

CHALLENGE



THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

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San Francisco-Oakland



Los Angeles



Pakistan



New York City



Chile



Israel/Palestine

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Obama or Romney's Goal: War and Corporate Profits

"If you're looking for a bumper sticker to sum up how President Obama has handled what we inherited, it's pretty simple: Osama bin Laden is dead and General Motors is alive." — Vice-President Joseph Biden, April 26.

Biden's boasting of his boss's supposed triumphs shouldn't lure a single worker to the polls.

Murderer bin Laden is dead. But Obama's war crusade on behalf of U.S. imperialism is killing millions of our sisters and brothers in widening U.S. war zones, from Iraq to Afghanistan to Africa. And preparations for armed conflict with China's ruling class — a foe far deadlier than al Qaeda, the Taliban, or Saddam Hussein's army — looms large on the bosses' 2013-2017 agenda, whether Obama or Romney is fronting for them.

As for General Motors, Obama's usefulness to

U.S. corporate rulers hinges on his ability to slash wages to boost profits. His auto bailout, in reality, is part of a massive assault on workers' living standards, enforced by sky-high racist unemployment and sharpening racist police terror. At \$14 per hour — what's left after a 50 percent wage cut— newly hired GM workers can't afford to buy the cars they make. This is the model the bosses hope to impose on the entire working class.



BROOKLYN, May 8 — Student and teachers at Clara Barton High School rally in support of a communist teacher who was being attacked by the racist Department of Education. Hundreds of students marched. *Full story next issue.*

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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Think Tanks Say 'Armed Clash' with China Possible Soon

U.S. capitalists' sole-superpower status depends as much on their shaky control of Middle East oil as it does on their still dominant war machine. Obama's bogeyman bin Laden, though capable of killing civilians en masse, posed a relatively minor threat to fuel routes from Saudi Arabia to Asia. Bin Laden hailed from a billionaire but non-royal Saudi family that the king and his kin had systematically excluded from their trillion-dollar oil racket. He got his start and training in President Carter's CIA-organized, \$40-billion jihad to topple Russian control of Afghanistan.

But later, lacking an army, bin Laden resorted to terrorism. He hoped to seize for himself the Saudi-owned oil giant Aramco, ExxonMobil's longtime primary energy source, by creating fundamentalist Islamic rule that stretched to Indonesia. While bin Laden and his jihadist thugs failed to wrest control of oil from U.S. hands, nuclear-armed China, with its growing blue-water navy, may well succeed.

Every move that Beijing's naval strategists make is aimed at curtailing U.S. dominance of oil flowing from the Middle East to the Far East. China is building bases in Pakistan and Myanmar, as well as aircraft carriers, anti-ship missiles and submarines. It is assembling Pacific "island chains" designed to deny U.S. Navy access to the region.

Obama understands the threat. That's why he's putting 2,500 Marines in northern Australia. It's why he has staged invasion exercises on Philippines beaches facing China, and why Hillary Clinton was sent on an Asia tour to reaffirm mutual "defense" pacts with U.S. allies.

All this saber-rattling suggests a near-term use of force by Obama (or Romney) while the Pentagon still holds an advantage in weaponry. The Council on Foreign Relations think tank, which speaks for the main Rockefeller-led faction of U.S. imperialists, entitled its latest (April 2012) "contingency planning memo" as "Armed Clashes in the South China Sea." Tellingly, one "possible scenario" has Rockefeller-owned ExxonMobil itself serving as the tripwire: "[A]n attack by China on vessels or rigs operated by an American company exploring or drilling for hydrocarbons could quickly involve the United States, especially if American lives were endangered or lost. ExxonMobil has plans to conduct exploratory drilling off Vietnam, making this an existential danger."

'Warrior-in-Chief' Obama Is No Roosevelt in Mobilizing for War

Mouthpieces for U.S. rulers speak openly of limited "clashes" with China but dare not mention too loudly any plan for all-out confrontation. Given their inadequate military ground force, they are far from being ready for World War

III against China's huge army. On the other hand, they can still compensate using their advantage in nuclear weapons in any all-out confrontation.

Despite 9/11, imperialist U.S. bosses have yet to put either their fellow capitalists or the working class on a wartime footing. Warren Buffett is still begging for World War II-style "shared sacrifice." He advocates higher taxes on the rich to help pay for the Pentagon's war machine, a measure that President Roosevelt so successfully organized in 1941, which helped end the Great Depression. Meanwhile, the New York Times printed a mixed assessment of war-maker Obama from another imperialist, Rockefeller-funded policy factory, the New America Foundation.

Under the headline "Warrior-in-Chief," NAF director Peter Bergen wrote, "[Obama] has completely shaken the 'Vietnam syndrome' that provided a lens through which a generation of Democratic leaders viewed military action. Still, the American public and [mass media pundits]... continue to regard the president as....a negotiator, not a fighter" (4/29/12). In other words, hacks in his party embrace Obama as a war leader, but he has yet to win the mainly working-class rank and file or even so-called intellectuals to the need for economic "discipline" to prepare for looming large-scale war.

In the U.S., however, Obama has proved a reliable suppressor of the working class. He presides over the world's largest racist prison system, which now holds 2.4 million inmates. The Obama administration has presided over more racist jailings, stop-and-frisk detentions, and immigrant deportations than Bush ever dreamed of.

