

CHALLENGE



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Youth Rebel Against RACIST MURDER of Kimani Gray

NYPD KKK, HOW MANY KIDS DID YOU KILL TODAY?

BROOKLYN, NY, March 11 —

Hundreds of mainly black youth gathered on the corner of Church Avenue and E 55th street tonight, angered over the murder of their friend Kimani Gray by the racist NYPD. It hasn't even been a year since Shantel Davis was shot down in cold blood by Phillip Atkins, a plainclothes officer operating out of the KKKlavern, otherwise known as the 67th precinct.

The cops claimed, as usual, that Kimani had a gun but one woman at a window declared he was unarmed and his friends said the cops never identified themselves. The cops put eleven bullets into this 16-year-old, who lay face down on the ground pleading for his life.

Tonight Kimani's friends were having none of the cops' lies. At the vigil, two people spoke on a bullhorn, setting the tone. A black woman, who boldly confronted Police Commissioner Ray Kelly at an open forum in the fall, angrily denounced the cops as racist and demanded they stop killing black youth. Shantel Davis's sister urged the youth to get involved in the fight for justice against racist police murder and recounted her numerous marches to the 67th precinct since June. She has since appeared on local radio and invited the whole community to her next planning meeting, this coming Monday night.

Then, dozens of enraged youth took to the streets down Snyder Avenue. When



it was proposed to march down Church Avenue, the major thoroughfare, the youth shouted yes! We going to Church!

Hundreds poured into the streets chanting "NYPD! KKK!" They surged across the streets and sidewalks. Cars and buses were forced to stop. The goal was the 67th station house itself, which the young rebels pelted with rocks and bottles. This same band of youth beat an effective retreat back to their memorial to Kimani, having suffered only one arrest. The NYPD was caught flat-footed. The city bus commandeered to dispatch officers to the scene was pummeled by youth on its way to the precinct.

When two cops were surrounded by about 36 youth, an NYPD van pulled up nearby. The officers inside assessed the situation and moved on. The two surrounded cops were heard later on that night exchanging stunned and angry words about how they had been potentially hung out to dry by their fellow cops.

Cops Serve Bankers

The rage of these young rebels was somewhat disorganized. Fruits they lifted were joined by garbage cans that were pelted at every cop car across a mile-long stretch of this major thoroughfare. A Rite Aid pharmacy surveillance video was used to make arrests of youth. A bank window was shattered, but the youth's consciousness hasn't yet tied the role of the banks as the rulers of the system to the racist cops' role as the bankers' servants. That's PLP's job.

In the following day's Daily News, an article "reporting" on the rebellion

smeared Kimani as a criminal misfit. This is similar to the bosses' media attacks on Shantel in Brooklyn, Ramarley Graham and Reynaldo Cuevas in the Bronx, Vincent Smith, Jr. in Indiana, Albert Purnelli in Philadelphia, Manuel Díaz and Joel Acevedo in California, Damaël in Haiti, and millions of children murdered by the bosses' guns and drones worldwide.

There is no mention of how thugs like billionaire Mayor Bloomberg and Police Commissioner Ray Kelly force our youth from school to prison or the military everyday. According to the NYPD's own reports, 9 out of 10 stopped-and-frisked New Yorkers have been completely innocent. Our youth have been stop-and-frisked over four million times since 2002, over 95 percent of them black or Latino. The cops use their stop-and-frisk policy to build up a record against hundreds of thousands of innocent youth to be dragged out as "fact" in future incidents.

Young black and Latino workers and students worldwide are considered cannon fodder for the bosses' wars and at the point of racist cops' guns from New York City to Port-au-Prince and beyond. This struggle is part of an international one against racist police brutality in a decaying capitalist system. It will surely lay the foundation to spoil the bosses' plans for continued imperialist wars.

The militant youth displayed the proper reaction to racist police murder. The old action taken by Kimani's friends points the way to the kind of fight-back the whole working class needs to defeat capitalism and its racist cops.✶

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Turn U.S.-China Rulers' Clash into Class War

Barack Obama's pivot to Asia puts the U.S. on a collision course with Beijing. At the same time, the U.S. bosses' economic crisis could threaten their long-term ability to prevail militarily over China. As a result, they're seeking a worldwide coalition against their imperialist rivals.

Meanwhile, Chinese expansionism is already threatening near-term conflict that the U.S. ruling class may be unable to avoid, ready or not. Obama is "rebalancing" U.S. forces to East Asia while maintaining bases in the Middle East to control oil and gas resources and supply lines — the reason it has fought two wars in the region and murdered millions of workers since 1991. But China's bosses need the same resources to supply their expanding economy, another threat to U.S. domination.

That's why China's capitalists, in addition to launching a blue-water (deep-sea) navy, are forcibly

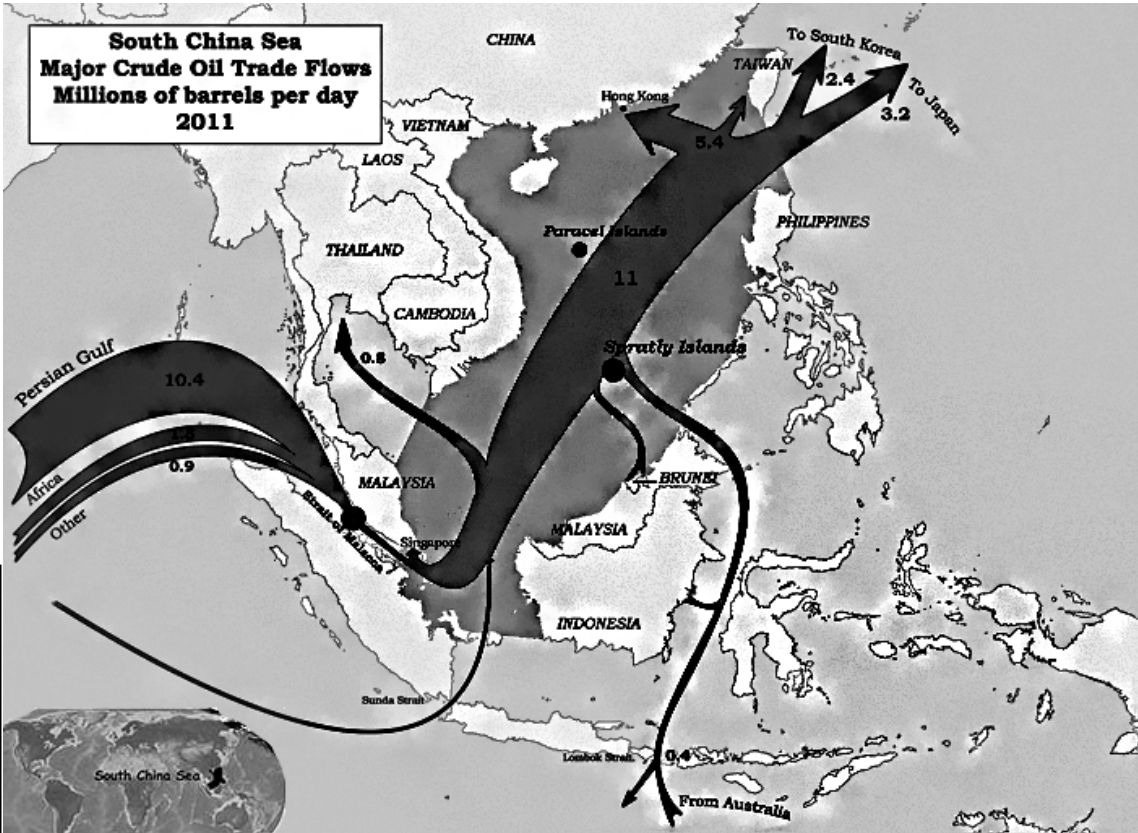
OUR FIGHT

- ★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

• email: desafio.challenge@gmail.com
• blog: challengenewspaper.wordpress.com

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claiming title to oil-rich islands in the South China and East China seas. Their goal is to turn their rivals' operations in the area into acts of war. In fact, ExxonMobil and Chevron are already drilling there, both for oil and to enlist potential U.S. war partners the Philippines, Japan and Vietnam.

