

CHALLENGE



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MAY DAY 2010 Militant Marchers Unite Worldwide



Bangladesh



England



Mexico



Chicago

**May Day
Around the
World,
pages 4-6**



Turkey



Phillipines

Imperialists are the Biggest Terrorists: Rulers Use Times Square Bomber to Expand War and Fascism

U.S. rulers are seizing on the failed May 1st Times Square car bombing to widen their overseas energy wars and wield harsher police powers at home. On May 9, Obama ordered a drone missile strike that killed at least 10 “suspected militants” in Pakistan’s Waziristan region, where bungling bomber Faisal Shahzad said he had received training from the Pakistani Taliban. Just before the raid, Hillary Clinton warned Pakistan’s leaders of “severe consequences” if a successful terrorist attack on the U.S. should originate from their country (CBS 60 Minutes, 5/9/10).

Consequences would include U.S. occupation of Taliban-dominated provinces beyond Special Operations troops already there. “[The Times Square

attempt] comes amid increasing debate within the administration about how to expand the American military’s influence — and even a boots-on-the-ground presence — on Pakistani soil.” (NY Times, 5/9/10) Back in Washington, proposals from Senators McCain and Lieberman to strip all legal protection from anybody linked to U.S. rulers’ foes would enable liberals to push a “middle-ground” tough stance.

Terror A Sideshow; Oil Riches Grand Prize For U.S. and Islamist Capitalists

Obama & Co.’s deadly reprisal forms part of a broader U.S. ruling-class effort to shore up its threatened dominance over world oil and gas supplies in the phony guise of “combating terrorists.” Shahzad’s crude contraption in fact injured no one. U.S. media and think-tanks, however, condemned the deed as an expanding global terrorist network:

- “There is a growing danger of attacks on U.S. soil by groups affiliated with, but not formally part of, al-Qaeda.” (Brookings Institution, 5/6/10) These groups and their Al Qaeda beacon, under the pretext of Islamic holy war, aim at capturing key pieces of the U.S. oil and gas empire for the benefit of local capitalists.

- Bin Laden’s original Al Qaeda seeks the vast profits reaped by Exxon Mobil and allies in Saudi Arabia.

- The group Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia eyes Iraq’s oilfields — currently under U.S. occupation — that could rival Saudi Arabia’s.

- Afghan and Pakistani Taliban franchises want control of gas shipments from Turkmenistan to energy-starved India and China.

Meanwhile, the U.S. war machine is gearing up for a major June offensive to take Kandahar, Afghanistan’s second city, which lies along the U.S.-backed Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India gas pipeline route.

Short of Military Draft, Neo-Nazi Drones Are Obama’s Weapon of Choice in Pakistan

U.S. rulers need to restore the military draft in order to mount a force capable of invading the entire war zone, including Iran, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. Until then, they will continue to rely heavily on Obama’s favorite terror weapon, the Predator drone. It kills about one civilian for every two militants (over 700 slain non-combatants so far), sowing hatred of the U.S. among survivors.

The liberal, imperialist New America Foundation, bankrolled by the Rockefeller Foundation, released a study in February blessing Obama’s “murder-from-the-skies” program:

“Despite the controversy, drone strikes are likely to remain a critical tool for the United States to disrupt al Qaeda and Taliban operations and leadership structures. Though these strikes consistently kill Pakistani civilians, which angers the population, and prompt revenge attacks from the militants, Pakistani and U.S. strategic interests



have never been more closely aligned against the militants than they are today...The drone attacks in the tribal regions seem to remain the only viable option for the United States....”

Indiscriminate drones resemble the V-2 rockets Hitler used in his terror raids against Britain in World War II.

However, many Pakistani bosses have their own

Obama Embraces Clinton-Bush Repressive Policies

Starting with the “Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act,” enacted in 1996 by a Republican Congress and Bill Clinton, U.S. rulers have been moving away from their façade of “individual freedoms.” This law allowed the government to deport immigrants using secret evidence. This push towards fascist methods of rule accelerated after 9/11 with the USA Patriot Act, passed overwhelmingly by Congress.

That law vastly increased spying (much of it approved by courts meeting secretly) and allowed criminal and intelligence agencies to share information. When the Bush-led government jailed U.S. citizen Jose Padilla (after falsely charging him with a “dirty-bomb” plot) and threw away the key, it took another step along this road. Obama’s promises to “restore the rights of Americans” lost during the Bush era has become an open embrace of all of the repressive policies of that administration.

class interests — controlling Afghanistan and fighting rival India’s control of Kashmir. Key Pakistani intelligence (ISI) and military officials have bankrolled Islamic “jihadist” movements (with CIA money) to expand Pakistan’s influence in Afghanistan and Kashmir. This was fine by U.S. bosses as long as these religious fanatics were attacking the Soviets. Now, the tables have turned. Jihadist forces today represent aspiring bosses in many areas of the Middle East and South Asia. Kicking the U.S. out of those areas would secure all the oil and gas wealth for these wannabe rulers.

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OUR FIGHT

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

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

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

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

★ **Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. Everyone will share in society’s benefits and burdens.**

★ **Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of “race.” Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit black, Latino, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.**

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

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

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

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

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Why Articles Are Not Signed

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

Newark PL'ers Link Budget Crisis to Capitalism

Mass Student Walkout Against School Cuts Hits the Streets

NEWARK, NJ, April 27 — “When Christie says Cut Back, We Say Fight Back,” chanted a multi-racial group of over 2,500 Newark high school students as they walked out of school today and marched to the Board of Education building protesting Gov. Chris Christie’s latest education cuts. Christie is slashing \$820 million in school funding — to municipalities, colleges and universities, student financial aid and from the state pension fund. The protest here was part of a state-wide anti-cut demonstration of 9,000.