Racist cops kill workers as freely as if slavery were still in force. Pay, pensions, health care, schools and housing are all on the chopping block. Racist police terror, compounded by massive unemployment and under-employment, acts as a brake on workers' fight-back. But voting Obama in or out obviously can't change anything for workers.

The electoral system established by the capitalists' laws has always been a heads-they-win, tails-we-lose proposition for the working class. The rulers' favorite ploy is to trick workers into voting for "the lesser evil." The results: Lyndon Johnson expanded the Vietnam War; Jimmy Carter initiated the CIA-financed attack on Afghanistan; Bill Clinton killed a million Iraqis with sanctions and bombings; Obama attacked workers in the U.S. in the guise of saving their jobs. In each case, the bosses' deception produced a Democratic victor who carried out the same policies advocated by the "hated Republicans." Regardless of who gets the most votes, the bosses never lose.

Workers will get nowhere by kicking out one millionaire servant of the bosses or electing another. It's the war-making, impoverishing, job-destroying racist profit system that has to go. Only the building of a mass, international Progressive Labor Party, woven into every class struggle, can achieve that goal. Only a communist revolution can erect a worker-run society without bosses and profits. Join us! ☺

INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' DAY

PAKISTAN

PAKISTAN — In almost every city and small town in Pakistan the working class aggressively held rallies, processions, meetings and seminars honoring May Day. Angry workers came out on the streets with red banners, chanting opposition to capitalism and the bosses. They were demanding jobs, increases in wages and social security and better working conditions. They exposed the fake leftist union leaders, saying, "The friends of the bosses are traitors to workers."

Progressive Labor Party played a leading role, actively participating in the marches and distributing leaflets explaining how to get rid of capitalism and imperialist wars by organizing into an international, revolutionary communist PLP.

Workers chanted, "Down with capitalism"; "workers of the world unite"; "unite against exploitation, inequality and corrupt bosses"; "bosses are killers"; "east and west, PLP is the best"; "Asia is Red"; and "long live communist revolution."

Speeches by PL'ers and friends exposed the capitalists and their puppet union leaders who are sabotaging the working-class movement. They're preventing it from organizing against poverty, exploitation, price-hikes, unemployment, shortages of electricity and natural gas, corruption, injustice, target killing and terrorism. We accused these bosses' puppets of misleading and terrorizing workers.

Bosses have their "own" union



leaders, rigging union elections to elect their own puppets to leadership. To change the situation and to lead big struggles against the bosses we must be ready to face the state power used to rig this process. We must advance real communist leadership in the unions to lead militant struggles against the bosses as well as to expose capitalism as the source of our problems. Reforms cannot substitute for revolution. While winning leadership in the unions won't change the capitalist system, it can effectively help win the working class into the PLP.

The Party also organized a march

independently in one small town where young members and friends explained to workers and students that the bosses are trying to build a new party (as they've done in the past) to divert workers' anger, spreading the illusion that this new boss-inspired party will bring change to the lives of poor people.

But voting for any electoral party, whether "leftist" or rightist, old or new, only protects the interests of capitalist bosses. We must fight to build the international revolutionary communist PLP to establish a communist society that will eliminate exploitation, poverty, racism and wars. No other party can do this.☸

LOS ANGELES

LOS ANGELES, April 28 — "This was the best May Day in 30 years!" exclaimed a veteran comrade at the end of the Los Angeles May Day dinner. Over 100 people — workers, students, unemployed and retirees — came to Progressive Labor Party's celebration of the international workers' day. This great turnout reflected months of visiting students and workers in their homes and workplaces and involving them in class struggle.

The evening began with a comrade reviewing the history of May Day. She explained not just the beginnings of our workers' holiday, but also how she became involved in PLP when a contingent of hundreds of janitors joined our May Day March in 2000. They were disillusioned in the sellout "Justice for Janitors" campaign by the Service Employees International Union. This point was especially significant, since the SEIU is once again mobilizing and misleading thousands of local janitors into campaigning for the Democratic Party in this year's elections.

Following this inspirational speech came amazing original poetry, beautiful singing and speeches from workers involved in a variety of struggles. A bus system worker spoke alongside a student about fighting back against racist attacks on transit workers and riders.

Campus workers and students stood side-by-side while speaking of their struggle to end contracted work, or "in-sourcing," and how they fought against the overt racism of union and campus misleaders. These workers, who are mainly Latina, have shown the determination of the working class and the power of unity and a fighting attitude, even though we understand that any reform victories will be yanked away as soon as the bosses have an opening.

An original poem explored the current world situation and the working class's need for a new movement based on class consciousness and revolutionary communism. The world-situation speech reiterated these points, pointing out the continuing war in the Middle East as a product of capitalism. The speaker noted that the racist budget cuts in the L.A. school system have eliminated early childhood and adult education programs, and related them to the austerity measures destroying the lives of workers across Europe.

She condemned the racist killings of Trayvon Martin in Florida and Kendra McDeade by cops in Pasadena, California, along with the murder of an Iraqi woman in El Cajon, California, by unknown Nazi types. These killings reflect the capitalist system's need for racism and brutality to divide and intimidate workers. The speech ended by contrasting the disempowering pseudo-democracy of capitalist elections with the empowering fight for communist revolution.

Our night ended with a rousing call for participation with the PLP May Day contingent in the May 1st Occupy March and the singing of the Internationale. A young participant stated that May Day was "pretty cool" and that the speakers "have a strong point that they want to get across to the world, and I would want to be a part of that."

