

CHALLENGE



THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

BANKERS' FIGHT, BEARS DOWN ON WORKING CLASS

J.P. Morgan's recent hostile seizure of Bear Stearns marks a big step in the growth of fascism in the U.S. Here, just as in pre-World War II Nazi Germany, dominant financiers with global interest, increasingly use state power to concentrate capital into their own hands and to tighten their regulatory grip on investment. They do so in order to compete better — economically and militarily — with rising foreign rivals and to enforce wartime discipline on smaller domestic bosses.

Despite serious and sustained efforts by U.S. rulers to contain it, the fallout from the subprime mortgage crisis continues to spread to the broader capitalist economy. Every week seems to bring a new debacle for the bankers and Henry Paulson, their government partner in the U.S. Treasury Department, to deal with. The takeover of Bear Stearns ("Bear"), one of the biggest "independent" investment banks, by JP Morgan Chase (JPMC), has much to teach the working class about the nature of the capitalist system, and the direction it is moving in for the foreseeable future. JPMC — the Rockefeller oil empire's chief bank — confiscated Bear mainly because its owners hinder the developing police state the ruling class's main wing's war agenda requires. Iraq and Afghanistan already wear a \$3-trillion price tag. For far costlier conflicts with Iran and China, U.S. rulers are ramping up compulsory "shared sacrifice" on Wall Street.

Until the takeover, Bear's largest shareholder was Wilmington Trust, an investment arm of the DuPont family, which vehemently opposes state controls on capital. JPMC also torpedoed China's CITIC, which "has decided to terminate its planned strategic cooperation with Bear Stearns, including a \$1 billion investment in the U.S. bank" (Reuters, 3/19/08). CITIC is wholly owned by a government gearing up to challenge U.S. military domination of the Mideast and its oil. No wonder JPMC targeted Bear rather than more imperialist-oriented Lehman Brothers or Morgan Stanley. Lehman counts war criminal James R. Schlesinger, defense secretary during the U.S.'s Vietnam genocide, as a "senior advisor." Blue-blooded State Street Bank of Boston and Saudi Arabia's Olayan family own major chunks of Morgan Stanley.

Capitalists Always Seek Maximum Profits

As CHALLENGE has pointed out before, capitalists and the financiers who back them constantly search for a place to invest their stolen billions. Capitalism dictates that each investment, whether it be in the production of real value or not, must seek a maximum return. At the dawn of capitalism, that meant a massive investment in the brutal enslavement of human beings. With that blood-stained start-up money, the early industrialists bought the power of human labor and made more than they could dream from the wage

slavery of workers in that hell of sweatshops and factories. What was fundamental to capitalism then is still today: "there will be blood" on the path to riches for a few.

Sometimes the blood is that of members of their own class. Modern capitalism is ruled by the big banks, which are able to use their gigantic accumulation of funds to control industrial and other capitalists (for more information about this, read "Who Rules the United States" in PLP's The Communist magazine, Spring 2005). One of the biggest banks is JPMC. It represents the merger of three of the major banks in U.S. history — JP Morgan and the Rockefeller-owned Chase Manhattan and Chemical banks. The other major player in the Bear Stearns takeover, the U.S. Federal Reserve ("the Fed"), is basically a committee that represents the interests of the big banks and the capitalist system.

Bear, on the other hand, was known as "an outsider that defied its mainstream rivals" (NY Times 3/17/08, A1). When the Fed "cajoled all the large Wall Street firms" to bail out an important hedge fund "to avert a global financial meltdown," only one, Bear, "refused to participate" (Washington Post, 3/15/08, A4). But, unfortunately for Bear, the biggest thieves have long memories. True to its "anti-establishment" veneer, Bear specialized in high-risk investments. Unlike its bigger investment bank rival, Goldman Sachs, Bear could not recover from its huge losses in mortgage-backed securities. Its stock price, which as late as last year was \$172 per share, plummeted 96% by March 14.

Bosses, Bankers Run the Government

Communists constantly point out how the government serves the needs of the capitalist bosses and bankers. Nowhere is there a more striking example than the "take-down" of Bear. JPMC, with the help of the Fed and Paulson, former Goldman Sachs chairman, acquired Bear at the fire-sale price of \$2 per share ("raised" as of March 23 to \$10). The Fed loaned JPMC \$30 billion to finance this, and although Bear's true value is in question, the Fed insulated JPMC from future asset losses to the tune of \$30 billion. This sweet deal for Rockefeller and Morgan interests will be subsidized by U.S. workers' taxes should Bear's real worth prove to be lower.

Even though JPMC made out like a bandit, the fact is that the biggest bankers were forced to act quickly to protect the long-term interests of the capitalist system. "In normal times, they would be inclined to let capitalism do its work . . . But markets are so jittery that . . . [t]he stock market could have experienced a collapse of 1987 proportions and untold damage may have been done to the U.S. economy" (Washington Post, 3/15/08). As far as these top dogs are concerned, the "free market" is expendable when

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Obama's 'All-Class Unity' Spurs War Draft

MASKS RULERS' RACISM

As the primary election season in the United States winds down, statistics are showing more and more enthusiasm for the elections than in past years. Young people turned out at nearly triple the rate they did in the 2000 election (thepewtrust.org), with most voting for Democrats. Many are drawn to messages like those of Obama and Clinton, who are attempting to convince young people that they will make life better for them. Obama in particular, in his recent speech on race, pushes the lie that "we", meaning all Americans, need to unify to face "our" problems, like racism, corporate greed and terrorism. This all-class unity is a deadly error for workers, because we have one primary problem: capitalism. This system, built on the exploitation of our labor and the continual degradation of our living conditions, can never meet the needs of the working class.

'National Service' High Priority

The liberal politicians can't fix this main problem. In fact, they are completely dedicated to the long-term plan of the U.S. ruling class: more war and fascism. The U.S. needs to position itself for future inter-imperialist rivalries against rising capitalist countries like Russia and China. This requires ideological unity between the millions of workers

and the few bosses.

To achieve this "unity," liberal rulers are relentlessly promoting a program of "national service" which requires service in the military or government-sponsored programs. They are trying to copy many countries around the world like Israel, Mexico, Germany, etc., which have compulsory national or military service. The liberals realize one of their key weaknesses is the apathy and cynicism youth have, as illustrated in declining figures in military recruitment. This apathy, along with the Bush Administration's general failure to generate nationalist feeling, makes it much more difficult for the U.S. bosses to convince young workers to fight for them domestically and internationally. In particular, events that unmask the racist nature of the capitalist system, like Hurricane Katrina, the assassinations of Sean Bell in New York and Aaron Harrison in Chicago, and the Jena 6, make recruitment of black and Latino youth that much more difficult. National service is intended to reverse this trend.