Plans were for students to leave their schools at 1:00 PM but that quickly changed. Students at Weequahic H.S. left at 9:00 AM and rallied outside University H.S. to win those students to come out. Moments later the two schools took over Clinton Ave., marching in unison to the Board of Education building.

At East Side H.S., students pulled the fire alarm, sparking a first wave of over 300 students to walk. Then at 11:00 AM another 600-700 left. Students arriving at Board of Ed offices met a Technology H.S. contingent that had already taken over part of Broad Street. Within minutes cop cars, unprepared for the early morning walkouts, raced into the area trying to contain the students.

Workers across the street were watching. One said, “Look at these cops trying to barricade all these students in.” Another commented, “That’s because they’re afraid of students fighting back.” A third responded even more specifically, “They’re afraid of black and Latino students fighting back.”

How We Organized

A college student’s entry on Facebook opposing the cuts spread like wildfire, attracting about 18,000 students through texts, calls and especially face-to-face at group meetings.

PL’ers were involved since March 4, holding study groups with students, teachers and parents to discuss the significance of these cuts and struggling to organize more fight-back. Our influence is growing, evident in signs like “Cut-backs mean we gotta fight back,” held by students from other schools we didn’t know.

Nearly a week before the walkout, a PLP May

Day fundraiser enabled students, teachers and parents to discuss plans. Additionally, they were introduced, and invited, to the May Day celebration. The fundraiser drew them — and most importantly, workers — to participate in the May 1 March and dinner. It laid the groundwork both for May Day and for the walkout itself.

This PLP gathering helped ensure that the walkout would occur, including its success in Newark. Many students who attended it carried the message to other schools as well as got students in their own schools on board.

The day before the walkout, representatives from five schools met to coordinate it, involving them in the planning — suggesting time and locations and ensuring contact with one another the following day. Students encouraged and inspired each other to proceed with the action.

At that meeting some parents tried to turn it into a campaign against Newark Mayor Corey Booker. Others pointed to Christie and his administration as the enemy.

PL Politicizes The Fight

However, PL members’ systemic analysis said these cuts resulted from a ruling class, led by the banks, trying to cut spending for the working class overall. They also want to better fit the school system into their agenda: creating a working class willing to fight and die in the rulers’ imperialist wars instead of battling for better living standards here.

We also stressed the cuts’ racist nature, hurting black and Latino youth much more than white suburban students.

Despite the public’s opposition to the cuts, Christie will push ahead. Not a surprise — like other politicians, Christie serves the capitalist class, showing no concern for the cuts’ destructive force, destroying the aspirations, ambitions and futures of thousands of students and teachers, especially in the urban areas.



This walkout was by far the largest student demonstration in Newark in over 40 years. Its success represented students’ dedication and commitment against the upcoming budget cuts and their anger towards the government and the Board of Education. But also, most significantly, it shed light on the perpetrator of these racist cuts and attack on the working class: capitalism.

More Work To Do

Two hundred PLP leaflets and CHALLENGES were distributed during the walkout. Most welcomed the paper; some gave it back saying, “I’m not a communist.” This shows that PLP members still have work to do: to educate more students about capitalism’s evils and the need for communist revolution.

Overall the event demonstrated PLP’ers’ advance. We held many more discussions with the students about the direction of the struggle and the need to organize for May Day. While working closer with the students, we must strive more with teachers and parents to support the fight. Moving forward, we’re making this much more of a priority, as it’s necessary in recruiting more workers to PLP and ensuring the Party’s growth in our fight for a communist world. ☸

Angry Transit Workers on Right Track

But Need to Smash Profit System

NEW YORK CITY, May 4 — More than a thousand angry transit workers surprised both Transportation Workers Union (TWU) Local 100 leaders and cops when they broke out of police pens at a Local 100 rally and marched to Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) headquarters, blocking traffic along the 15-block walk.

These militant marchers had plenty to be upset about. In recent weeks tragedy and devastation have hit City transit workers:

- On April 27, track foreman Jimmy Knell fell on an unprotected energized third rail in a rain-soaked area, killing him;

- The next day train operator Domenick Occhiogrosso, 50, collapsed and died of a heart attack operating the G train;

- Nearly 1,500 MTA employees, mainly station agents and bus operators, received layoff notices in early May. A court injunction postponed them until the MTA holds public hearings but the Authority announced it plans to lay off some workers anyway. (The judge-ordered hearings are an opportunity to give the bosses a taste of workers’ power.)

These deaths and layoffs follow transit service cuts and MTA threats against student Metrocards and transit-worker raises. Capitalism — a racist system that kills and screws workers for money — spawns all these attacks.

The MTA budget gap stems from billions paid in profits to bankers in “debt service,” nearly one-fourth of the MTA’s budget. The bosses’ dictatorship guarantees that all these payments are legal

requirements under NY State law. The bosses’ law says the MTA must pay bondholders before all other expenses and MTA agreements require that fares be sufficient “to cover all debt service.”

Still further, the MTA’s service cuts, fair hikes and attacks on transit workers are concentrated in the city, where workers and riders are overwhelming black, Latino and immigrant, even though the MTA also runs commuter rails through mostly white suburbs. This racist drive for bank profits, historically always present in the City’s mass transit, contributes to a national workplace death rate for transit workers higher than the national death rate of coal miners!

Workplace stress likely contributed to heart disease that fatally struck Occhiogrosso.