Ironically, these three nations have all suffered mass murder by the U.S. war machine: the conquest of the Philippines in 1898, which launched the U.S. as an imperialist power; Japan in World War II, with the atom-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and fire-bombing of other Japanese cities; the invasion of Vietnam two decades later, which killed three million workers and peasants there.

The nationalist outlook among leaders in these countries (criticized by the Progressive Labor Party as far back as the Vietnam War) could lead them into an alliance with the capitalist butchers of the U.S. Then again, popular opposition to uniting with U.S. bosses could upset the appletart.

U.S. Bosses' Main Option: The Military

Given this emerging crisis, U.S. rulers must rely on their military. New Navy warships, originally designed for inshore fighting in Iran and Saudi Arabia, have been redirected to the east. On March 1, the first four of 55 U.S. Navy Littoral Combat Ships left San Diego for Singapore. According to Foreign Policy magazine, "the fast-moving ships are intended to patrol maritime traffic with allied navies, including private oceangoing cargo ships and pirate threats, while monitoring the increasingly tenuous intent of Chinese vessels, all at the contested southern door to the South China Sea" (2/28/13). Singapore commands not only the strategic China seas but also the Malacca Straits, a major chokepoint for Middle East energy supplies headed to China.

On the webpage of Foreign Affairs magazine (2/22/13), the mouthpiece of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) and U.S. finance capital, Professor Michael Klare of liberal Hampshire College foresaw less than smooth sailing:

In the East China Sea, China and Japan are squabbling over a cluster of small, uninhabited islands called the Diaoyu by the Chinese and the Senkaku by the Japanese. Japan has administered the islands since the end of World War II, but China, Taiwan, and Japan all lay claim

to them. In the South China Sea, meanwhile, tensions have flared over several island groups, most notably the Spratly and Paracel islands.... China, Taiwan, and Vietnam claim all of these islands, and Brunei, Malaysia, and the Philippines claim some of them. Little more than rock formations, the islands possess hardly any value in and of themselves. But they are believed to sit astride vast undersea reserves of oil and natural gas — lucrative caches for whichever country can get to them. Beyond the economic boon it would be, the Chinese view acquisition of the islands (along with the recovery of Taiwan) as the final dismantling of the imperial yoke of Western powers and Japan.

According to a recent report from the U.S. Department of Energy, major firms such as Chevron, ConocoPhillips, and ExxonMobil have partnered with the state-owned oil companies of Malaysia, Vietnam, and the Philippines to develop promising reserves in maritime territories claimed by these countries as well as China.

[R]egardless of whether it was Obama's intention when he pivoted to the Pacific, he has surely increased the chances that rash and potentially incendiary behavior by any one of the countries hashing it out in the South and East China seas could lead to war.

Rulers Prepare for Future Wider War

U.S. rulers recognize the probability — and the necessity — of a future wider war with China. Though they may not be fully prepared for it at present, they may soon be drawn into one. Their economy is stagnating. Bitter if unfocused anti-capitalist anger rules popular sentiment. According to Major Fernando Lujan, an Army strategy planner and fellow at the imperialist CFR, the bosses would prefer U.S. War Lite, where Special Forces troops can go anywhere at a moment's notice:

Looming budget cuts, ground forces worn down by years of repeated deployments, and a range of ever evolving security challenges from Mali to Libya and Yemen are quickly making "light footprint" military interventions a central part of American strategy. Instead of "nation building" with large, traditional military formations, civilian policymakers are increasingly opting for a discrete combination of air power, special operators, intelligence agents, indigenous armed groups, and contractors, often leveraging relationships with allies and enabling partner militaries to take more active roles (Foreign Policy, 3/8/13).

But if things heat up in, say, the South China Sea, a quick remobilization is on the boards, regardless of budgetary or political constraints:

As the Army and Marines begin to cut 100,000

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Mass Texas Rally Slams Racist Tests, Cuts



AUSTIN, TEXAS, February 23 — Over 2,000 angry parents, teachers, students and community members rallied today, demanding an end to STAAR (the state's latest standardized testing scheme) and to fight the \$5.4 billion cuts in education.

The crowd this year was angrier and more militant than in the past. The rage could be felt as the multiracial mass led by two all-black marching bands strode up the main downtown avenue toward the capitol. Liberal misleaders of the march led chants of "Si se puede" ("yes, we can") and "Save our schools." PLers, joining in with rank-and-file students and teachers, led militant slogans: "The banks got bailed out, schools got sold out!" and "Up, up with education, down, down with deportations."

At the rally speaker after speaker condemned STAAR. Signs in the crowd called on parents to openly defy the exam by opting their children out of taking it. Thousands read a student leaflet exposing the billions paid to the testing company Pearson to create and administer the new state exam. With these developments there is a potential to win thousands of students, parents and teachers to PLP's communist ideas.

Out of School into Prison or the Army

While the STAAR exam threatens all Texas students, the impact it is having and will continue to have on working-class mainly black and Latino students is devastating. The latest STAAR results have shown that the lowest scores occur in the poorest schools. The reality is that thousands of these black and Latino students will be pushed out of school and into the prisons or the army, serving as cannon fodder for the next imperialist war. This fact reveals the truly racist nature of the standardized testing movement.

Two black students spoke about a struggle in their mainly black high school to stop a charter school takeover. One of the youth described how he regularly attends school board meetings where he attacks the board for their compliance with the charter school. Thousands cheered this sophomore's actions, which were a sharp contrast to the empty platitudes of the school bosses who

were invited to speak.

Several superintendents and board presidents spoke out in opposition to the cuts and the testing-mania. But there is true hypocrisy when the very people who implement the cuts on a local level claim to be leading the fight against them. These school bosses are as much to blame for the cuts as the politicians they condemn. Pearson bosses and the servants of capitalism in the government rely on the compliance of these school boards and superintendents to maintain their capitalist system.

The overarching theme of the rally was to blame "greedy" and "incompetent" Republicans and companies like Pearson for the problems in education. The cuts are actually caused by a capitalist system in crisis, one both Democrats and Republicans are attempting to "cure" off the backs of working-class youth. In reality, the liberal rulers pose a higher threat to the working class, as they are better able to pacify and trick workers. The rally called for everyone to vote for "pro-education" Democrats.