Barack Obama has led the liberal bosses' call, recently heralded by Democrats Rahm Emanuel and Bruce Reed in their book "The Plan: Big Ideas for America." The book lays the foundations for much of Obama's version of John F. Kennedy's "what you can do for your country" speech. "The Plan" states, "It's time for a real Patriot Act that brings out the patriot in all of us," and then proposes a mandatory period of three months national service for all Americans under 25. This plan includes:

- Expanding AmeriCorps from its current 75,000 positions to 250,000, with new units to deal with education, clean energy, health care and homeland security.
- Expanding service programs involving retired individuals and those over age 55.
- Doubling the size of the Peace Corps from its

current 7,800 volunteers to 16,000 by its 50th anniversary in 2012.

- Setting goals for middle-school and high-school students to serve 50 hours a year of public service, and for college students to serve 100 hours a year. (AP, 12/07)

The authors have to emphatically state that this is "not a draft," but nothing could be further from the truth. The bosses want to use workers' desire to serve their own class and help their fellow workers and transform it into nationalist feeling. Their hope is that these nationalist feelings can then be turned into mass military recruitment to fight their imperialist wars. This is the program that Obama and Clinton are pushing. National service especially could be very attractive to black and Latin working-class youth who will not be able to afford college, who do not want to go directly into the military and who can look forward only to a dead-end minimum-wage job.

Serve Your Class: Fight for Communism

We can see the desire for workers to serve their class even under capitalism: after 9/11, thousands of volunteers were eager to help; assistance poured into New Orleans from around the country after Hurricane Katrina; and thousands marched in Jena, Louisiana in support of the young men railroaded by the racist justice system. The bosses want to turn these feelings into nationalism and a willingness to kill and be killed for profit. PLP, on the other hand, has a different vision of the future: by exposing the bosses' lies, fighting for the working class in our daily lives, and winning masses of workers to PLP, we can transform the earnest desire of workers to help our brothers and sisters into the only way to truly secure our liberation: communist revolution. ☼

WHAT WE FIGHT FOR:

★**Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to smash capitalism — wage slavery. While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions all over the world.**

★**Capitalism returned to the Soviet Union and China because socialism failed to wipe out many aspects of the profit system, like wages and division of labor.**

★**Capitalism inevitably leads to wars. PLP organizes workers, students and soldiers to turn these wars into a revolution for communism — the dictatorship of the proletariat. This fight requires a mass Red Army led by the communist PLP.**

★**Communism means working collectively to build a society where sharing is based on need. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. Everyone will share in society's benefits and burdens.**

★**Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of race.**

★**Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women workers.**

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

★**Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!**

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40 Years After King Killing, Racism Still Riding High

Forty years ago, on April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee, where 1,600 sanitation workers were striking for union recognition, higher wages and an end to racist practices. King had gone there supposedly to support the strikers but the latter's militancy ran far ahead of King. When he led a march through the heart of the city, the workers and their youthful supporters began a mini-rebellion against the exploitative merchants, battling the cops along the route of the march. King was quickly ushered away in a limousine.

Later, while standing on a motel balcony, a sniper cut him down.

In the context of worldwide mass struggle against the U.S. imperialist war in Vietnam and racist police terror and for revolution (the Red Guards in China), immediately rebellions erupted in black communities across the U.S. The National Guard was called out to quell the uprisings.

Racism had cut deep wounds among black workers. Their unemployment rates were double the national average. Their family incomes were far below white workers'. They were using the King assassination to protest the savagery that the rulers' racism had visited on their families for centuries.

Today, politicians like Barack Obama, while not denying some racism still exists, cite the "progress" black workers have made. He and others are calling for black and white people to "unite." Unite for what? To get behind U.S. capitalism's drive to advance its bosses' interests through imperialist war. (See article above)

But 40 years later black workers' unemployment is still twice that of white workers.

Black family income is still less than 70% that of



white family income.

Black workers and youth comprise 50% of the 2.4 million in capitalism's prisons — nearly ten times what it was 40 years ago — although only 12% of the population as a whole is black.

Black and Latino workers will be paid \$10 an hour in Alabama plants to build the U.S. rulers' oil-war tanker aircraft, while mostly white workers in Boeing's Seattle plants, earning \$27 an hour, will be laid off. Thus, the bosses still use racism against black and Latino workers to drag down the conditions of white workers as well.

King had a "Dream." But for millions of black and Latino workers, that "dream" is more a nightmare and it is fast turning into one for tens of millions of white workers also suffering mass layoffs, wage-cuts and home foreclosures.

The only way to turn dreams of a decent life into reality is to fight the bosses' racism used to divide ALL workers and crush class consciousness. Then a red-led united working class can destroy the racist bosses' profit system through communist revolution. ☼

PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

P.O. Box 808 Brooklyn NY 11202

www.plp.org

email:cd188@juno.com

Phone: 718-630-9440

GIs, Vets Must Fight Imperialism, Cause of Bosses' War Crimes

WASHINGTON, D.C., March 18 — At the Winter Soldier Investigation (see CHALLENGE, 3/26) organized by the Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW), over 200 Marine, Army and Navy veterans of the wars and occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan testified about atrocities and war crimes they had witnessed, and sometimes had committed. Iraqi civilians testified via video and in person about their experience of abuse and terror by U.S. troops. (Testimony can be read and heard at the website <IVAW.org>) The event coincided with the 5th anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq. PLP'ers at this event pointed out that the root cause of these atrocities is capitalism and imperialism.

The brass employs racism and the "Rules of Engagement" policy of using force to encourage abusing and killing civilians, detaining innocents and torturing prisoners. Vets said these "Rules" had become so loose that officers were telling soldiers virtually anyone could be considered a threat. Holding a cell phone, walking across the street or wearing a green headband were all "capital offenses." A War Department memo denies rape kits for troops in combat zones.

Several vets testified being routinely ordered to carry "throw-down" weapons and shovels to plant on civilians they murdered in order to claim they were "insurgents" — the same tactic cops use in the U.S. Others described the racism inculcated by the brass and officers who constantly use a racist slur, in referring to all Iraqis, making the entire population the "enemy." This dehumanizes all Iraqis, making it "easier" to kill them like animals, just as the U.S. Army did when using racist terms against the Vietnamese during that war.

Some vets tearfully apologized to the Iraqi people for not having stopped civilian murders, and sometimes for murdering civilians themselves. One vet angrily threw his medals into the audience, declaring "Eat the apple — F--- the [Marine] Corps."

More troops need to follow the example of these testifiers and resist killing and dying for U.S.

imperialism. Troops and vets also must recognize the root of the problem is capitalism. Ending imperialism, racism and sexism requires building a mass communist party to overthrow capitalism, building a revolutionary communist society, not just more anti-war organizing to "pressure" the government to stop the war and "reform" the military.

One veteran declared that U.S. service members and workers had far more in common with the average Iraqi than with the rich capitalists and oil barons who run the U.S., who launched this war for their profits and power. This is the kind of internationalism and anti-racism we need.