Two track workers also died of heart attacks on the job within the past year.

Knells, although a low-level supervisor, was working long hours for the same reason most workers do, overtime pay. When he died he was rumored to have been on the job for over 23 hours, seven more than the maximum limit. For management, safety rules are used to blame the worker after something happens. These rules are hardly ever enforced due to union-management deals that ensure productivity, and lower costs at the expense of workers’ safety on the job. But every life and job loss is a challenge that we must answer with militant class struggle.

Workers who are ready to break laws and unite with working-class students and riders are on the right track. But Local 100 president John Samuelson, supposedly a “militant,” arrived at the May 4th breakaway rally at MTA headquarters soon

after it started and announced, “We came here, we said what we had to say. Let’s go home.” One shocked worker blurted out, “What?!” Samuelson replied, “What? You want to stay here all night?” Workers can do without that kind of “leadership.” Workers, students and riders must unite to expose the unsafe conditions that threaten us all.

But more militancy alone isn’t enough. In fighting for safer conditions and jobs. We need to forge unity between workers, students and soldiers that will one day overthrow the bosses in revolution and build a communist society free of racist class exploitation.

The 1,500 layoffs of unionized workers are already the second wave of transit job cuts, following buyout offers for 600 non-union administrative employees. Local 100 heads want the new MTA boss Jay Walder fired and urge politicians and the MTA to use federal stimulus money to fill budget gaps. But capitalist competition, not individual bosses or mis-management, forces the MTA’s bosses to maximize debt service payments for banks. Increased military and economic rivalry between imperialists — the world’s most powerful capitalist nations — is forcing bosses worldwide to exploit “their” workers harder than their competitors. U.S. bosses’ strategy to maintain supremacy against rival powers impels banks and politicians to squeeze private revenue from public agencies and forces racist unemployment onto the working class. Only a worker-run communist revolution can bury this profit system. ☸

MAY DAY MARCHERS...

New York City

NEW YORK CITY, May 1 — May Day 2010 was a great day for the working class in NYC. Workers involved in class struggle against the bosses were a highlight of the spirited march in Manhattan and at three dinners throughout the city, which were attended by over 600 people. Stella D'Oro strikers, now PLP members, spoke at the dinners along with students involved in fighting the budget cuts in their schools

Several of these students and workers decided to join the Party, after having seen the multi-racial unity in the May Day activities and how PL'ers actively fought alongside them against the bosses in the spread of communist ideas, especially through the distribution of CHALLENGE.

Particularly outstanding this May Day was the participation and leadership of the youth who organized the march and the dinners, which bodes well for the growth of Progressive Labor Party. All told over 5,000 CHALLENGES were distributed, and received enthusiastically.

Comrades and friends led chants all along the route, calling for multi-racial worker unity and communist revolution to destroy capitalism, a system built on racism, sexism, police brutality and exploitation.

At all three dinners speakers clearly explained the state of the bosses' crisis-ridden world and how workers, students and soldiers were beginning to step up to the plate to fight the misery it has produced, citing communism as the only answer. Other speakers described the history of May Day, born in the 1886



general strike for the 8-hour day in Chicago.

As always the food was excellent amid some super entertainment. Skits and songs prevailed throughout. At one dinner "What's Going On" was sung along with a beautiful rendition of "Bella Ciao." The walls at the dinner sites were decorated with vintage front pages from past CHALLENGES.

All the dinners closed with the singing of the international working-class anthem, The Internationale. Workers, students and soldiers, inspired by the day's events, vowed to return to their factories, transit barns, barracks, schools and campuses more determined than ever to fight this murderous system with the only solution: the battle for communist revolution.☺

Undocumented Immigrant Strikers March Through France

JOIGNY, FRANCE, May 5 — Eighty-six undocumented immigrants arrived in this town in Burgundy today, as they pursue a one-month, 850-mile trek from Paris to Nice on the Mediterranean coast. The protest marchers aim to win support for the "legalization" of all undocumented immigrants. They all pay taxes or send their children to school in France.

The marchers left Paris on May Day. May Day was chosen "as a powerful symbol to say that undocumented workers are foreign slave laborers who are legally turned over to slave-trader bosses by the racist laws of the French government," the National Coordination of Undocumented Immigrants said in a press statement.

The marchers' itinerary is determined by the local support associations and municipalities that offer them meals and lodging along the way. The march has been organized by the "ministry for the legalization

of all undocumented immigrants." The "ministry" is a federation of several collectives of undocumented immigrants, and is supported by twelve associations and three trade union confederations (CGT, Solidaires, and CNT).

Demonstrations and rallies will be staged at each stopping point. In Nice the marchers intend to demonstrate at the France-Africa summit there. France has invited 51 African heads of state to the summit; so far 20 stated they'll come. The "ministry" declared that marchers will "denounce the collaboration of African heads of state in the French policy of 'selective immigration,' with its mass deportations of, and suffering for, undocumented immigrants." They will "demand the 'legalization' of all undocumented immigrants as well as an end to neo-colonialism and misdevelopment."

"Thus," the "ministry" continued, "the African heads of state will be challenged on their silent collusion in the racist, xenophobic, inhuman and degrading treatment of Africans."

