

The next issue of CHALLENGE will appear in three weeks, after which we will follow our regular bi-weekly schedule.

**PERIODICO EN ESPAÑOL ADENTRO**

# CHALLENGE

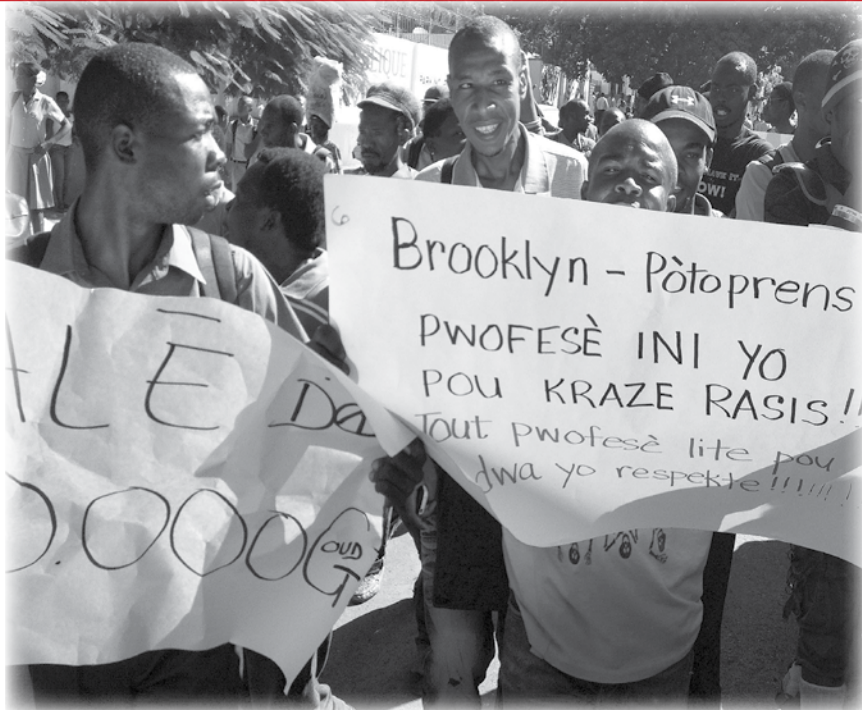


**THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY**

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**HAITI** — 15,000 students and workers, along with NY comrades, took to the streets for a two-day teachers' strike. Students led it, and battled the racist UN troops.



**SOUTH AFRICA** — Women protest ANC's government massacre of over 35 black miners on strike at the Marikana platinum mine.

**2012**

## INTERNATIONAL CLASS STRUGGLE ON THE RISE



**NEW YORK** — PL'ers and families of Ramarley Graham and Shantel Davis joined in weekly protests outside the racist NYPD precinct where Davis's murderer is stationed. Fight-backs against racist cops were widespread throughout the U.S.



**INDIA** — Millions of workers went on a one-day strike in one of the largest walkouts in the country's history. They shut down transportation and banking.

### JOIN THE FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM

**Los Angeles:**  
**PL'ers Spread Red**  
**Ideas As Workers**  
**Block Airport**  
**page 3**

**New York:**  
**End Capitalism to**  
**Bring True Justice**  
**for Shantel Davis**  
**page 4**

**Bangladesh:**  
**Workers**  
**Protest Mass**  
**Murder**  
**page 5**

**France:**  
**Steelworkers Battle**  
**Socialist Gov't,**  
**Union Hacks**  
**page 7**



# Racist U.S. Bosses Seek Allies for World War

## British Rulers' War Cry Rejected in India

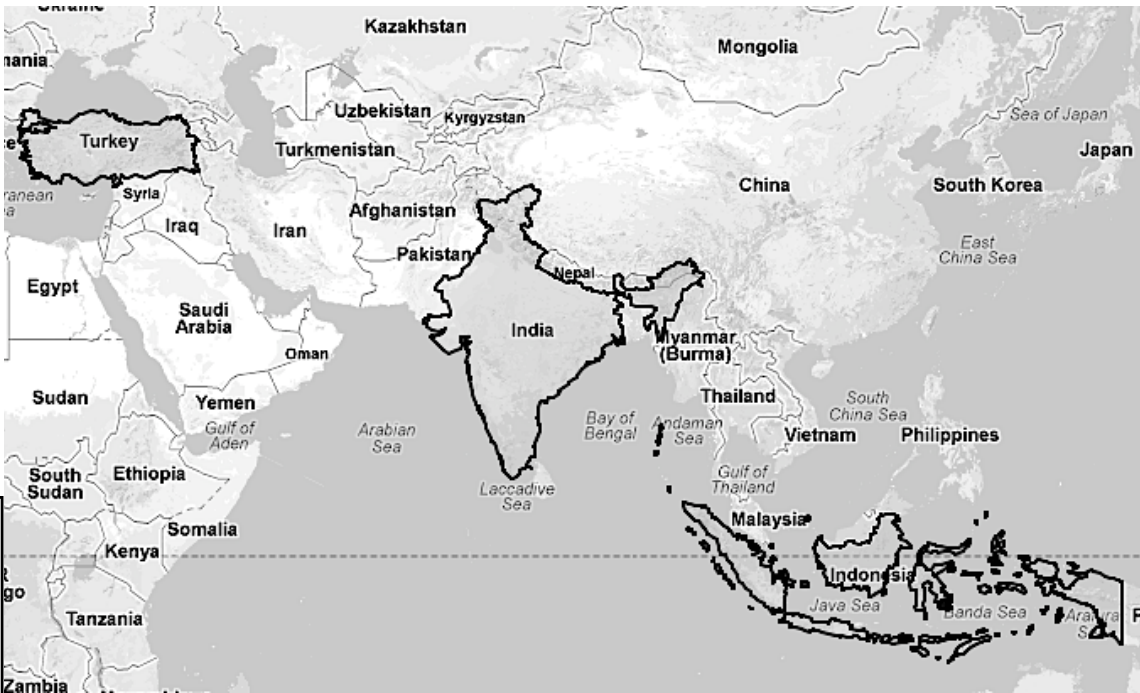
British imperialists long ago tried the same racist strategy the U.S. bosses now envision: the dragooning of troops from its colonies to kill and die for foreign financiers' profits. But it repeatedly failed. In 1857, tens of thousands of Indian soldiers, known as Sepoys, mutinied against their British officers. And despite their wielding of state power in India during World War II, British overlords managed to put only one percent of India's residents in uniform.