The May Day dinner was a huge success. The participation of these workers represents great potential for growth of our Party. Now comes the hard part: the long-term political work. By making communist politics primary in all of our struggles, we can convert this potential into new PL'ers and new communist leaders for the working class.☸

TEXAS

DALLAS/ FT. WORTH, TEXAS — This year's May Day was a huge success. Nearly 50 people attended PL's annual May Day BBQ here. The highlight of the event was the speech-skit that young leaders and new members organized and performed in both English and Spanish. It got the audience engaged on a level not seen at previous May Day events.

We began with a reading of the history of May Day. The history was accompanied by images ranging from the first May Day to recent PL May Days.

Our program was performed as a four-act play.

In Act I, we demonstrated how capitalism exploits the working class. We used a pie and showed that if society was truly equal then the pie would be evenly divided among everyone — without the bosses. Young children in the audience participated and played the role of the workers. Once they got their even slice, the capitalist pig (who literally wore a pig mask) took the stage and declared that it was "time for my profits!" One by one the capitalist pig took their slices and left them with only crumbs.

In Act II, we showed the role of elections. The narrators proclaimed that capitalism is a dictatorship of the bosses which they hide with elections. Participants playing Romney and Obama entered. They shook hands with the capitalist pig who gave them money and U.S. flags. He then sent the politicians out into the crowd to steal cards that read "Medicaid" and "college readiness programs" from the audience. These social programs

were added to the capitalist pig's feeding trough. Obama and Romney told the crowd to blame immigrants and terrorists for the problems, but audience members yelled back "those are racist lies!"

In Act III we passed out posters among the crowd. Each one contained maps and graphics showing the history and impact of imperialism in the Middle East, Africa and Latin America. Audience members participated by reading about the horrors imperialism has brought to workers worldwide.

In the final Act we declared the need for a party to organize the working class to put an end to capitalism and imperialism once and for all. We declared that CHALLENGE is a weapon against the bosses' racist and sexist ideas. We handed out CHALLENGES to the audience and asked them to join us in the fight against capitalism. At that moment dozens in the crowd stormed the stage and attacked Obama, Romney and the capitalist pig, beating them with rolled-up CHALLENGES.

We ended our performance with a history and singing of the Internationale.

While not all of the people we invited could attend, we did give several new workers CHALLENGE as part of the process of inviting them to May Day. In all about 20 new workers received CHALLENGES for the first time! In the weeks and months ahead we will continue to discuss the ideas of the Party with these new readers and bring the message of May Day to them!☸

INTERNATIONAL...



BROOKLYN, April 28 — Three young students in red were running towards the junction of Flatbush and Nostrand when workers stopped them and asked, "What's going on?" They were referring to the thundering presence of hundreds chanting, "The workers, united, will never be defeated!"

One student responded, "It's May Day — International Workers' Day. That group you hear is Progressive Labor Party and we fight for communism. Come with me, let me give you a CHALLENGE!"

In this mainly black and immigrant neighborhood, the waving red flags caught the attention of workers everywhere. At the junction, PL'ers and friends from DC, Boston, New Jersey, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and throughout New York were led in their chants by young Party

members — black, Latino, South Asian, and white. CHALLENGE, with its front page of multi-racial fists breaking the chains of capitalism, was distributed at a feverish pace.

A group of young, mainly women students and workers began leading the march. Workers rushed out of buildings and markets as they heard the call. "Whose day? Workers' day! What day? May Day!" The workers raised their fists in the air and took CHALLENGES. Cars honked in support and children watched in awe. By the end of the rally, more than 2,700 papers were sold. Altogether, 6,600 were distributed city-wide.

We fought racism in chants such as "Smash racist deportations; working people have no nations!" and "Racist cops, you can't hide; we charge you with

genocide!" We gave speeches at four intersections about PL-led struggles and the need for a communist revolution. Chants were in English, Spanish, and Kreyòl. Multi-racial unity was alive, and the power of a communist march was felt throughout the neighborhood.

Our May Day program began with a skit about our holiday's history, from the Haymarket Massacre of 1886, to the Battle of Berlin and the Soviet Union's defeat of fascism in 1945, to PLP advancing communist politics and leading worldwide fight-backs today. In one scene, a mass of reds — ranging in age from five to sixty — marched through the crowd and onto the stage with red flags chanting, "Fascism means we got to fight back." Then

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NEW YORK CITY

NEW YORK — In the spirit of May Day, tens of thousands of workers marched from working-class neighborhoods into Manhattan's financial district, the heart of the capitalist bosses' power. With millions of young people out of work and angry as they see capitalism placing profits over workers' needs, there has never been a more important time to be a communist in the Progressive Labor Party. Workers and students eagerly took CHALLENGES.

The reformist leadership of the march tried to saturate the event with dead-end ideas. They called for higher taxes on the bosses while maintaining a system to keep the bosses' profits intact. They espoused nationalist support for countries where national liberation struggles have replaced one set of rulers for another, and any benefits gained by workers are being taken back. But workers deserve everything; we have the power to control it all because we produce it all. That is the difference between reform and revolution.

The character of the march turned militant wherever PLP was present, as seen in the confrontation we led against fascists with Immigration and Customs Enforcement and others who held racist signs regarding "illegals." A young multi-racial group threw bottles, cans, and rocks at the racists while chanting, "Burn in hell!" and "These racist pigs have got to go!" The sign was ripped apart and stomped on.