While the march has attracted widespread attention in the broadcast and print media here, its real success will lie in the links forged with rank-and-file workers across France. As vital as it is to denounce French neo-colonialism and French super-exploitation of immigrant workers, it's even more vital to expose capitalism as the source of both. Firstly, failure to do so may open the door to the idea that there can be "good nationalist, anti-colonialist but pro-capitalist" leaders. Secondly, exposing capitalism helps lead to an understanding that its abolition through communist revolution is the only way to end neo-colonialism and the super-exploitation of immigrants. ☺



"Paris to Nice on foot for the undocumented workers"

Israel

A delegation of PLP'ers came to the May Day march in Tel-Aviv this year. We prepared more than 100 copies of the PL document "Road to Revolution IV" (in Hebrew translation), a May Day flier about the need for communist revolution to smash fascism and apartheid and a flier in Hebrew and English for immigrant workers under the slogan, "Deport the Bosses, not the Workers!" We also carried CHALLENGES.

Several hundred workers, including several dozen immigrant workers, also marched. However, it was organized by middle-class liberals and their revisionist (phony leftist) allies in the "Communist" Party who shouted reformist and trade-union slogans, avoiding the words "revolution" and "communism" like the plague. They also restricted most post-march speeches at the rally to reformist and liberal politicians. Almost no workers were given the stage.

Nonetheless we came forward with our fliers and leaflets to openly call for a workers' communist revolution. We were the only ones who talked with the immigrant workers, who were blatantly ignored by the reformists and the liberals. While our materials and slogans scared the living hell out of the liberals, we were openly welcomed by some of the workers who were looking for a more militant answer to their problems. One worker — until recently a right-wing Zionist and now a left-leaning trade-union activist — phoned in after the march to say our May Day flier was spot-on!

Another comrade went to the May Day march in Nazareth, which was a standard "C"P reformist show, and raised our slogans there as well. We lacked a flier in Arabic, but still managed to distribute our materials among the Nazareth workers.

Next year we will struggle to organize an even larger group to bring communist politics to May Day.

A comrade in Israel-Palestine

Indiana

INDIANAPOLIS, IN — We celebrated May Day with industrial, service and educational workers and students. One comrade opened the event explaining why the May Day dinner was important for our class. Another comrade presented the history of the international communist movement from 1945-1965, reviewing its ups and downs. The high point was how Stalin and the communist-led anti-fascist struggle defeated Nazism and Japanese fascism during World War II, the low point being the revisionist (phony leftist) Khrushchev leadership restoring capitalism in the Soviet Union.

PLP was born out of the global class struggles and today is trying to rebuild the international communist movement.

Workers were encouraged to join the Party and help spread the revolutionary ideas of communism and revolution to our working-class brothers and sisters so that we can build a new society and world free of racism, sexism, and imperialist war. We closed the celebration with everyone singing the communist Internationale. ☺

...MARK INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES, CA, May 1 — Raising PLP's red flags against the backdrop of tens of thousands of white shirts and flags of various nationalities, several dozen students and workers formed PLP's contingent in this year's May Day march in downtown Los Angeles. In the wake of Arizona passing an openly fascist immigration law, many angry workers marched. Our enthusiastic group created a visible alternative to the pro-ruling-class organizers of the march who called for immigration reform that would lead to long indentured servitude for immigrants. PLP called on workers from around the world to unite, fight back against deportations, borders and racism, and to build a revolutionary movement for communism.

This year the PLP contingent was organized and led mainly by young students and workers from Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay area. Along with veteran comrades and many friends, we made quite a presence. Throughout the march workers responded well to our chants. Several workers decided to join our contingent, wear our red shirts and carry our red flags. One worker, with his own megaphone, joined our group during the march, repeating our chants and encouraging others to do so. These workers expressed interest in our communist politics and asked to stay in touch with us. We distributed 1,500 leaflets and about 900 CHALLENGES. We left the march energized and invigorated for a coming year of struggle.

At our dinner, following the march we were able to express that enthusiasm and the specifics of

Progressive Labor Party's line: "May Day is OUR day, a day to talk about workers' struggles and workers' power!" "More than ever, we need to see the world as it really is... cut-backs, unemployment, wars... The Progressive Labor Party has a plan to work with industrial workers, transportation workers, soldiers... and we take this very seriously." "Every day things remind me more and more of fascist Germany. We cannot sit back and let fascism grow. We must fight back!"

A multi-racial group of over 60 workers, students and teachers joined with the Party to celebrate the international workers' holiday, May Day. We all met up after marching to eat and celebrate with our comrades. We had music, poetry and discussion alongside speeches describing the world situation, the history of May Day and the things our comrades are going through right now at work, at home or at school. Everyone who came agreed: this year more than ever it is so important to be a part of a fighting organization like PLP. Capitalism's attacks are becoming more reminiscent of fascism every day and we must stand up and fight back as a unified force. We are reinvigorated by the energy and determination of our new young leadership and look forward to the potential for growth in the years to come. ☺



Texas

FT. WORTH, TX — May Day celebrations in our city were a huge success. Our day began with us preparing to bring communist ideas to the city's immigration march. We printed flyers that connected immigration, unemployment and imperialist war to capitalism and made signs that read "Smash the Border" as we waited for friends from around the city, out of state, and from other countries to arrive.

The city's liberal misleaders organized the march, and had no intention of making this a day about workers' power. Among the speakers were the city's mayor and the Chief of Police. The main thrust of the event was to attack the recent racist immigration law passed in Arizona guaranteeing racial profiling and to promote Obama's "Comprehensive Immigration Reform," which is equally racist. Nowhere in any of the speeches was May Day acknowledged as an international workers' day. Their calls for "comprehensive immigration reform now!" and to rally around the American flag were contrasted with our flyer calling for unity among the international working class in the face of increasing attacks from the bosses.