Imperial occupations must brutalize civilian populations to stop popular resistance. But how different a revolutionary war is! Given that the capitalists think nothing of slaughtering a million Iraqis and three million Vietnamese, when the working class fights, it must ruthlessly kill these capitalist enemies, any traitors to our class, as well as any military forces that cannot be won to mutiny against the imperialists. The vets' exposure of brutality against civilians in Iraq and Afghanistan proves that this is a racist war against the interests of the working class of Iraq, Afghanistan and the world.

What now for IVAW? The PLP "GI Voices" newsletter, circulated widely at the event, raised this question, calling for internationalism, anti-racism and communist revolution as the way forward for the veterans' and GI movement. One vet said that each action IVAW took was moving the group in a more radical direction. But the bosses' foun-



dations and liberal capitalists are funding and supporting IVAW. Its leaders mainly focus on a media strategy rather than organizing active-duty personnel to fight racism and war in their units and on their bases.

During the conference, IVAW "messaging" framed vets' testimony as serving "our" country. Reformists like those who lead IVAW co-opt and mislead honest fighters. Some attendees raised the danger of relying on liberal patriotic politics to fight imperialism. Honest veteran activists were frustrated with the group for dropping a panel on racism within the military, not taking civilian testimony seriously and not adequately addressing Afghanistan.

Expanding the distribution of CHALLENGE, asking friends to help do this and to participate in Party activities like the upcoming May Day must become the order of the day. PLP veterans, GIs and others should intensify their efforts to win IVAW members and friends to the long-range view of revolution.✊

Students Lead Parents to Oppose NYC Budget Cuts

NEW YORK CITY, March 24 — Several students new to PLP took leadership in our high school to fight the budget cuts after being inspired by a Brooklyn school's Student Government that organized a protest at City Hall (CHALLENGE, 3/12). Battling these cuts requires parent-student-teacher unity. On a Monday, a PL teacher noted that the school's PTA would be meeting on the coming Wednesday.

When the PL students, the Writing Club and the teacher met on Tuesday, they understood that struggle was necessary to defeat these cuts. Many students in this club read CHALLENGE, some for years. They recognized the bosses need budget cuts, squeezing the working class in order to finance their oil wars. Two students volunteered to speak at the PTA meeting.

After some initial discussion, the PL'ers changed the tone of the PTA meeting. The teacher spoke first, saying the budget cuts affected the school and a fight-back was needed. The PTA agreed, and then asked students in the Writing Club to write a letter attacking the cuts, and that the PTA would sign it and mail it in. Then one PL student spoke, describing how the budget cuts would affect her and her desire to learn. Another PL student said the bosses "are trying to take the books out of my hand, and give me a gun." The parents agreed with PLP's communist analysis of the budget cuts, and told us to make sure the letter was "very political."

The parents decided that if the politicians don't respond to the letter, then they

would organize protests and more. The militant parents recognized that the letter was only the first step, and that more struggles lay ahead. However, even these struggles, in and of themselves, won't stop the racist, anti-working-class cuts because they're a necessary part of the capitalist system. A mass campaign can intensify the class struggle but can only produce reforms, which the ruling class can eventually reverse. Only communism can fulfill the needs of the working class, ending the profit-driven budgets that exploit the needs of children.

The school administrator supported the students' and PTA's letter, noting how the budget was cut overnight. She went to work the next day, checked her computer and saw that the money was already taken out. The corporate-style restructuring of the school system enabled this attack on the schools, paving the way for increased ruling-class fascist control over education.

The next day PLP'ers enthusiastically spread the news about students giving leadership to parents. At the Thursday Writing Club meeting, students unable to attend the PTA meeting were excited to help draft the letter. Congratulations to these new comrades and CHALLENGE readers for stepping forward. We want them to meet regularly with the Party. This modest victory itself isn't enough if it doesn't help build PLP, in order to destroy a system that steals books from students in order to give them guns to kill and be killed in endless profit wars.✊

Axle Strikers Battling UAW's Blatant Sellout



DETROIT, MI, March 24 — Today GM and Chrysler workers, idled by the month-long strike at American Axle (AAM), joined the picket lines in a show of unity. Many auto workers who've suffered a blatant UAW sellout are backing these valiant strikers who are fighting a similar betrayal.

The Solidarity rally occurred ten days after three strikers were arrested for blocking scab trucks moving work out of the plant. Meanwhile, the International UAW sent the local bargainers home and took over contract negotiations to duplicate the auto sellouts.

The 3,600 strikers are battling company demands to cut pay from \$28/hr to \$11.50-\$14.50/hr. The integrated workforce at the Detroit plant shows how racism hurts all workers. These black and white workers are struggling to survive in a city ravaged by racism, with soaring unemployment and the country's highest foreclosure rate. More mouths than ever depend on each and every paycheck.

The company also wants to replace pensions with 401(k)s, end retirees' health care, cut medical coverage drastically, move work to low-wage non-union plants (done during the strike) and eliminate about 1,000 jobs.

This latest restructuring of the U.S. auto industry — GM, Ford and Chrysler cut starting wages in half while eliminating over 80,000 jobs — results from sharpening inter-imperialist rivalry that has the world's auto billionaires fighting for markets,

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More Racist Profiling: 'Black While Shopping'

CHICAGO, March 20 — “No justice, no peace! No racist police!” chanted over 100 demonstrators, catching the attention of shoppers hurrying into Southlake Mall. A few weeks after the winter holidays, high school students, ministers, moms and PLP members were protesting the racist practices of Southlake Mall security, particularly the charging of a young black woman with “criminal trespass” and “disorderly conduct” during that shopping period.

She is an A student at a charter school. All know her as a bright, caring, energetic and strong young lady, active in her church. But mall security saw her only as someone who fit their racist stereotype — black while shopping in a “white mall.”

When she stopped to talk for a bit, security told her to “keep moving.” She did, though not understanding why, and continued shopping, stopping at some more stores before finding her nephew. Then the police surrounded her entire group, herding them like cattle, shouting “YOU WERE ALREADY TOLD YOU’RE NOT WELCOME HERE! YOU’RE

GONNA NEED TO COME WITH US NOW!”

One cop grabbed her, charging her with “criminal trespassing,” and tried to shove her down a dark isolated hallway. She refused to go anywhere without her mom, requesting they find her. The cops forced her into the hallway but she continued to resist, fearing what might happen to a young girl behind a closed door with an angry racist cop. She was then handcuffed and charged with “disorderly

‘Communists know the workers will never win a fight by following the bosses’ rules.’

conduct.”

Clearly, there was no charge of shoplifting or any real offense. She was accused of “criminal trespassing” for just being black in a “white” mall, shopping and talking. We must fight the continued harassment of our youth.

At the demonstration, after half an hour, security forced the protesters off mall property. Church representatives thanked security, stating they “understood the rules needed to be enforced.” (But

the only “rules” enforced were the cops’ racism.) They then addressed the protesters, saying not to lose faith — the next fight will be the “right way,” implying with the bosses’ permission.

