

CHALLENGE



THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

volume 46 no.1

January 15, 2014

suggested donation 50¢

ANTIRACIST SCHOOL STRUGGLE

COMMUNIST IDEAS HIT THE MARK

NEWARK, NJ, December 18 — “You know, all this stuff going on with the schools is really making me think more about capitalism,” said one teacher involved in the class struggle here. He isn’t alone. Over the past few months, Progressive Labor Party (PLP) members have been more openly discussing capitalism and the need for communist revolution. These discussions are framed by the fightback against Superintendent Cami Anderson’s racist attacks on schools in predominantly black neighborhoods.

At a recent rally led by misleaders of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and a local Newark group, New Jersey Communities United, over 200 workers and students protested these attacks. The leadership focused the blame solely on Anderson and ignored the contradictions within capitalism that cause schools to fail the working class. But PLP was there to offer our communist analysis. We distributed CHALLENGE and had good discussions with teachers who were unfamiliar with the Party.

‘Becoming way too radical way too fast’

One teacher had never known a communist before joining this struggle. He said, “I can’t believe that I would ever read a communist newspaper and agree with what they are saying. I am becoming way too radical way too fast.” He wasn’t alone. Many education workers and students responded to the Dec. 11 article about Anderson’s racist letter. They also found the editorial about the U.S. rulers’ drive to war helpful in understanding the world situation and how it affects public schools.

Through discussions and literature, PLP members have shown that the latest crop of education reforms, including the charter school movement, are designed to discipline the working class and consolidate U.S. rulers’ top-dog superpower status. Charter schools give the ruling class more maneuverability; they are operated without even a facade of accountability to parents and students. The new Common Core State Standards Initiative, backed by President Barack Obama and the capitalists he serves, are being pushed in all schools, traditional and charter. The Common Core is essential to the bosses’ plan for centralized ideological control and heightened patriotism.

Closing Schools for Capitalism

A few days after the rally, Anderson announced the closings of 20 schools and a remodeling that may lay off hundreds of education workers. An overwhelming majority of the schools to be shut down are from the mostly black South, West and Central Wards. The East

Ward, which is mostly white and Latino, will remain untouched, still another way they’re dividing the working class. This is to persuade these students to think they are better off.

At a number of other schools, faculty will be forced to reapply for their jobs, regardless of tenure or seniority. Once again, this anti-worker measure will be concentrated in all-black districts. One exception is the Hawkins Street School in the East Ward, which serves most of the students from public housing projects like Hyatt Court, Terrell Court, and Riverview Court.

Misleaders Ignore Racism

In typical form, none of the union leaders — from the AFT to the New Jersey Teachers’ Union (NTU) to the Newark Teachers Union — will criticize Anderson’s boss, Governor Chris Christie. Nor will they acknowledge the racist nature of these school attacks. After Anderson’s letter was released, the NTU’s main complaint was that

reduced truancy would result in fewer arrests of Newark students!

PLP has a different point of view. We have always said that fighting racism is essential to the fight for communism — and to the schools struggle here as well. Our communist leadership has won both teachers union members and students to make anti-racism a key element in our fight. In addition, we have recruited Newark parents and students to join our communist study group.

The Limits of Reform Struggles

A few days after the rally, our study group discussed “Reform and Revolution,” one of PLP’s core documents. Although it is over 35 years old, and some aspects of our politics have changed since then, it remains relevant for anyone who wants to organize within the reform move-

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2013: Students Fight Racist Education System



Chicago students slam racist mayor Rahm Emanuel’s attack on their schools.

JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

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OUR FIGHT

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

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

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

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

★Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and 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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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP's criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a "following" around any particular individual.

While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual's writing of an article.

CHALLENGE/DESAFIO (ISSN 0009-1049) published bi-weekly by Challenge Periodicals. 1 issue \$5.00. One Year: \$15. Six months: \$10. Send address changes to CHALLENGE Periodicals, GPO Box 808 Brooklyn, NY 11202, January 15, 2014. Volume 46, No.1

Editorial

Ukraine: Battleground for Russian and U.S. Rulers

As the rivalry between the U.S. and Russia is seemingly moving closer to open conflict, Ukraine's strategic importance is re-emerging. In mid-December, Russian President Vladimir Putin successfully pressured cash-strapped Ukraine into remaining in Russia's orbit and canceling its planned alliances with the U.S.-leaning European Union (EU) and the U.S.-run International Monetary Fund (IMF). Putin bought off Ukraine by pledging a \$15 billion loan and a 33 percent cut in gas prices. In return, Moscow gets control of Ukraine's energy pipeline network. But the stakes here run beyond economics. They have everything to do with military preparations for future wars.

On December 17, Stratfor, an intelligence analysis outfit that advises Exxon and other major corporations, warned its capitalist readers:

Ukraine is as important to Russian national security as Scotland is to England or Texas is to the United States. In the hands of an enemy, these places would pose an existential threat to all three countries.... Neither Scotland nor Texas is going anywhere. Nor is Ukraine, if Russia has anything to do with it.... Ukraine is Russia's soft underbelly.... Under the influence or control of a Western power, Russia's (and Belarus') southern flank is wide open... running from the Polish border east almost to Volgograd [originally Stalingrad] then south to the Sea of Azov,.... [over] 1,000 miles, more than 700 of which lie along Russia proper.... For Russia, Ukraine is a matter of fundamental national security. For a Western power, Ukraine is of value only if that power is planning to engage and defeat Russia, as the Germans tried to do in World War II.

Putin Stops NATO Expansion Dead

Putin didn't merely frustrate the EU and the IMF; he stopped the expansion of Pentagon-led NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) in its tracks. Founded in 1949, four years after the end of World War II, NATO's main mission was to prepare for a European war against the USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics). After the Soviet Union imploded,

NATO expanded into a worldwide military operation across three continents. It invaded Eastern Europe (Kosovo), North Africa (Libya), Iraq and Afghanistan in order to maintain its dominance among imperialist rivals for strategic and economic goals.