We distributed 500 flyers and close to 70 CHALLENGES. As the march commenced, its organizers led chants like "Si se Puede!" We handed out chant sheets to everyone in the vicinity and with our bullhorn began leading more militant chants like "Las luchas obreras no tienen fronteras!" (Workers' struggles have no borders!) and "Abajo con banderas, afuera con fronteras!" (Down with [bosses'] flags, smash all borders!). We connected the dots of capitalist exploitation further, chanting, "War in Iraq means... Fight back, and Racist unemployment means... fight back!"

Before, during and after the march we met up with old friends and made some new ones. One example was a student of one of our comrades who had come to the march with a local janitors' union. At first he was hesitant to take a flyer; he wasn't sure what he thought about attacking capitalism as the main problem in the world. After a lengthy discussion, pointing out the difference between the nationalist, pro-capitalist politics of the march's organizers and the internationalist, working-class politics in the flyer, he took one. He also took a CHALLENGE.

As the march came to an end, we regrouped for our PL dinner. Two months of planning paid off as friends and co-workers began showing up. Our event was truly an international experience as we had friends in attendance not only from around the state and country, but from as far away as Guatemala and Turkey.

We had a barbeque that was prepared by a PL'er and a long-

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Seattle

SEATTLE, May 8 — The reformist May Day rally on May 1st attracted a crowd of 10,000 people. PLP members marched with a contingent of 30 university students and staff in preparation for a student strike the following Monday. (see page 8).

For the past three years, a contingent of this school's students and workers has been absent from the May Day march. It was good this year to see such a large contingent arrive, with militant signs in hand, ready to march. This May Day march, under leadership of the Catholic Church and the Democratic Party, always threatens to be dragged into the doldrums of pure nationalist, flag-waving reformism.

Students and campus workers, already mobilized to fight against the racist budget cuts and tuition hikes at the campus, saw the need to bring their militancy to it. For many of the students the idea of marching on May Day wasn't particularly intimidating. It had simply never occurred to them to do it, a result of the capitalist indoctrination of the university system itself. Now they want to go back next year.

While reform chants like "si se puede" (yes, we can) could not be contained, the university contingent did bring a more militant force to the march. A comrade's coworker marched for the first time, bringing along his young daughter. School custodians marched alongside students and graduate student workers, and nobody showed up waving American flags. At the end of the march when three Nazi knuckle-

heads showed up to antagonize and intimidate the marchers, the students and workers fought back. A young woman in the group, energized by the chants, took the bullhorn to continue a verbal assault on the racists and their police protectors.

After the march some students and a comrade's coworker and his family came to our May Day BBQ. Informal discussions were had all around regarding the march, the international marches, what they mean and where we are going as a class. We listened to the Internationale during the presentation of a special May Day cake made by a coworker's wife and when the night was over two new people took CHALLENGES.

The march proved the perfect lead-in to the student strike on Monday in which custodians once again came out, despite threats of termination, to support students and graduate students (see p. 8). This week of events shows the need for workers and students to unite to fight back, smash capitalism and build a mass communist PLP. ☺



MORE MAY DAY STRUGGLES



GERMANY, May 1 — Nearly a half million people marched on May Day in many cities for workers’ demands while confronting and blocking neo-Nazi demonstrations protected by hundreds of cops.

In Berlin, up to 10,000 marchers blockaded the Nazis, stopping the latter’s march after 500 yards of a planned 3.5-mile parade.

In Hamburg, May Day demonstrators hurled stones and bottles at cops trying to stop their march; 13 cops were injured. One May Day banner read in part, “Class Struggle....For a world without crises, war and capitalism.”

In Munich, left-wing-led marchers called for the overthrow of capitalism. “We don’t want to waste 40 or more hours a week...in capitalist modes of production,” said one speaker.

In Erfurt, 2,000 workers stopped 450 neo-Nazis who were unable to march more than a few hundred yards.

In Bremen, two police cars were burned by marchers angry at the cops for protecting the neo-Nazis.



PARIS, May 1 — Over 350,000 marched on May Day in 284 cities throughout the country, 45,000 in this city, mostly for economic demands of jobs, higher wages and no change in retirement, denouncing the bosses’ attempts to shift their economic crisis onto workers’ backs. Many of the demonstrations expressed solidarity with the working class in Greece.



ATHENS, May 1 — “Those that robbed us must pay!” chanted thousands of May Day marchers demonstrating against the austerity imposed by Greece’s ruling class following orders of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Overall 20,000 marched, with many rank-and-file workers pressing for the unions to call a general strike to protest having to pay for the bosses’ financial crisis, manipulated by none other than Wall Street’s Goldman Sachs.

In Athens, dozens of youth armed with sticks attacked riot cops protecting the Finance Ministry. In Salonica, street fighting erupted when the cops tear-gassed youth who were smashing the windows of banks. In Piraeus, seamen blocked the harbor, after the IMF demanded the closing of several hospitals. The working class in Greece is up in arms against an “ailing system,” only needing communist leadership to overthrow that system.

Defeat of Greek Austerity Robbery a Must for All Workers

Across the European Union, the bosses’ governments have been announcing cutbacks in government services:

- In Ireland, the government adopted two austerity plans in 2009, cutting benefits across the board by 7 billion euros (US\$8.75 billion). Government workers’ wages have been cut 5 to 15%, depending on their department and pay category.
- In January, German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schäuble warned that public spending would be cut in 2011 and that “grave decisions lie ahead.”
- On January 29, Spanish Finance Minister Elena Salgado announced 50 billion euros (US\$62.5 billion) in budget cuts over the next three years. The government plans to “reform” the labor market and raise the legal retirement age from 65 to 67.
- On April 29, Mervyn King, the Bank of England governor, said the austerity measures needed to tackle Britain’s budget deficit will be so unpopular that whoever wins the elections will not get back into government for a generation.
- On May 5, French Prime Minister François Fillon announced an austerity plan to freeze government expenses from 2011 to 2013. Taking inflation into account, this amounts to a 10% budget cut over three years. Bourgeois economist Jacques Attali put the cut at 50 billion euros (US\$62.5 billion).
- The Portuguese government has frozen government workers’ wages (around 12% of the working population). It’s planning layoffs, privatizations and a two-year increase in the retirement age.

