nine bases there still remain in U.S. hands. Furthermore, "The U.S. embassy in Baghdad already houses thousands of...officials and troops and contains 21 buildings in a space over 100 acres....The State Department is looking to spend upwards of \$30 billion on Iraq over the next five years — around one-fourth of the Department's...global operations budget" (Huffington Post, 9/26).

Meanwhile, Iraq's Maliki regime is revoking the U.S. license to kill there. "The issue of immunity for

U.S. troops appears to have been the key factor in the Obama administration's decision to withdraw.... Iraqis...did not want to grant it because of high-profile killings of civilians....The U.S. said for any troops to remain in Iraq, they'd have to be granted full immunity from prosecution in Iraqi courts" (National Public Radio, 10/24/11).

Guarding Exxon's Oil Wells Means Boots on the Ground

But not all the GIs will be home for the holidays. Many will be part of the Obama administration's plans "to bolster the American military presence in the Persian Gulf," including "new combat forces in Kuwait able to respond to a collapse of security in Iraq or a military confrontation with Iran" (NY Times, 10/30; see box this page). Obama's threat to reinvade Iraq contradicts his peace pronouncement.

The U.S.-led war for the Middle East's vast energy resources remains far from settled. When they invaded in 2003, U.S. rulers envisioned six million barrels of crude gushing daily from Iraqi wells by 2006. Last year, they upped the potential bonanza to 12 million barrels per day. But persistent violence keeps actual flow around 2.9 million;

on October 27, bombs killed 32 people in Baghdad. Exxon Mobil just invested \$50 billion to boost production from Iraq's massive West Qurna field. Expect a quick return of U.S. forces if violence menaces that project.

Meanwhile, oil bosses from the U.S. and other NATO countries are flocking like vultures to post-Qaddafi Libya. More than 40,000 U.S.-directed NATO bombing and strafing runs wiped out at least 25,000 Libyan civilians. The self-congratulating liar Obama, eyeing re-election, touted his dreams of more such lucrative, "bloodless" victories on the Tonight Show: "Not a single U.S. troop was killed or injured, and that, I think, is a recipe for success in the future."

But Obama's imperialist handlers, including the Pentagon and Exxon, don't buy what he's peddling to the public. In mid-October, the top-level Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) think tank that enlists dozens of serving military officers, released a report titled "U.S. Ground Force Capabilities through 2020." The piece undercut Obama's vote-seeking falsehood by noting that "every post-Cold War president has come into office vowing to avoid large, costly foreign interventions requiring tens of thousands of 'boots on the ground,' only to have their hand forced by unforeseen events."

The Fall of "Arab Spring"

CSIS indicates how close the Arab Spring came to necessitating an outright U.S. invasion — and still could. "If Egypt's uprising had threatened to disrupt the Suez Canal and key oil networks...only ground forces would have been capable of seizing and protecting the 300-plus miles of critical infrastructure." In other all-too-plausible, near-term scenarios, "Precarious governments in nuclear North Korea or Pakistan, should they falter or break down, would similarly create immediate, large-scale crises to which ground forces would be highly relevant." In either of these cases, the potential U.S. battlefield foe could employ both nuclear weapons and more than one million soldiers.

In short, as the October 30 New York Times article indicates, Obama's "exit" from Iraq is actually an expansion of the U.S. military in the energy-rich Middle East, with the build-up to "secure" Iraq lasting at least another ten years (see box). As long as imperialism fuels its profit-driven rivalry for the world's resources and exploited labor, war is inevitable. Only communist revolution that destroys capitalism, profits and bosses — and erects a society in which workers share all the value that they, and only they, produce — can free the international working class from the horrors of endless wars.☸

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!**

PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

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Obama's Iraq 'Exit' Expands U.S. War Machine

Obama's "exit" from Iraq is more a game of musical chairs. Far from scaling down its war machine in the region, U.S. imperialism will be expanding it. According to the NY Times (10/30), "The Obama administration plans to bolster the American military presence in the Persian Gulf after it withdraws...troops from Iraq...[which] could include new combat forces in Kuwait able to respond to a collapse of security in Iraq or a military confrontation with Iran."

Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta noted that the United States had 40,000 troops in the region, including 23,000 in Kuwait" (NYT). None of this includes the tens of thousands of CIA and U.S. contract mercenaries now flooding Iraq. In addition the Pentagon "is considering sending more naval warships through international waters in the region."

The Obama White House "is also seeking to expand military ties with the six nations in the Gulf Cooperation Council — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman.... trying to foster a new 'security architecture' for the Persian Gulf that would integrate air and naval patrols and missile defense" (NYT).

None of this is exactly new. From 1991 up to the invasion of Iraq in 2003, the "U.S. Army kept...a full combat brigade in Kuwait year-round, along with an enormous arsenal ready to be unpacked" should even more troops be called to the region.

How long will this military build-up last? "The U.S. will have to come to terms with an Iraq that is unable to defend itself for at least a decade," wrote Adam Mausner and Anthony Cordesman of the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

No, U.S. imperialists are in no way "exiting" this energy-rich area. They will be aiming to preserve their dominance over Gulf oil supplies and pipelines until communist revolutionaries throw them out.

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.

France: Workers Beat GM Attack

STRASBOURG, FRANCE, October 29

— Auto workers here have forced the multinational corporation General Motors to reinstate shop steward and local union secretary Roland Robert. In May, the bosses moved Robert from his job in the plant to another one a half-mile away (see CHALLENGE 8/17). GM claimed Robert's deafness was a hazard; in fact, the company wanted to isolate the union activist.

A majority of the 1,150 workers signed a petition demanding his reinstatement. The government-assigned works doctor determined Robert could safely do many in-factory jobs.

GM employs 209,000 workers worldwide and netted a \$5.7 billion profit in 2010. The fact that a relatively small number of united and organized workers could make the mega-corporation back down suggests the revolutionary potential of the working class when united behind communist ideas.☸

'Base Camp' for Anti-Capitalism Struggle

Occupy Oakland Fights Racist Cops' Attack; Calls for General Strike



OAKLAND, CA, October 28 — At Occupy Oakland, workers and students reclaimed Oscar Grant Plaza after the occupation was brutally attacked on October 26 by a full-scale military action of 500-600 cops from 17 different Bay Area agencies. The cops invaded the camp, which included children, at 5:30 AM with flash grenades, percussion bombs and tear gas. Eighty-five people were arrested that morning, and more than 100 during the day.