## OUR FIGHT

- ★ **Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.**
- ★ **Only the dictatorship of the working class — communism — can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today's world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.**
- ★ **Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world's workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.**
- ★ **While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.**
- ★ **Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. Everyone will share in society's benefits and burdens.**
- ★ **Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of "race." Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit black, Latino, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.**
- ★ **Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women — sexism — and divisive gender roles created by the class society.**
- ★ **Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.**
- ★ **Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion's false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.**
- ★ **Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!**

**PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY**  
P.O. Box 808 Brooklyn NY 11202  
• [www.plp.org](http://www.plp.org)  
• email: [desafio.challenge@gmail.com](mailto:desafio.challenge@gmail.com)  
• blog: [challengenewspaper.wordpress.com](http://challengenewspaper.wordpress.com)

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Sharpening competition for resources, markets, and labor are driving U.S. capitalists toward war with their Chinese, Russian and Iranian rivals. As each nation's imperialists maneuver for the upper hand, they must impose more deadly fascist conditions on their working class while clamping down on any opposition. Workers throughout the world are being squeezed by austerity policies to pay for the inevitable wars to come.

U.S. bosses are at a huge disadvantage here. They rule a population of 315 million, while their foes have a combined 1.5 billion from which to raise armed forces. Seeking a racist remedy for their shortage of cannon fodder, defenders of the U.S. empire are seeking support from countries historically exploited by the imperialist powers.

In November, the pro-Obama Center for a New American Security (CNAS) published a report called "Global Swing States: Brazil, India, Indonesia, Turkey and the Future of International Order." CNAS lists Chevron, GE, JP Morgan Chase, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, the Rockefeller Foundation and the U.S. Defense Department among its supporters. The think tank's report proposes a U.S.-led world war alliance that could draw on more than two billion inhabitants.

The global Swing States report covers the immediate steps needed to begin building the mega-coalition. While skirting direct mention of a third world war, it unmistakably alludes to one. In "the worst case scenario," according to the report, "a renewed international order will withstand Chinese pressure." "If the global order fragments," it ominously warns, members of this proposed grand alliance "will suffer the consequences."

"International order" and "global order" are code for U.S. imperialism. Global Swing States begins by wistfully — and falsely — recalling that the predominance of U.S. imperialism after World War II (outside the Soviet bloc) derived from globally admired virtues. The U.S., CNAS says, selflessly created and fostered international institutions like the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). The paper

identifies five areas where U.S. imperialism supposedly served as a beacon — and where it could now bolster ties with its new mega-allies, assigning specific roles to each. They are finance, trade, maritime "freedom," nuclear non-proliferation and human rights.

But reality contradicts the bosses' rosy interpretation of U.S. "leadership" on every front. The IMF and World Bank ensure loan repayments to U.S. bankers by enforcing austerity programs that deepen the impoverishment of workers in some of the poorest lands in the world. The WTO gives U.S. bosses access to ultra-low-wage labor, from Haiti to Vietnam. "Freedom of the seas" means continued U.S. Navy control, which has included sanctions, of worldwide energy and the shipping of goods. Nuclear treaties guarantee that the lion's share of these weapons remains in the hands of U.S. rulers, the only ones ever to use them.

As for human rights, U.S. bosses have long since surpassed Germany's Nazis as world record holders in murder and abuse. The Pentagon's civilian death count soars from the atomic bombing of Japan (250,000), through Korea (one million), Vietnam-Laos-Cambodia (five million) Serbia (tens of thousands), Iraq (one million from sanctions and direct invasions), Afghanistan (hundreds of thousands and counting, with Obama's drone strikes).

Then there are the uncounted mass deaths from U.S. interventions in Guatemala, Chile, and the Dominican Republic; the installation of the fascist Shah in Iran; CIA directives that led Indonesia's rulers to massacre one million; the assassination of Patrice Lumumba in the Congo, leading to

*continued on page 4*

**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.





## 2012: INTERNATIONAL CLASS STRUGGLE ON THE RISE



**BALTIMORE —**  
Students show solidarity with Chicago teachers on strike.



**QUEBEC —**  
300,000 students go on strike against tuition hike and an unequal education system.

## Student, Teacher Struggles Continue in Haiti



Students call on everyone to unite to fight against injustice, the rich, insecurity, poor study conditions, cholera, and the UN troops.

**HAITI, December 7** — In three Haitian towns of St. Marc, Port-Au-Prince, and Gonaives, the spirit and the struggle of the November student demonstrations and national teachers' strike continues. In all three, students went on strike and marched—the banner in the picture declares the demands: "Unite and fight injustice, high cost of living, insecurity, poor learning conditions, and MINUSTAH troops and their cholera."

Calling it charity, an insulting hand-out that falls far short of what they need, students refused the 18,000 gourdes (427 USD) one-time grant the President, Martelly, offered. Instead, they burned the grant applications and demanded instead decent campuses, transport, and health insurance. "We don't need any \$427 from a kidnapper," they chanted, referring to a recent kidnapping case involving Martelly's administration.

On December 5, they also protested government sexism — it has protected an ex-minister of

justice accused of raping his secretary. A PLP study group has been formed among some leaders of these actions.

The teachers' union, UNNOH, has also continued meeting to plan further action after their two-day strike, including a national meeting of regional delegates. The promised negotiations with the Minister of Education have been delayed, showing the need for more direct action. The teachers received significant strike-fund help from a handful of North American and Caribbean teachers' unions, and notice of their strike appeared in the French teacher/student union SUD.