In the 1990s, with the phony-communist Soviet empire a thing of the past, opportunistic U.S. rulers successfully enlisted 12 of Moscow's ex-satellites into NATO. But Ukraine is a special case because it commands Russia's warm-water Black Sea naval ports. These outlets do not freeze over in winter, a crucial advantage in wartime. Putin and the Russian capitalists he represents cannot permit Ukraine to join the military alliance led by the U.S., their bitter imperialist rival.

Putin's Ukraine pushback signals a hardening Russian position that was anticipated by the more foresighted U.S. planners. In the late 1940s, diplomat George Kennan formulated the U.S. policy of "containment" of the USSR, the central Cold War strategy followed by U.S. presidents from Harry Truman to Ronald Reagan. Containment was the ideological basis for U.S. atrocities in Korea, Vietnam, Nicaragua and Afghanistan. At the same time, it allowed U.S. bosses to avoid a direct confrontation with the mighty Soviet forces that crushed the Nazis in World War II. Kennan warned that moving beyond containment and NATOizing the old Soviet bloc was a "tragic mistake.... the Russians will gradually react quite adversely" (New York Times, 5/2/98). He also pinpointed the critical failure of U.S. capitalists. While relying more and more on regional military actions, they have yet to mobilize the nation for global war. "We have signed up to protect a whole series of countries," Kennan wrote, "even though we have neither the resources nor the intention to do so in any serious way."

U.S. bosses by and large ignored Kennan. They thought they had Ukraine wrapped up after the Orange Revolution of 2004, one of the so-called "color revolutions" in former republics within the old USSR. Financed largely by various foundations controlled by liberal billionaire George Soros, the Orange Revolution brought pro-NATO Yulia Tymoshenko to power in a contested election.

Revolution = Working-Class Seizure of State Power

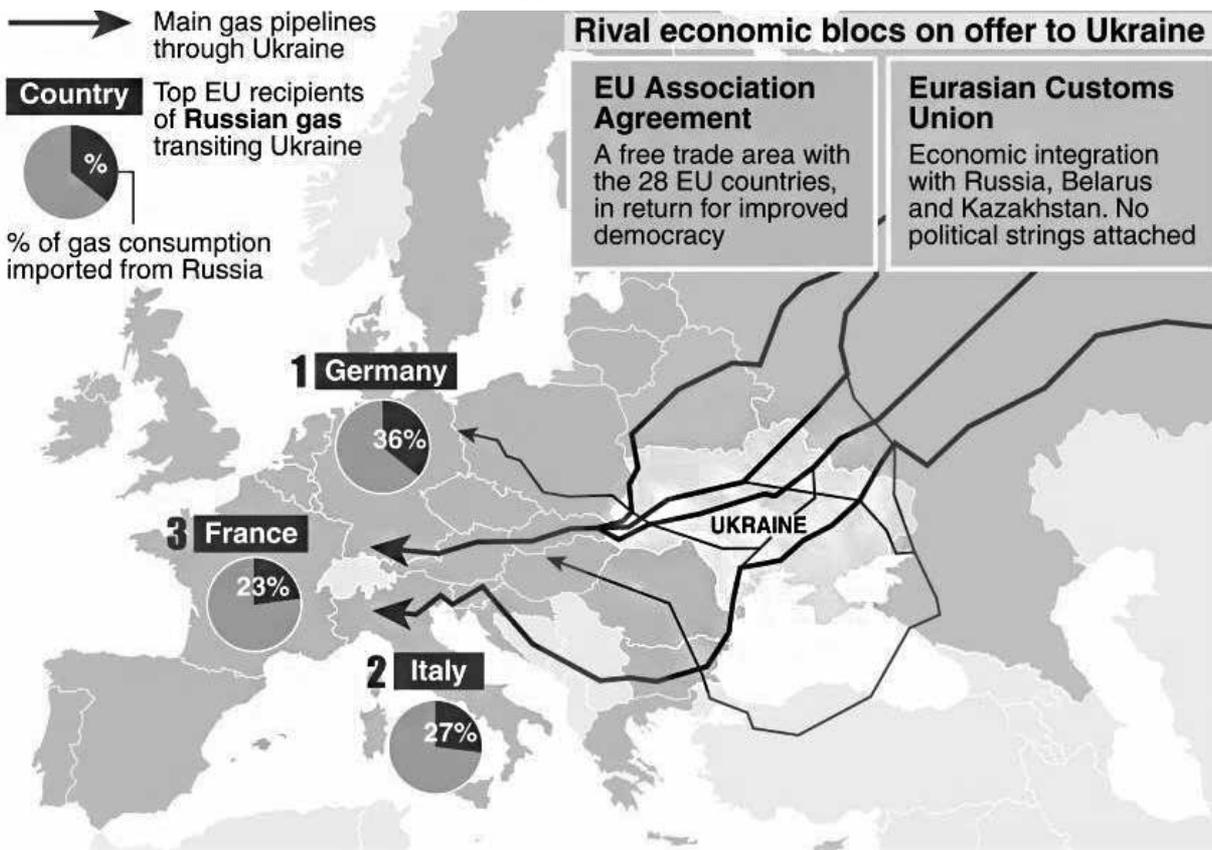
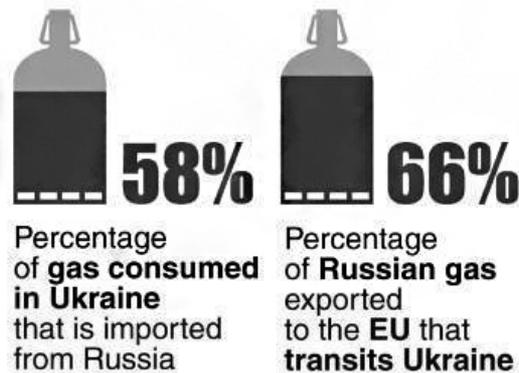
In reality, these "revolutions" had no revolutionary content. Revolution occurs only when the working class violently overthrows the ruling class, smashes the rulers' state power, and establishes new class rule and its own state power. Neither capitalist-run elections nor an "Arab spring" can make a revolution. Only workers, led by a mass communist party, can accomplish that.