In another part of the march, Transport Workers' Union (TWU) members took up the Party's chants, including "The only solution is communist revolution!" Children held a banner that read, "Smash the 1% with communist revolution." One TWU worker put his young daughter into our section of the march to hold the banner. Another worker gave one of our young marchers a red bandana to wear. Such acts of solidarity show that workers are open to communism and have increasing confidence in PLP.

May Day brought the working class into the streets, but PLP will put the working class in power. Only a mass movement dedicated to the seizure of state power can give workers what they need. Only a working class dictatorship based upon communist economics can end this hell of capitalism. PLP is building that movement. In the wake of this powerful May Day, there is no better time to join and help build the Progressive Labor Party.☺

CALIFORNIA

OAKLAND — Progressive Labor Party members and friends marched as a communist section in a Coalition May Day March. The whole march had an anti-capitalist tone and was filled with young people from community groups, non-governmental organizations, and schools. Our banner and red flags spoke to our confidence in a communist future.

Earlier in the day, PLP and friends attended job actions around the Bay Area. Nurses struck eight Sutter hospitals. Golden Gate Bridge workers picketed the bridge and, together with the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), shut down morning ferry service. The ILWU also shut down the Port of Oakland for one shift. Janitors marched in force in downtown San Francisco. The Occupy movement shut down banks, occupied Child Protective Services to protest its sexism, and marched in downtown Oakland.

As usual, the media put the stamp of "violence" on the entire May Day and justified attacks on demonstrators by the Oakland police. But they left unreported the more than 5,000 protesters in the streets and the growing focus on capitalism as the fundamental problem.

Amalgamated Transit Union Local 192, AC transit workers, called a morning picket in paratransit, which serves

the most vulnerable riders: seniors, the disabled, and low-income families. Paratransit workers are mainly black, Latino and immigrants, at the lowest rung of the transit hierarchy. PLP and Occupy AC Transit put out hundreds of flyers, pointing out the racism in transit.

Our May Day message to transit workers and riders: "Capitalism has no use for those whose labor can't produce a profit....PLP celebrates May Day as a revolutionary, international working-class holiday to advance and popularize 'Production for Need' as the future of the human race."

On Facebook and Twitter, many quotes summed up the day:

"May Day, International Workers' Day, in the Bay: La Lucha es Constante [The Struggle is Eternal], the times are changing!"

"We got a great reception to PLP and our banner along the streets, lots of raised fists, and smiles along the march route."

"Our leaflets were well done....I saw them being distributed throughout the march."

"I liked the camaraderie between different groups...."

Experienced comrades and first-timers distributed CHALLENGES and

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ISRAEL/PALESTINE

TEL-AVIV-JAFFA, ISRAEL-PALESTINE — Thousand of workers, dressed in red and carrying red flags and banners, marked May Day today in central Tel-Aviv-Jaffa with an energetic march. Slogans and chants called for a revolution. PL'ers in Palestine joined these workers and handed out leaflets explaining why a communist revolution is the only way forward.

We distributed CHALLENGES and leaflets in Hebrew, which were welcomed by the marching workers who were open to our political analysis.

Phony leftists who are "revolutionary" in words and reactionary in actions dominated the bulk of the march. They called for "price controls," "public housing" and "socialism," essentially meaning to keep most of the capitalist system in place with minor reforms, or, at most, returning to 1950s Israeli state capitalism.

We, on the other hand, explained the need for an egalitarian communist system based on the principle of "from each according to commitment, to each according to need."

When the march reached its rally point, however, two groups

of anti-communists attacked us. The first one, a libertarian capitalist group raising the symbols of the U.S. Tea Party, attacked us only verbally by claiming that "communists, especially Stalin and Mao, killed 100 million people"; in reality, unlike the brazen lies these bosses' spokesmen were spouting, Stalin's Red Army saved the entire human race from the Nazi butchers in World War II; Mao transformed China from an imperialist colony to a workers' state.

The second group of anti-communists, however, were far more violent. These were the Kahane gang (the Israeli equivalent of Neo-Nazis) who waved Israeli flags and shouted ultra-nationalist slogans. When the demonstrators, including ourselves, shouted them out, the riot cops stormed us — they wouldn't touch their fascist buddies — detaining several leftists and beating them viciously.

All in all, while small in numbers, we made an impact on the May Day activities here. With hard work we will organize a much larger contingent next year.☺

...WORKERS' DAY

CHICAGO, May 1 — Friends from the Midwest gathered in Chicago on April 28 to celebrate and learn about communism at the Progressive Labor Party May Day dinner. The comrades and friends of PLP who attended the dinner were educated and entertained by a host of encouraging poems, speeches, songs and skits presenting the history of May Day. There was one common theme: Communism is the answer to smashing the ruling class worldwide!

May Day is a time to encourage veteran comrades and gain new ones as we fight back against the bosses and capitalism. The dinner was a true celebration of workers' rights. It was a sign that the red flag will forever be held high as the working class builds an international communist movement, led by PLP, to destroy this dark night of capitalism with a red dawn of communism.

Picking up where Saturday's dinner left off, we organized comrades and friends to march today in Union Park at the citywide May Day March. The turnout for this event has unfortunately dwindled since the massive demonstration of 2006, when a million workers marched through downtown Chicago to demand immigrant rights reform. Even though attacks

on workers have only intensified due to the global economic crisis, this year's march turned out about 2,000 two thousand marchers.