International solidarity is still needed and PLP members continue to build it. As the Latin American slogan has it, "¡Esta lucha va llegar a la guerra popular!" These struggles, if communist leadership is built within them, will lead to an all-out workers' war on the bosses' system.✪

## PLers Spread Red Ideas As Workers Block LA Airport

**LOS ANGELES, CA, November 21** — Hundreds of LAX airport workers and community supporters marched through the streets, blocking the main entrance to the airport for two hours. A community-based organization helped organize the march. They have been organizing workers at two different contract companies within the airport. They are fighting for benefits, healthcare, vacation, and better pay. Some have made multiple attempts to establish a union but have failed. During the voting the first time, contract workers were not even allowed to vote.

Airport subcontractor workers here are subject to bad or no health care, no pay raises, no sick days, no vacation, no jury duty pay, no free flights, long work hours or too few hours in the case of Ready Reserve workers. They are moving older workers out of the bag room and onto the ramp, where they have to stoop over all day. This is an obvious attempt to force older and better-paid workers to quit. They are also forced to manage entire flights without getting the higher pay of a lead.

The TSA "Totally Standing Around" agents and the airport police attack workers on a daily basis in the form of random pat-downs, check points to check ID and fingerprinting to check for explosive residue or gunpowder. They pull workers' badges and add points to their airport records. The bosses push the idea that they are somehow protecting the "good" people from the "bad" people, but the end result is repression of the working class for the benefit of the ruling class. That is a sign of fascism.

Workers must unite and fight back against attacks from the TSA, the airport bosses and the airport police. Fight-back has been difficult, but lately the airport workers have been slowly organizing. The march that took place was only a tiny step towards true class struggle. The union will eventually let the workers down because their philosophy is to make a deal with the bosses. The result will be workers being screwed, either a little less or a little more. That is why the workers all over the world need communism, a society run by the working class in our interests, and not those of profit-hungry bosses. Our fight against the bosses is a fight we want to win.

With this in mind, PLP will be distributing leaflets and selling CHALLENGE at the airport on a monthly basis. We will continue to be involved in the fight-back organized by the union, getting to know workers, so we can bring them our revolutionary outlook. The union's fight is a start but it's reformist. It won't stop capitalism and its rotten system of exploitation. The fight needs to be for communism: a world without exploitation or a profit-driven wage system. We in PLP are determined to bring that idea to the workers here and everywhere.✪



# End Capitalism to Bring True Justice for Shantel Davis

What does it mean to remember Shantel Davis, the 23-year-old unarmed black woman killed by black NYPD Detective Phillip Atkins in Brooklyn on June 14?

As the six-month mark of Shantel's murder approaches, family, friends and supporters fighting to send Atkins to prison plan to gather for a vigil on the site where she was murdered.

For the Progressive Labor Party, remembering Shantel means much more than only fighting for Atkins to serve time. The lasting justice for Shantel means fighting for an anti-racist communist world that would be worthy of her life.

For the Brooklyn District Attorney Charles Hynes, Police Commissioner Ray Kelly and Mayor Bloomberg, remembering Shantel means reminding the mainly black and immigrant workers of East Flatbush that cops can get away with racist murder.

After six months of protests, including disrupting Ray Kelly's speech at a forum and militant unpermitted demonstrations in front of the 67th police precinct, Hynes has still not charged Atkins with any crime. The DA is sitting on numerous witnesses and videos that show Atkins shot her in cold blood. But publicly Hynes needs to reassure other cops who kill that the courts will look the other way. Privately Hynes promised Shantel's family an investigation.

The city's rulers also want workers to forget the words of former NYPD narcotics detective Stephen Anderson who served under the same command as Atkins. Anderson recently testified in court that he and his superiors regularly planted evidence on innocent people to make arrests. In Shantel's case the police and media want workers to believe the lies they created about Shantel's supposedly lengthy (actually non-existent) criminal record to smear her name.

Shantel's family and friends remember that during the first seventeen years of her life Shantel devoted free time to care for the elderly, sick and disabled.

But while her big close-knit loving family nurtured her to be kindhearted and generous, capitalism failed Shantel.

Shantel was one of millions of U.S. black youth that racist education set up for low wages and underemployment. For all of Shantel's short life, PLP fought against the racist conditions of capitalism in East Flatbush, from school budget cuts to police brutality. Throughout the city we organized students around local and global struggles to smash a racist system that can never provide jobs for all.

Capitalist education forced her to give up on school. The year Shantel was due to graduate high school the unemployment rate among black youth in New York City was over 40 percent and Shantel dropped out. For several years Shantel cared for her elderly grandmother, a demanding skill that demonstrated Shantel's aptitude. But to capitalism she was barely worth considering for most jobs.

Six months after Atkins killed Shantel PLP remembers that true justice for Shantel Davis means putting an end to the racist capitalist system that set Atkins loose to begin with. Today, in a period when revolution is not an immediate reality that means putting forward communist ideas of anti-racism, militancy and class solidarity in the fight to put Atkins behind bars. Making the growth of a fighting communist movement our benchmark for victory means that our class can advance whether or not the bosses decide to indict Atkins.

Without building a long-term revolutionary movement, convicting Atkins could feed the deadly illusion that capitalism can be nice and can do without racist terror. If such false ideas are the heart of Shantel's struggle we will have won the battle and lost the war. As long as capitalism exists police terror will continue to shatter working-class families. PLP fights to send Atkins away. But we also aim to win the class war against all of the racists bosses and their assassins whether or not we win the individual battle to put Atkins in jail. ☸

## 2012: INTERNATIONAL CLASS STRUGGLE ON THE RISE



**FRANCE** — Workers rebelled against lack of jobs and cuts stemming from the continuing euro economic crisis. Pictured are residents attacking the French interior Minister when he came to quell workers' anger.



**CHICAGO** — 26,000 rank-and-file teachers went on strike! They defied the bosses, in fighting for better learning and working conditions. Everyday, teachers, along with students, picketed the system's 585 schools.

## U.S. Rulers Seek Cannon Fodder for World War

*continued from page 2*

decades of fascist rule; support of apartheid in South Africa; supplying Saddam Hussein with weapons and intelligence in his war with Iran (another million dead), and on and on.