In 2008, Russian rulers dealt with the "Rose Revolution" in Georgia by invading its Black Sea neighbor. But Putin's real target was Ukraine. On August 28, 2008, Agence France Press quoted the RAND Corporation's F. Stephen Larrabee:

Georgia is a sideshow. What the Russians are really concerned about is Ukraine. Georgia's entry into

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Gas is key to the Russia-EU tug of war over Ukraine



Greet Communist Ideas at Antiracist Rally

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ment for a communist revolution.

When we discussed the Dream Act, the immigration reform backed by the Democratic Party, one comrade emphasized the limits of any reform victories. The bosses simply reorganize, he said, and come back with a vengeance to take away temporary any gains. This is today's reality for millions of workers who have been stripped of pensions, health benefits and decent working conditions.

The education struggle in Newark is no different. We may keep some schools from closing for a time. We may prevent some teachers from getting laid off, at least for now. But as long as the bosses have state power, schools will serve the profit-based system of capitalism. Until we win millions to fight for communism, the bosses will eventually win out every time.

In our study group we have friends who fear alienating students by talking about capitalism and communism. There are workers who hold back from the mass movement because they think workers are "out for themselves." Through friendly struggle, we've made progress in convincing some of these workers to get involved in the mass movement, raise communist ideas and expand PLP's base.

Growing PLP

Over the past two weeks, the schools struggle has definitely sharpened. Our work within the reform movement gives PLP the potential to grow and provide communist leadership to the thousands of workers fighting back. It won't be easy, because the union bosses and community groups are competing for the minds of the working class. But if the Party keeps fighting, building relationships, and getting CHALLENGE to those around us, we can realize that potential. We are on our way.✪

Rulers are the Real Child Abusers

I recently attended a mandatory meeting establishing (new) requirements for teachers regarding the reporting of suspected child abuse. A key part of the presentation was the idea that "the authorities" would rather see over-reporting of non-child abuse cases as opposed to under-reporting of actual child abuse cases. Now the ruling class certainly doesn't care about child abuse. Cutting food stamps, intensifying racism, denying disability benefits, and using drone strikes to kill children are legal and beyond reproach.

It is now illegal for a teacher to not report suspected child abuse. In other words, they can now claim that you were "negligent" in not bringing to your supervisor's attention that you "suspect" something is amiss, even if you never witnessed the supposed suspicious behavior.

What, then, is going on? There are several reasons for this more overt approach:

1) Since teachers care about the welfare of the students, the ruling class needs teachers to convince students that "the authorities" (child welfare agencies, district attorneys' offices, police departments) are "on their side" and are dedicated to helping people.

2) The ruling class needs to convince teachers that poor student outcomes are, at the very least, the fault of the students and their parents.

3) The ruling class wants to use teachers in the same way the Nazis did: get them to encourage their students to rat on their parents' (or anyone else's) left-wing and communist politics. Using child abuse as the opener is a way to suck teachers into this kind of mind set.

4) The new rules make it even easier for school boards to find that certain "rebellious" teachers should be fired while claiming that their removal has nothing to do with politics but only occurred because the teacher "condoned" child abuse activity.

The above applies to Pennsylvania. I don't know what is happening in other states but it's probably not all that different. We need to be aware of these changes and to point out their very dangerous implications as well as to show how deceptive the ruling class is by hiding its methods behind "doing something to help children."

Red Teacher

2013: Fight Racist Education System

In 2013 students, teachers and other educational workers fought back worldwide against the rising cuts and militarization of the education system.



Student rally against charter school co-location on their campus in Brooklyn



Students fight closing of City College of San Francisco



'Join the fight against injustice, insecurity, poor studying conditions, cholera, and MINUS-TAH' in Haiti



'Total rejection of [Mexican President] Nieto's education reform'



Students protest raid of community center at city college, and presence of ROTC and Petraeus on CUNY campuses.

2013: Workers Strike



Bay Area Rapid Transit workers in Oakland, CA



Garment workers in Bangladesh



School bus drivers and matrons in New York City.

Workers Blocking Bosses' Lockout

ALTOONA, PA, December 21 — Over 100 unionized electrical workers here have been locked out for one month by the criminal corporate Penelec bosses. These workers, who've been walking the picket line every day, had voted down the latest contract and the bosses responded by locking them out.

The bosses have declared that the lockout will continue until the workers accept this contract. However, the workers are in a fighting mood and are refusing to back down to the profit-hungry bosses.

There's been some community support for the workers but with the holidays upon us, it's clear that the workers' families will be facing tough sledding. It is another example of a class war being waged by many in the working class.

The local press has given these brave workers very little news coverage while they attempt to convince everyone that the only thing worth reporting is local crime. The same could be said for the bosses' national media. It is the leadership of PLP that is needed to help workers break from bourgeois ideology and move in a revolutionary direction.

This struggle deserves the support of all working people. Damn the Penelec bosses!✪

Woman Worker Reveals Sexist Exploitation

Brooklyn, NY, December 15 — Today workers from a community mass organization in Bushwick had a march in the neighborhood to publicly inform both workers and the bosses about the updated law that has been passed in New York State, which will raise minimum wage to \$8 an hour from \$7.25. This so-called achievement is being praised by the community organization as another win for the workers. PL members have constantly reminded the workers that these reforms are only "bread crumbs" and will never be enough, because the bosses will always attack workers' standard of living by increasing the price on rents, food and fares and that only a revolution can free us from this vicious cycle. The organization leaders always respond that something is better than nothing.