As usual, there were many reform groups on hand, selling their watered-down approach to class struggle. Many advocated alternative paths towards legalization, proposing a "progressive" way for immigrant workers to provide for their families under capitalism. PLP supports struggles of immigrants and all workers to fight capitalism's attacks on their living conditions. At the same time, we expose these groups' reformism and make the call for worldwide communist revolution to destroy the bosses' artificial, racist borders.

Our contingent was small but multi-racial, heavy with black workers and students. Our uncompromising line for communist revolution struck a chord with nearby marchers, who readily took up our militant chants and CHALLENGE as well. Throughout the march, comrades gave speeches pointing out that Obama and Romney are two sides of the same coin, with similar stances on racist deportations, po-

lice brutality and murder, and widening imperialist war. Both of the bosses' political parties, Republican and Democrat, also support the massive police presence at peaceful rallies like the May Day march. They are revving up their forces for potential clashes with protesters at the Chicago NATO summit in late May.

Whether the demonstration is small or large, PLP can use these ral-

lies to sharpen workers' political perspectives, and our own. We can use them to expose the racist and sexist failures of capitalism and the necessity of an international communist alternative. We fight for a day when workers can celebrate May 1 more proudly than ever, when capitalism and its endless wars have finally been eradicated from the face of the earth.☺

CHICAGO



MEXICO

OAXACA — The Progressive Labor Party in Mexico made its presence known in Oaxaca's celebration of May Day, the International Workers' Day. Twelve members of the Party marched. We distributed 8,000 fliers, singing communist songs and chanting throughout the event. PLP was the only communist group marching, and we saw how the people who took our fliers seemed interested and read them carefully. We made two contacts, with whom we will be meeting in coming days.

Attendance in the march was down by more than half this year, a reflection of rising attacks against the working class and the capitalists' ability to divert workers' attention with their electoral process. Even so, it was very emotional to see and listen to workers' applause at the end of the march



as our PLP group entered the zócalo in the heart of the city.

Our flier addressed the elections and the importance of not voting and instead uniting with the communist PLP. It also attacked the elections as a sham for the

working class. The same is true in the United States and every other country. Progressive Labor Party offers an alternative: communist revolution, the only real option for the united international working class.☺

MEXICO CITY — Members and friends of Progressive Labor Party met here to celebrate May Day with a march and a dinner. At a meeting before our demonstration, a PL'er gave a brief history about the original May Day struggle in 1886 in Chicago and its historical meaning. The comrade described how PLP has taken up this tradition as a day of celebration for the international working class.

After the speech, the workers at the meeting talked about the importance of organizing workers. They also discussed the bosses' election sham and how the capitalists use the state apparatus to

share power within their class, but never with the working class. A Party comrade made a communist analysis of how the elections are a dead-end for workers, since they lead us only to elect our next oppressor.

The meeting culminated with a worker asserting that class struggle in our area needed to be infused with communist ideas. At that point another worker interrupted: When would we meet again? We ended by asking them to accompany us in our May Day march.

Comrades at this meeting understood that these workers — like

many throughout the world — live in difficult conditions. The ruling class is in crisis, which means that capitalist exploitation and brutality are on the rise. The situation leads workers to think and fight for local and immediate reforms. Our struggle will be to lead these workers to think and fight for the only solution for the international working class, a communist world.

Long live communism!☺

LOS ANGELES

LOS ANGELES — About 20,000 people marched in this year's May Day celebration here. This year's march was far smaller than previous years. Instead of one unified march, there were several smaller marches that left from different areas of the city at different times. This reflected the splits within the nationalist, reformist and revisionist (unity-with-bosses) organizations. But, there were definitely more friends marching with us this year. We maintained high energy, held up the red flag, and distributed CHALLENGE.

Thirty PL'ers and friends marched in our open contingent. We led revolutionary chants, like "Raise those red flags, raise 'em high, the PLP is marching by," and "Las luchas obreras no tienen fronteras, the fight of the workers has no racist borders!"

Several high school students participated by helping lead chants in English and Spanish, even though Spanish is not the first language for some. The best part of the march by far was when the revisionists and the cops attempted to divert the march from joining the other marches that ended in Pershing Square.

As a result of strong leadership and long-term base-building at several local college campuses, we were able to lead a breakaway march of more than 50 workers and students that took the streets, confronted the police, and stopped traffic, chanting "Whose streets, our streets!"

"From Tahir Square to Pershing Square," and "Capitalism means, we got to fight back!" It was a powerful experience for us and a small taste of working-class power.

Many of the college students thanked us for our leadership and boldness. They took CHALLENGE and exchanged contact information. Much work lies ahead of us for next year. There are new people to follow up with and struggles to continue, but this march was definitely an inspiring moment for our Party and our friends.☺

INTERNATIONAL...

‘The Effect of Communism Was Spreading Like Wildfire’

My experience at May Day was unbelievable. I’m a middle school student who was recently introduced to PLP. From the moment I saw red flags, the noise of chants accompanied by hundreds of people was incredible. I was amazed by people marching, shouting, holding banners along with PLP...



...I realized why all these people were screaming at the top of their lungs: the effect of communism was spreading like wildfire. May Day was created to admire and appreciate the effort of workers that make up the world we live in. This rebellion is a thing that all workers should join to create a new world and society. I’m proud that I was in that rebellion that represented so much more.

A Middle School Student

GERMANY



The banner reads “The safe way is not safe. Put an end to capitalism around the world.”