In the U.S. itself, the capitalists arrest and imprison or deport millions of workers, mainly black and Latino, every year. State-sanctioned racist executions by lethal injection or cop's bullet are a routine occurrence. The looming fiscal cliff cuts (see page 8) point toward even more austerity and exploitation.

As the embattled U.S. ship of state takes on water, CNAS urges the rulers of Brazil, India, Indonesia and Turkey to board and to drag workers with them. Global Swing States envisions Brazil as a potential pro-U.S. force in a world war, operating on both sides of the South Atlantic: "Geographically, Brazil dominates South America; it shares a border with eve-

ry country on the continent except Chile and Ecuador. In addition, with a coastline that extends far into the South Atlantic, Brazil economically and culturally bridges South America and West Africa."

In India, CNAS recommends that the U.S. "back New Delhi's aspirations for maritime leadership in the Indian Ocean." In another "worst case scenario," this strategy to gain India's naval assistance for U.S. control of China's oil supplies could entail the deployment of millions of Indian ground troops.

Indonesia straddles the Malacca Strait, the passage for all Chinese oil imports from the Middle East. It also faces the South China Sea, where China makes highly contested territorial claims. In one phony anti-war passage, CNAS suggests that Indonesia benefit ExxonMobil, Chevron, BP and Shell by joining the U.S. in setting redlines that China must not cross. The penalty would be war. Says CNAS, "Corporations that rely on this waterway for transit...have a vested

interest in the peaceful management of current frictions. As non-claimant states, the United States and Indonesia are uniquely positioned to facilitate a South China Sea Corporate Caucus."

Egypt lies torn between Islamic and military rule. Netanyahu's Israel, though armed to the teeth, is small and unreliable. As a result, U.S. rulers are counting more and more on Turkey (pop. 75 million) as a long-term ally in holding onto Middle East energy assets in opposition to the similar-sized Iran. CNAS praises Turkey's "increasingly hard-line position" against Iran stooge Syria in "imposing sanctions, severing diplomatic ties, giving material aid to the Syrian rebels and taking direct military action against the regime's forces."

Imperialist alliances shift and change, however, which complicates the U.S. rulers' plans. Moreover, they are assuming that the international working class will roll over and play dead in the face of intensifying exploitation and increasingly likely car-

nage. But workers are already striking against austerity and taking to the streets in Bangladesh, Pakistan, France, China, Spain, Portugal, Haiti, Egypt and South Africa. We can see the same thing happening in the U.S. in Wisconsin, California and Chicago.

Communist class consciousness can thwart the U.S. rulers' global militarization by sparking international rebellion. Progressive Labor Party is organizing working-class internationalism in more than twenty capitalist countries. PLP is confronting the bosses' racist attacks on black and Latino workers and youth in cities across the U.S. Building the Party in all of these areas and in mass organizations is the key to the ultimate overthrow of capitalism and the smashing of the bosses' state. Only communist revolution will emancipate the working class from the rulers' exploitation, mass unemployment, racism, sexism and war. Only then will society be run for and by our class. Join us! ☸



# Workers Protest Mass Murder in Bangladesh



**DHAKA, BANGLADESH, November 26** — Ten thousand garment workers barricaded roads, shut 50 factories and hurled stones at cops firing rubber bullets and tear gas as workers protested the November 24

## Mass Slaughters: Then and Now

One of the most infamous workplace fires in U.S. history occurred in New York City in 1911 in the Triangle Shirtwaist factory. Hundreds of women workers had been locked inside when fire started. The bosses fled, refusing to unlock the doors. Ultimately 149 died as terrified women jumped to their deaths from the roof of the eight-floor building to escape the fire. A witness reported that, "Women were hysterical, scores fainted; men wept as...they hurled themselves against the police lines."

Just one year before, the women had struck to demand higher wages and increased worker safety, including addition of fire exits. These demands were laughed off as "preposterous" and too expensive to maintain profitability for the bosses. New York cops played their usual strike-breaking role for the bosses, brutally beating striking workers.

Afterwards, to quell public outrage the factory owners were indicted for manslaughter but were acquitted after less than two hours of deliberation. In the fire's aftermath, a former Triangle worker and union organizer, Rose Schneiderman, indicted both sexism and capitalism:

This is not the first time girls have been burned alive in this city. Every week I must learn of the untimely death of one of my sister workers....The life of men and women is so cheap and property is so sacred! There are so many of us for one job, it matters little if 149-odd are burned to death. (Philip Foner, "Women and the American Labor Movement")

In the U.S. it was only workers taking to the streets that won the most basic safety precautions. But the mass slaughters have not ended as witness recent fiery deaths of immigrant workers in the Carolinas.

fire that killed 124 workers at Tazreen Fashions here. Hundreds of workers were trapped inside, symptomatic of Bangladeshi garment factories that have become infamous for their lack of fire exits and stairwells. Over 100,000 outraged workers attended the burial ceremony of 53 workers whose bodies could not be identified." (New York Times, 12/7)

It's common practice for the garment bosses to chain doors shut to prevent workers from taking breaks. Combined with poor maintenance practices and flammable materials and chemicals, these factories become firetraps. "More than 600 garment workers have died in such fires since 2005." (NYT, 12/7)

Tazreen bosses told workers the fire alarm was a false one, to keep them working. Then they fled, but by the time workers realized what was occurring, the fire had snaked to the upper floors, blocking any exit routes. Some tried to escape by jumping out of windows.

Tazreen manufactures clothing for Walmart, Sears and the Gap, among other U.S. companies, all of whom make enormous profits from the poverty wages and hazards in these death traps. They are all aware of these conditions, making them complicit in the murders of these workers.

This latest factory fire is the worst in Bangladeshi history. As the families and friends of the trapped workers crowded around the inferno to offer whatever assistance they could, they knew who was to blame. Sabine Yasmine, one victim's mother and a factory worker herself, moaned, "Where's my soul? Where's

my son? I want the factory owner to be hanged! For him, many have died, many have gone." (Associated Press, 11/25)

Yet factory owners are rarely punished for the deadly conditions they enforce in their workplaces. The garment industry is a massively profitable one in Bangladesh, exporting \$20 billion annually, mainly to the U.S. and Europe. The Tazreen Fashions factory alone makes \$37 million annually.