Like the fascist response to the Oscar Grant demonstration protesting his murder by racist cops several months ago, this was a well-planned domestic version of the "Shock and Awe" invasion of Iraq in 2003. The Oakland politicians and police are well-rehearsed from years of attacking black and Latino youth. Now they have redesigned their security to handle mass uprisings.

Far from being intimidated by this police brutality, over 1,000 Oakland workers and students fought back. They gathered at the main library for a rally, then marched to the police department and jail to demand the release of arrested comrades before returning to City Hall. CHALLENGE was distributed along the way.

At 6:30 PM, the cops gave protesters five minutes to disperse or face mass arrests. But it wasn't until 7:45 PM that the cops again attacked with tear gas and flash grenades. One Iraq vet, Scott Olsen, had his skull broken by a tear gas canister. These fascists wouldn't even let people carry him away without tossing a flash grenade near him. The rebellion lasted until midnight.

By Wednesday night, workers and students had taken back Oscar Grant Plaza at 14th and Broadway and torn down the fences around the park. The daily General Assembly (GA) began at 7 PM. By 10 PM, 1,486 people had voted to have a one-day general strike on November 2nd. The tents had returned the next day.

Over 1,000 people have attended the GA each night since the camp was raided. Liberal mayor Jean Quan tried to speak but was told to "go home!" She did. For now, the cops are laying low. Such a fascist attack proves that the cops are enemies of the working class and a direct arm of the state.

For some, Occupy Oakland is a base camp for the local struggle against capitalism. While the Occupiers and their supporters span the political spectrum, there certainly are many who want a new economic and

political system. PLers had conversations where Occupiers actively shared their ideas about how to organize a new society as an alternative to profits and capitalism.

On visits, PLP members talked with individuals about producing things for need and voluntary commitment to work for all instead of a wage system. Many wanted to "tax the rich," but others wanted something more fundamental. We had a good reception to the CHALLENGE headline, "Only Revolution, Not Voting, Can End Capitalism's Racism, War and Unemployment."

A few transit workers and other friends have joined us at the camp visits, rallies and meetings. Occupy Oakland called for a general strike "against an economic system built on inequality and corporate power that perpetuates racism, sexism and the destruction of the environment" (see later report on page 1).

This movement gives us opportunities to connect Occupy Oakland to the jobs where we are actively fighting back. Some are promoting the general strike at work. This encourages political strikes against the system as a whole rather than just for wages and benefits. One bus driver recently commented, "I get it!. All that stuff you've been saying about how banks and corporations control transit — it's all coming true."

Others, however, express hesitation due to their experiences with racist cops and bosses, who use racism to divide workers and attack in particular dark-skinned workers. Yet the constant attacks

Bankers Are Vultures on Carcass of Public Services

The big banks have an organized apparatus of "public" transit agencies, commissions, managers, legislators and court decisions that feeds money collected from the working class to private capitalists. Communists call this state power.

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) controls funding for Bay Area transit. The MTC is subsidizing hedge funds while attacking transit workers and passengers.

Hedge funds Amerimar Enterprises in Philadelphia, and Angelo, Gordon and Co. in New York made \$33 million in profits from the sale of a U.S. Postal Service property in San Francisco to the MTC. These transactions allowed public tax dollars (the post office property) and fees paid by the public (MTC-collected bridge tolls) to go directly to profit finance capitalists.

Bay-Area wide, the MTC plans to cut service and jobs by \$80 million per year. With control of funding, the MTC will demand scrapping work rules, and will use part-time bus drivers to cut service. SF MUNI Management is well on its way. By 2014, they plan to cut the budget almost \$24 million by using part-time jobs to reduce service.

Look at the massive New York transit system. It has always been an ATM machine for Wall St. The New York Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) is currently proposing its biggest-ever borrowing program of \$14.8 billion over a five-year period to fund its capital projects. In addition to paying interest to bondholders, the MTA must pay fees to the bankers who package and sell the bonds, amounting to between \$2.50 and \$5 on every \$1,000 worth of debt.

Financial institutions underwriting the bonds include Barclays, Goldman Sachs, Bank of America, Merrill Lynch, J.P Morgan, Jeffreys and Co, Jackson, Morgan Stanley and Wells Fargo. Over the last two years, these capitalists earned \$39.7 million in fees by issuing bonds.☺

enrage these same workers. The Occupy movement makes it easier for PLP to expose the class rule of finance capitalists.☺

Bosses Aim to Pacify Occupy Wall Street

continued from front page

nist revolution will put an end to the bosses' sickening slaughters.

OWS is far from reaching this understanding, but the ruling class is growing nervous over mass anger against their rigged system. They want to control this new political phenomenon and keep it within the tight bounds of the electoral politics. Meanwhile, the New York Times highlights dead-end debates between OWS reformists and Latino nationalists. Its narrow reportage shows how hard the bosses are working to build racism and undermine worker unity. Mainstream reporters are finks, too.

Nothing is more threatening to the bosses than multi-racial unity against racist super-exploitation. To the extent that black, Latino and immigrant workers do not join OWS protests across the country, the movement will be less dangerous to capitalism. The OWS manifesto begins with the words, "As one people, formerly divided by the color of our skin, we acknowledge the reality: there is only one race, the human race." This is an important and positive statement, but OWS leaders have failed to take it far enough. Michael Fink and his reformist cronies own a vested interest in the status quo. They target the excesses and corruption of capitalism, but stop short of indicting the system itself. They lack something fundamental: a class analysis of racism and inequality.

History demonstrates that racism is essential to capitalism's very existence. The wealth of the U.S. ruling class was rooted in the genocide of Native Americans and the holocaust of the Atlantic slave trade, followed by lynch

law segregation. It industrialized by employing massive state violence and child labor against a workforce of new immigrants. It consolidated its global dominance in World War II, culminating in the racist incineration of Japanese workers and children with firebombs and nuclear weapons.