PLers called to "vote with your feet" toward revolution. Hundreds of leaflets and CHALLENGES were distributed, calling for communist revolution as the only solution to the problems of education. People were very receptive to PLP's ideas and we plan to intensify our CHALLENGE sales at future events.

Tie Budget Cuts, Tests to Capitalism's Racism

There is much potential for the Party's ideas to grow in the fight against budget cuts and standardized testing. The line of the liberal misleadership to vote for change has a strong appeal in a period where many see no alternatives to capitalism. We must be vigilant in connecting the budget cuts in education and the standardized testing movement to the racism inherent under capitalism. And we must continue to put forward a sharp line of class-conscious anti-racism and anti-sexism in these movements. It is around these ideas that we will win thousands to PLP and expand the fight for equal education to a fight for communism!✊

Racist Hospital Closings Spur Militant Fight-back

BROOKLYN, NY, February 14

— *This is a racist attack on the residents of Red Hook. The State of New York is coming for our patients' lives. The power to stop this comes from us when we are united...Writing letters will not do it!*

That's what a Long Island College Hospital (LICH) paramedic said to hundreds of co-workers and community residents at a rally to stop the proposed hospital closing. And it brought the crowd to their feet!

Hundreds of hospital workers are struggling to stop the closing of Downstate Central and LICH. These hospitals serve primarily black, working-class neighborhoods. LICH serves Red Hook, an area devastated by superstorm Sandy and the massive public housing projects there.

These closure threats follow the attack on Brookdale Hospital and the closing of Peninsula Hospital in Far Rockaway a year ago. The largest of all the hospital unions, Local 1199/SEIU, with over 200,000 members in NY, has kept the workers at each of these sites isolated from each other. Rather than mobilize the workers to shut the City down and up the ante against the racist profit system, they handle each case individually, citing mismanagement and corruption as the root of the problem.

When Brookdale was threatened with closing almost two years ago, LICH 1199 leaders argued that Brookdale should close because it would mean more job security at LICH! Then last summer, this same crew called the cops on a retired 1199 member who attended a meeting about the LICH closing and argued for a strike. Not only did they have him removed, these rats

had him arrested and falsely accused him of making terrorist threats. Now the chickens have come home to roost!

No doubt, there is a cesspool of corruption as the politicians throw millions of dollars at private consultants, subcontractors and the corrupt hospital management firm, Continuum. These thieves make obscene salaries while hospitals are short on toilet paper and the most basic supplies. But more to the point, Democratic Governor Cuomo and the Feds are cutting Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements to hospitals by 50 percent. These cuts are racist to the core, aimed at the unemployed, children and the elderly. As the black woman doctor who heads the neonatal unit said at the rally, "We're fighting for our babies."

Cuomo says they "are running out of money for these hospitals," yet the rulers have deep pockets for their continued carnage in Afghanistan and Pakistan and potential imperialist attacks on Iran and N. Korea. Ultimately, these spreading wars are potentially headed to another world war between the U.S. and China.

The good news is that healthcare workers and patients are in a fighting mood. PLP has a base at both hospitals, including hundreds of CHALLENGE readers who have led mass actions. Together we can try to lead workers past the obstacles the unions, courts and politicians place before us. Maybe we can stop the closings and maybe not. But by fighting back we can build the revolutionary communist movement which is the only way we will ever have free health care for all. Having a healthcare workers contingent at this year's **May Day** March is our next big test.✊

Worker-Student Unity Battles Columbia U.'s Billionaire Board

NEW YORK CITY, March 8 —

Today several hundred chanting students joined workers in another militant solidarity march on Columbia University's (CU) campus. The 35 Faculty Club workers are fighting for a decent wage, for pay during school breaks and against all their tips being stolen. Many students and workers, a faculty member and community supporters spoke about the millions of dollars CU spends to pay and renovate the home of President Bollinger and to take over West Harlem while refusing to pay a living wage to workers.

Many speakers mentioned the humanistic, liberal pretenses of CU. If you scratch a liberal, you find a capitalist. Liberals are capitalists who try to put a nice veneer on their hunger for profit. CU has an endowment of billions and large real estate holdings. Seventy-five percent of CU's Board members are bankers. Their role is to train new capitalist leaders and money managers while simultaneously teaching students to set themselves apart from workers.

The growing Student Worker Solidarity (SWS) group sees clearly how oppressed these workers are and how their working conditions contradict the university's avowed goals. The chants

reflect the power of, and need for, worker-student unity. More and more students are joining the struggle.

Marchers took over 70 CHALLENGES and **May Day** flyers. PLers can win these militant students and workers to see themselves as lifelong fighters for a society based on equality and production for need — a communist society.

Rely on Rank-and-File Workers, Not Union Mis-leaders

We need mass support from workers in other unions on campus. As reflected in labor struggles worldwide, union leaders neither seek support from other unions nor offer it when other unions are striking. Although most campus workers seem supportive, the union leaders refuse to organize it. This mirrors the recent school bus workers' strike, which had widespread support, but whose leaders stopped it dead to please local politicians. Pro-capitalist union misleaders today are invested in winning favor with politicians and favors for themselves. It will take mass action from all rank-and-file campus workers to fight this and future struggles. We cannot rely on any bosses but only on the power of the working class.✊

Algeria: Dairy Wildcatters Defy Bosses' System

ALGIERS, March 4 – Wildcatting dairy workers have taken on four enemies in one fell swoop: union misleaders, company bosses, the courts and the government.

Workers at the largest dairy supplying the capital are continuing their February 28 wildcat against the official trade union and its corrupt general secretary, Khelifi Ali. The strike has shut the public-sector Colaital dairy company in Birkhadem, six miles south of here.

The workers have defied a court ruling the wildcat as illegal. The general director of the government's National Milk Office (ONIL), Fethi Messar, is ordering in police as strike-breakers. The ONIL is also increasing production at 11 other dairies in order to help break the strike. Meanwhile, Messar said he's willing to "mediate" the conflict.

The strikers are demanding a wage hike and the resignation of Khelifi Ali and his cronies. A minority of the dairy workers are striking, but they've blocked the strategic pre-pack unit, closing operations. Public-sector dairy managers and the union misleadership made joint threats to try to prevent the strike.

The struggle began on February 7 when the dairy workers first struck against the company union and for higher wages, permanent jobs for the temporary workers and reinstatement of unjustly-fired workers. The three-day walkout ended with the workers winning a 40 percent pay hike and the permanent hiring of 100 temporary workers, while obtaining the "freezing" of company-union activities, Khelifi Ali's removal and a general assembly to elect a new union leadership.

**Oust Union Traitors,
Strike to Enforce It**

When the authorities failed to call an assembly, on February 21 the workers held one on their own and voted out the corrupt leaders. But the company union has refused to recognize the vote, leading to the present strike. The courts ruled the strike "illegal" since the bosses' law does not permit a strike to change the union leadership.

The action hits a key sector here where per capita milk consumption is 137 liters/year (U.S. consumption is 72 liters/year). The strike has already caused a shortage of pasteurized powdered milk in the shops.

Class relations are clear in Algeria. In their struggle, the Birkhadem dairy workers are fighting four enemies: the misleader of the only government-recognized union, Khelifi Ali; the courts; the general director of the public-sector company, Derouiche Mohamed Abdelhamid; and the government's general director of the ONIL, Fethi Messar. Sellout union, judge, company and government — all in one bag!