These massive profits flow from sweatshop conditions inside the 4,500 factories. Safety is ignored as workers are locked inside, working 60-hour weeks for around \$37 a month. Workers opposing this murderous system are marked for death. Earlier this year a union organizer was found tortured and murdered outside the city. (AP, 11/25; New York Times, 11/25)

Such mass murder is common under capitalism, particularly in developing industrial economies. Just two months ago factory fires at a garment shop in Karachi and a shoe factory in Lahore, Pakistan killed a combined 314 people. Workers were trapped in the factories with no emergency exits and all doors locked to hold the workers imprisoned inside. Again, these sweatshops netted profits primarily for U.S. and European bosses. (CNN, 9/16; BBC, 9/11)

In 1993, a fire in the Kader Toy Factory in Thailand killed 188 workers and injured more than 500. It was the worst industrial disaster ever until the Karachi fire in 2012. The Kader factory, which made toys for Disney and Mattel, paid their workers slave wages and locked them into the building during the workday. When the fire started, managers fled the scene, leaving the largely female workforce trapped inside to burn. (International Labor Organization, Encyclopedia of Occupational Health and Safety)

Capitalists care only for profits. The fiery death of hundreds of workers is only part of the super-exploitation of the working class. Only a communist revolution to smash the capitalist class can end this mass murder of workers. Until that day it's just a matter of time until the next big fire.☸



**2012: International Class Struggle On The Rise**  
**ISRAEL-PALESTINE — Bedouin workers, both Arab and Jewish, fight Israel's racist eviction and its regime.**

## Algeria: Worker, Student Strikes, Blockades Hit Bosses' Attacks

**ALGIERS, December 5** — Workers and students are blocking buildings and striking for better conditions on the job and at the university against the socialist fig-leaf being used to hide a capitalist economy and the wealth of the bosses. Although a national liberation struggle gained independence from France in 1962, capitalism has remained in the name of socialism.

Large sectors of the economy were nationalized. Today, 90% of the banks are public, the hydrocarbon company is state-owned, and government spending represents two-thirds of non-hydrocarbon Gross Domestic Product. Yet almost one-fourth of the population lives in poverty. Twenty percent of the youth 15-24 are jobless. So the workers and students are fighting back.

Today, municipal workers in Zeribet El Oued struck, blockading the municipal popular assembly building demanding back pay, having gone unpaid for two to six months. The strike united temporary and permanent workers. "Whole families have been paralyzed by accounting and administrative malfunctions, which deprive us of our monthly income for months at a time," said a public records worker.

Also today, forestry workers in Tlemcen walked out, demanding permanent hiring of temporary workers — in particular safety and security personnel — as well as for promotions that have been delayed, in particular for older workers.

There have been repeated student strikes in Boumerde condemning the university bureaucracy, which has disorganized teaching and the functioning of different university departments. As of today, the commercial and economic sciences department and the school of hydrocarbons — Algeria is rich in oil and gas — have been blocked for over a week by strikers protesting disciplinary sanctions taken against 15 student strikers.

What is needed is a communist ideology to link all these struggles and to understand the need to fight for communism, not socialism's state capitalism.☸



# LETTERS

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

## Students Embrace Anti-Racism, Move to Act

I learned many things at the Anti-Racism Conference this November. One shocking thing was how the Red Cross did not bother to help one man's family and other families who were affected by Hurricane Sandy. They had to wait for long periods of times only to be moved to some other place, and still without receiving any help. I also learned about some of the outrageous things going on, such as Reynaldo Cuevas who was shot in his bodega. There was a robbery. He escaped, but ended up getting shot by the cops, mainly because of his "race." At the Conference they said, "He was more safe with the robbers than with the cops." This is very true and depressing to hear. I enjoyed the Conference because I liked how people were determined to put a stop to racism.

I really enjoyed the Conference. It felt good to see people of different origins come together to discuss a topic so crucial to society and want to change it. This Conference was filled with stories of the power of the police. Instead of protecting us from being killed, they were the unjustified killers. It showed how the government that is supposed to help us actually favors the upper class and screw the minorities.

I thought the Conference was very interesting. Many people gave speeches against racism and about their own experiences. I learned the United States thrives upon racism to keep a division between people. Even in history, wealthy Americans wanted to separate "races" in order to keep them under control. I thought critically about the hidden racism in schools. Students in poorer ar-

reas or schools with more "minorities" are given less funding and opportunities than schools with wealthy or "majority" students.

I thought the Conference was going to be boring and long. But, it was pretty interesting and I actually learned a lot. I learned that racism still affects so many people today. I also learned that because of Hurricane Sandy, many people are still suffering, and no one is doing anything about it. Many people have neither homes nor food. The media isn't telling us all this. They're only telling us how everyone is working together to solve the problem. But they're not telling us the entire truth. I think the Conference was a good experience and I really liked the people.

The Conference was a very positive and uplifting experience. I really enjoyed myself. Most of all, I loved the environment of people who were willing to take action and fight against racism and capitalism. I think it was an excellent Conference for people who've been in a bubble or unaware of the things that go on in the world and with the government. I learned there are people who actually want a better living not only for people in the U.S., but in other countries as well. We had a very good intricate discussion. The man's and the families' stories from Far Rockaway who were hit by Hurricane Sandy were very sad and depressing.

When I went to the Conference, I learned racism is everywhere, even when you can't see it. I also learned about the government's "help" towards Hurricane Sandy victims aren't as effective

as they want us to believe. This experience made me realize how corrupted this country, even this world, is. Higher authority has the power to do something about it; they say they will, but so far, they're doing a crappy job.