But the bosses' power is not absolute. Under anti-racist, communist leadership, workers have waged epic struggles against racism and fascism, from the Scottsboro campaign to defend nine black youths framed for rape in the Jim Crow South to the Soviet communists' annihilation of the Nazi Germany war machine. Since its beginning 50 years ago, PL has waged its own successful struggles against the Ku Klux Klan and Nazis.

Kink's Stronger Economy For All has three demands: extension of the state's millionaire's tax; "real job growth" through infrastructure projects, and the restoration of funding cuts to education and other social services. These reforms will likely become central planks in the Democratic Party push to retain the White House and shore up U.S. interests in a period of sharpening international rivalries.

As imperialist war inevitably widens across the Middle East and beyond (see editorial page 2), a shaky U.S. empire will need enthusiastic citizens to support a military draft and to kill and die for the bosses. Only a sharp class analysis of the true nature of "the 1%" will lead the masses to the one conclusion that the bosses' can't hijack or repackage: that "the 99%" needs communism.☺

LA PL'ers Defy Occupy LA 'Leaders'; Spark March vs. Racist Police



LOS ANGELES —In the Occupy movement here, PL'ers led a roaring march of about 50 people — which grew as we marched — around City Hall, chanting, "Stop racist police brutality, stand with Boston in solidarity." OccupyLA is approaching its 30th day here. To date, the occupiers have gotten very little resistance from the police — in contrast to Oakland, Denver, Atlanta, Boston and New York, where hundreds bravely fought against the cops. The participants here include a hodge-podge of individuals ranging from union hacks and pro-democracy types to fake leftists, undercover cops and disrupters. But most important are the honest youth, students and workers, employed and unemployed, who are enraged at the horrors of capitalism. We found this out first-hand when we helped spark the march against police brutality.

One of the growing frustrations in the camp has been the ineffectiveness of the General Assembly, which is essentially the "leaderless" leadership body with rules that allow one or two individuals to prevent a proposal from passing despite the large majority in agreement. A group trying to form an anti-police brutality committee was shut down and called provocateurs by

"leaders" taking advantage of these rules.

But at one meeting we met a few individuals who were upset about the General Assembly. A small discussion started, and it was announced that up to 100 people had been arrested in Boston. The discussion turned to racist police brutality, and what, if anything, to do about it. Some of the misleaders who later joined the gathering tried to "facilitate" (that is, take over) the meeting. They called for a moment of silence in solidarity with our Boston brothers and sisters. They did not want to "provoke the police" or fight racism and argued that the cops were "part of the 99%."

The gathering grew to about 50 people, which showed younger comrades how sharp ideas can influence a larger body. More important, it was good for them to see that many people supported our idea of calling the police racist defenders of the state and Wall Street, in opposition to the more visible "leaders." It was a great moment of unity in the fight against racism. That's when we led this march around City Hall, especially significant after the demoralizing General Assembly.

Friendships that started with this action have

become a small base for our Party as we organize anti-racist actions, ignoring the reformist "leadership" group. Our work is a small step in the right direction, but we need do a better job at mobilizing all our clubs and friends to get involved on a more consistent basis. We need to improve our open presence with CHALLENGE.

However, with the modest efforts of some comrades, we've gotten to know a few individuals fairly well and more recently have discussed CHALLENGE with one. We've also helped mobilize members of one church to participate on a few occasions. One of them has participated in PL events and wants to learn how the Party organizes in such situation.

We know the bosses' only interest in allowing such Occupy movements to exist is to push patriotism in their "pro-democracy" rhetoric and to lead them toward the voting booth. But they can also be schools for communism if we and our friends are there, in the muck and mire and sleeping bags and tents. Join the struggle! Join Progressive Labor Party!✊

Occupy Philly Crowd Cheers PL'ers' Call for Communism

My comrade in PLP and myself try to encourage each other to overcome our resistance to engaging with our friends in the community. We decided to go to the Occupy Wall Street demonstration in Dilworth Plaza here in Philadelphia. He had brought CHALLENGES to sell.

As we rounded City Hall, we made our way through the lanes of "occupying tents" toward the crowd having an open meeting at the Tech Tent. It was presented by a coalition — All Mothers are Working Mothers; Payday for Men; Women's Global Strike; and DHS-Give Us Back Our Children — to about 35 people, from their late teens to retirees, listening closely to explanations of the sexist and economic injustice faced by parents and children.



These painful experiences were often generated by both governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which supposedly give aid to families. The crowd was equally divided among black and white, as well as Southeast Asians and Latinos; about two-thirds were female. We were being urged to fight to support justice and demand better services for moms, dads and children.

Amid this rally, I had a strong memory of myself as a teen-aged woman listening to protest leaders and experiencing the awakening of my own political mind. A "speak-out" line was forming at

the mike. I've had a "communist education" from the PLP — through my spouse, our PLP club, area leader, reading CHALLENGE, attending Party conventions, then bringing these ideas to co-workers, friends, and family members and participating in PL-led anti-fascist demonstrations. I discussed the idea with my comrade about saying a few words at the mike. We agreed and I got in line to be handed the mike a few moments later and began speaking.

I agreed that sexism is oppressing us in many cruel ways. Most men and their children suffer from the effects of this sexism on the women they love and experience it directly on themselves as well. We face the same basic problems and we can face them together when we unite and create a society without sexist oppression. Many in the crowd applauded.

I said the division and injustices of sexism, added to the worst kind of racism and patriotism, keep us blaming other groups of workers, both employed and unemployed. While acknowledging that some people react negatively to the word "communism," I declared that the only way to defeat sexism and racism is for all workers, men and women, young and old, to organize to defeat capitalism.

This profit-maximizing system cannot allow us workers any gains without snatching them right back. I said we need to get rid of this whole system and called for a communist-led society where meeting the needs of the workers drives the decisions.

At this point I was being tapped on the elbow to give up the mike, but was able to conclude that the Progressive Labor Party was leading this fight to create a world of equality and sharing and that the paper we were distributing would give more information. The audience expressed warm applause.

My comrade and I distributed the remaining CHALLENGES. We discussed the strengths and weaknesses of our actions and words and agreed that it was important practice.