Communists know the workers will never win a fight by following the bosses’ rules. A Party member quickly reminded the crowd that the bosses will never allow effective protest; we need to struggle by our own rules.

The young lady is awaiting trial and still looking for the people’s support. The community has united to support her, but the Party’s ideas are needed during this struggle. We must point out, as in every racist attack, that racial division is the bosses’ favorite weapon. Racism is alive and well, despite what presidential politicians may say and will be here as long as its cause — capitalism — exists.

We must unite as a class. Together we are stronger than the bosses and TOGETHER WE WILL WIN. ☸

Red Flags, PL Youth Draw Acclaim at LA Anti-War March

LOS ANGELES, March 15 — “Elections will not end imperialist war. Fight for communism!” said the banner in English and Spanish that was carried by PLP students in the anti-war march to mark the 5th anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. Many marchers took pictures of the banner. A multi-racial and loud PLP contingent of high school and college students and a few teachers marched down the streets of Hollywood. With the red flag raised high they chanted “Democrats, Republicans are one and the same, war and fascism is the name of their game”; “Oaxaca, Baghdad, New Orleans, smash the racist war machine.” We distributed over 400 CHALLENGES and 1,500 PLP leaflets.

Before starting the march we made speeches that not only denounced U.S. imperialism but also attacked Democratic candidates, Clinton and Obama and the Republican McCain, showing that none of them would end the war in Iraq. The world powers are in a new “Cold War” where the battle is over the control of oil. The Chinese, Russian, and European imperialists are not only fighting for this control in Iraq but in Africa and South America. All of this in preparation to sustain bigger and wider wars that will ultimately reach world scale. The only solution to end these imperialist wars is to organize a movement of workers, students and soldiers united in revolution against capitalism and fighting for a communist world.

At this time, L.A. is planning to cut back on all the city departments except one: the LAPD. Mayor Villaraigosa has announced that he will add 3,500 cops by 2009. The addition of cops, while cutting jobs, wages, healthcare and education, shows that capitalism has nothing for us except racist attacks, fascism and war.

Many of those that were listening nodded approval. During the day there seemed to be a lot more youth than previous marches. There was a different atmosphere and many eagerly took our leaflets and CHALLENGE. When approaching a group of youth and telling them “this is about revolution,” over and over they would answer “thank you very much. Can we ALL get it.” We were surprised that even some people carrying Obama signs wanted CHALLENGE with its front page attacking him. Three different groups of high school students gave their names and contact information to the PLP youth, interested in talking to them about starting clubs at their schools to fight racism and imperialism. One of these groups told us, “I like communism.”

The youth in our contingent were very excited and committed themselves to organizing for May Day.

We are building for a May Day Dinner, which will not only commemorate the historic day with speeches, poetry, and good food, but also to prepare ideologically and logistically our contingent that will bring PLP’s communist politics to the big May Day March sponsored by the immigration rights groups. A PLP May Day presence will help build for a strong summer project to reach out to workers students and soldiers with communist politics in the lead.☸



Unionists Defy Funeral Mood at NYC Anti-War ‘Protest’

The March 22 anti-war “River-to-River” protest organized by United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ) across New York City’s 14th Street was rather disappointing, reflecting the weaknesses of the anti-war movement. Not only was it mostly white, but there was no major participation by college youth.

Spanning the distance between avenues requires about 500 people. So for the demonstration to have stretched from river to river would have required at least 6,000 demonstrators. I thought there were maybe half that, obviously much less than 6,000. Many blocks had big gaps with no protestors.

The demonstration was a new low for UFPJ. Besides the poor turnout the entire event was thoroughly depoliticized — a weak call for “peace,” no emphasis on demanding immediate and total withdrawal of U.S. troops

(and therefore no criticism of the Democrats who don’t support a complete withdrawal), no speakers (just singing, five minutes of silence and taps). The whole thing had — and was intended to have — the somber feeling of a funeral.

The best part was the rally at one corner by a union in which PLP members and friends are active. Over 200 people listened to speakers describe the war and occupation in class terms. They called for defeating imperialism, not just “war,” and for organizing solidarity events uniting with West Coast longshoremen who are set to strike against the war on May 1. Ten members of one Party-led readers group participated and led militant left-wing chants in our section of the march, in contrast to liberal “give-peace-a-chance” chants of the UFPJ leadership. ☸

NYC Red Anti-War Marcher

Axle Strikers

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resources and cheap labor.

AAM supplies GM’s pick-up truck and SUV production. Those vehicles typically use about 400 direct suppliers, with hundreds of others selling to those companies.

The strike has forced GM to shut or cut production at 29 plants, involving over 37,000 workers. This has also affected many supplier plants. Magna, Lear and Delphi have laid off 3,140. The strike is also rippling through the railroads and food service providers. These shutdowns and layoffs have added to a 6% rise in weekly unemployment claims last week, one of the highest this year.

The strike has cost GM 100,000 lost vehicles that won’t be produced. But due to a weakening economy, soaring gas prices and a big backlog of unsold SUVs and pick-ups, the bosses can stand the lost production.

As the strike drags on, AAM’s CEO Richard Dauch’s income rose to

\$10.2 million in 2007; the company reported \$37 million in profits. Dauch is one of the auto industry’s highest-paid executives, raking in \$68 million from 2003–2007. AAM executives are being rewarded for halving the workforce, closing the Buffalo plant and moving production to low-wage plants. The workers, who produce all wealth, will be “rewarded” with wage-cuts and lost jobs.

From Delphi to GM, and Ford to Chrysler, the handwriting is on the wall. The bosses offer a future of poverty, strike-breaking, racist terror and war. But by taking a stand and striking, AAM strikers are leading the way. We support them and hope to win some workers closer to the Party. Having the strikers represented at May Day would be a big step in rebuilding PLP in Detroit.☸

Tibet's CIA-Backed Feudal Monks Fight China's Bosses



Recent events in Tibet are more related to geopolitics than religion. With the Olympics looming, protests in Lhasa and elsewhere were organized to embarrass the Beijing rulers. Tsewang Rigzin, head of the major Tibetan group the Tibetan Youth Congress, told the Chicago Tribune (3/15): "With the spotlight on [the Chinese government] with the Olympics, we want to test them....to show their true colors. That's why we're pushing this."

It was an organized violent protest targeting ethnic Chinese Hans and Muslims in Tibet. "Tourists arriving in Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal, from the closed city of Lhasa...told how they saw angry mobs of Tibetans attacking ethnic Chinese." (London Telegraph, 3/20)

Tibet's economy has actually "grown at more than 12% for seven years and hit 14% last year — higher even than the national rate." (London Times, 3/23). But this growth is based on capitalism, creating inequalities, favoring a small group of merchants and entrepreneurs, similar to the rest of

capitalist China.