I thought the Conference was interesting because it reflected the real picture of society and people's lives that the media usually tries to hide. I learned how racism has an impact on people every day, and how innocent people are suffering because of racism. The police are not there to help people. In fact, they are out there to show their power and ruin people based on their colors and class. One thing that changed my mind is that society is not able to accept people the way that they are. Society accepts people based on their colors and class, and if you belong to the "low" class and are dark skinned, you are treated like garbage. They don't give you any resources or help.

It was fascinating seeing so many devoted anti-capitalists and anti-racists in just one room. The passion brought on by the hate they had towards racism really got the crowd roaring and cheering. I already knew racism can be seen anywhere from schools to the neighborhoods we live in, but now I am more aware of its consequences. One must be able to change every single person's point of view, especially when it comes to the color of his or her skin. I believe that until we are able to stop the seed of racism from growing within a person's mind, we won't be able to destroy it completely. If we do eventually eliminate racism, it will live on in the forlorn past.

### Spread Unity Between Walmart Shoppers and Workers

The day before Black Friday, as Walmart prepared for the biggest shopping day of the year, we prepared to show solidarity with the Walmart workers being forced to work on Thanksgiving. It was a challenge to get our group going on Thanksgiving Day. The lack of motivation brought on by the turkey feasts and the fear of getting arrested for trespassing on Walmart property were serious struggles to overcome.

But because of the leadership of a dedicated teacher and female high school student, after some struggle in the group, we were able to organize over twelve people, including high school students and teachers, college students and workers to go leaflet in front of several Walmart stores.

Our plan was to get out as many leaflets as possible telling Walmart shoppers to stand united with the demands of the Walmart workers for better pay, hours and benefits. Over the course of Thursday night and Friday morning we were able to distribute over 1,000 leaflets to about half the Walmarts in our area.

In our conversations with shoppers, the majority was overwhelmingly sympathetic to the plight of Walmart workers and agreed that the struggles Walmart workers are facing are similar to the struggles we are all facing at work.

In these dark times, our modest action is a light for workers that it is possible to fight for a world without capitalism.

Our Black Friday action also in-



**2012: International Class Struggle On The Rise**  
**WASHINGTON, DC — Several thousand workers and students from around the world marched to the White House, demanding end to the racist AIDS epidemic. We protested UPS and Wells Fargo en route.**

spired our friends and family to get involved. The following week we took the leaflets to work and to school and continued the conversations about the need for workers to unite. As we head into the holiday season, we plan to continue raising issues of solidarity with Walmart workers here and those being exploited by capitalism around the world.

### 1931 Film: Miners in Germany, France Smash All Borders

Internationalism is a cornerstone of the communist Progressive Labor Party.

Kameradschaft (Comradeship), filmed in 1931 and directed by Georg Wilhelm Pabst, puts forth internationalism in a forceful and positive way. It was filmed in German and French with English sub-titles.

The story takes place in a mine that ended up on both sides of the border between Germany and France after the First World War. In order to protect their profits the German bosses built a border wall in the depths of the mine. A scene in the movie shows the French border guards stopping German workers who were looking for work.

A fire breaks out in the mine on the French side of the border and

many miners are trapped down below. The German miners organize a rescue team to save their fellow workers. The rescue team is made up of French and German miners who enter the mine on the French side of the border.

Another rescue team enters the mine on the German side of the border.

In order to save the trapped miners, the rescue teams had to tear down the boss's border wall. After the rescue there is a big celebration. Even though it is an old movie with English sub titles it is definitely worth seeing.

Red Movie Buff

# France: Steelworkers Battle Socialist Gov't, Union Hacks' Betrayal

**FLORANGE, FRANCE, December 6** — Five thousand steelworkers here are fighting the closure of the ArcelorMittal steel plant, but at every turn they run up against the law of capitalism which seeks maximum profits over the workers' dead bodies.

Workers at ArcelorMittal's plant in Fos-sur-Mer on the Mediterranean blocked deliveries today in solidarity with steelworkers here. Some shifts struck and prevented rolls of steel from leaving the plant. Steelworkers at the company's Basse-Indre plant on the west coast are set to strike on December 10 against plans to transfer sixty jobs to the Florange packaging plant.

Meanwhile, the union has been putting up its usual militant front while appealing to the government to force the company to keep the plant open, demanding it renegotiate its deal with ArcelorMittal. The local union leader, Edouard Martin, and a dozen union officials briefly occupied the plant, threatening to stage a sit-down inside. They then left when the bosses promised not to turn off the gas valves which keep the blast furnaces on standby.

While Martin condemned the French government's "betrayal" of the workers, adding that "those who were supposed to help us are killing us." Who's kidding whom? It is these union misleaders who are betraying the workers. They repeatedly steer the workers into depending on a supposedly neutral government to protect them against the capitalist class.

But the capitalist government was never supposed to help the workers in the first place.

Martin said, "We're solemnly calling on you, President François Hollande, to take the matter in hand." But in reality Hollande's Socialist government serves the capitalist class. Workers can only depend on their own unity and organization in their fight against the bosses.

Last year ArcelorMittal idled both blast furnaces here because of overcapacity. The anarchy of capitalism leads the bosses to expand production wildly in boom periods and then shut plants in the bust that inevitably follows. Meanwhile, the packaging plant, which makes cans for the food industry, continues to operate because it is profitable.

During the recent French presidential election campaign, Socialist Hollande promised the thousands of steelworkers that if he was elected, he would pass a law forcing "a big company [which] no longer wants a production unit...to sell it" so that the plant will not be "dismantled." Then, after Hollande was elected in May, a series of promises and "militant" statements by Socialist leaders were ignored by the company (which employs 260,000 workers worldwide), claiming the plant was no longer profitable. On October 1, ArcelorMittal put the Florange blast furnaces on permanent standby, leaving the Hollande government 60 days to find a buyer for the site.

Meanwhile, on November 6, the Socialist government announced a

"competitiveness pact," a "massive and unprecedented" 20-billion-euro gift (\$26 billion) to the capitalists aimed at lowering the cost of labor and increasing the competitiveness of French companies against their imperialist rivals.