The ongoing class war is being waged against us whether we choose to see it or not. We dedicate this letter to inspiring our comrades in PL (such as myself) to put into action the Party's ideas to build working-class warriors determined to bring about our goal of a communist world.✊

Comrade in Philly

Occupy Chicago Getting Angrier, But: Police Attacks Show Non-violence Is A Loser

CHICAGO, November 1 — While the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movement continues to grow worldwide, Occupy Chicago has moved in that same direction. Progressive Labor Party has been there since the beginning, selling CHALLENGE and trying to channel the movement towards communism. For the past month students, workers (employed and unemployed), doctors, nurses, teachers and others have built Occupy Chicago from a few angry people into a lot of angry workers. PL applauds this effort, but without communist revolution we'll continue to be at the bosses' mercy.

There's a lot we communists can learn from this movement and there's also a lot we can teach those in it. One is that non-violence doesn't work when the bosses' main tool is violence. On Occupy Chicago's main website, they list their "Declaration of Nonviolence" which reads: "Occupy Chicago reassures its members and the public that we are a social movement dedicated to nonviolent action."

We've struggled with OWS to see that non-violence is useless when the ruling class is committing genocide against the working class on a daily basis, whether it's on the streets of Chicago, Oakland, New York, Rome, London or Rwanda; whether at Cook County Board meetings where they close hospitals, or in the schools or the jails. As long as capitalism exists, there can be no peace anywhere.

That lesson was taught the hard way to this movement. Over the past three weekends, the Chicago kkkops have arrested hundreds of the occupiers. On October 24, they arrested 130 people just for being in Grant Park after hours. The cops say they're "protecting the peace." But when a concert or a football game at nearby Soldier Field ends late and people are just hanging out in the park, there's not a cop to be found.

One student protester who was there that night told us: "We were just sitting in the park peacefully. We made our tents and were prepared to stay for the night. The cops told us to leave at 11 PM. Some did but the majority said no, we're not moving. At 12:30 AM, two big spotlights went on and about 200 cops in riot gear came out of nowhere and started arresting and beating



people. They cut up tents and destroyed people's stuff and just took people to jail. It was surreal."

Also arrested were two nurses, there to make sure that protesters received proper medical treatment. Funny, the bosses say they have no money to keep open Oak Forest Hospital, from where 243 long-term patients have since been moved and have died. But they somehow have money to pay killer cops to arrest non-violent protesters. That's capitalism!

We relayed that fact to the student protester who described that night. We gave her a copy of CHALLENGE and she gave us her contact info to stay in touch.

Another point that we raised to the Occupy movement is its lack of black and Latino workers, on whom capitalism's hammer comes down first and hardest. They're the ones who know the hard fact that racism and capitalism go hand in glove.

Without racism, the bosses could not keep the working class divided. The Occupy movement knows this because PL'ers keep raising it. Now they're reaching out to the Occupy Gary and Occupy the Hood movements. As long as the working class continues to be pushed into the bosses' elections and reforms, we'll continue to be prey to the dead end of capitalism. We need communist revolution.✪

Bring Red Ideas to Occupy Wall Street

NEW YORK CITY, October 22 — Amid the hundreds camping at Zucotti Park, in front of the U.S. flags that some campers had put up, the bosses' banners to mislead and murder millions of workers for profits, we stood: a group of 10 PL'ers holding our own banner, which read, "Fight for Communism, Join PLP!"

The fact that we were a multi-racial group of students and workers set us apart from the mostly white contingent banging on drums inside the park and selling t-shirts bearing the Occupy logo.

We held signs which read, "KK-Kops, Thugs 4 Wall Street" as we struggled with and handed copies of CHALLENGE to workers passing by. Among signs with messages like "All We Need is Campaign Reform," we soon stood out as a revolutionary working-class contingent.

Our analysis — that the entire capitalist system must be destroyed and replaced with an egalitarian communist society — drew flocks of workers. We engaged in sharp struggles with them on issues ranging from the failure of socialism in the USSR to the role police play in protecting the capitalists and brutalizing workers. Having just read and discussed

the Party document, *Black Workers: A Key Revolutionary Force*, we especially emphasized the need for multi-racial unity and the essential role that the most exploited workers must play in working-class movements around the world. Such messages resonated with many workers, distinguishing PL'ers from the reformists and reactionaries. This contrast made it clear that we posed a real political threat to the bosses.

A retired black worker born in Mississippi heard our message of multi-racial unity and told us he remembered PL from the Harlem Rebellion of 1964, and that he was happy to see a new generation of students engaged in the fight for communism. We gave him CHALLENGE and invited him to our next study group. An undocumented student from Baltimore was moved by our ideas and was excited to find out that she could work with other PL'ers back home. Conversations like these left us feeling inspired and enthusiastic to make more trips to Wall Street to shed light on those sharp, insoluble contradictions in capitalism that the Occupy movement tends to shy away from.✪

Red Student

Occupy Newark Makes Anti-Racism Key Fight

NEWARK, NJ October 30 — While there are certainly many weaknesses in the Occupy Wall Street movement, one positive aspect is that it has motivated many workers and students to begin fighting back. Around 25 students and workers in Newark gathered for a General Assembly meeting to figure out how to proceed. From the beginning, many workers began to talk about the budget cuts made by Mayor Cory Booker while giving himself a raise in the last budget.

One of the students then proposed creating a different budget and getting a petition to deliver it to the city council for recognition. Then, a black worker jumped in and said, "They create these illegal laws to get away with this stuff." She described how workers are struggling just to survive and that we need to think about different ways to fight back beyond "protesting."

Many people in the group agreed that we need to do more. Then a longtime worker and resident of Newark raised the role of racism under capitalism and why we need to look at these problems (housing, unemployment, health care) as a systemic issue and not just one brought about by particular individuals.

A high school teacher echoed those sentiments, saying "They want to divide us. They don't want black, Latino, Asian, and white people uniting to fight. That is why what we do

here is so important." Everybody agreed.

In a city like Newark, where over 20% of the population is unemployed (and many more are underemployed), fighting racism must be a main pillar of what we do. While many students and workers involved in the OWS movement agree that racism is a problem, many of them lack a class-conscious approach.