BERLIN — Nearly 35,000 workers and youth marched in May Day demonstrations throughout Germany, the largest being in Berlin with other marches in Nuremberg, Hamburg, Leipzig, and Kiel. Meanwhile, anti-racists stopped or routed neo-Nazis in Neumuenster, Neubrandenburg and Wittstock.

Over 25,000 celebrated May Day in Berlin, marching through the city’s political center under the slogan, “Pressure is rising for social revolution.” They were viciously attacked by a mass of cops with riot clubs and tear gas. Many were injured and arrested. Left-wing and anti-fascist groups organized the march which included several Kurdish and trade union youth organizations. They declared that the march was “a clear demonstration to the rulers that people will not put up with Capital’s attacks on people’s living standards anymore.”

In Hamburg, 1,400 marched under the motto, “No alternative to revolution!” When 1,000 cops, included mounted police, attacked the marchers with clubs and pepper gas, the cops

were hit with stones, bottles and fire-crackers.

In Kiel, speakers urged the destruction of crisis-generating capitalism and denounced the racist European Union refugee policy.

Nazis Routed

In Neumuenster, direct action by 2,000 anti-fascists — organized under the slogan, “They shall not pass!” — halted an attempted Nazi demonstration. The fascists were stoned at the south train station, forcing them to call off their rally.

In Wittstock, 500 May Day marchers prevented 170 neo-Nazis from marching. In a three-hour action, the anti-fascists blocked the streets and the Nazis gave up after marching barely 200 yards.

In Neubrandenburg, when 1,000 cops using riot clubs and pepper gas cleared the way for 300 neo-Nazis, hundreds blocked the streets, forcing the Nazis to circle back to the train station and end any march.✪

FRANCE



PARIS — Over 750,000 people demonstrated in 288 May Day marches and rallies across France today. The predominant theme was opposition to French president Nicolas Sarkozy and consequently support for Socialist François Hollande, his opponent in the May 6 presidential election.

However, this is no real choice at all. Hollande is a servant of the French bosses as much as Sarkozy, and will govern France in their interests. And the bosses’ interests are diametrically opposed to those of the working class.

As the satirical weekly “Le Canard enchaîné” (4/11) indicated, after the May 6 elections, “France will have to continue to borrow billions of euros each month....Now, the experts say, it is very likely that the financial markets will cause the interest rates France must pay to soar, hence worsening the government’s budgetary situation.... The future government can only do one thing: increase taxes even more than announced, and make cruel budget savings in every domain.”

In other words, the third, 8-billion-euro austerity plan demanded by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on November 28 will be imposed, no matter who is presi-

dent.

This is not what workers here want. As André, a 54-year-old cleaning agent who marched in Nantes, said: “I’m here to defend what is left to be defended before they destroy everything — the minimum wage, the fifth week of paid vacation and retirement pensions. I favor keeping our social gains; people died for them.”

But instead of organizing workers to fight, the trade unions that assembled France’s May Day marches have steered them into electoral illusions. The three “class-struggle” unions — the CGT, FSU and Solidaires — spurred workers to vote for the “lesser evil,” while the two outright “class-collaboration” unions — the CFDT and UNSA — fell short even of this level of pseudo-class consciousness, and simply urged workers to vote.

But workers’ goals cannot be reached through reformist electoral politics. The working class cannot depend on the union hacks to tell the hard truth — that only the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism can ensure us a decent life. It’s the job of communists, here and everywhere, to bear witness to that truth and to organize to make it happen.✪

...WORKERS' DAY

BROOKLYN

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they killed the Nazis, sang "Bandiera Rosa" (Italian for "Red Flag") and called on our friends to join PLP. This skit, led by college students, reflected the enthusiastic young leadership given in every aspect of May Day. It was one of many signs of the Party's bright future.

The State of the World speech put PLP's political work in the context of sharpening inter-imperialist rivalry. In a worldwide economic crisis, as the veil of democracy peels away to reveal a looming fascism, there is an increase in racist police brutality and a greater violence against the working class. With a pivot towards Asia in the interests of oil and energy resources, the U.S. is preparing for any armed conflict with China and Russia.

Driven by this inter-imperialist competition, the ruling class is prepared to kill millions of workers in their profit wars. It will impose more budget cuts in education and healthcare, and raise the prices of food and other necessities even as wages are cut. In its quest to control and intimidate the working class, it will sharpen racist and sexist divisions as it super-exploits and deports more immigrant workers. As workers' lives under capitalism become more and more intolerable, the bosses will push for phony elections as the so-

lution while feeding anti-communist and nationalist propaganda in the classroom and workplace.

These capitalist murderers are unrelenting in maintaining their class interests throughout the world. We workers must be equally unrelenting—not just to fight against the war-markers, but also to destroy their profit system.

Stalin once said that if the communist movement failed, the working class would have to live through the worst dark ages humanity has ever known. This is the dark night that PLP must build within. The workers who spoke at our May Day program renewed our confidence that this dark night will end. A woman industrial comrade told of workers embracing CHALLENGE and considering a strike. A student-worker spoke of his experiences in the military and the need — now, more than ever — to build PLP in the bosses' army. The rulers force guns upon us, but the workers will turn the guns around.

To combat the bosses, we need the international unity that was so dramatic in the struggle speeches of five high school students against their racist education system. It rang loud and clear in the international greetings from workers who are building PLP in Haiti, El Salvador, and Palestine-Israel. This was the display of real working-class power on this revolutionary communist May Day. ☺



PLP May Day contingent in Washington, DC

OAKLAND

continued from page 4

we connected with some of the activists who organized in the May Day coalition.