Racist Cutbacks

In every case, these measures and cutbacks are

racist because they hit the poorest workers hardest, and in every European country the poorest workers include a disproportionate number of workers belonging to a “racial,” “ethnic” or “national” minority.

In each of these countries, the ruling class is carefully watching how much the Greek bosses will manage to take away from the workers. If the Greek government imposes its austerity package of 30 billion euros (US\$37.5 billion) in budget cuts over the next three years, bosses across Europe will order their governments to ratchet down workers’ incomes accordingly.

Indeed, government services like health care, pensions, education, etc., are a part of workers’ income, i.e. payment for their labor power. The only difference is that these services are financed and distributed indirectly, through taxes and the government, whereas wages are paid directly by the boss.

As Karl Marx explains in chapter VI of “Capital,” the value of a worker’s labor power has two components: First, the satisfaction of “natural wants, such as food, clothing, fuel, and housing, [which] vary according to the climatic and other physical conditions of his country.” Secondly, “the number and extent of his so-called necessary wants” depend to a great extent “on the habits and degree of comfort in which the class of free laborers has been formed.” Obviously, the “degree of comfort” that we expect as “normal” results from the class struggles of past generations of workers.

This means that, under capitalism, workers’ standard of living depends on the level of class struggle. The more workers fight, the more crumbs

they may get, either directly from the boss or indirectly through the government. However, the bosses constantly attack to maintain or increase their profits by pushing back workers’ living standards. Whatever gains workers may win are usually reversed when the ruling class, using its control of state power, decides it can no longer allow these gains to limit their profits. Only with communist revolution can workers collectively distribute the full value they produce to our class, according to need.

The budget deficits that the bosses’ media are wailing about can be reduced in two ways: through budget cuts (taking income from the workers) or by taking income from the bosses (through taxes). The class struggle decides who will pay and how much.

In France, for example, a recent Senate finance committee report states that company exemptions on social security contributions cost the government 42 billion euros in 2009; while a National Assembly finance committee report states that tax breaks for the rich cost 73 billion euros. By eliminating tax breaks to the rich and their companies, the French government could take in 345 billion euros over three years, instead of cutting 50 billion euros in services to the working class over the same period!

Now is the time for workers across Europe to demonstrate concrete solidarity with workers in Greece. Defeating the austerity plan in Greece could help defeat similar plans being prepared in every country in Europe. And the international solidarity forged in fighting these austerity plans can — with communist leadership — become the sort of school for communism that will get our class out of the reformist traffic circle and onto the revolutionary highway to ending capitalism once and for all. ☛

Texas

continued from p. 5

time friend who stepped up and has become more committed despite his initial disagreements with the Party's ideas. Others brought side dishes, and by the time everyone arrived we had more than enough food. We ate and talked politics for an hour and then everyone made their way indoors for speeches and music.

People filled the living and dining room to hear the welcoming speech and the history of May Day. A woman new to our club gave the welcome and May Day history, emphasizing both the internationalism of May Day and of PLP. Her speech was followed by three more: a report on the international situation, a speech about where the real power to change the world lies and a final speech about commitment to the Party. A comrade who has been working to improve his ability to translate Party literature translated for our friends from Latin America. The speeches were followed by applause and some words from our international friends who discussed the history of May Day in Turkey.

We ended with a music program that included both original songs and some PL classics. A new song about CHALLENGE, the communist paper, got the audience laughing. This was followed by an improv performance of Bella Ciao. An original reggae song about the Party's line got the audience singing along and was a major hit. We ended by singing the Internationale in English, Spanish and Turkish!

Although the attendance was a bit smaller than last year's, many of the guests commented that the quality was much better. We are trying to keep the momentum from the planning for this year's May Day alive, by continuing to write and record our Party music and to document all the speeches. We plan to put all the speeches and music onto CDs for friends who were not able to attend. ☺

Times Square Bomber

continued from p. 2

Obama, Liberals Use Fear to Dismantle Vaunted U.S. Civil 'Rights,' Expand Racist Profiling on the Home Front

The fascist "Terrorist Expatriation Act," introduced by Senators Joe Lieberman (CT.) and Scott Brown (MA.), and supported by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Nancy Pelosi and a number of other Democrats (NY Times 5/7/10), would allow the U.S. State Department to strip citizenship from U.S. citizens suspected of providing support to terrorist groups. This would retroactively make them non-citizens at the time they allegedly committed their crimes, allowing them to be tried by a military commission. This is the latest development in a seamless web of legal fascism, from Clinton to Bush to Obama: secret evidence, secret courts, state secrets, massive wiretapping and surveillance, Guantanamo, indefinite detention.

Following the Times Square event, the Senate's most popular conservatives, John McCain and Joseph Lieberman, introduced a bill to relegate terrorism suspects, citizen and non-citizen, to indefinite imprisonment at the whim of military kangaroo courts, which act as judge, jury and executioner. Liberals complained but agreed to dump Miranda "rights" (to remain silent and have legal representation).