"White skin privilege," a popular idea among many OWS members, overlooks the objective political and economic reasons for white workers to attack racism. History shows that racism hurts the white working class, both politically and economically. By keeping white, black, Latino, and Asian workers from uniting while unemployment rates for black and Latino workers are double that of white workers, wages and benefits of white workers continue to get cut. And millions of white are unemployed as well. And millions of white workers are unemployed, as well.

We in PL are bringing a communist approach to fighting racism to the Occupy Wall Street movements. Only through multi-racial unity of the working class and the commitment to get rid of capitalism — the profit system that needs and continues to produce racism — can we move forward to building an egalitarian society.✪

LETTERS

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

'Founding Fathers' Found How to Enforce Class Rule: Voting

The editorial (front page) in the November 2 issue told how the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movement was started by a member of the ruling class and is about to be co-opted by the Democratic Party hacks. The Democrats aim to use it to encourage everyone to vote — for them, preferably — but the main goal of the ruling class is to get everyone to see voting as the only way we can end exploitation, unemployment, racism, sexism, and war. CHALLENGE continually describes why voting is a way to guarantee the continuance, rather than the cessation, of these capitalists evils.

It is useful to go back in history to see how the "Founding Fathers" conceived of the way voting would be useful, if not necessary, to their continued class rule (dictatorship). As the plan for the U.S. was first being put together in the 1780s, they described their preferred form of government in a collection called The Federalist Papers. It was written by three members of the ruling class, Alexander Hamilton (the first Secretary of the Treasury), James Madison (the fourth President and lead author of the Constitution, as well as a slave-owning land owner), and John Jay (son of a wealthy merchant and the first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court).

In number 10, out of 85 papers, Madison argued that the wealthy class required a republic as the preferred form of government to serve their class interests, rather than a democracy. Madison explains that a democracy is "a society consisting of a small number of citizens, who assemble and administer the government in person." He further explains that a republic, in contrast to a democracy, is one in which the voters decide who will decide. That is, the voters will not themselves make important decisions about how the country should be run, but rather they will only be permitted to choose those who will, in fact, make those decisions. The distinction between these two opposite forms of government is reflected in the names of the two dominant U.S. political (electoral) parties of today, Republicans and Democrats.

We can see where electing those who decide for us gets us, whether Republicans or Democrats, namely a situation in which the 1% (capitalists) own virtually all the wealth versus the 99% (workers), who do their work for them and own virtually no wealth. Both parties are firmly wedded to a republic (representative form of government), and definitely opposed to a democracy, even as they claim that the U.S. is the example of "democracy" for the world to follow. They push the illusion that voting equals democracy, when the Founders realized clearly that voting for those who will decide was the exact opposite of democracy.

The ruling class clearly wants workers around the world to shun a real democracy, which even in their own description would involve direct assembly and administration of the government by the world's working class. PLP, on the other hand, envisions a communist world as one in which the world's workers, as members of a mass party, assemble in groups to debate, discuss, and jointly decide on policies, and put them into effect in a collective fashion that serves the interest of our class everywhere on earth. But in order to bring this state of affairs about, an armed revolution of workers and our allies is necessary to defeat the violence of the ruling class and their cops, courts, jails, politicians, and military. Join us.

Saguaro Rojo

(CHALLENGE Addition)

Madison and Hamilton argued in the Federalist Papers that a Republican form of government was necessary to "prevent the majority of property-less from overturning the minority of property-holders." This minority — the framers of the U.S. Constitution — then set up the eligibility for voting: one had to own a certain measure of property, had to be white and had to be male. Thus, 90% of the population in the original 13 states were excluded from voting. The framers were intent on preserving the wealth of the small minority of white, male property-owners. It was they who then enacted the laws that would preserve their dominance.

OWS 'Field Trip' Awakens Students to Rulers' Myths

When I first told the students in my U.S. history class about Occupy Wall Street (OWS) they appeared to be mystified. In response, we watched a short video on the protests to understand why activists were occupying Zuccotti Park. As soon as the video was over, I was bombarded with questions about corporate greed, economic inequality, and the government's role in either allowing or preventing each. It seemed as though students' class consciousness was awakened.

To continue this awakening, I proposed we visit the OWS encampment Friday after school. Ten students came. We walked around the protest and spoke with activists whose signs captured the imaginations of students. One sign in particular — "The Land of Wage Slaves" — led students into a discussion about how capitalism exploits workers for the benefit of the bosses.

In the end, the trip was a rousing success. When students returned to school the following Monday, they were asking me when we were going to make our next visit to OWS. They were curious to know more about the capitalist system and why the U.S. government allowed such exploitation and oppression to exist in the "land of opportunity" where liberty and justice were supposedly "for all." Bourgeois myths taught to students in elementary and middle school were crumbling as their working-class consciousness began to grow.

Comrade

Media Buried CHALLENGE Exposé of Racist Frame-up

(After reading the Truthout blog's report of the racist frame-up of a black youth in the 1964 murder of two white professional women about which the capitalist press had a field day spreading police-inspired lies, I sent the following truth to Truthout.)

"Your account of the Wylie-Hoffert murder case, states that George Whitmore, a young black man, 'owes his freedom to...his pro bono lawyers, the editorial writers of the New York Post and... the Brooklyn District Attorney Eugene Gold.' But perhaps you are not aware of the fact that CHALLENGE, the newspaper of the Progressive Labor Party, first exposed this frame-up, long before the New York Post and the rest of the city's media wouldn't touch this case with a ten-foot pole. This is how it actually happened:

"John Lawrence, a legal researcher and a civil libertarian, was intent on challenging the legality of the NYPD's stop-and-frisk actions. He proceeded to walk down Manhattan's Church Street carrying a rifle in broad daylight, hoping to be arrested by the police, which is exactly what happened.

"When he appeared in court and made his point about the law's unconstitutional nature, the judge sent him to Bellevue Hospital for a 'mental evaluation.' While there, he happened to encounter Whitmore who was also there for an examination.

"In talking to Whitmore, Lawrence discovered the fact that the young man had been in south Jersey at the very time of the murders.

"When Lawrence was released he went to every major newspaper in New York — including the NY



Post — as well as all the TV and radio stations, with his story. They all rebuffed him.