Documented and undocumented workers participated in the march and also gave speeches at the end of the rally. The real truth about the minimum wage reform battle came from the last speech by one of the women in the community organization, who supports the Party, especially during a crisis when her husband became ill, was given the opportunity to give a public speech. This is her story:

"I'm married. My husband got ill about a year ago, and ever since I've been forced to carry on all the responsibilities in my home now that my husband cannot work due to his illness. Earning \$7.25 an hour cannot pay the rent, transportation, food and other expenses needed in the home, electricity and telephone, etc.

"I currently have two jobs so I can somewhat cover the expenses, and I know that on December 31 they will raise it to \$8 an hour. But the rent also goes up, the price of milk and other products necessary for daily consumption, and now there are plans of raising the price of the Metro Card (fare card for public transit), so that means that the increase that we are going to receive will still not cover the expenses. It is good to have that increase now, but we need more. \$8, \$8.75, or \$9 is not enough. We need a salary so we can live with dignity. We need \$12 or more!"

This is a perfect example of how the bosses use sexism to make superprofits from the special oppression of women workers.

The ruling classes, which are just a few parasites at the top, need the wage system in order to steal from the labor power of the working class, which they have done since the start of class society. Even though \$8 or \$12 is better than \$7.25, Progressive Labor Party continues to point out those workers need to destroy the capitalist profit system that imposes wage slavery on the workers with a communist revolution once and for all.✪

Worldwide Protests Halt Racist Israel's Ethnic Cleansing

NEGEV, December 12 — Massive protests both here and around the world forced Beni Begin (the Israeli government official in charge of “resolving” the Bedouin settlements in the Negev) and Israel's prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu to cancel the racist Prawer-Begin Plan which would evict (read: ethnic cleansing) 40,000 Bedouin workers. This massive victory against apartheid was only made possible by international and multi-ethnic solidarity of workers against racism and fascism.

Two weeks before, on Nov 30, thousands of Palestinian-Bedouin workers and peasants, as well as Jews and Palestinians from the rest of the country, rallied near the poverty-stricken Bedouin town of Hura against the racist Prawer Plan. The multi-ethnic protestors stood for two hours, facing heavily armed cops and mounted police and demanding justice, as well as the recognition of all Bedouin villages. After two hours of protest, the cops charged in, attacking the unarmed workers and peasants with clubs, tear gas, concussion grenades, water

hoses and horses.

Dozens were arrested and brutally beaten, including a 10-year-old child. As of Dec 15, they are still in custody, children included. In response, local youth threw stones at the cops and blocked the road with burning tires. The fighting continued for two more hours. Then some of the protestors drove to the police precinct to demand the release of their arrested comrades. Two PLers joined the protest, from beginning to end, standing together with their Bedouin comrades against the racist plan.

The Prawer Plan was nothing but thinly-disguised ethnic cleansing. It called for the deportation of 40,000 Bedouin workers and subsistence farmers from the so-called “unrecognized” villages to crowded (mis-)“planned” towns where unemployment reaches 50% and over 60% are below the poverty line. The bosses' goal was massive land-grab of Bedouin ancestral lands, to be seized by the state and handed over to U.S. and local real-estate tycoons,

such as NYC's Ronald Lauder (worth \$32.3 billion), who would have used it to build fancy houses for the rich.

The state claims that the Bedouins are “squatters”, but how can someone be a “squatter” on lands their families have lived on for generations? The real “squatters” are the Zionist regime and its fat-cat U.S. patrons, who wish to do a somewhat smaller “Nakba” of 1948 (the deportation of 750,000 Palestinians,

yet to return to their lands).

Even after the defeat of this plan, Bedouin workers and peasants live in the “unrecognized” villages that still lack basic infrastructures and amenities and have inadequate education and healthcare, all while being harassed by the Jewish (read: Zionist) National Fund who seek to take over their lands and livelihood. The government claims that it cannot provide services to tens of small, “scattered” villages even while it provides excellent infrastructures and services to dozens of well-off Kibbutzim, Moshavim and individual farms, all exclusive to upper-class Jews. These excuses reek of racism.

Capitalism, especially in its Zionist form, is hell for all workers in historic Palestine “from the river to the sea” (an anti-Israeli slogan). However, experience from South Africa and Zimbabwe shows that replacing colonialist (in this case, Zionist) capitalism with Palestine boss capitalism will solve very little of the workers' problems. Racist apartheid was replaced by native capitalist rule, in service of U.S. imperialism, and now increasingly oppresses workers and murders striking miners. Capitalist “national liberation” holds no promise to the impoverished workers of all ethnicities and “races.”

The victorious fight against the Prawer Plan shows us the way to defeat our class enemies: working-class unity and struggle to the end. The only real solution to the horrors of capitalism is communist revolution under the flags of Progressive Labor Party and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat from the river to the sea. This could help create a red Middle East and a red world. Under communism we will share all land and resources equally, and smash all remnants of racism. Join us!✊



Women from Palestine and Israel, risking criminal prosecution, integrate racist Israeli beach.

‘Justice for Ronel Désir!’

Haiti: Rip Cops' Maiming of Student



PORT-AU-PRINCE, November 21 — Ronel Désir is a third-year student at the Ecole Normale Supérieure (Teachers College) in the Haitian capital, site of demonstrations for the removal from office of the right-wing President Michel Martelly. Like hundreds of other students from the campuses of UEH [Université d'Etat d'Haïti, State University of Haiti], Ronel took part on November 18 in a mass protest mostly organized by Lavalas, the organization of former President Aristide and current politicians like the outspoken senator Jean-Charles Moïse. Many students have no faith in Lavalas or bourgeois politicians like Moïse but took part anyway, with other left and liberal groups, because they

have been fighting Martelly ever since the U.S. embassy helped him gain power.