The measure exonerates the bosses from paying 20 billion euros in social security contributions on their lowest-paid workers. It will be financed by slashing 10 billion euros (\$13 billion) from the government budget in 2014 and 2015 — including many social welfare programs — and by a 10-billion-euro increase (another \$13 billion) in the value-added tax. That will mainly be paid by the working class.

Pretending to get tough with ArcelorMittal, on November 22 the government minister for industrial renewal announced possible temporary nationalization of the site, to give more time to find a buyer. But this was never more than a hollow threat, given that Socialist Prime Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault admitted that nationalizing Florange would have cost the French government over a billion euros.

His "compromise" deal says, (1) there is no "white knight" buyer; (2) the blast furnaces will be mothballed; (3) the 629 blast furnace workers will be offered early retirement or jobs at other sites; and (4) the workers at the packaging plant must submit to more exploitation to increase its competitiveness.

The union misleaders had little choice but to condemn such a deal

that falls so far short of worker expectations. But the government said there would be no renegotiating the rescue plan.

Capitalism is truly the source of these machinations which dump these steelworkers on the garbage heap. Based on the planlessness of the system, the bosses overproduce at this plant the amount of steel they can sell at a profit. To maintain their overall profit in their fierce competition with rival steel bosses, they are driven to get rid of this particular plant and its workers who they have exploited for decades. Then the union misleaders and their Socialist government play with workers' lives with phony militancy combined with defending the profit system. Their stance absolutely precludes the real solution: communist revolution to eliminate the bosses and their oppressive, exploitative system.

Workers must be won to understand that capitalism can't be reformed, as the above class struggle reveals. It is driven by the pursuit of maximum profits, in direct contradiction to the well-being of the working class. Only the workers themselves, led by the communist Progressive Labor Party, can make a revolution that will put the steel mills and all of society in the hands of our class, which produces everything of value.

[Late bulletin: On December 7, ArcelorMittal agreed to mothball the two blast furnaces for six years.]

## 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

### Biggest threat to environment is capitalism

The New Yorker, 12/10 — To the editor: ...The urgent need to address the challenge of climate change...went unmentioned during...the 2012 Presidential debates. But what...most liberals continually fail to recognize is that there is a certain kind of "magical thinking" required to believe that all we need to do is initiate a "big government" program that includes large investments in clean energy, along with improved emission standards, regulations and incentives for companies.

The biggest current threat to our planet remains global capitalism itself. As long as there are profits to be made from burning fossil fuels, someone will insist on doing just that, without regard for the environmental consequences. As long as...disposable products are profitable, our planet will remain in peril....

Some say that it's a fantasy to hope for a worldwide revolution that replaces the profit motive with rational thinking and collaborative planning. But the real fantasy is that capitalism can be properly tamed through regulation, "cap and trade" programs or any other market-based approach. We need a true democracy, in which communities decide what is the most sensible way to satisfy their energy needs, without the interference of people and institutions that are primarily inter-

ested in profit.

### Obama okays killings by drones

GW, 11/30 — President Barack Obama's administration is drawing up a formal rulebook that will set out the circumstances in which targeted assassination by unmanned drones is justified....

Human rights and peace groups opposed...the CIA-operated targeted-killing program....

### Domestic workers badly exploited

NYT, 11/27 — "The upshot of the study is that domestic workers who help so many families with taking care of their loved ones and taking care of their homes often earn so little that they have a difficult time supporting their own families," said Nik Theodore, an author of the study and an associate professor of urban policy at the University of Illinois at Chicago....

The researchers did not study domestic workers employed through companies or outside agencies....

Live-in domestic workers were found to earn far less than "live-outs." Live-in nannies earned a median wage of \$6.76 an hour....

With many domestic workers called on to take care of infants or the elderly during the night, the study found that 25 percent of live-in workers said their responsibilities prevented them from getting at least five hours of uninterrupted sleep....

About 65 percent of domestic workers reported that they did not have health insurance of any kind, and just 4 percent said they received coverage through their employer. About 82 percent said they did not receive paid sick days, and only 9 percent said their employers paid into Social Security for them....

Domestic workers are covered neither by federal minimum wage laws nor by most states' minimum wage laws. Nor are they generally covered by unemployment insurance....



### The rich are criminals

NYT — "Behind every great fortune there is a great crime," [a] famous quote from the French writer Honore de Balzac....

### Money manipulates the media

GW, 11/30 — The precious freedom of speech of an individual is far different from the freedom of speech of a media corporation with its capacity to manipulate the opinions of millions....Freedom is...menaced by private media barons and their servants. An avalanche of highly spun journalism to serve partisan interests has become habitual.

### Are capitalist economists sane?

GW, 11/30 — When he was an economic advisor to President John Kennedy, Kenneth Boulding declared that anyone who believes that exponential growth can go on forever in a finite world is either a madman or an economist....

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# Workers Raise \$ for Terminally Ill Brother; Bosses: Not 1¢

Recently at work we learned that one of our maintenance workers was diagnosed with terminal throat cancer. His doctor gave him only six months to live. Those closest to him began to take up a collection to send him on one last trip to fulfill a dream of his, watching a NASCAR race in Daytona, FL. Our machine shop pays the lowest wages in the area, with most workers making between \$10 and \$15 per hour in one of the most expensive areas in the country to live. But the workers in the shop stepped up, donating what they could. They raised the needed funds in less than two weeks.

Even though this was a modest dream and this maintenance worker had given more than five years of his life to this company the bosses could not find it in themselves to donate a single penny for this man's last vacation. After initially claiming that they would allow workers to donate through paycheck deductions (something that would help people who live paycheck to paycheck) the company went back on that, claiming that it simply wouldn't be possible.

Meanwhile you can buy merchandise from the company store and hockey tickets via paycheck deductions, but the cost of having the payroll department process these donations would just be too taxing for the bosses. The most they could find themselves moved to give was to simply allow the collection to be taken up during all shifts.

This is, of course, nothing new. When the current depression hit in 2008, food banks emptied and charitable organizations that aid the poor and homeless were hit hard as donations declined. The decline revealed a startling truth, that despite overly publicized charitable donations from the capitalist class, it is in fact the working class who make the overwhelming amount of donations to organizations that aid the poor.