"He then looked in the Yellow Pages for other newspapers, none of which would print his story until he then came to CHALLENGE. We interviewed him and then printed the story of this racist frame-up in a series of articles. He detailed how the cops had extracted a phony "confession" from Whitmore.

"The media still refused to pick up on it, especially since it reached deep into the racism of the criminal justice system, involving the cops, the D.A. and the courts. When it became so blatant that they couldn't continue to cover it up, the entire sordid story was drawn into the open."

A Reader Who Remembers

Torch of International PLP Lights Road to Revolution

Recently in the pages of CHALLENGE you have read exciting articles and letters from around the world about fighting racism and imperialism and building a mass international PLP. From Haiti to Palestine, from Mexico City to Senegal, an important breakthrough has been achieved over the past two years. PLP has emerged as a truly international Party. It is safe to say there are more PLP members outside the U.S. than within it. While our numbers are still too small to affect the balance of forces, or avoid the future of fascism and world war that the bosses have in store for us, the fact is, we have proven it can be done. No matter what obstacles we face now or in the future, there is no turning back.

Whether in El Salvador, Tanzania or Chicago, PL members meet to discuss politics and plan out their work in Party collectives, all politically more the same than different, even as each collective deals with the particular conditions in their area. We are not waiting until after the revolution to smash all borders, we are doing it now within our Party and laying the political groundwork within the international working class to finish the job through mass armed struggle after the imperialists launch their next world war.

This has been the goal and battle flag of the world communist movement since Marx first wrote in the Communist Manifesto, "Workers of the World, Unite! We have nothing to lose but our chains," about 160 years ago. Communists before us have tried and failed to accomplish this goal and it is only by learning from the heroic efforts of hundreds of millions of them, in more than a century of struggle, have we achieved this small but significant breakthrough.

We claim this victory today, but it has been nearly 50 years in the making for our Party. With the adoption of Road to Revolution III in 1970, PLP rejected all forms of nationalism as reactionary bourgeois ideology. About a decade later, with the adoption of Road to Revolution IV, we set out to build one international PLP, fighting to establish communism under the dictatorship of the proletariat, abolishing wages, money and the state upon the seizure of power.

That vision of a communist future sustains us as the billionaires and bankers offer war and poverty, racist and sexist terror and brutal attacks on immigrants. Around the world, workers and youth face mass unemployment and budget cuts as more than a billion people live on less than \$2/day. The U.S. invasion of Iraq has spread to Afghanistan, Libya and Pakistan, with no end in sight. Today the imperialists fight it out with trade deals, currency manipulations and on the international stock markets. But imperialism inevitably leads to world war. To keep workers in line and to get us to fight for them, the bosses push patriotism, nationalism and racism around the clock.

Nationalism was one of the ideas that killed the old communist movement and remains a dominant ideology in the world today. That is a part of the dark night, or as Stalin warned, the new Dark Ages that would be brought on by the defeat of the old communist movement. The torch of internationalism, embodied in the building of a mass international PLP, can begin to light the road to revolution for the international working class.

Red Trade Unionist

Steve Jobs Polished Capitalist Apple for I-Slavery

People around the world mourned the death of Steve Jobs on October 5. Jobs, one of the founders of Apple, is credited with changing the world with stylish and easy-to-use gadgets like the iPhone, iPad and Macintosh computer. Apple built an image of ingenuity that would make life better through its products.

While Jobs and Apple can be credited for these devices, they were and are no friends of the working class around the world. In the past 14 years under Jobs' leadership, Apple became the world's largest company, recently surpassing Exxon Mobil. It made so much money that it held over "\$76 billion in cash and investments" in a bank in Nevada to avoid California corporate and capital gains taxes (Newsweek, 9/5/11).

How did they make all that money? Pure inventiveness, creativity and will? No, they made it off the backs of the working class. Even though Apple is a U.S. company, it chose to produce the bulk of its products in China, where average wages of workers are extremely low. In 2010, the average salary for a Chinese worker in Shenzhen, home city to Taiwanese electronics company Foxconn, is about 900 yuan a month, or about \$132 (Bloomberg, 5/28/10). Foxconn is the company that manufactures most of Apple's products.

Sweatshop-like conditions have permeated these companies. According to the UK's Daily Mail, workers clocked almost 98 hours per week,

standing most of the time. When the iPad was in high demand, workers were only "allowed to take one day off in 13." If they performed poorly they were humiliated in front of co-workers (www.dailymail.co.uk 5/1/11). Conditions at these plants are so horrendous that workers were committing suicide. Workers at Foxconn were made to sign an agreement that if they killed themselves, their families would not be compensated.

Steve Jobs tried defending Foxconn in early 2011 by proclaiming to investors that the company was not a sweatshop. But in an internal progress report, Apple conceded that workers at 18 facilities were paying such steep hiring fees that they were basically enslaved. At 10 facilities, a total of 91 workers under the age of 16 had been hired (<http://tech.fortune.cnn.com>, 2/16/11).

This is how Apple and Steve Jobs made their billions. Apple couldn't set up shop and provide jobs for workers in the U.S. because they needed to go where the labor is cheapest. Workers around the world need to see what the bosses are really like: merciless, ruthless and profit-driven. The working class must remain clear about what these bosses do and how they exploit the working class. ☹

Student Groups' OWS Trips Building PLP

NEW YORK CITY — Our study/action Group has been taking students to participate in Occupy Wall Street (OWS). The students looked forward to going to OWS because they've been inspired by the protests. We meet for lunch, read CHALLENGE and discuss the contradictions between reform and revolution.

The most valuable element of the OWS protest has been the fact that it is capturing the imagination of workers and youth as well as inspiring them to fight back. Our students were quick to point out that these protests were similar to those in Egypt. The massive uprising there led to a dictatorship without a dictator in Egypt. In Tunisia, Islamists won an election. Both were a losing proposition for the working class.

A few days later, another group of students and some teachers went down with a PL'er who works at the school. They saw the limits of reform for themselves, and each of them moved closer to the Party as a result. One of the students now takes and distributes CHALLENGE, having his own CHALLENGE network.