It's clear that real victory cannot come from chopping off only one of the monster's heads, Khelifi Ali. Workers will also need to defeat company management and the government. Ultimately, only communist revolution can beat that gang-up.☸

Bosses' 'Education Reform' A Lesson Plan for War

The Progressive Labor Party has repeatedly warned workers of coming wars leading to a major war to decide which imperialist(s) will control the world. We've said that the U.S. ruling class will use its state power to prepare and try to mobilize the population for war.

On March 20, 2012, the U.S. Council on Foreign Relations' (CFR) Independent Task Force (ITF) on U.S. Education Reform and National Security issued its 96-page report. The CFR is the key U.S. ruling-class think tank directing U.S. imperialism's foreign policy and influencing government officials who are instrumental in their plans. It's significant that it appointed a Task Force headed by Condoleezza Rice, former George W. Bush's Secretary of State (a key figure in both Iraq wars), and Joel Klein, ex-chancellor of New York City's schools.

U.S. rulers are trying to seize an opportunity created for them by the right-wing "education reform" (ER) movement. It has successfully mobilized some parents and others to attack unionized public school teachers; demanded the use of standardized test scores to produce "data-driven" evaluations of teachers; popularized the call for charter schools and the closing of public schools; and called on state governments to institute a "common core curriculum." The ER movement is responsible for right-wing superintendents like Michelle Rhee in Washington, D.C. and Cami Anderson in Newark.

Based on this ER platform, the ITF proposes using the common core curriculum standards to "ensure that students are mastering the skills and knowledge necessary to safeguard the country's national security," i.e., military, foreign service and defense industry skills; to push patriotism more sharply in civics classes and other school curricula; to sharpen competition between public, charter and private schools; and to institute a "national security readiness audit" in order to censure those educators not falling in line with the bosses' plans.

This audit will also inculcate nationalistic and competitive ideas in students' and teachers' minds. All this enables the ruling class to institute a higher level of social control in the schools and prepare U.S. youth for major conflicts — imperialist war — with one or more of its main competitors in the world.

Wrapping its rhetoric in the specter of threats to the U.S. "leadership role" in the world, the ITF report gives away its real agenda early on. It says explicitly that the U.S. "Education Crisis Is a National Security Crisis" (page 7). Its "five distinct threats" include U.S. economic growth and competitiveness, physical safety, intellectual property, global awareness and unity and cohesion (pp. 7-13). Each of these "threats" signifies an area this ruling class-led group has identified as critical to address in the lead-up to imperialist-led genocide.

The ITF's citing of these threats reflects the current rise of China and other competing imperialists, whose goal is to replace the U.S. in its current number one position. The ITF says U.S. workers lack the skills necessary to enable U.S. businesses to turn back these challenges by maximizing productivity per worker, bringing the bosses higher profits. They bemoan

the reality that 75 percent of U.S. youth (particularly black and Latino youth) are not qualified to join the military. This is mostly because many don't graduate from high school or are not otherwise prepared to be soldiers in today's high-tech armed forces.

The report further criticizes U.S. schools for not producing enough graduates proficient in foreign languages who can work as diplomats and/or spies, Special Forces and overseas agents for U.S. corporations. The ITF also cites the growing "education/mobility gap" (really just a product of the bosses' economic crisis on top of their racist and anti-working-class policies). They believe this growing inequality will impair workers' loyalty to, and willingness to die for, U.S. imperialism.

The ITF fears that "this trend could cause the United States to turn inward and become less capable of being a stabilizing force in the world." This view represents the thinking of the most powerful capitalists, for whom "stability" is a codeword for continued U.S. political and economic domination.

PLP forces, both inside and outside the schools, must expose these atrocious profit-driven goals. Just as the "education reform" movement has given the rulers an opportunity they might use for their purposes, communist leadership in the schools can turn the tables on them. A militant left-led mass movement of students, parents and workers against racism, sexism, fascism and imperialist war would be an important component of PLP's drive towards communist revolution.☸

Rage Against Collocation, School Shutdowns Students Set Up to Fail



NEW YORK CITY, March 13 — Students and teachers took to the streets last Thursday once again to protest the Department of Education's (DOE) proposal to collocate a charter elementary school into the Tilden campus building. It already houses three high schools. This time the struggle was taken to the steps of Tweed, the DOE's headquarters in Manhattan. Students from Brownsville Academy, who recently won their collocation, fight joined dozens of students and staff from the Tilden campus. Despite the cold and rain, spirits were high as students picketed and chanted. Many received CHALLENGE.

Collocations and school closings are the order of the day for thousands of predominantly black, Latino and immigrant schools citywide. Under capitalism these attacks will continue

because the bosses cannot afford, and has no interest, to educate all children. Capitalism needs millions of working-class youth to settle for being the next foot soldier, prisoner, low-paid worker or part of the unemployed.

If students blame themselves for failing the tests required to graduate, the bosses don't have to worry about them questioning this racist system. Budget cuts, large class sizes, and the instability caused by these collocations and school closings are just some of the racist attacks students face every day they make focusing in the classroom, and passing standardized exams more difficult.

After some chanting, students gave passionate speeches about the need to fight the collocation. The Tilden students

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France: 200,000 March vs. Job Cuts

Sarkozy, Socialists: 'Same Hot Air'

PARIS, March 5 — Tens of thousands of workers demonstrated here today against the fraudulent agreement on “secure employment.” Nationwide, 200,000 joined 174 protest marches.

The loudest contingent in the Paris march comprised 250 Peugeot auto workers from nearby Aulnay, who chanted “Forbid layoffs, no factory closures!” and “We’re here today, we’ll continue tomorrow!” One worker, Mohamed, declared, “I didn’t vote for [Socialist president] François Hollande because I knew it was the same thing, the same hot air.”

“There has been no break with the previous [Sarkozy] government,” said Jean-Pierre, who marched here. At 66, having just retired, he fears retirement pensions will “not be guaranteed.”

In Lyons, Renault autoworkers waved signs reading, “Shame on the agreement!” In Toulouse, the main banner condemned “the blackguard January 11 agreement.” In Nantes, large contingents of metalworkers and workers from the Airbus factory participated.

In Le Mans, the workers chanted, “Flexibility, competitiveness, mobility, no, no, no!” In Rheims, the demonstrations halted bus and tram traffic. Over 200 Michelin rubber workers joined the protest march in Clermont-Ferrand. “Young people don’t want to see their



careers made precarious,” commented one rubber worker.

In Lille, contingents from the Dunkirk ArcelorMittal steelworks, the Valenciennes Peugeot factory, the Toyota auto factory, the Conforama furniture chain stores, and the Fraisnor lasagna factory all marched.

The demonstrations were organized by three union confederations, the CGT, FO and Solidaires against government plans to adopt anti-worker laws in May. The “lesser-evil” Socialist government sponsored talks between the unions and the bosses’ associations. On January 11, three union confederations, the CFTD, CGC, and CFTC, representing a minority

of workers, signed a sellout agreement on which new laws will be based.

The main feature of the proposed law allows a company to cut wages and change working hours, supposedly for a limited two-year period, in order to “increase competitiveness” — exploitation — and allegedly avoid layoffs.