Look out for a surge in jailings of Arabs in the U.S. With few exceptions, U.S. press coverage of the Times Square bombing ranges from tabloid speculation about the "degeneration of a suburban father" to racist hysteria about "Islamic bombers." The hypocrisy of the liberal press knows no bounds: they pose as "protectors" of civil rights while saying absolutely nothing about the racist anti-Muslim garbage that saturates "letters to the editor" of major newspapers and internet comment sections. This racism will justify more repressive measures by

the rulers.

The liberal establishment's leading policy foundry, Rockefeller's Council on Foreign Relations, said (5/7/10), in the case of "terrorists," authorities should "postpone the reading of Miranda rights under what's termed the 'public safety exception,' as a rule." This move follows the Obama regime's abolition of lawyer-client confidentiality by reaffirming the conviction of attorney Lynne Stewart for communication with a terror suspect she represented in court.

Communists Fight for International Working-Class Unity

Racism, fascism and imperialist war are all products of capitalism. Racism is both profitable and divisive. Anti-Muslim racism is used to create fear of Muslim workers amongst the rest of the population, and to spread terror in Muslim communities. Expanding U.S. fascism will be used to intimidate workers from fighting back against the unemployment and financial disaster that is all capitalism has to offer us and to mobilize our class for wars that are fought only for the bosses' interests.

Supporting either the liberals' or conservatives' racist response to the hyped-up scare would be a grave political error. Our class must identify and combat our main class enemy, U.S. imperialists. They have killed more than a million Iraqis and maimed and made homeless millions more, all for oil.

Communists fight for the international unity of all workers, because workers have really only one class interest worldwide. Racism, fascism and bosses' wars secure the class interests of the capitalists. Only a movement which unites all workers and fights for communist revolution can rid our class of these ills of the profit system.

We need to build a mass communist party that will ultimately destroy the billionaires' profit system and the wars it endlessly generates. ☺

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

US profits: 40% money-juggling

NYT, 4/26 — ...The finance sector's share of domestic corporate profits, never higher than 16 percent until 1986, hit 41 percent in the last decade....

Something is fundamentally amiss in a financial culture that thrives on "products" that create nothing and produce nothing except new ways to make bigger bets and stack the deck in favor of the house. "At least in an actual casino, the damage is contained to gamblers," wrote the financial journalist Roger Lowenstein in The Times Magazine last month. This catastrophe cost the economy eight million jobs.

US imports oil, exports spills

NYT, 5/2 — Whether this spill turns out to be the result of a freakish accident or a cascade of negligence, the likely political outcome will be a moratorium on offshore drilling....

Moratoriums have a moral problem, though. All oil comes from someone's backyard, and... we end up getting people to drill for us in Kazakhstan, Angola and Nigeria....

Nigeria [for one] has suffered spills equivalent to that of the Exxon Valdez every year since 1969....

Effectively, we've been importing oil and exporting spills to villages and waterways all over the world.

NY firing thousands but no cops

NYT, 5/6 — Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, anticipating deep financial cuts from Albany, plans to cut the number of city teachers by 6,700....

Mr. Bloomberg also intends... to reduce the city's work force by about 5,000 other workers....

And he is prepared, officials say, to take the budget knife to a host of programs that many residents have come to treasure, closing as many as 75 senior centers, as well as day care centers and programs for children.

One area... will be spared, however... Mr. Bloomberg has decided that the police force... cannot absorb any more cuts.

Can they regulate their regulator?

NYT, 4/24 — To the editor:.... Every American should understand that the challenge we're dealing with in the Senate is not whether Congress can regulate Wall Street, but to what degree Wall Street regulates Congress.

TV stuffs bad food into kids

NYT, 4/20 — Children ages 2 to 7 see an average of 12 televised food ads a day, or 4,400 a year, and children 8 to 12 see an average of 21 a day — more than 7,600 a year. For teenagers, the numbers are 17 a day, or more than 6,000 a year. Fully half of all ad time on children's shows is for food.... There were no ads for fruits or vegetables....

Researchers found that for each additional hour of television viewing, the children consumed an additional 167 calories, especially the calorie-dense, low-nutrient foods frequently advertised on television.

Bosses love the power to deport

NYT, 4/22 — Many American workers know how a bad economy can chain them to a bad job or a bad boss. But what if you're an immigrant guest worker and that boss holds your visa and can get rid of you with one phone call to the feds? What if he just threatened to call? Which would you choose — to be exploited or deported? To suffer silently here or in destitution back home?



There are laws to prevent such exploitation, but they often fail in the real world, which is rife with examples of abuses....

For too long the deck has been stacked against non-citizen workers. While the country has drastically ramped up the arrest, prosecution and deportation of tens of thousands of undocumented workers, it has done little to deal with unscrupulous employers who like their work force cheap, easily intimidated and disposable.

When one group of workers is powerless, all workers suffer.

Slave trade led to Africa poverty

Harvard Magazine, Feb. — In a chapter that assesses the impact of the slave trade on modern Africa, Harvard assistant professor of economics Nathan Nunn.... Concludes that the contemporary nations that, historically, lost the highest proportion of their populations to slavery are economically the worst off today. In fact, he computes that per-capita annual income in Africa — \$1,834, on average — would be between \$2,679 and \$5,158 if the slave trade had never occurred.

MORE ITEMS AVAILABLE AT WWW.PLP.ORG

Obama Uses Racist Arizona Law to Push Own Fascist Scheme

PHOENIX, May 2 — On May 1, hundreds of thousands of workers marched in many cities nation-wide — including thousands of students who walked out and marched in Arizona itself — to protest Arizona’s new racist anti-immigrant law and to demand a better life for themselves and their class brothers and sisters.