A week after our first trip, another teacher in our group was able to convince his students to go. Our students then met up together and distributed CHALLENGE and had conversations about our politics. These conversations strengthened their commitment to our Party's ideas. Hopefully, they too will join the Party. The OWS movement should be seen as an opportunity for us to build the Party by discussing it, going to it, and struggling over the politics of it. ☹

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

Crisis-predictor now sees a crash

GW, 10/21 — Professor Steve Keen was one of the few economists to predict the financial crisis. While the OECD and the U.S. Federal Reserve foresaw a "great moderation," unprecedented stability and steadily rising wealth, he warned that a crash was bound to happen. Now he warns that the same factors that caused the crash show that what we've heard so far is merely the first rumble of the storm. Without a radical change of policy, another Great Depression is all but inevitable....

If Keen is right, the crippling sums spent on both sides of the Atlantic on refinancing the banks are a waste of money. They will not kickstart the economy....

Obama justified the bank bailout on the grounds that "a dollar of capital in a bank can actually result in eight or 10 dollars of loans to families and businesses. So that's a multiplier effect." But the money multiplier didn't happen...The money would have achieved far more had it simply been given to the public.

Egypt military may keep power

NYT, 10/15 — Egypt's military rulers are moving to assert and extend their own power so broadly that a growing number of lawyers and activists are questioning their willingness to ultimately submit to civilian authority.

Two members of the military council...said...that they planned to retain full control of the Egyptian government even after the election of a new Parliament....

"We will keep the power until we have a president," Maj. General Mahmoud Hegazy said....a process that could stretch into 2013 or longer.

Vets mental health care a disgrace

NYT, 10/25 — The Veterans Affairs Department has devoted much effort and money to im-

prove and expand its mental health care, especially for those coming home from Iraq and Afghanistan with post-traumatic stress disorder and brain injuries. But continuing reports of drug dependency, suicides and suicide attempts among veterans and active-duty soldiers suggest that urgent needs remain vast and unmet. So do persistent accounts from veterans who say they spend months waiting for mental health care.

Now Veterans Affairs' own health-care professionals say that the department's efforts are not enough.... Nearly 40 percent said they could not schedule an appointment for a new patient within the two-week window the veterans department requires. Nearly...half said some patients were being denied care because no appointments were available outside regular office hours....Acknowledging a mental health problem is a huge hurdle for stoic soldiers. It takes courage to ask for help. When they do, they should not have to wait for a response.

Tobacco profits involve child-killing

GW, 10/21 — Many of Malawi's estimated 80,000 child tobacco workers suffer from green tobacco sickness, or nicotine poisoning....

Since the leaves are mostly handled without protective clothing, workers absorb...nicotine daily through their skin, equal to 50 cigarettes....

Smokers...toxic habit is slowly killing the children involved in the production process....Malawi has the highest number of child labourers in Africa...Children receive an average of 25 cents for long hours of [a day's] work. The[se] are the lucky ones; some never see their money.

....Malawi's tobacco is found in the blend of almost every cigarette smoked in the west...Using intermediaries to purchase tobacco makes it difficult to ensure [those who profit] follow the rules.

Hard life on benefit checks

NYT, 10/27 — ...The poll found deep unease about unemployment benefits...7 in 10 of those receiving unemployment benefits said that they feared their benefits would run out before they could find new jobs....Two-thirds said that the benefits were not enough to pay for basics like housing and food....



The toll that unemployment is taking on families is not just financial....More than half of those polled said that they had experienced emotional or mental health problems like anxiety or depression because of their lack of work....More than a third said that they had had more conflicts or arguments with family and friends because of being jobless.

The top reason people cited for not getting work: Too many applicants.

It won't be done until workers rule

GW, 10/21 — More than a billion people in poor countries around the world could have access to electricity within 20 years if the international community was prepared to make the effort, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said last week.

Giving poor people access to electricity would cost about \$48bn a year, and would have huge advantages in terms of health, education and economic growth, a global study for the IEA concluded....

"Eradicating energy poverty is....just a question of mustering the political will...."

People with access to electricity suffer far less from indoor air pollution, mostly caused by cooking over traditional wood fires....Indoor air pollution is one of the biggest "silent killers," causing millions of deaths and many more cases of respiratory illness every year. Education is also improved with electricity access, as children are able to study at home after school....

Pro-Boss Union Hacks Divert Workers into Arms of Rulers' Electoral Hoax

The recent upsurge in militant class struggle, as seen in Greece, Egypt, Spain, England, Syria, Israel/Palestine, Pakistan, and the United States, is a heartening development. Over the last two months, the trade union movement in New York City has moved thousands of its members to participate in its Labor Day march and at various rallies connected to Occupy Wall Street (OWS). This display of the potential power of the working class has encouraged still more organized workers.

Black, Latino, Asian and white workers from scores of unions, in both the public and private sectors, have made what appears to be a statement of solidarity and unity. Once you get past surface appearances, however, the essence of this activity is something very different. Progressive Labor Party was present at the Labor Day march and lifted the struggle level by raising questions like:

What was the focus of the unions' Labor Day march? Did it aim to stop the racist threat of public hospital closings at Brookdale in Brooklyn or Painsville General in Queens? Such a fight would do much to stop the erosion of desperately needed medical care in the predominately black and Latino communities that these hospitals serve — and the layoffs that these closings would require. PL'ers have supported these struggles by joining picket lines and demonstrations at the hospitals, along with our coworkers and friends. Our solidarity efforts, communist ideas and CHALLENGE were warmly received by rank-and-file hospital workers, many of whom have become our friends.

It would have been great if the Labor Day march had taken a stand against the racist crisis of unemployment that grips every segment of the working class at an "actual" rate (including underemployed and "marginally attached" workers) of more than 21 percent (shadowstats.com). We say that unemployment is racist because black, Latino and immigrant youth are victimized by joblessness by a multiple of three times the overall rate. But the union "leaders" have no plan to fight either health care cuts or massive, racist unemployment.

What if workers organized to force the New York City Central Labor Council (NYCLC) to call for a citywide general strike to stop the layoffs of some 800 public school support workers? The struggle led by PL earlier this year at the John Jay High School campus in Brooklyn showed how students, teachers and parents could be won to unite and militantly confront the racist Department of Education.