Tibet's anti-Chinese forces want more inequality, resurrecting the rule of the Lamas, led by the CIA-financed Dalai Lama (See "The CIA's Secret War in Tibet," 2002, Kansas University Press; by Kenneth Conboy of the Heritage Foundation and James Morrison, Army veteran trainer for the CIA), now exiled in India, and darling of the mysticism-loving Richard Gere and Hollywood crowd. It's a myth that Buddhism, contrary to other religions, is less about theology and more a path towards "inner harmony," ignoring one's egotistical pursuits "for connections with all things and people." The Dalai Lama claims to be non-violent. Not quite.

Tibet under the Lamas was no Shangri-La. It was a violent feudal society where the Lamas ruled and 95% of the population served them as serfs or even slaves. Most worked 16-18 hours a day, forced to give 70% of their crops to their feudal lords (who did not work). Serfs who dared touch anything belonging to their masters suffered lashings.

Women were considered "talking animals." The term kimen (woman) means born inferior. They had to pray to leave this "woman body" and be reborn male. A woman bearing twins was considered evil and generally killed, as were their twins. In Lhasa, children could be bought and sold. In 1950, the infant mortality rate was 43%, life expectancy only 35 years.

Diseases were rampant. The only "cure" was to pray and pay money to the monks. In 1951, 95% of the population was illiterate. Reading and writing were only useful for religious purpose.

For over 200 years, Tibet was considered part of China or a Chinese vassal state. The ruling Lamas always had good relations with Chinese rulers.

But when the communist-led revolution liberated China in 1949, conditions changed. The communist movement being very weak in Tibet, there was no major peasant uprising against the Lamas and feudal lords. But Red China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) acted to prevent Tibet from becoming a base for imperialism against liberated China.

In October 1950, the PLA reached the Tibetan plains and easily defeated the feudal Tibetan rulers' army. However, the PLA didn't completely free Tibet, allowing Tibet's rulers to maintain power, but overseen by the new people's central government in Beijing. On October 26, 1951, the PLA marched into Lhasa.

Historically, the PLA mistakenly permitted the feudal lords to remain partially in power, not immediately smashing them completely. Then, when the communists began giving rights to serfs and to liberate women from the extreme oppression of religion and feudalism, the Lamas started organizing a counter-revolution, with CIA assistance. The "non-violent" Dalai Lama allowed the CIA to train anti-Chinese guerrillas to wage war against Beijing.

Today, as the contradictions between rising imperialist China and the U.S. sharpen, the Dalai Lama and his feudal mysticism again become useful to U.S. bosses. Congressional leader Nancy Pelosi visits the Dalai Lama at his Indian headquarters, and many U.S. liberals and conservatives advocate boycotting the Beijing Olympics.

Workers and youth should not back the feudal Tibetan movement, nor should we support China's new imperialist rulers, whose system has brought a different kind of hell to all of China's working class: capitalism. ☸

Angry Workers' Mass Strikes Pose Problem for Greek Rulers

ATHENS, GREECE, March 20 — Millions participated in a massive general strike on March 19 which shut down this country, protesting Prime Minister Karamanlis' right-wing government's new social security plan, which would eliminate early retirements, merge pension funds and cap auxiliary pensions.

Despite this action, today Parliament passed the pension reform bill, but tens of thousands of workers continued striking, shutting down the Athens subway, the suburban railway and the tram system. TV and radio journalists, engineers, teachers and lawyers, as well as workers at the main power company, and municipal refuse cleaners struck.

It was the third mass strike in three months, called by the Greek Confederation of Workers and the main union of the Public Sector Workers. Huge rallies spread across the country, including two in Athens with over 100,000 participating. The BBC reported that most people in Greece supported the strikers.

Even given the passage of this "reform," the working class' militancy and anger will continue and may very well intensify. This might impel the Greek bosses to try "plan B," bringing the social-democratic PASOK party into a coalition government with Karamanlis' New Democracy party, to try to pacify the workers. And the union leaders actually gave the government breathing room with over a month's "period of peace" between the Feb. 13 strike and this one. Workers must break with all these reformist schemers.

Worldwide capitalism is in a period of profound economic crisis and sharpening imperialist rivalry leading to more and more wars. Greece is not exempt from this. Eventually, the bosses here must try to force workers to pay for the crisis.

The workers must break with all the reformists trying to use their anger and militancy to get elected. The key lesson to be drawn from this struggle is to develop a revolutionary communist leadership to fight all the bosses. ☸

'Socialist' Chavez's Cops Assault Steel Strikers

CARACAS, VENEZUELA, March 19 — While Venezuela's President Hugo Chávez was making peace and shaking hands with Uribe, Colombia's death-squad President, Chavez's government and cops were making war on 12,000 steel workers in the United Steel Workers Union (SUTISS), on strike against the Ternium Sidor plant in Ciudad Cuayana, in southwest Venezuela. On March 14, 200 National Guard and police agents viciously attacked protesting workers with tear gas and rubber bullets, wounding two and hospitalizing three others. The attackers also smashed 50 strikers' vehicles blocking the road. Fifty strikers were arrested, handcuffed like criminals, while demonstrators chanted "Where is the government's socialism?" Workers have stopped production five times this year.

Sidor is one of Latin America's largest steel-makers, producing 4.8 million tons of liquid steel annually. The Italian-Argentine Techint group owns a 60% controlling share of Sidor; 20% belongs to the Venezuelan state-owned CVG and 20% belongs to the workers. The company claims the strike action has cost more than \$50 million.

The strikers not only blame the Sidor bosses and Rangel Gómez, governor of the state of Bolívar (where the plant is located), for ordering the attack, but also the Ministry of Labor in Caracas. The latter has been trying to force the workers to end their year-long struggle for a new contract by accepting a deal favorable to the company. Sidor's final offer is a \$20-a-day hike; the workers are demanding \$24. Sidor workers are the country's lowest-paid steelworkers.

A March 16 mass mobilization of Sidor workers, relatives of the arrested and workers from other plants freed the 50 arrested strikers. The workers then held a general assembly at the plant's main gate and decided to end their 3-day walkout, but to continue to fight for their demand, using future work stoppages and other actions.

The National Guard attacks, under national government orders, and the pro-company attitude of the Minister of Labor, again exposes the Chávez government's "Bolivarian socialism" — defending capitalist exploitation of workers. Last year, the government also repressed workers who had seized the Maracay bathroom-parts plant abandoned by its bosses. Potentially all these workers want to end all forms of capitalism.

Chávez talks a lot about "fighting imperialism" (only the U.S. type, while making deals with Chinese, Russian and India's bosses). Meanwhile, his government shakes hands with the U.S.'s main lackey in the region, war-maker Uribe; lets the right-wing CIA-financed "opposition" do whatever it wants; and then attacks class-conscious militant workers to make sure they don't think "Bolivarian socialism" means revolutionary workers' power.