This law is among the most openly racist ones passed in recent years. It requires Arizona cops to demand immigration papers from anyone they “suspect” to be undocumented. This is an explicit call for cops to arrest anyone who “looks” Latino or has a Spanish accent or any other racist stereotype they might use.

This open police state law — part of the growing fascist trend in the U.S. — seems to “upset” even the biggest ruling-class tools, up to and including the president. Obama claims to oppose it as “misguided,” saying Congress needs to pass “Comprehensive Immigration Reform” (CIR) to combat such laws. But he is using it to pose as a “lesser evil” to win those who oppose such laws so he can advance his own racist scheme.

U.S. rulers need these 12 million undocumented workers as a source of low-wage labor to maximize profits. As a representative of the ruling class, Obama is using the threat of an Arizona-type law to create a more subtle and exploitative form of indentured slavery and misery for undocumented immigrants than the petty

racists of Arizona could ever imagine.

Obama’s CIR would require immigrants to register with ICE (Immigration & Customs Enforcement), work for a decade or more without causing “trouble” for their boss, and to pay taxes and fines. This slavery will result in immediate deportation for any worker’s opposition to injustice or exploitation.

This maneuver aims to intimidate workers from fighting back, including native-born workers who might be won to think that oppressing the immigrant workers would solve their own problems of mass unemployment and wage cuts.

Moreover, Obama and many liberal political groups want to enact the so-called DREAM Act. These misleaders and hacks claim it will allow immigrants who grew up in the U.S. to attend college. But this is a lie.

The DREAM Act requires qualifying students to attend college for at least two years straight with no time off. This prevents them from holding the kind of job that could help pay college tuition, placing this education beyond their reach, especially since most undocumented students do not qualify for financial aid. Thus, they would have to “choose” the Act’s other provision — military service.

Obama and his ruling-class bosses are not trying to help immigrants whatsoever. Actually,

they’re focused on future world wars with China, Russia and/or Europe. This immigration “reform” is their attempt to win immigrants to willingly rebuild war industries with cheap labor and expand the military by enlisting to receive citizenship. It is inter-imperialist rivalry that drives the ruling class.

Capitalism creates borders via military adventures and then uses them to foster divisions within the working class, pitting immigrant against native-born workers. The bosses spread the lie that one group of workers is “taking another group’s jobs.” But it’s the bosses who do all hiring and firing. It’s the bosses and their profit system that causes mass racist unemployment, with double the rates for black and Latino workers, thereby increasing super-exploitation.

And meanwhile these same bosses are ever ready to cross these borders themselves in their unending drive for maximum profits, and will use wars to protect these profits.

To answer this we workers ourselves need to cross these capitalist borders and unite in international solidarity to destroy this bloodthirsty system that oppresses us all. ☸

Seattle Students, Campus Workers Picket vs. Budget Cuts

SEATTLE, May 3 — At 8:00 AM today, up to 250 campus workers and students conducted mass picket lines throughout the day to protest budget cuts and show our strength in the face of current contract negotiations for graduate students and the upcoming contract expiration for the custodians at our university here. The UAW union leadership unilaterally chose to extend the grad students contract rather than strike, as many rank-and-filers demanded.

Earlier, at 4:30 AM outside clock-in stations for campus workers, we asked them to join our picket lines. Many took our flyer and did join throughout the day, despite intimidation from management who told them joining students could cost them their jobs.

This student strike was organized as a continuation of the nation-wide March 4 events. These angry students and workers want to fight the budget cuts that mean higher tuition, lower pay and layoffs for all campus workers, especially targeting black and Latino and low-income students.

A coalition of workers and students (who see themselves as part of the working class) organized the strike. Many understand the class politics that places the university as a “center of production,” seeing student-worker unity as having the power to stop that production.

The series of picket lines was designed to give students and workers pause on entering the campus and think about what it meant to cross the lines. We marched in the crosswalks

and blocked traffic and, despite police threats of ticketing and arrests, many students and workers refused to leave the streets for the sidewalks.

While the turnout was less than the 1,000 workers and students who demonstrated on March 4, there was a qualitative leap forward over March 4. Then that student strike became a march led by the cops and moved off campus, losing its intended focus. Today we picketed despite the cops’ threats and harassment, not with their “guidance.” Students and workers who joined us united as one, defying the bosses and their henchmen.

The picket lines eventually spontaneously marched onto the campus (not part of our original plan), to win more students to participate. A few did join, although we also lost some workers and students who had planned to meet us at the picket lines. Now we must begin to judge these actions not only by quantity but also by quality.

The quality of our action was a step forward in our struggle, one which more and more workers and students are understanding

is long-term. On the picket lines we discussed what a “fair contract” for grad student workers would mean, particularly for other workers. We explained the nature of reforms, where they come from and how the bosses often simply take from one group to throw crumbs to another.

With the upcoming custodians’ contract expiration, we stressed the importance to be there for them as they stood by us. We’re beginning to see these reforms as merely temporary fixes (if that) for systemic problems in the university and in capitalism generally.

This important battle signified the potential power of worker-student unity. Now we must better understand how to use that power and the long struggle ahead, as well as the nature of capitalism and the history of workers’ struggles. We must steel ourselves for a grueling fight, not only on the campus but as part of the larger struggle of the international working class, a fight which means destroying a system that puts these cuts on the backs of workers and working-class students. ☸

Look for the continuation of the series on global warming in the next issue of CHALLENGE

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