What if such a general strike had demanded an end to the imperialist oil wars in Iraq and Afghanistan? If the NYCLC organized such a strike, we would begin to see real working-class power in action. Instead, we saw calls for patriotism and support for U. S. imperialism via signs "remembering" those who died on 9/11.

If the Labor Day march had been intended to build real working-class unity, it wouldn't have stopped at East 66th street. It would have continued into Central Park and joined striking restaurant workers at the Central Park Boathouse as the PL did. PLers built support for this strike in the weeks before Labor Day and leafleted that march to guarantee that many marchers, including those we brought, would indeed show their solidarity with the strikers. The valiant, mainly women immigrant restaurant workers were able to win union recognition and a contract. Still, a massive outpouring of marchers into the park would have helped build unity and fought racism, sexism and anti-immigrant sentiments. From this New York restaurant to a Chicago library to a California grocery chain, PL has sought to build solidarity campaigns to fan the embers of working-class struggle. In the process, we have met wonderful people who are excited by our revolutionary communist ideas.

What if workers demanded that instead of marching up 5th Avenue, past the luxury buildings housing the richest 1% of New York, we had marched in the working-class areas of Brooklyn where the 99% live? What if we had rallied in front of the Flatbush Gardens housing complex where unionized workers have been locked out since last November? Or if we had joined the picket lines at Long Island University, where teachers were on strike and in opposition to tying any raise to tuition

increases? Then we could have been built worker-student unity!

What if Verizon workers in the Communication Workers of America, who had joined the OWS activities by rallying in front of Verizon Corporate headquarters on October 21, had instead renewed their strike against Verizon? Then they would have harnessed the anger stoked by OWS against a corporation that amassed \$22.5 billion in profits and paid its top five executives \$258 million in the last four years — while moving to slash worker benefits, sick leave and raising health insurance costs and eliminating job security. What if the 110,000 members of the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) District Council 37, whose contract expired a year and a half ago, went out on strike for a new contract and to restore cuts and laid-off workers? Then these workers would be taking on the fascist Taylor Law. The spark of OWS would have led to sharper class struggle.

The reason these things haven't happened is because the unions' role is to maintain capitalism! The leaders mimic the bosses by demanding obscene salaries. A case in point: Gerald McIntee, International President of AFSCME, was paid \$479,328 in 2009. AFSCME's District Council (DC) 37 head, Lillian Roberts, earned \$343,467, or about 10 times the average wage of DC 37 members.

To fight New York State's Taylor Law or the wave of anti-union laws passed in Wisconsin, Ohio and elsewhere, the unions would need to break the bosses' laws and expose their rigged system. Instead, they channel workers' anger and frustration into the voting booth.

In 2008, the unions' political action committees spent more than \$80 million on federal elections and elected their "friends" to the White House and Congress. Having "won," they then failed to get their top issue passed, the "card check" method for organizing new bargaining units. This proves yet again that governing power is not determined by elections but rather serves the interests of the ruling class, regardless of which party wins the latest contest.

When a spark like OWS seems to challenge the hold the bosses have over our lives, the union honchos, ever faithful to their friends in high places, organize through coalitions like "stronger for all" to blunt the energy and anger of OWS protesters and to deliver the union rank and file into the waiting arms of the bosses' "Demopublican" party

Capitalism Still Reigns in Algeria: Gas Workers Battle for Stolen Wages

HASSI R'MEL, ALGERIA, November 1 — The Arab Spring that overturned three neighboring dictatorships has been meaningless for natural gas workers in Algeria, who still suffer from the capitalists dominating the country. They've been fighting for back pay and are demanding a 30% wage hike.

On October 27, about 400 workers sat in at the Sonatrach regional headquarters here, the site of Africa's biggest natural gas field, and attempted a second one two days later. On October 30, the movement spread to workers in the Amont division, who staged a protest outside company headquarters in Algiers.

Multinational Sonatrach is Africa's biggest oil-and-gas company and the 12th biggest in the world. It has 22 subsidiaries and employed 48,062 workers in 2010.

Rank-and-file workers say they will radicalize their movement if management does not meet their demands. In particular, they're threatening to repudiate their newly elected union representatives for failing to back their demands, which also include an end to the job promotions freeze.

The movement began in the summer, after management failed to

pay the wage hikes obtained in the April 2011 union contract. In June, the workers upped their demands to a 25% across-the-board wage hike (now 30%) instead of the previous contract's 8% to 25%, depending on one's work category.

Since then, the workers have held numerous meetings and general assemblies and have drawn up a 15-point platform of demands.

Currently the company is somewhat on the defensive, scrambling to mail out checks to cover the April increases that were never paid. Obviously, they're trying to buy off the workers and nip the protest movement in the bud before a majority of the rank and file swing over to demanding a completely new contract.

The bold actions and demands of these Algerian gas workers are a beacon to workers around the world. But as the Sonatrach workers know, the ink is barely dry on a union contract when the bosses — with the help of their junior partners in the union leadership — begin to chip away at everything the workers have won. That's why the only way our class can make real gains is by destroying capitalism altogether through communist revolution.✊

operatives. Year after year, we are urged by union leaders to vote for lesser-evil candidates (usually Democrats), who promise us fewer cuts and more crumbs. The reality is seen in the current debate in Washington, which is between catastrophic or merely disastrous cuts in services that workers need. Workers choose only one thing in these elections: who will be their oppressor.

Progressive Labor Party has a different plan. We understand that workers create all wealth. We know that under capitalism, the value they produce is stolen from them every day. We want to use the power and fighting unity of the working class to destroy the capitalist system. While we support the necessary fights that workers wage for better wages and benefits, we understand that under the bosses' system, every reformist gain that is won can be taken back from us. The process of building Progressive Labor Party in these fights strengthens our class's ability to fight back today as well as preparing us for the bigger fight to come.

That is the fight for communism, a system where the working class takes power, and where everything produced is for the use and benefit of the working class. A society where racism and sexism are outlawed. A system where there is no immigrant/citizen divide, and no more rich and poor.

Get off the bosses' treadmill and join us in building a society that can truly serve our needs! Join Progressive Labor Party. Read and distribute CHALLENGE. Build for communist revolution!✊

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