At the beginning, we had a bullhorn rally in English and Spanish to greet those arriving on Bay Area Rapid Transit. A group of Latino youth behind us echoed our chants, and we picked up theirs. This call and response continued throughout the march. A real mobilizer was "Fight Back": "Trayvon Martin means fight back, Oscar Grant means....School closings mean...Cap-

italism means....Racism meansInternationalism means..."

At one point we interacted with a brass band that was playing the anti-fascist resistance song, "Bella Ciao." They asked our comrade who was leading chants in Spanish whether he knew the words. He started singing, "Una mañana, del sol radiante..." Our contingent and others joined in. One young person told us that he was from Italy, where the song originated, and was reporting on the march. After looking at our banner and at CHALLENGE, he said that he would tell others in Italy that there are communists in the U.S. ☺

Summit of the Americas Philanthropy for Profits

CARTAGENA, COLOMBIA, April 16 — At the Summit of the Americas, the celebrity singer Shakira sang the Colombian anthem. She portrayed a microcosm of what imperialism has in store for Latin America.

Shakira announced that she's sponsoring new educational projects throughout Latin America covering 6,200 children of the 35 million who have no access to any type of education. This educative philanthropic project, which earns her great economic dividends, will "resolve" the educational problems of 0.018 percent of the continent's children.

Lecturing hundreds of the Summit's capitalists about her "new" education idea, she said that investment in early education is a promising business which can net surprising profits. She maintained that each dollar invested could reap \$17 in profit in adulthood. She knows this from the tax privileges she has enjoyed in Colombia and in other countries. She repeated the usual formula that education can end poverty and that her 17-year philanthropic project in education has redeemed six million children.

She criticized as "obsolete and old fashioned" the idea that the State must provide education. "Education not only helps masses emerge from poverty" but "is a virtue converting them into potential clients." Thus, investors win double: gaining direct returns in education and assuring future buyers of their products, earning profit as businessmen and world fame as philanthropists, like Bill Gates, Warren Buffet and George Soros.

This capitalist lecture about education is not new. It's the same one repeated by a bunch of technocrats and economists *made in USA*: uni-

versity deans, Board of Education speakers, the World Bank and the fascist educators. But what's new is that an out-of-tune singer presented this project. She declared that capitalist philanthropy is the best way to solve poverty and achieve "the sure prosperity that we deserve and have always dreamt." As we know, capitalism's dreams are workers' nightmares.

Lesson No. 1: Capitalist Philanthropy

What happened in the orgy that Obama's secret service agents organized in Cartagena matches what U.S. ambassadors, secret service agents, military advisers and mercenaries are used to doing: *sexist imperialism*. They transform places they visit into brothels and prostitute young native girls, carried out with a death threat, as if it were an honor for women in those lands. This is how U.S. capitalists see Latin American countries and their people: as brothels occupied by poverty-stricken prostitutes, with their governments as unconditional pimps. The Colombian government, protected by U.S. imperialists, just demonstrated this in fine detail.

Lesson No. 2: The Free Trade Agreement

The Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Colombia and the U.S. is exploitation on a grand scale, a product of inter-imperialist contradictions. In Colombia, where part of these contradictions develop, its capitalists kneel before bosses from China, Spain and North America, fighting for control of the country's natural resources.

With a smile of betrayal from those that know they have traded Colombia's riches for a plate of len-

tils to the imperialist U.S., various Colombian government speakers announced that starting May 15th the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement will go into effect. In reality, this happened since the Cartagena Summit.

Unemployment will increase with the arrival of U.S. products, but the official advertisers and their media of misinformation assure that new jobs will be created more than ever.

While the FTA increases harassment and murders of union members and workers' leaders in Colombia, U.S. governmental circles and those in Colombia maintain the agreement is a "blessing" for unions. The insatiable search for natural riches and the construction of infrastructure routes to transport products to the U.S. will destroy ecosystems, seas, rivers and forests but journalists say this will mean more environmental protection and exploitation of these riches.

What remains of education will be privatized, but they assure us that such measures will improve services and the flow of private businessmen who will take us out of poverty and underdevelopment, like Shakira. But all they do is generalize illiteracy and ignorance. The brutal import of U.S. junk food will destroy the feeble foundations of agricultural production, but they assure us that our diet and nutritional habits will improve eating this trash.

Lesson No. 3: 'Humanism' of the Colombian State

In a clear demonstration of state humanism, the Colombian State's oppressing forces swept Cartagena street by street, house by house, to oust the poor from the city's center because they "made it ugly" and

were a bad showcase for the sale of Colombia to transnational capital. They even removed the dogs, along with the homeless, the street vendors, popular cooks and anyone else in the way.

Avenues were remodeled so that Barack Obama's caravan of about 20 limousines and expensive cars wouldn't have to stop anywhere in its way. The city militarized itself as never before, employing thousands of police, military, secret agents, divers and pilots to guard it.

The price of these security measures, along with the Summit's expenses, may have reached \$100 million, while schools, hospitals, parks or universities go wanting. This shows how public resources are only used in big measures to pay the external debt and finance the war against Colombia's exploited.