We in PLP support the Sidor workers and all others fighting back. We demand punishment for the Commander of the National Guard and the governor who ordered the attacks, and also of the Ministry of Labor. But we have no illusions this will happen under "Chávez socialism." Workers need to turn their struggles into a school for communism and build the kind of leadership that will unite them with their working-class brothers and sisters in Colombia, Ecuador, Argentina and throughout the continent. That's the only road for real working-class liberation, for communism. ☸

LETTERS



Bosses' Media Covers Up Colombia's Death Squads

As CHALLENGE (3/26) reported, although an oil war was averted between Venezuela, Colombia and Ecuador — after Colombia's army, with U.S. aid, massacred a FARC guerrilla leader and others in a camp inside Ecuador — the contradictions behind this crisis remain. Reading the Colombian bosses' media (and lots of U.S. media), one would conclude the real culprits are the governments of Venezuela and Ecuador for protecting the FARC group, labeling them narco-guerrillas, kidnappers, common criminals, etc. But all this propaganda is a smoke-screen to cover the mass crimes committed by Colombia's rulers, their army and paramilitary death squads. Colombia's President Uribe, lapdog of the U.S. bosses in the region, has increased armed attacks against workers and peasants throughout Colombia. Even the AFL-CIO, which usually supports U.S. foreign policy, declared that just this March death squads have murdered four trade unionists. Forty leaders of mass organizations who led the March 6 mass marches here against the death-squad murders have had their lives threatened, The Uribe government's policies are based on mass terror, rapes of peasant women, turning hundreds of indigenous people into refugees from their lands and giving million-dollar bribes to those perpetrating these murders.

These bosses' media now labeling the FARC terrorists haven't said much about the 30,000 workers and youth killed and the four million displaced from their homes in recent years here. The media has also wondered what four Mexican students and an Ecuadorian worker were doing in the FARC. They just can't understand how many young people and workers worldwide are looking for ways to fight capitalism.

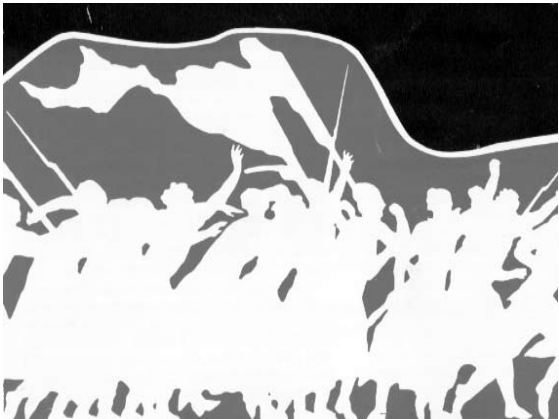
The big criminals are the rulers and their politicians. Some 40 Senators linked to Uribe are under investigation about connections to paramilitary groups, drug gangs and illicit wealth. And of course, Uribe is very good friend with today's number one terrorist, President Bush, as well as with Sarkozy and Zapatero (rulers of France and Spain), whose governments super-exploit and terrorize immigrant workers.

We must fight all the bosses. We in PLP here are uniting workers and youth using DESAFIO, struggling to win them to our communist politics as the only real way to fight capitalism. We aim to destroy the bosses' nationalism and wage slavery, to create a new world without bosses: communism.

A Comrade in Colombia

Students See Through Sugar-coated History

How should a teacher expose capitalism when openly distributing CHALLENGE in the classroom is not possible? I'm a high school teacher at a large urban school. This year I'm teaching American History, although I am actually a science and math teacher. I decided that one good way to help my students understand what really happened in U.S. history from colonial times to the present would be to: (1) present a class analysis of each aspect of this history, and (2) ask my students to compare my presentation with what they read in their textbook.



Virtually all my students have said many times that the textbook sugar-coats events and that my analyses are much more meaningful than what's in their textbook. This is certainly good, but there are still many contradictions in my students' minds. Their biggest illusion is the incorrect conclusion that voting for Barack Obama or Hillary Clinton can lead to meaningful change. To counter this, I asked each student to choose a presidential hopeful and present a summary of that candidate's program to the class. I hoped that after examining what the candidates actually say in print, my students would realize that all of them are making the same empty promises or actually have different programs from what the students thought they had.

It didn't take long for most students to see that both Obama and Clinton are saying/promising the same things with absolutely no specific plan to accomplish their so-called "goals." In one class, a student reporting on Obama said just that: "Gee, that's the same thing Hillary says." This led to a good discussion but it also showed that illusions die hard. A sizeable majority still feel Obama is better than Clinton (and MOST DEFINITELY both better than McCain). Fortunately, most of my students will still be here next year. I'm hopeful they will re-think things as the ruling class prepares for more and larger oil wars.

Pennsylvania Teacher

What's Deadlier in Paraguay? Yellow Fever or Election Fever?

A yellow fever epidemic has erupted in Paraguay, just before national elections. Both disease and election illusions are deadly products of capitalism. The mosquito may bite workers in Paraguay, but capitalism kills them. It will take a PLP-led workers' revolution to stop the carnage of both!

The government has belatedly declared a "national emergency," but its mass vaccination effort has become chaotic. Hundreds of thousands of vaccine doses have been flown in from Brazil, Venezuela, Argentina and Peru to forestall an epidemic but they're barely reaching the people. Paraguayan capitalists have worried only about their profits, not about people's health. None of the revenue from Yacyreta and Itaipu, two of the region's largest hydroelectric plants, has been allocated for public health and disease prevention. The bosses here are turning this epidemic into an excuse for mobilizing the police and army to do a house-to-house "elimination of mosquito breeding grounds."

Amid this health crisis, Paraguayan President Nicanor Duarte Frutos reported a supposed assassination attempt on his life, while saying he was "immortal." The opposition parties are trying to oust Nicanor's Colorado Party which has ruled for over 60 years. But the "opposition" Liberal Party and Fatherland Party put workers' needs last as well. The "Rosca Mafia" — the corrupt capitalists exploiting the workers — are not just Colorado party members. All these bosses' politicians and their parties are accomplices in the destruction and misery in Paraguay.

Some rank-and-file members of PMAS (followers of Chávez's "Bolivarian socialism" here in Paraguay) say they're for the workers. But the solution to health problems, poverty, high bus fares and oppression of indigenous communities won't come from supporting ex-bishop Fernando Lugo and his Liberal Party vice-presidential candidate. Instead, we must organize workers to attack the entire capitalist political apparatus, and point the way for violent revolution against the bosses and towards the building of communism. Workers from



Paraguay, whether in that country, in the U.S. or in Spain, should join this fight for a society that eliminates profits, putting workers first.

Red Guarani

The Real Prostitutes

Reporters asked Lt. Governor David Paterson, who replaced Eliot Spitzer as NY Governor, if he ever had relations with a prostitute. Paterson quipped, "Only with lobbyists," and got a big laugh from the audience. But it is lobbyists representing big business and the war industries who are paying billions to politicians for their "services." So who are the prostitutes? Like Karl Marx said, capitalism stands reality on its head.

Diogenes

Rulers 'Turn Around' Schools by Closing Them

In January, Chicago Public Schools (CPS) CEO Arne Duncan announced that 11 schools would be closed and 8 would be classified as "turnaround schools." The eight schools are all in black neighborhoods with average incomes below \$23,000 a year. The 11 are schools with low enrollment and closing them will slash \$100 million from the school system next year.