The law would also create “intermittent permanent job contracts” — allowing bosses to bind a pool of workers to a company, free to employ them as much or as little as they choose. It would also allow bosses to close a factory in one region and open a new one in another region. Workers who

refuse to follow their jobs will be fired and will be ineligible for unemployment benefits.

In exchange for these give-aways, the three sellout unions supposedly won “compensatory rights” for workers. But none are in the signed agreement that was signed. All are subject to future negotiations and no one is discussing guaranteeing them legally.

The deputies belonging to the right-wing UMP party, which lost the last presidential and legislative elections, will vote for the Socialist Party’s law, although former labor minister Xavier Bertrand criticized it for “not going far enough.”

The Socialist government, says it will allow superficial changes in the future law, but none are substantial.

Neither these union leaders, elections or laws will guarantee workers a decent life, much less the full value of the products their labor creates. As long as the bosses hold state power, laws will always favor them.

Clearly, the key to obtaining real rights for workers lies in our class eliminating the bosses’ government. That can only be done by a revolutionary party leading the working class in a communist revolution to destroy capitalism and create a society run by and for workers.☺

INTERNATIONAL WORKING WOMEN’S DAY

Communists Link Class Struggle to Fight vs. Sexism

HAITI, March 13 — Communists must fight against the capitalists and their ideas everywhere. A small group of communists in a provincial city in Haiti waged an ideological struggle for communism on the weekend of International Women’s Day. Several young women university students of proletarian background wanted to organize an event. We presented phrases of famous women to show the history of women’s participation in the struggle. They called it a plea for fighting sexism in all aspects of society.

We began discussing our plan over several meetings, trying to give a more revolutionary and working-class character to this initiative. We discussed women revolutionaries such as Clara Zetkin, Alexandra Kollontai, Rosa Luxemburg, among others. Current struggles for equality need to become more class-conscious: to make it a struggle of working-class women and men against the ruling class. We are discussing the importance of communism in women’s struggle against capitalist exploitation for our class’s liberation. Today millions of women are striking against this exploitation worldwide. Capitalism uses sexism as a basis of the exploitation and oppression of women is the social division of labor.

With the support of communist comrades, these young women posed some revolutionary acts. They saw that in the bourgeois feminist movement, women bosses defend their class interests. Because our relationship is only beginning with these young women, they found it sufficient to carry out their activities by asserting certain rights of women, without entering into class struggle.

This experience shows us, however, that communists must be present everywhere — because opportunities are everywhere to fight capitalism in all its facets. We must fight sexism, racism, and all the other forms of exploitation that the bosses use against us. In order for working-class women and their allies to be liberated, the whole working class must be liberated. We have to engage in ideological as well as practical battles against the bosses.☺

Tel-Aviv: Red Flags Fly



TEL-AVIV, ISRAEL-PALESTINE, March 8 — Over 100 working women and men marched in central Tel-Aviv to mark International Women’s Day. Two PLers joined the march and distributed CHALLENGES in Hebrew and English.

This march was dotted with red flags and represented multi-ethnic unity of working women. While small, the march was very sharp, politically speaking, with the red flags and energetic chants of “The Answer to Racism is Revolution” and “The Answer to Sexism is Revolution”.

We in Progressive Labor Party welcome the demand for revolution. Indeed, while we do disagree with the organizers of the march on

many subjects, to have International Women’s Day marked with red flags and chants calling for revolution was a very welcome change from the liberal feminist slogans and commercialization seen on this day.

As our Party continues to grow we will have our own contingent marching on International Women’s Day under our own flags and with our own chants, not merely calling for a revolution, but for a *communist* revolution.☺

LETTERS

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

Communist school inspires youth for May Day

We had a big Communist PLP school on February 16 and 17 in South America, with more than 42 members and friends of the PLP participating from: Mexico, Colombia, El Salvador and the United States; more than half were young people and a good number were women.

It was a wonderful experience; especially for those who hadn't had the opportunity to experience this personally. We spoke about racism, sexism and the importance of fighting against these bosses' ideas that are integral to this system. The discussion and camaraderie played an important role in committing ourselves to put into practice the Party's line.

It was inspiring to see how the youth and veterans exchanged their knowledge about their experience in the struggle; the discussion displayed a lot of knowledge about PL's politics.

We analyzed how the racist attacks against the working class, products of the capitalist crisis, makes living conditions within this capitalist system worse each day. We see how the betrayal of the old communist movement and the pseudo-left and union mis-leaders, have made workers very cynical in facing the bosses. We see how the bosses use our children in their violent wars for oil and their bloody profits, while they step up fascist attacks.

But our Party is still alive and present in workers' lives, despite any temporary defeats. We explored how in reality little by little we have become an international party of the working class. We concluded that CHALLENGE must be our main vehicle to spread our ideas and to report workers' struggles in every corner of the globe against capitalist oppression and exploitation. We must learn from them.

Reports of our participation in the teacher strikes in Chicago and Haiti, and the participation of our comrades from Mexico in the Summer Project, were

Rage Against Collocation, School Shutdowns

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gave a perseverance award to the Brownsville Academy students for their successful struggle against a DOE proposal to collocate their school and for their solidarity with the struggle at the Tilden campus. Students marched into Tweed to deliver a "math award" to the DOE's office of space planning for figuring out how to fit over 300 students and staff into 12 classrooms! The cheering crowd then marched to City Hall to deliver a "disrespect award" to Mayor Bloomberg. More chants and fists in the air ended the day's rally.

The fight against this collocation will continue. Angry workers, parents, and students organized against the proposal to shut down 22 schools. The Panel for Educational Policy (PEP), Bloomberg's cronies, voted to pass it. In fact the PEP has always voted in favor of the DOE's proposals. It is clear that workers do not live under a democracy, but rather a ruling-class dictatorship. The capitalists and their government appointees will continue to attack us until we realize that the international working class has the power to shut their system down!✊



very inspiring to our young students and other comrades.

The leadership of young people in many countries have shown their potential of growth in our Party, especially the struggle against sexism which should be one of our daily tasks in building our base.

All of the criticism and self-criticism was very constructive in the school. It was two days of communist experience, where we shared our politics as well as our lives. This inspired the youth towards our goals for **May Day** to be more committed in mobilizing our friends and also in intensifying recruitment for PLP.

We said goodbye, singing excitedly the international anthem of the working class, firmly dedicated to building PLP and communism.

Comrade in Colombia

Great Train Robbery: Bankers Profit, Workers Pay

New York City's racist bosses are ganging up on mass transit riders and workers who are mostly black, Latino and immigrant. The Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) has raised fares for the fourth time in five years, handing the bankers who own the MTA a \$450 million windfall.

Twenty percent of the MTA budget goes to "debt service" which allocates billions to Wall Street banker-bondholders. Obama also handed over hundreds of billions of our taxes to these same bankers who "failed" and his administration doles out tens of billions monthly to fund imperialist wars worldwide.

Department stores, shopping centers and real estate properties, which pay nothing for, and profit the most, from transit, would make 90 percent less profit without a mass transit system to provide them their customers, tenants and workers.