When he came back to campus after the march that afternoon, Ronel was struck directly on the right hand by a vicious weapon, a stun grenade which not only deafens protesters with loud noise but showers them with toxic chemicals. It is supposed to be launched above the heads of a crowd, but the Haitian National Police shot Ronel point blank with it, essentially exploding his hand. His comrades got him to the hospital where his hand was amputated, but he was still fighting a dangerous infection in the arm.

Amputees in Haiti face a tough time in many areas,

including employment. Students demonstrated immediately for “Justice for Ronel!” but without any response from the police or the government. This atrocity resembles the police killing with a tear gas canister fired into the head of a picketing teacher, Jean Louis Filbert, in October 2010. The policewoman who killed him merely served six months in jail.

The police, backed up by the UN army of occupation MINUSTAH, often target certain UEH campuses on days of mass demonstrations, attacking before the marches to prevent the students from joining, and after the marches to punish them. On November 18 there was a morning attack with tear gas and an afternoon attack with stun grenades. Ronel lost his hand not because of a police mistake but because of systematic police intimidation and psychological warfare — in a word, fascism. One of the hallmarks of fascism everywhere is police terror tactics against youth they fear may become rebellious.

Readers can respond with email protests to the Prime Minister, Laurent Lamothe, who is in charge of the commission which oversees the National Police, at this link: primature.gouv.ht/?page_id=22. Statements of support can go to the students at GREPS01@yahoo.fr.

As the UEH students' “SOS” says, this is one struggle. A shout-out for Ronel, “Get well, Ronel!” started by a City University of New York (CUNY) union leader who had been informed of the assault, echoed among CUNY students rallying at Baruch College November 25, protesting the CUNY Board of Trustees' policies of militarization, repression, and tuition hikes.

As capitalists everywhere prepare for war, students and workers internationally have to make our own preparations to defend ourselves. Uniting across borders — one CUNY group is called Students Without Borders — is job number one. “Get well, Ronel!” One day communist students and workers will make the bosses pay for their crimes.✊

LETTERS

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

Strike Against Racist Police Terror

This is an excerpt from a speech read at the latest demonstration for Kyam Livingston. She was a black woman who was left to die in prison by the New York Police Department and the city's prison guards.

We come from St. Mary's Church in Harlem. We are in support. Support of the Family of Kyam Livingston. Support for the friends of Kyam Livingston. And support for EVERY family that could be victimized by Racist Police Terror!

Our own daughter could wind up dumped in a jail cell. Our own son could be dragged behind bars there. For hours and hours in sickening filth. Waiting, stuffed in with other prisoners. While "the papers get lost." Hoping not to get sick! Not to DIE. While the racist guards ignore, threaten and disrespect them. All while you are dying! DYING!

Who could this Not happen to. You!? You! You!

It could happen to any of us. It's so True!! At St. Mary's we know about dying.

We counted and we discovered the average age when brothers and sisters die is forty-eight years old. This is from a system of racist health care and from the fascist denial of healthcare, that murdered our sister Kyam.

Who is going to fight this? New Mayors? New police chiefs? We will hear promises; we have heard thousand of promises.

Promises from mayor-elect Bill DeBlasio who just promised "I can't be at war with Wall street. Wall street is our Hometown industry." Promises from Bill Bratton who arrests workers who have to beg for a sandwich and coffee. Who fires rubber bullets at demonstrators? Bill and Bill. We're going to make you Pay UP Your Bill!

Because we know who we can trust!

Our sister Kyam could only trust her fellow workers. Sisters who cleared a bench for her, sisters who smoothed her hair, fellow workers who tenderly tended her. Sisters who saw her seizures begin. Working-class sisters who confronted the fascist guards and demanded HELP! Kyam Livingston could rely only on her fellow workers standing up to fascist terror. And so can we.

The barons of Wall Street are paying for fascist terror to protect their staggering system of exploitation and death. Here and worldwide.

They are losing in the profit squeeze struggle with their rival thugs around the world. They must make the U.S. workers ready for their new plans for oppression. And for their new plans for war.

That is why they pay these killer kkkops. They are paid to intimidate us. They are paid to murder us. They

are paid to control us! But sisters and brothers we can pay too. We must pay too. We must pay them back. We must push them back!

Since November two years ago police have murdered at least eleven of our sisters and brothers throughout our region. We must act, and act together.

We must continue the struggle for justice for each of our fallen workmates, and for their families. But we must sharpen our message.

We must take our message into every school, into every congregation, into every workplace, into every community and into the hearts and minds of everyone we know.

And we must stir our anger into action. More and more into action.

Protest. Yes. Picket Lines Yes. Marches. Yes

But we must urge and plan walk outs. We must organize strikes. With every racist murder we must hit them harder and harder the only place Wall street cares about: their money. What they steal from us we will deny to them.

Only by going on the labor and student strikes offensive can we push back racist police terror. Many lives depend on this. Our lives in fact!

So as we say at St. Mary's, Let us join together and fight the good fight.

Comrade

Capitalist Devastation in the Philippines

Recently one of the biggest typhoons in history devastated the residents of Tacloban and surrounding areas in the Philippines. Thousands have been killed and injured. Hundreds of thousands are homeless. Capitalism created the poverty that condemned thousands to be the victims of Typhoon Yolanda. Most Filipino workers barely survive on two dollars a day!