Workers Great Potential

The world's workers have risen and organized themselves under reformist ideas. Struggles from Brazil to Afghanistan have shown the great potential we workers have, but we will only see change if the workers are led by communist ideas. Our Party will be present on May Day, commemorating the day of struggle of the international working class. Conscious that there's still much to do, we will raise our red communist flags to continue the road that communists from the past began. Workers' class struggles have taught us that communist ideas are needed to destroy this parasitic and murderous system, to build with the Progressive Labor Party a communist society that will free us from slavery. ☺

Afghanistan: CIA Plot Led to 33 Years of Wars on Workers



Workers in Pakistan rally and march on May Day. See inside.

But although the promise of equality was never fulfilled, the idea of an egalitarian communist society motivated thousands of Afghans then and still does today. In Afghanistan and working class areas of Europe and the U.S. where many Afghan exiles live, Afghans are looking at why the old movement failed, in order to find a way forward.

They identify the egotism of some within the PDPA leadership, who focused on building a power base, dividing the party in a struggle between two factions rather than developing communist ideology.

The PDPA took power in an army coup organized by military officers, and although the party had an estimated 25,000 members, it lacked a strong base among the working class. Its attempts at a transformation of society was misunderstood by some and met with resistance, especially in the countryside, where wealthy landowners with religion and coercion dominated rural workers.

The party had close ties to the Soviet communist party, which professed anti-nationalism in theory but in practice made little effort to build an international working-class movement.

In the year after the PDPA took power certain corrupt leaders brought in supporters whose interest was personal gain, not building an egalitarian society. They imprisoned and killed those who opposed them including innocent civilians and under the banner of communism alienated the unorganized masses, making them open to the intensive, anticommunist propaganda of the Afghan ruling class, the U.S. and Arab fundamentalists.

The Afghan communists followed the theory of socialism as a stage to communism, practiced by the USSR and China. PLP, in "Road to Revolution 4," analyzed that experience and concluded that socialism reverts back to capitalism.

Today PLP rejects the two-stage theory, nationalism, racism, sexism and the cult of leadership. We are building a mass international party to fight directly for communism and invite the heroic Afghan comrades who have kept the ideas of an egalitarian society alive to join us.

One World, One Flag, One Party.✪

In the first week of May a new underground youth group plastered Kabul with hundreds of posters depicting former warlords as criminals and denouncing the U.S. and Karzai who gave them government positions in 2001.

April 28 was Mujahadin Victory Day, a national holiday celebrating the defeat of a Marxist government in 1992 by the fundamentalist warlords — known collectively as mujahadin — and the establishment of an Islamist state. For Afghans the day is a brutal reminder of the tens of thousands killed, the rape of thousands of women and children and the destruction of Kabul that followed as the seven groups that made up the U.S.-backed mujahadin fought for territory and power until driven to the north by Taliban forces four years later.

The youth group's proclamation, "Enough is enough! We will no longer be a witness to your corrupt and predatory ways," reflects the popular mood. Political parties are organizing, clandestinely and openly, to break the hold of the ruling class and the unbearable conditions of daily life.

Capitalism the Problem, Communism the Answer

Afghans once organized a movement, influenced by Marxist ideas that identified capitalism as the root of the vast economic disparity between rich and poor, advancing communism as the solution to end it. The idea that communism is needed to eliminate capitalist forces that are currently oppressing Afghans is taking hold again.

Starting in the 1960s among university students, a movement spread into the urban and rural working class. "We thought that money and wealth is concentrated in just a small class of the society," said a former student at Kabul University, "that socialism is the only way for poor people to be equal, to receive what they work for." Dedicated young men and women formed clandestine study circles that became a force in raising the political consciousness of the whole population. Peasant uprisings, labor stoppages, student strikes and demonstrations paralyzed the country in 1968.

Ten years later the Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan, (PDPA) the largest of the Marxist parties came to power. The popular new government cut food prices, raised wages, opened health clinics and schools, confiscated the land of the old aristocracy and redistributed it to the peasants. New laws ended the practice of bride price. Women and minorities were given equal rights.

All gains made when the PDPA was in power are gone. During those years, despite the intervention of the imperialists, and the PDPA's own mistakes, from 1978 to 1992 conditions for Afghans improved tremendously:

jobs were created and hospitals and schools built. Women made great gains: half the university students in the country were women; women were 40 percent of Afghanistan's doctors, 70 percent of its teachers and 30 percent of its civil servants.

Counter-revolutionaries, wealthy landowners and fundamentalists sabotaged the new programs and spread anti-government misinformation. They joined the jihad — religious war — against the communists which the CIA was secretly organizing in Pakistan, funded by the U.S. and Saudi Arabia. Maoists, who followed the Chinese anti-Soviet line, calling the PDPA puppets of the Russians, joined them. Over the next ten years, at a cost of \$40 billion, the U.S. recruited, supplied, and trained — militarily and ideologically — almost 100,000 jihadis or mujahadin from Afghanistan and 40 countries. (This included Osama bin Laden who bankrolled the jihad and later formed al Qaeda.)

The broader U.S. aim was to draw its imperialist rival, the Soviet Union, into a trap, a debilitating war. Russian forces went into Afghanistan in support of the government in December 1979, starting 33 years of war for Afghans as the country became the battleground of a 10-year proxy war between the USSR and the U.S. One million Afghans were killed, four million fled, many to Pakistan and Iran, and the economy and infrastructure of the country were devastated.

The legacy of these war years has left deep scars on Afghan society.



May Day in Tel-Aviv Jaffa. Banner reads "Workers of the World Unite" in Hebrew and Arabic. See inside

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