A recent study in August by the Chronicle of Philanthropy confirmed that the vast majority of aid to the poor is collected from working-class neighborhoods. The capitalist media tries to portray the wealthy as our benevolent caretakers, but as recent events at my shop have demonstrated, the capitalists are only interested in bleeding the working class dry.

As a final indignity for this maintenance worker he gets to spend his final months not with his friends and family, but at work. Without going to work he loses the meager health care that our job offers, something that would surely bankrupt his family as they tried to pay for his care. Besides, the company would not want to set any bad precedents by keeping him on payroll while he stayed home. This is not a world fit for the working class to live in.

Red Beard

# Fiscal Cliff Crisis Declares War on Workers

Much has been made by the capitalist media and their politicians of the looming "fiscal cliff." This is occurring amid intensifying imperialist rivalry causing the bosses to impose more fascist austerity measures to force workers to pay for unending wars.

In a political move described as "kicking the can down the road," the fiscal cliff date was arbitrarily set by lawmakers two years ago as a time bomb to guarantee creation of a new crisis if draconian cuts were not made. On that date the Bush tax cuts would expire, amid sweeping spending cuts threatening to cause a massive retraction of the economy. We're told that without massive cuts to Social Security, Medicare, unemployment insurance and other benefits, an economic doomsday is inevitable.

The rulers' solution for the crisis, with its fiscal cliff, is economic blackmail designed to force through wildly unpopular austerity measures. The U.S. ruling class has for decades fought to roll back gains won by U.S. workers in the first half of the 20th century. These gains made it more difficult for U.S. corporations to compete with many countries with cheaper labor as well as those that had built up more modern and efficient industries. All this time U.S. bosses were spending trillions on a huge military at the expense of upgrading their industries.

But the bosses have to deal with U.S. workers' massive opposition to austerity policies. In election-night polling by Hart Research Associates, people rejected using cuts in Social Security, Medicare and federal unemployment insurance to bring down the deficit by varying rates of from 70 to 84 percent; 68 percent opposed raising the Medicare eligibility age. Meanwhile, 64 percent supported addressing the deficit by increasing taxes on the rich. (Findings confirmed by a recent Washington Post poll, The Nation.)

**'Fix the Debt'?**

So despite workers decisively rejecting these austerity measures, they are still the preferred ruling-class club to beat the working class into submission. As such it is a top priority of both Republicans and Democrats.

A recent New York Magazine article (11/30) reveals this ruling-

class effort to force austerity measures down workers' throats. The article describes a coalition called Fix the Debt, comprising leading U.S. capitalists, organized around neoliberal economist Peter Peterson, Republican Alan Simpson and Democrat Erskine Bowles who headed Obama's National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform, and the heads of Goldman Sachs, JPMorgan Chase, Morgan Stanley, Bank of America and Citigroup among others.

Fix the Debt pushes the Simpson-Bowles deficit reduction plan: massive cuts to social programs to pay for a deficit created by imperialist wars and bank bailouts.

The borrowing of \$16 trillion for decades of wars — to pay for over 1,100 military bases in 130 countries — has been robbing the U.S. of resources and destroying the living standards of U.S. workers. The latter face a future of austerity and one of fighting and dying in these wars.

The Fix the Debt group has launched an all-out media offensive featured on all the major news networks and newspapers. They've also created "CEO tools" that help employers pitch their platform to their workforce, including sample letters to give to workers and power-point presentations.

Fix the Debt is the latest front group in a 70-year ideological struggle by U.S. rulers to replace working-class consciousness with a pro-business consciousness, centered on shifting the tax burden from the bosses to the workers: deregulation, union-busting and destruction of any social safety net.

**Austerity is Class War**

Austerity measures will not help the economy as Fix the Debt claims. Rather they lead to reduced growth and greater debt according to the research of many noted economists including Paul Krugman and Ha-Joon Chang (see "The Return of Depression Economics" and "Bad Samaritans"). Austerity attacks "dangerous" political ideas, like the one that the capitalist state should make even the smallest effort to alleviate the worst effects of capitalism. The bosses don't want to be obligated to give the slightest consideration to workplace safety, pollution or the deteriorating condition of their exploited workforce.

A major reason capitalists push

austerity is to try to prevent an economic depression. But all the austerity and infrastructure programs over the decade of the 1930s couldn't get U.S. capitalism out of the Great Depression. It was only World War II and putting 14 million workers into the military that solved their economic and unemployment problems.

Austerity also is used to break the back of the working class. But U.S. workers have resisted these efforts. In Wisconsin tens of thousands marched on the state capital to oppose a union-busting law that was shoved through under the guise of "solving" the state budget crisis. Similar attacks in Indiana and Ohio were met with massive street protests.

It took a serious effort by the Democratic Party to either co-opt these working-class movements or destroy them, only to have another nation-wide movement pop up opposing austerity measures — Occupy Wall Street. It ultimately had to be put down by a series of coordinated police raids organized by a conference of big-city mayors and launched out of the Obama White House and a relentless media blitz slandering the movement. ("Truthout," 3/20; "CounterPunch," 5/14) To overcome this mass resistance to austerity measures, the ruling class is using the debt crisis as a cover to shove through these unpopular policies.

The battle over austerity measures proves that any reform won by workers under capitalism will face constant ruling-class attack until it is ultimately driven into the ground. This attack is relentless. The bosses will demand total domination, both physical and ideological, of the working class.

But it also demonstrates that despite the mass propaganda campaigns, workers are highly skeptical of capitalism's trickle-down economics and its maxim of "All for capital and nothing for the working class." Workers are willing to fight this class war. What is needed is a revolutionary communist party — PLP — to develop their politics and lead the struggle to smash capitalist exploitation forever.☺

Additional Sources: Klein's *The Shock Doctrine*, and Harvey's *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, Fones-Wolf's *Selling Free Enterprise*, Carey's *Taking the Risk Out of Democracy*.

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