Duncan piously talks about the "moral obligation to do something for these children" but if the children were the system's main concern CPS would lower class sizes in the primary grades instead of closing and reorganizing schools. The truth is working-class black and Latino communities have never been served by the school system, nor can they be. We live under capitalism, inseparable from racism, where the wealthy few feed off the low-paid many. The system cannot allow everyone to become college-educated because who would work in the factories, collect the trash, or deliver the mail?

Capitalism must educate the majority to learn just enough to work the machines or read manuals but not enough to qualify them for higher paid jobs. The bosses purposely miseducate the majority and then blame students, parents, and teachers for the system's failures.

The eight "turnaround" schools will fire all their 200 teachers and all but one principal. Although there is absolutely no evidence that such a drastic measure will make the schools better (one study of such "turnaround" couldn't find any successful examples), CPS insists on carrying out the current "flavor of the month." Just five years ago, one of the turnaround schools, Orr, was divided into three small schools as part of that year's reformation plan. Now they will be recombined back into one school. The eight turnaround schools will be run by the Academy for Urban School Leadership (AUSL), founded by venture capitalist Martin J. Koldyke. Bill and Melinda Gates have given AUSL an additional

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Bankers’ Fight Bears Down On Working Class

continued from front page

their needs dictate it. Using their government to bring into line or destroy smaller players who don’t go along with the program is classic fascism.

We cannot predict if capitalism’s financial wizards will be able to arrest the “credit crisis” in time to prevent a deep and prolonged recession. We do understand the lessons of history. The bosses’ current fear and mistrust of each other will have no good end for the working class, short of a communist revolution that stops them from once again preserving their system by stepping harder on our necks and shedding our blood.

Russia, China, and other rival imperialists are gaining ground on U.S. rulers. The spirit of “sacrifice” that the Democrats, in particular, call for is just what the doctor ordered. As the capitalists try to convince workers that “we are all in this together” in order to prepare us for bigger wars, they will force their own class into line as well. The New York Times made its lead front-page story on March 23 “In Washington, a Split Over Regulation of Wall Street.” “Democratic lawmakers are drafting bills that would create a powerful new regulator...to oversee practices across the entire array of commercial banks, Wall Street firms, hedge funds and non-bank financial companies.” On the other side, “President Bush and [treasury secretary] Paulson... remain philosophically opposed to restrictions and requirements that might hamper economic activity.” New York’s disgraced ex-governor and attorney general Eliot Spitzer fell victim as much to the Bushite foes of regulation, as to his own perverted

ego. Liberal crusader Spitzer had subjected Wall Street firms to strict scrutiny and prosecution for the imperialists’ benefit. It was a combination of HSBC, a British-owned bank investigated by Spitzer and closely tied to China’s rulers, and the Bush-controlled IRS and FBI that exposed his penchant for prostitutes.

The Bush gang puts quarterly bottom lines ahead of the main capitalists’ long-term war needs. Liberals Obama and Clinton hope to reverse this trend. In calling for “cleaning up” Wall Street, they seek a militarization of society that includes both state control of finance and the enlistment, by one means or another, of millions of working-class soldiers. Obama and Clinton, in fact, serve the openly imperialist wing of U.S. capitalists, hungrier for global war than even Bush and McCain, and potentially deadlier because of their broader liberal, Democratic appeal, especially to young people.

Capitalism’s seemingly endless “booms and busts” will only be a relic of history if millions of workers reject the bosses’ fear, racism, and patriotism, and join a mass communist party to turn things around. Communism will abolish a system that gives a few speculators so much money to play with that they inevitably bring hundreds of millions to ruin. Revolutionary actions under the leadership of PLP can put an end to the rule of the financiers and let real history begin for the working class.☺

MORE LETTERS

continued from previous page

\$10.3 million to help with the turnarounds.

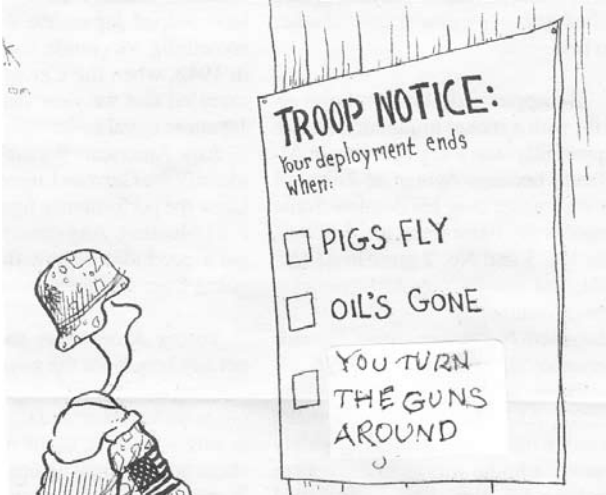
Most CPS schools have at least the contractual limit of 29 students per classroom in grades K-3 and many classes are way over even this large number. The Tennessee class size study, which is well known by educators, proved conclusively that class sizes of 13 to 17 students in the lower grades led to increased academic performance, which continued through high school, particularly for black children. CPS is only interested in providing black children with a good education to the extent that doing so coincides with preparing them for the military, industry, or prison.

The Teacher’s Union is doing virtually nothing to stop the firing of teachers, the direct takeover of schools by venture capitalists, or the overcrowded classrooms and school closings. As long as the union is led by pro-capitalist ideology, this will be the case. The Progressive Labor Party is taking the fight against the racist closing into the union and schools. Our goal now is to raise class consciousness and build a multi-racial communist movement that unites students, parents, and teachers to fight against the racist bosses and their system. When communist revolution destroys the profit system once and for all, then poverty and racism will be eliminated and education will maximize all children’s potential, allowing them to contribute fully to the making of a better world.

Chicago Comrades



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



Obama rejects anti-imperialism

On Friday, Mr. Obama called a grab bag of statements by his longtime minister, the Rev. Jeremiah A. Wright Jr., “inflammatory and appalling.”

“I reject outright the statements by Rev. Wright that are at issue,” he wrote...

One of the statements that have been most replayed this week comes from the sermon Mr. Wright delivered following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

“We have supported state terrorism against the Palestinians and black South Africans, and now we are indignant because the stuff we have done overseas is now brought right back to our own front yards,” he said. “America’s chickens are coming home to roost.”

...Before it got “holier than thou,” he said, the nation should have considered how its own policies had led to the events of that day.” (NYT, 3/15)

Better life, if market didn’t rule

...These days, even Bill Gates says capitalism’s work is “unsatisfactory” for one-third of humanity. [This book,] Predictably Irrational...tells us than “life with fewer market norms and more social norms would be more satisfying, creative, fulfilling and fun.”