Workers must pay sales taxes on most everything they buy, yet bankers and their clients ride on transit to Wall Street where they sell a trillion dollars in stocks, bonds and debt daily without paying a nickel for sales taxes or transit. Masses of workers, many subsisting on poverty wages, and those jobless because of the bosses' crisis, must fork over still more money to get to their jobs or to try to find one.

The transit union "leaders" never utter a peep about the tie-in of the banks, the MTA and the billions spent on the bosses' wars, nor about the bankers' gravy train of billions to cover "deficits."

PLP fights for a communist system without profits, bankers and phony "deficits." Workers will put these leeches six feet under.

Transit Worker

Django Unchained: Conceals Rebellions vs. Slavery

I thought that *Django: Unchained* was a good movie. Despite the fact that it is set in the pre-Civil War era of the United States, the movie had a sense of humor. It is also violent and gory. This violence was not in the form of the brutal treatment of slaves received from their masters. As a matter of fact, violence of this nature was severely downplayed. The movie had a few torture scenes; a "man-dingo" fighting scene; and a scene in which a male slave was eaten by dogs while still alive. Several characters mention how some female slaves were labeled as "comfort girls," women who were forced to have sex with their masters and the master's guests. None of that is shown on screen. The main form of violence came from the many gun fights that occurred throughout the movie. If you watch Quentin Tarantino films, the violence will not surprise you.

The two protagonists of the movie are Dr. King Schultz, a German dentist turned bounty hunter and Django, a slave who was separated from his wife. Early in the movie, Dr. Schultz frees Django from two slaveholders. Schultz's motive is that he needs Django to identify some men who are wanted. As the two travel together, Schultz decides to make Django his partner.

Django: Unchained carries the misconception that the Southern states were the only bad guys. Most of the white southerners in the movie are slavers or just plain racist. The only character from the North is Dr. Schultz. At the beginning, Schultz tells the slaves they have just been freed, and are free to go to a more enlightened part of the country. In truth, the "enlightened" northern states benefited from slave labor. At the time the movie takes place, the Southern states' main cash crop was cotton. This cotton was used in the Northern textile

factories. Going back even further, when slaves were shipped from Africa, the North had a booming ship industry. Many products passed through its' ports, slaves included.

For most of the movie, Schultz is the star of the show despite Django's name being in the title. It's Schultz's actions which push the plot forward. Who frees Django? Schultz. Who does most of the negotiating? Schultz. Who does most of the planning to get them out of nasty situations? Schultz again. Django is able to become his own character after he and Schultz part ways, but by then the movie is almost over. Furthermore, this development was only possible because of Schultz. Django did little, if any of it alone. Django did not empower himself. Schultz did.

It is a shame that Django's character wasn't given more power. There are many examples from history to draw from. There were slaves who deceived their masters; slaves who escaped on their own; and slaves who organized others and led rebellions. Even if Django was empowered by Schultz, a saving grace in Django's character could have been his desire to tackle the institution of slavery. Unfortunately, that potential is left untapped. Django is only interested in freeing his wife and riding off into the sunset.

Red movie-goer

Slave Labor: From Lincoln to Obama

From the mind of Abraham Lincoln who advocated shipping Negroes to some colony, with Congress paying the cost:

"I will say then, that I am not, nor ever have been, in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races — that I am not, nor ever have been, in favor of making voters or jurors of Negroes, nor of qualifying them to hold office, nor to intermarry with white people; and I will say in addition to this that there is a physical difference between the white and black races which will ever forbid the two races living together on terms of social and political equality..." (Quincy, Illinois, 1858)

Union President Lincoln was a core racist who represented northern banking and textile industries. His main Civil War goal was to restore seceded southern states to Union control. Cotton produced by southern slave labor was a high-profit commodity that capitalists of that era went to war over, just as today's imperialist war over the cheapest oil and gas resources.

But in 1863, after two years of military disasters, the Union army's morale was devastated and faced troop shortages, draft riots and bankers' resistance to more war loans. Lincoln offered the South a law guaranteeing 40 more years of slavery if they disarmed and rejoined the Union — to no avail. Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation "freeing" southern slaves was a last desperate attempt to prevent a Union defeat by tying down Confederate troops trying to prevent slave escapees to the north and encouraging military enlistments of 200,000 brave, motivated ex-slaves (including 20 Medal of Honor winners) who turned a Union defeat into victory.

During the war, Lincoln ordered his generals to return escaped slaves to assure the South that he would not interfere with their profitable racist exploitation of blacks. After the war Union troops were withdrawn as soon as possible to prevent integration of "free" black soldiers with whites. This encouraged southern capitalists to create Jim Crow vagrancy laws that condemned former slaves to long-term chain-gang labor for the crime of being unemployed. Today a similar form of slavery continues with Obama's approval of the mass incarceration of blacks and Latinos — 70 percent of the 2.4 million inmate population — many working in prison industries at slave wages because of notoriously racist drug laws.

The New York Times reports (1/5/13) on a 2010 book "The New Jim Crow" by Michelle Alexander who confirmed: "Today there are more African American adults under correctional control — in prison or jail, on probation or parole — than were enslaved in 1850, a decade before the Civil War began."

The history outlined above shows that although the laws and forms of capitalist terror have changed, racist oppression, wars and exploitation remain. And although our class has won many brave battles, we will never end this parasitic system that lives off our misery and death without struggling to bring discussion about the fight for communism into our organizing efforts.

A Comrade

U.S.-China Clash

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personnel during the next few years, policymakers and senior military leaders have announced plans to retain an expansible, experienced force that can be reconstituted rapidly in the event of a major war.

What the U.S. war machine prefers is a slow but steady ramp-up to a potential world war. Julia Gillard, prime minister of stalwart U.S. ally Australia, has pledged loyalty — along with working-class cannon fodder — to war-maker Obama: “[W]e are delighted with the pivot or the rebalance. The U.S. has been a continuing presence in our region....We have fought alongside America in every war” (Washington Post, 3/10/13). Aiming at the South China Sea region, Obama has already posted 2,500 U.S. Marines to Darwin, Australia’s northernmost city. Washington also threatens to use its post-WWII “right” to defend Japan and the Philippines by armed force.

Imperialist Crisis A Revolutionary Opportunity for Our Party

Out of their weakness, U.S. capitalists have yet to reveal their schemes for militarizing the U.S. for global war. They disagree fiercely among themselves and know that working-class loyalty to them is thin. The rulers also know they need a military draft, which could provoke mass popular opposition based on U.S. workers’ and students’ experience with the slaughters in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan.

The imperialist crisis over China can be a revolutionary opportunity for our Party and the working class. Millions of workers worldwide may not be ready to lay down their lives in the service of U.S. capitalism. Their reluctance can enable PLP to organize to expose and oppose the rulers’ war plans in the shops and unions, schools and universities, churches and communities — and especially in the military.

South China Sea estimated proved and probable reserves

Country name	Crude oil and liquids reserves (billion barrels)	Natural gas reserves (trillion cubic feet)
Brunei	1.5	15
China	1.3	15
Indonesia	0.3	55
Malaysia	5.0	80
Philippines	0.2	4
Taiwan	-	-
Thailand	-	1
Vietnam	3.0	20
Total	11.2	190

Note: Reserve totals do not include Gulf of Thailand or onshore reserves.