In a communist society, the working class would mobilize to build safe buildings and have a concrete plan to evacuate workers. We have hints of what can be done now. Cuba has a plan to evacuate workers in the event of hurricanes. The China of 40 years ago had

Protest Transit Bosses' Concession Demands



Transit workers in New York City protest the new budget by the Metropolitan Transit Authority which refuses to negotiate a new contract for workers unless they make concessions. The workers have been without a contract for over two years while the big banks made \$2 billion in bondholder profits in the same time span.

far more concern for workers' lives. When an upcoming earthquake was detected, thousands were evacuated.

In 1989, the city of Baguio in the Northern Philippines suffered a 7.8 earthquake. Like the recent typhoon, capitalism was responsible for many deaths and injuries.

Six months before the earthquake my wife and friends had vacationed in Baguio's Hyatt Hotel. Speaking of capitalism, when the earthquake hit, the hotel went to the ground and 400 people were killed. What happened to the steel for a stronger structure, which would have saved many lies?

The money "rested" in capitalist pockets! In comparison, my wife's parents' house, nearby, had steel supports anchored in cement. The house shook and shook, but didn't go down.

The lessons of capitalism, especially in places like the Philippines, prone to natural disasters, will continue to be deadly. The only answer to this is a communist revolution and a workers' society which values equality and our well-being.

Stockton California Comrade

Ukraine: Russia-U.S. Battleground

continued from page 2

NATO wouldn't have major strategic consequences for Russia. Ukraine, on the other hand, is a very different matter. If Ukraine joins NATO, Russia would not only be forced to remove its ships based in Crimea; it also would see dashed its hopes of founding a...union with Ukraine and Belarus. What's more, Russian and Ukrainian defense industries are closely linked.

Tymoshenko is now serving a seven-year jail sentence on trumped-up charges of abuse of power and embezzlement. Her country, meanwhile, has become even more pivotal to ruling-class strategists with an eye to a potential World War III. U.S. capitalists constitute the "Western power planning to defeat Russia" as Stratfor put it. Their top policy-shaping think tank is the Council on Foreign Relations, which is dominated by ExxonMobil and JPMorgan Chase. The Council's current *Foreign Policy* web page highlights two Kennan essays from 1939 and 1942: "Preparing Civilian America for War" and "Policy and Strategy in the War in Russia."

Ukraine's Workers Suffer Miseries of Capitalism

What the rulers omit from the equation is the working class in Ukraine and in all the other places victimized by the imperialists. Ukraine's workers are voicing intense dissatisfaction with the miseries of capitalism. The country's death rate exceeds its birth rate; Ukraine's population has dropped from a peak of 52.2 million in 1993 to 45.5 million today.

While official unemployment has recently fluctuated between 8 and 9.5 percent, the actual jobless

figure is closer to 25 percent. (Ukrainian employers do not report laid-off workers.) Often workers go unpaid for several months before being laid off. Wages are so low that a high percentage of families need at least two wage-earners to survive. The lack of job opportunities has driven 4.5 million Ukrainians — 10 percent of the population — to work abroad.

These conditions have fueled the workers' mass protests since November 21, when the regime of Moscow-backed President Victor Yanukovich suspended talks on an "Association Agreement" with the European Union. The exploitation of Ukrainian workers reflects the worldwide fight for profits among the major imperialist powers. In Ukraine it pits Russian billionaires (known as oligarchs) against their European counterparts. U.S. rulers are backing the European Union; Yanukovich represents the pro-Russian Ukrainian oligarchs. The western Ukraine in particular is a hotbed of anti-communism, and much media publicity was given to the tearing down of a statue of Vladimir Lenin in the capital, Kiev.

Rinat Akhmetov, the richest Ukrainian oligarch, owns a \$250 million mansion in London and has taken much of his \$15 billion fortune out of Ukraine. He's a pro-Russian supporter of Yanukovich but appears to be hedging his bets. Recently he seemed to favor the protesters in Kiev's Independence Square.

A Boss Is A Boss Is A Boss

An alliance with the EU is widely popular among Ukrainian workers, in part because Europe's fake-democratic veneer seems more appealing than Putin's more open fascism. The EU fosters a lot of talk about

civil society, transparency and the rule of law. Much of this blabber comes from the same oligarchs who made their obscene fortunes by trampling over both society and the law. There is little or nothing in the Association Agreement that would benefit workers. In fact, both the EU and the IMF (following the Greek example) are demanding strict austerity measures in Ukraine, from tax increases to budget cuts.

All of Ukraine's workers — east or west, Ukrainian- or Russian-speaking, industrial or agricultural — need communism. They don't need more exploitation by the Putin-led capitalists or the anti-Putin gang. They need the Progressive Labor Party.

PLP Only Hope for World's Workers

The struggle for communism is a long and hard one, but it's the only solution. As inter-imperialist rivalry leads inevitably toward a broader and bloodier war, and the rulers attack wages and living conditions around the globe, the international growth of the Progressive Labor Party is the only hope for the workers of the world. We need to expand PLP to Ukraine so communist ideas can begin to take root there.

Most of all, we must rebuild the worldwide communist movement. In the past it was a beacon for the working class. It helped restrain capitalism's murderous exploitation. It defeated fascism in World War II. With its retreat, the world's capitalists have a freer hand to maim and murder for their profits. A rebuilt communist movement can take the next step and destroy capitalism forever. Spread communism and build PLP everywhere!✪

China, U.S. Imperialists Heading for Armed Clash?

China is putting military muscle behind president Xi Jinping's call for "a new type of great power relationship." World domination is, of course, the ultimate goal for all imperialist powers. What is China's strategic intent? That's what U.S. intelligence analysts are considering in regard to China's recent aggressive military moves in East Asia.

Of course, pro-China commentators are asking the same question about U.S. (and Japanese) strategy. Spurred by inter-imperialist rivalry on a global scale, the arms race and military confrontations between China and the U.S. have reached a new level of intensity in the Western Pacific.