“Predictably Irrational” is a far more revolutionary book than its unthreatening manner lets on. It’s a concise summary of why today’s social science increasingly treats the markets-know-best model as a

fairly tale. (NYT, 3/16)

Army sees more, longer Iraqs

This week, the Army released a new version of FM 3-0, the Army Field Manual on Operations. It offers what the Army...calls “a revolutionary departure from past doctrine.” For more than 200 years, the Army has had two “core missions”: offense and defense. FM 3-0 adds a third: “stability operations,” better (if more controversially), known to the public as nation building.

But here’s the rub. Successful stability operations take a lot of time.

Maybe not McCain’s 100 years, but if the United States is serious about seeing stability operations as part of the Army’s core mission, we’ll need a larger Army, and we’ll be looking at extended deployments in trouble spots around the globe. You can defeat an enemy army in a month, but truly “stabilizing” a society is something that will happen — if it happens — over 10 or 20 years, not 10 or 20 weeks. (LAT, 3/1)

Law leads schools to dump kids

Most troublesome to some experts was the way the No Child law’s mandate to bring students to proficiency on tests, coupled with its lack of a requirement that they graduate, created a perverse incentive to push students to drop out. If low-achieving students leave school early, a school’s performance can rise.

...Experts say they believe many low-scoring students are prodded to leave school, often by school officials urging them to seek an equivalency certificate known as a General Educational Development diploma.

“They get them out so they don’t have them taking those tests...” (NYT, 3/20)

Prison profiteers love long lock-ups

To the editor: ... Tough sentences but 1% of U.S. adults in jail... [T]he prison population works, for minimum wage or way less, without benefits or capacity to strike, for many prominent corporations. Even maquiladora operations have transferred their operations in order to use prison labour, and we read of state officials lobbying corporations to repatriate manufacturing from third-world nations so as to benefit from the local “competitive labour scene”.

The inherent logic of this situation provides for a major profit incentive to lock people up for long periods for trivial offences: they provide a major source of private profit...” (GW)

The Battle That Helped Crush South Africa's Apartheid

Part VII of Africa Series

On March 25, the 20th anniversary of the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale, Angola, was celebrated in Cuba by Raúl Castro and government representatives from Angola, Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa. Although the battle is mired in propaganda over whether the South African apartheid army really lost or the Cuban Army-led forces won, it marked the beginning of the end of the hated South African apartheid regime and the myth of its army's invincibility in Southern Africa.

It has been called "Africa's largest land battle since World War II," occurring amid the Cold War between the U.S. and the former Soviet Union. A brutal, bloody civil war gripped oil-rich Angola after it won independence from Portugal in 1975. Angola's MPLA government was pro-Soviet. So the CIA, the apartheid South African regime, Congo's corrupt dictator Mobutu and Israel armed, financed and trained UNITA, a guerrilla movement that had also fought Portugal's colonial army. UNITA and its backers outgunned the MPLA, so the latter sought aid from Cuba, which sent thousands of soldiers to fight alongside the MPLA. The South African army also wanted UNITA to control Angola's southern border to stop the liberation movement (SWAPO)

fighting for Namibian independence from South African control.

The border war's final battle occurred in the city of Cuito Cuanavale, in early 1988. It involved hundreds of tanks, artillery, planes and 50,000 Cuban-army-led soldiers against the UNITA-South African army attempt to capture the city. Both sides suffered heavy casualties. The apartheid regime claimed it wasn't defeated.

But as von Clausewitz said, "war is the continuation of politics by other means." That battle crushed the myth of invincibility of the racist apartheid regime and its army. Several years later, apartheid was dismantled in South Africa.

Unfortunately, this defeat of the hated apartheid regime didn't include a revolutionary struggle against the root of racism: capitalism. Today, the rulers of South Africa, Angola and Namibia (all former leaders of those liberation movements) are in bed with capitalism and imperialism. Cuba looks to be turning towards the "China" road of free-market capitalism. And a new imperialist battle for Africa's oil and other vital resources is developing, now between the U.S. and Chinese imperialists. A luta continua (the struggle continues).



Cuban Troops in Angola

Russian Rulers' Rebound Rivals U.S. Imperialist Supremacy

After the demise of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, the U.S. bosses were euphoric believing their hegemony would last well into the 21st century. But this was wishful thinking. As an article published in The New York Times Magazine (Waving Goodbye to Hegemony, 1/26/08) points out, "At best, America's unipolar moment lasted through the 1990s.... So now, rather than bestriding the globe, we are competing — and losing — in a geopolitical marketplace alongside the world's other superpowers: the European Union and China."

U.S. imperialists face three strategic challenges: 1) The rise of China as the factory of the world and the eventual shifting of the world's financial center to the East; (2) the rise of Russia as the world's main energy distributor; and (3) the emergence of the euro as a credible challenger to the dollar's economic dominance. Each of these by itself has the potential to fatally wound the U.S. bosses' dream of projecting their world domination well into this century.

But, the article accepts that, "Despite the 'mirage of immortality' that afflicts global empires, the only reliable rule of history is its cycles of imperial rise and decline, and as [British historian] Arnold Toynbee also pithily noted, the only direction to go from the apogee of power is down."

Nevertheless, the article pushes the idea that the fall of U.S. imperialism can be peaceful, stating that the high cost of maintaining U. S. hegemony "...isn't worth it, and history promises the effort will fail. It already has." Furthermore, it and another article by John Ikenberry's in the current Foreign Affairs Magazine adds that 21st century's geopolitics will be mainly defined by the U.S., China and the European Union working together.

This picture is reinforced by omitting Russia's rise as a major owner-distributor of energy worldwide, playing a pivotal role in Central Asia, the Caucasus and the EU, as well as forging a growing energy and military alliance with China, Iran and Venezuela and extending its influence to Japan, South Korea, the Middle East and Africa.

Although, the Times article claims that Russia is "nothing but Gazprom INC," a nuclear-armed Russia controlling vast energy resources is nothing to sneer at. In fact, it pits Russia against the U.S. bosses' efforts to prolong their world hegemony by perpetuating their control of the oil-rich Middle East.

This collision will eventually explode in global war, which is rapidly unfolding with the intensification of the U.S.-Russian battle over control of energy resources and pipelines in Central Asia, the Caucasus and Eastern Europe. A battle with many ups and downs, but one that Russia has been winning.

Make no mistake; the peace of capitalism is

that of the cemetery. Since World War 2, tens of millions have been butchered in imperialist-caused wars (Korea, Vietnam, Central America, the Congo, Iraq, Afghanistan, the former Yugoslavia, etc.) Our duty and our strength is to win the working class to understand the criminal nature of capitalism's competition for maximum profits that makes imperialist wars inevitable and to prepare it for the long-range struggle to smash the bosses' dictatorship with communist revolution. For this our Party must be steeled to work under any and all conditions, build a mass base for our line and recruit massively among all sectors of the working class — especially among industrial workers and soldiers. We face this task with revolutionary optimism based on historical facts: workers in Russia and China led by communists took power during the previous two World Wars. ☸

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