A good start is to win our friends and co-workers to march this year on **May Day**. The international workers’ day represents the antidotes to the poison of capitalism: anti-racism, anti-sexism, strikes against mass racist unemployment. **May Day** reflects workers’ commitment to turn imperialist wars among the bosses into class war against the entire system.

March on **May Day**! Join Progressive Labor Party!✪

‘Paradise Alley’

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could pay \$300 to buy their way out of the draft. Many of these same businessmen were making a fortune by selling goods to the Union Army, while the poor died or lost limbs in a war that took the lives of 700,000 soldiers.

While the Civil War was at heart a struggle between northern industrial capital and southern plantation-based capital, there was an important anti-racist aspect to the conflict. In order to curb the power of the southern aristocracy and their political machine, the northern capitalists, through the Lincoln White House, had to abolish slavery. The emancipation of four million slaves was the welcome culmination of generations of struggle — slave rebellions, the Underground Railroad and the work of fighters like Harriet Tubman, decades of abolitionist activism, John Brown’s raid on Harper’s Ferry and the 200,000 black soldiers who fought to crush the slave regime.

Frederick Douglass sent two of his sons into the Union Army, and William Lloyd Garrison, although a pacifist, sent one of his sons to fight. Marx and Engels wrote extensively about the Civil War and strongly supported a northern victory. In contrast, the draft riots were inspired by, and benefitted, the racist Confederacy.

“Paradise Alley” builds to an exciting and emotional finale, and this reviewer couldn’t turn the pages fast enough.✪

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

Imperialism’s new killers: Drones

GW, 1/18 — The greatest threat to world peace is... from drones and their certain proliferation....Drones are now sweeping the global arms market. There are some 10,000 said to be in service, of which a thousand are armed and mostly American. Reports say they have killed more non-combatants than died in 9/11.

I have not read one independent study of the current drone wars in Afghanistan, Pakistan and the horn of Africa that suggests these weapons serve any strategic purpose. Their “success” is expressed solely in body count, the number of so-called al-Qaeda-linked commanders killed. If body count were victory, the Germans would have won at Stalingrad and the Americans [in] Vietnam.

Neither the legality nor the ethics of drone attacks bear examination. Last year’s exhaustive report by lawyers from Stanford and New York universities concluded that they were in many cases illegal, killed civilians and were militarily counter-productive. Among the deaths were an estimated 176 children. Such slaughter would have an infantry unit court-martialed. Air forces enjoy such prestige that civilian deaths are excused as a price worth paying for not jeopardizing pilots’ lives....

How soon will it be before the United States finds itself “at war” with Iran and Syria, and sends over the drones? When it does, and the killing starts, it can hardly complain when the victims retaliate with suicide bombers....

Obama...and the U.S. are teaching the world that a pilotless aircraft is a self-justifying, self-exonerating, legal and effective weapon.

Bosses rob; Immigrants worst-hit

In January, Broward County...became the second in Florida to put into effect an ordinance to help workers recoup money they had earned but not been paid.

The ordinance passes despite strong opposition from business groups, which say it is...burdensome for business....

Such wage disputes are fast becoming an issue nationally....

The problem of unpaid wages is significant. Since 2009, the...Labor Department has collected more than \$859 million in back wages for more than one million workers. But most cases go unreported, and worker advocates say that in some cities the practice is endemic....

In Florida, the high number of immigrant workers complicates the issue. Because they tend to work in low-paid jobs and may lack English skills, know-how, money and legal status, immigrants are most vulnerable to being underpaid or not paid at all....

Business groups say they are committed to dismantling wage recover ordinances....

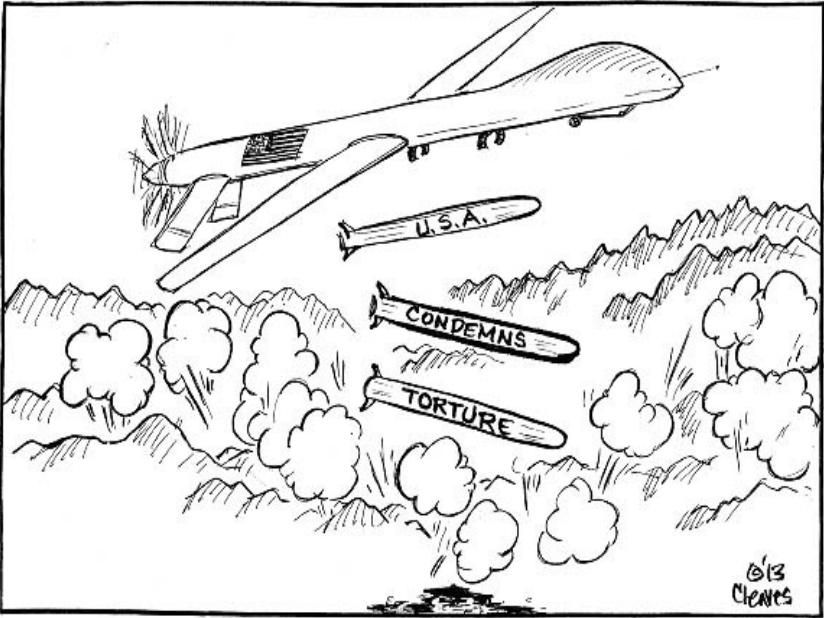
Worker advocates say that claims typically fall into a void....[Florida] has no wage and hour division. And while federal Labor Department officials have increased enforcement and staff, they are chronically overwhelmed.

Extra troubles for poorer workers

NYT, 2/28 — Mail has long been an issue in impoverished neighborhoods, where many people are homeless or transient and others live in apartment buildings or houses where the mailboxes have broken locks, or have to be shared with roommates and neighbors.

It serves as a daily reminder of the persistent barriers that separate poor people from everyone else, on a list that also includes access to bank accounts, cellphones and other basic services that are seldom given any thought by those with money and resources.

People who do not get mail say the absence of it can lead to bigger problems, like missing job interviews they never knew about, or being cut off from benefits because they failed to complete paperwork or keep appointments.



‘Race,’ class put workers in prison

Harvard Magazine, March — The United States, with less than 5 percent of the world’s population, has nearly one-quarter of its prisoners.

Longer sentences for [non-violent] drug offenders and violent or repeat offenders, underlie this high rate. The United States currently had 41,000 inmates serving life sentences without parole...England has just 41....

Sixty percent of black male high school dropouts in the United States will go to prison before age 35....The American prison boom is as much a story about race and class...as it is about crime control....

Two factors greatly increase the odds of going to prison sometime during one’s life: being black or [Latino], and being poor.... “Small race and class differences in offending are amplified at each stage of criminal processing, from arrest through conviction and sentencing,” Western writes. A criminal history accumulates that reflect not just criminal conduct, but the influence of race and poverty, and this in turn shapes later decisions about sentencing and parole release...[P]rison-policy scholars have observed that American criminal-justice policy is built on the rhetoric of personal responsibility — paying for one’s ‘bad’ decision — to the exclusion of asking why minority and low-income groups are so much more likely to make bad decisions, or how society fails them.