A dramatic new stage began Nov. 23 when China declared a new Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) in the East China Sea. The declaration demands that anyone flying into the zone notify Chinese authorities and follow instructions from China's air-traffic controllers. That's a challenge to the U.S., Japan and South Korea because it claims control over an area that not only is very close to their territory but also includes an area that surveys indicate is rich in resources.

The situation quickly heated up. On the day of the announcement China flew a "maritime patrol," including fighter escorts and an airborne warning and control-type plane within the ADIZ. In response, Japanese "self-defense" aircraft intercepted the Chinese aircraft. The U.S. quickly denounced China's move and on Nov. 26 flew B-52s over the area without complying with China's demands. On Dec. 15, South Korea announced an expanded air defense zone that overlaps China's, and stated it would fly over the area to defy the Chinese.

Another ominous confrontation occurred a few days later in the South China Sea near Hainan, a Chinese island province in the Tonkin Gulf. The USS Cowpens, a guided missile cruiser, narrowly missed colliding with an escort ship operating with the Liaoning, China's only aircraft carrier. China objects to U.S. surveillance operations in what it considers its exclusive economic zone,

while the U.S. insists the area is part of international waters and that all nations have the right to be there. It is only a matter of time before a deadly incident occurs.

It is clear that the growth of China's economy and power is pushing other imperialists into preparations for confrontation, if not war. These moves include lining up new support, mainly from Japan, the Philippines and South Korea.

The U.S. has long pressed Japan to expand its already formidable military strength, despite Article 9 of Japan's constitution that bans it from maintaining military forces. The Japanese "Self-Defense Forces" have been growing since the 1980s, when the U.S. and Japan were confronting the Soviet Union, China and North Korea.

Led by far-right prime minister Shinzo Abe, the Japanese cabinet, on Dec. 17, approved a five-year buildup and \$24 billion in military spending, a five percent increase over the previous five. (All understate real spending. U.S. annual "defense" spending is well over \$700 billion and China's is probably well over \$100 billion.) The budget came with a national security strategy stating that Japan will seek more "proactive" roles for its Self-Defense Forces abroad and loosen guidelines on arms exports. It also emphasized a strong Japan-U.S. security alliance.

Just the day before, U.S. Secretary of State Kerry was in Vietnam offering assistance with Vietnam's disputed maritime borders with China in exchange for more trade and security cooperation. Earlier in the year, U.S. and Philippines agreed to more U.S. military presence in the Philippines, including pre-positioning of equipment. The U.S. promised to help the Philippines defend its territorial waters in any conflict with China.

On a broader diplomatic front, on Dec. 14, Abe and leaders of the ten members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) agreed at a Tokyo summit on the need for "freedom of the high seas and skies." This was a response to diplomatic gains by China at other re-

gional conferences, where it used lucrative investment projects to win support from Cambodia and other Asian nations.

What are the chances of large-scale military engagements in the short run? The Chinese strategy is a protracted one, and although China is angry about being encircled by the U.S., it realizes it has much to lose in military engagements with a Japan backed by the U.S. The Pentagon is refocusing on Asia with moves that include reinforcing bases in Guam, continuing to station thousands of troops in Japan and Korea, and positioning smaller units of marines and soldiers in Australia and the Philippines. On Dec 14, the U.S. sent a fleet of drone aircraft to a Japanese air base.

China has mounted a "charm offensive" accompanied by lots of cash aimed at most countries in Asia. It seems to be adopting a divide-and-conquer strategy toward Japan and the Philippines, which are already in the U.S. camp. Over time it might be able to detach these countries from alliances with the U.S. Therefore it probably sees nothing to lose in ratcheting up pressure on those countries. This type of strategy has traditionally been called "inflicting death by a thousand cuts." Along with steadily expanding economic ties, this approach seems to be paying off in regard to Taiwan, which many CIA officials concede will be in China's camp in the foreseeable future.

No workers in any of the countries involved have anything to gain by supporting the imperialist aims of their national bosses. The bourgeois political leaders of all large countries only represent the interests of the giant banks and corporations that exploit the working class. All they offer working people is ongoing poverty and military atrocities. Rather than accepting nationalistic propaganda issued by corrupt capitalists, workers must strive to build international ties for communist revolution. Progressive Labor Party is committed to this effort. Join PLP to smash imperialism. ☪



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

U.S. lies to cover its death squads

GW, 12/13 — You might have thought the war on terror was finally being wound down, 12 years after the US launched it with such disastrous results....

But the war on terror is mutating, growing and spreading. Drone attacks, which have escalated under Obama from Pakistan to north Africa, are central to this new phase. And as "Dirty Wars" — the powerful new film by the American journalist Jeremy Scahill — makes clear, so are killings on the ground by covert US special forces....

Scahill's investigation starts with the massacre of a police commander's family by a US Joint Special Operations Command (Jsoc) secret unit in Gardez, Afghanistan. It then moves through a murderous cruise missile attack in Majala, Yemen, that killed 46 civilians, including 21 children; the drone assassination of the radical cleric Anwar al-Awlaki and his 16-year-old son; and the outsourced kidnapping and murders carried out by local warlords on behalf of Jsoc and the CIA in Somalia.

What emerges is both the scale of the overt killings by US special forces — running 20 raids a night at one point in Afghanistan — and the unmistakable fact that these units are operating as death squads, whose bloodletting is dressed up as "targeted killings" of terrorists and insurgents for the benefit of a grateful nation back home.

Mandela's influence helps racists

NYT, 12/8 — ...The perks of privilege of...whites... is a testament to the commitment Mr. Mandela...placed on making racial reconciliation the centerpiece of his presidency....

He led a party that had fought an armed insurgency against the apartheid government, yet when he emerged from prison he preached forgiveness and harmony....But racial equality at the ballot box has proved much easier to achieve than social and economic equality....