How PLP Defeated FBI-LAPD Attack in 1960s

Capitalism is a dictatorship of the small group of bankers, bosses and billionaires who own and control the means of production, agriculture and transportation; the state apparatus (the government, military, courts and police); the educational system and the media. Despite the pretense of democracy, the capitalist class uses this ownership and control to maintain itself in power and suppress serious challenges to its rule.

In the U.S., the 1960s anti-racist ghetto rebellions and massive anti-imperialist movement against the war in Vietnam rocked the capitalist class to its core. These uprisings forced the rulers to step up their use of their Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). In cooperation with local police forces, the FBI, through its Counterintelligence (COINTEL) program, planned or fomented physical and psychological attacks on leading communist and militant anti-racist political forces like PLP, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and the Black Panther Party.

CHALLENGE (1/16/13) quoted from attorney Brian Glick's book War at Home. The FBI's COINTEL tactics included : "[i]nfiltration: ... [to] not merely spy on political activists ... [but] to discredit and disrupt their activities; [l]egal harassment: ... [a]buse the legal system to harass dissidents and make them appear to be criminals ... [using] perjured testimony; and [i]llegal force: ... [c]onspire with local police departments ... to ... commit vandalism, assaults, beatings and assassinations ..."

These attacks did not stop with the 1976 liberal Church Committee congressional hearings and report which partially exposed COINTEL. The following describes a police attack on PLP in Los Angeles (from a 1982 PLP pamphlet):

On June 18, 1977, PLP and the International Committee Against Racism (InCAR) held a mass anti-racist demonstration in the Los Angeles garment center. The demonstration was organized to combat the sweatshop and slave labor conditions faced by L.A. garment workers, most of whom are immigrants. The demonstration was called in connection with InCAR's campaign to organize a new anti-racist garment workers union, which had been gaining a mass base of support.

Cops Attack, PLP Resist

Acting on behalf of the garment bosses, the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) attempted to break up the demonstration. The cops attacked. Naturally, the demonstrators resisted. A sharp clash resulted. Many demonstrators and cops were injured. Indeed, the cops took a real beating. Subsequently, two dozen members and friends of PLP and InCAR were arrested and charged with resisting arrest and assaulting officers ...

PLP members faced serious jail time as a result of these false charges. However, before the trial, PLP exposed the fact that two undercover police spies for the LAPD, Connie Milazzo and John Dial, had infiltrated PLP meetings, including the meetings of the Legal Defense Committee set up in the wake of the police attack. The criminal charges then had to be thrown out because of the "misconduct" of the bosses' agents in the police department and the prosecutor's office.

But the conspiracy to get PLP continued: "The fact that the case was thrown out of court because of the exposure of their own criminal behavior infuriated the LAPD. They decided to get PLP and InCAR by instituting a new and unprecedented legal tactic." A civil suit was filed by ten cops against PLP and 20 individual members for \$2 million in damages, stating there was a "conspiracy to injure L.A. cops" (PLP pamphlet).

The cops got plenty of help from the judge who barred PLP's lawyers from introducing any evidence showing an LAPD conspiracy to attack PLP. "While police attorneys were allowed to ask questions about PLP's membership, policies and structure,...defense attorneys ... were prohibited from asking questions about...the LAPD's vicious record of racist attacks on demonstrators..." (PLP pamphlet).

The judge also allowed the cops' attorneys to use the trial to subpoena and question PLP leaders about the names of Party members and of our

inner workings. When Party leaders refused to name names, the fascist judge ordered them jailed. To their great credit, these leaders did not follow the bosses' rules, and refused to expose their comrades and the organization to harm.

With this judge's assistance, and the bosses' agents' predictable use of anti-communism in the trial, they eventually got a verdict of \$334,000 in their favor. The cops' attorneys then began a long campaign of harassing individual Party members to try and collect on their judgment. Nevertheless, they were unable to break the political will of the Los Angeles PLP.

A key lesson of this police assault on PLP is that members and friends must be ever vigilant in the face of attempts by the rulers' spies and armed thugs to undermine our unity and organization. Even in a period of less class struggle, the capitalists are still haunted by the specter of communism, which would mean their loss of the trillions in surplus value (profits) they've stolen from the working class. As Mao said, to be attacked is a good thing. If we turn the assault around on the class enemy by building PLP, it will bring workers' revolution one step closer.☸

Paradise Alley Exposes North's Racism During Civil War

This July marks the 150th anniversary of the infamous NYC draft riots, one of the largest urban insurrection in U.S. history. Tens of thousands of working-class New Yorkers, many of them Irish, burned down the city's draft office and armory, and set fire to police stations and the homes of wealthy Republicans over the course of four days. Union troops had to be diverted from fighting the Confederate Army to suppress the riot.

Normally communists welcome working-class rebellion. Not this time. The main aspect of the NYC draft riots was the ghastly and brutal attacks on black men, women and children, one hundred of whom were murdered in less than a week. Black men were captured, beaten, tortured, strung from lamp posts and set on fire. Black women were stripped naked and beaten. An orphanage for black children was burned to the ground, with the occupants making a daring escape, which is captured in the historical novel *Paradise Alley*.

It brilliantly brings three days of the draft riots to life. It follows the paths of seven people over the course of those days: Billy Dove, an ex-slave who works at the orphanage; Ruth Dove, his Irish wife and mother of Billy's children; Johnny Dolan, the sadistic killer who thinks that Ruth belongs to him and has vowed to kill her and Billy; Deirdre O'Kane, who lives next door to Ruth and Billy and must decide whether or not to help them and risk her own life; Tom O'Kane, who's away fighting in the Union Army; Maddy Boyle, a prostitute living on the same block; and Herbert Willis Robinson, Maddy's lover and writer for the New York Tribune.

The reader comes to know each character intimately, as the racist and sexist violence brings them together and threatens their lives. We also get a strong feel for what it was like to live in lower Manhattan during that period: the housing, the food, the taverns, the smells in the air, and the awful racism of the day. Even though blacks were nominally "free" in the North, the character of Billy demonstrates the limits of this freedom. Billy had been a master shipbuilder in the South, working for his owner. He escapes slavery and comes to NYC, where he hopes to continue in the trade that he loves. Instead, he finds that only whites can work on the docks,

and any attempt to break the racial barrier is met with extreme violence.

Kevin Baker, the author, is honest about the brutal racism of NYC in the 1860s. The Democratic politicians who ran its politics were in alliance with the plantation owners who controlled the Democratic Party in the South. They opposed the efforts of Lincoln and the Republicans to suppress the Confederacy and told white workers that if the South was defeated, the freed slaves would destroy "white civilization." They instilled fear in Irish workers that ex-slaves would come north and take their jobs. The demagogues were able to persuade the majority of the Irish — who were despised for their Catholicism and exploited for low wages by the elites — to keep their boots on the necks of blacks, an even more despised and exploited group of workers.

Yet three of the seven main characters in "Paradise Alley" — all Irish — reject anti-black racism, not just in words but also in deeds. Ruth loves and marries Billy and bears their children, despite the disapproval of many of her white neighbors. Deirdre takes in Ruth and her children at the height of danger, while her husband Tom — a friend of Billy's — is on the front lines at Fredericksburg and Gettysburg, two of the biggest battles of the Civil War.

While Baker makes it clear that the main aspect of the draft riots was racism, there was also justified resentment towards the wealthy businessmen who

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