...Black South Africans are still very far behind whites, and... falling further back. In 2011, white-led households typically earned close to \$17,000 more than

their black counterparts....By 2011, that disparity had grown to nearly \$30,000....

The nation remains deeply divided in social spheres as well....Schools remain heavily segregated....

Mr. Mandela helped keep decades of oppression and imbalances from boiling over. He encouraged blacks to be patient about acquiring the material goods and services that even lower-class whites took for granted....

Without Mr. Mandela's living example...[many] worried that...relations between the 'races' could worsen....

"I have... [three children] and I'm very happy to stay in this country," said Debbie Angus, a white property manager in the upscale Johannesburg suburb of Sandton. She credited Mr. Mandela ...and said: "I think ...he's laid the groundwork for future generations...."

A crude video made by residents of an all-white dorm at the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein in 2008 showed the students berating and humiliating black domestic workers in their dorm, forcing them to eat stew into which one student appeared to have urinated....The video...was apparently made to protest the planned integration of the residence hall....

"Racism is never very far below the surface....It is always with us, waiting to pounce."

Big tobacco sues little nations

NYT, 12/10 — With ever more Americans and Europeans giving up smoking, tobacco companies have increasingly focused on developing countries as markets for their addictive and deadly products. Now, as some of these nations try to regulate cigarettes by, for example, requiring warning labels, Big Tobacco is using trade and investment agreements to challenge and intimidate them.

Tobacco companies have sued...countries like Uruguay and Uganda, arguing that their tobacco rules unfairly restrict trade or hurt their investments....Namibia has not enforced tobacco regulations because it is not prepared to fight long and expensive legal battles against large companies....

Smoking-related illnesses kill nearly six million people a year across the planet, according to the World Health Organization. Moreover, the W.H.O. reports that close to 80 percent of the world's smokers live in lower- and middle-income countries.

Rodney King-style cops are back

NYT, 12/15 — A man trying to visit his brother in 2011

in a downtown Los Angeles jail was arrested by a deputy sheriff, who took him in handcuffs to a windowless break room and shoved him against a refrigerator. One deputy stood guard while others kicked and punched the man, still in handcuffs, against the floor. They wrote a report accusing the man of assault and pressed charges, which the district attorney later dropped abruptly.

Later...two sergeants went to the home of an FBI agent, demanding to know details of [an] investigation. When she did not comply, the sergeants lied and told her that she was a criminal suspect who faced immediate arrest.

A generation ago, the Los Angeles Police Department was rocked by corruption and abuse charges after the Rodney King beating....But these days...the larger Los Angeles Sheriff's Department is enmeshed in a new round of...pervasive civil rights violations that...feel uncomfortably familiar.

U.S. goes easy on corporate crime

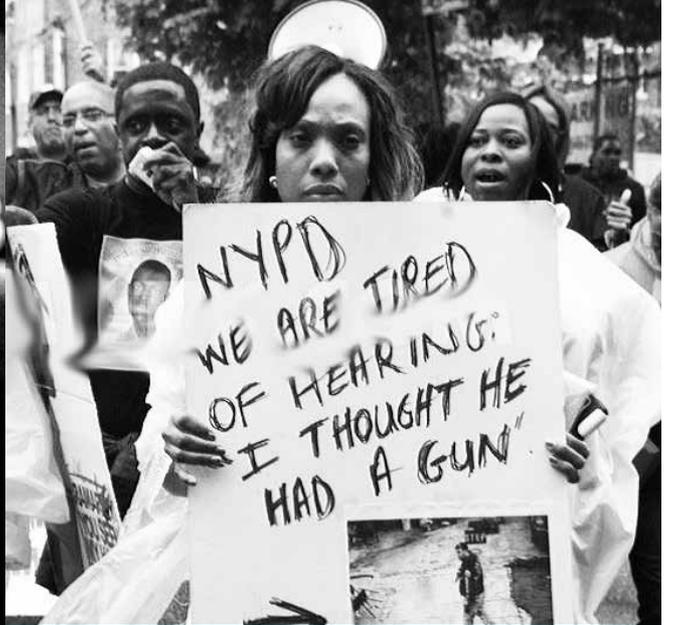
NYT, 12/14 — The Justice Department...use of deferred prosecution and non-prosecution agreements, which began during the George W. Bush administration and has increased under President Obama, allows companies to avoid criminal charges...They are not convicted of any crimes. They do not receive criminal sentences.

The department's criminal division now uses "non-criminal alternatives" in most of its settlements with corporations...

We're not talking about small cases...Prosecutors agreed to a deferred prosecution with HSBC in 2012 even though the bank was involved in nearly a trillion dollars' worth of money laundering, much of it from drug trafficking....The department struck a nonprosecution agreement in the disaster of 2010 that left 29 miners dead in West Virginia. Massey, the mine owner, had concealed over 300 safety law violations from government inspectors.

The failure to prosecute the likes of JPMorgan, HSBC, and Massey...raises doubts about the government's commitment to fighting corporate crime...

2013: Youth, Workers Fight Racist KKKop Murders



BROOKLYN, NY — Youth face NYPD, killer of Kimani Gray, 16-year-old high school student. The cops fired 11 shots.

BRONX, NY — Mother of Ramarley Graham, age 18. He was killed in front of his grandmother and little brother.



FLORIDA — Trayvon Martin, 17-year-old shot by racist vigilante for walking while black.

BROOKLYN, NY — Multiracial unity for Shantel Davis, 23-year-old woman shot and killed in her car.



(Above from left to right)

BROOKLYN, NY — High School students and teachers protest murder of Kyam Livingston, 37-year-old mother of two who died of medical neglect under police custody.

CALUMET CITY, ILLINOIS — Protest of sixteen-year-old autistic youth gunned down by police in his own home.

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