

The next issue of CHALLENGE will appear in three weeks, after which we will resume our regular biweekly schedule.

**PERIODICO EN ESPAÑOL ADENTRO**

# CHALLENGE

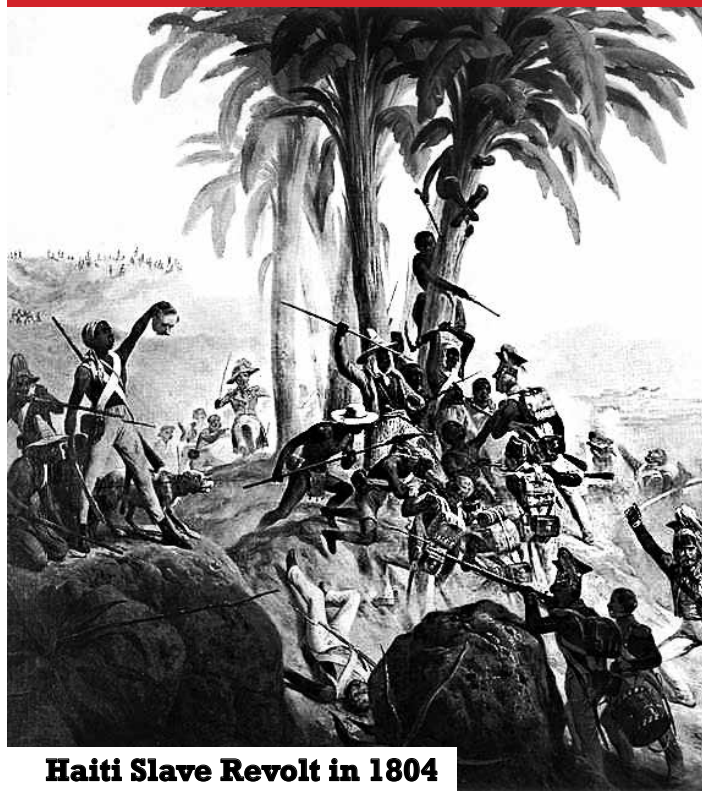


THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

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**Haiti Slave Revolt in 1804**



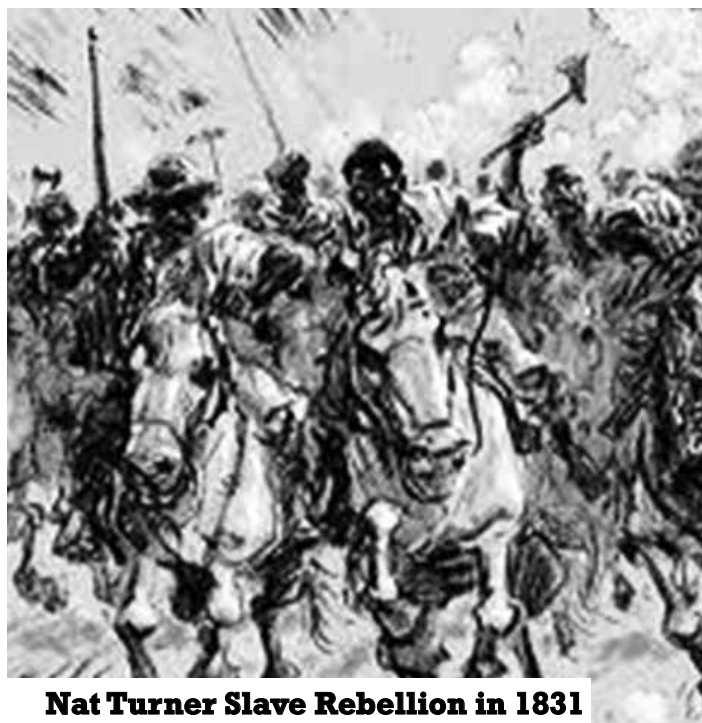
**Newark Rebellion in 1967**

**NONVIOLENCE NEVER WORKS**

**ONLY  
COMMUNIST  
REVOLUTION  
CAN END  
RACISM**



**Demonstration in South Africa**



**Nat Turner Slave Rebellion in 1831**



**Watts Rebellion in 1965**



# 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!

## CONTACT US

Email  
desafio.challenge@gmail.com  
Mail  
Box 808 GPO, Brooklyn, NY 11202  
Internet  
www.plp.org  
challengenewspaper.wordpress.com

## 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.

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# Editorial

# Turn Obama-Putin War into Workers' Class War



Escalating conflict between the beleaguered U.S. and resurgent Russian empires led President Barack Obama to cancel a planned September summit meeting with President Vladimir Putin. The “emerging differences” (as Obama calls them) behind the snub run far deeper than Putin's granting asylum to National Security Agency whistle-blower Edward Snowden. It's all about the unceasing fight for profits under capitalism.

Hostile blocs of capitalists, represented by Obama and Putin, are more and more at odds in their inter-imperialist competition for the world's resources, markets, and labor. Those bosses who control global energy supplies gain political and economic advantages over their rivals. Each major power needs armed force — including nuclear weapons — to enforce its domination. It's no surprise, then, that oil, gas, and missiles top the list of grievances between Obama and Putin. At the same time, both the U.S. and Russia are tailoring their tactics toward building coalitions for a wider confrontation down the road, one that may involve emerging superpower China.

The cost of this competition bears heavily on the world's working class. As the imperialist rivals prepare for war, their austerity policies devastate the living standards of the international working class. Several billion workers now live on less than two dollars a day. There is mass unemployment in Greece, Spain, Italy, France, Mexico, South America, China, the U.S., and elsewhere. Millions have been laid off during world capitalism's latest economic crisis. Hazardous working conditions kill thousands in the fire-prone factories of Bangladesh. Miners are openly murdered by Nelson Mandela's political heirs in South Africa. Millions more are suffering and dying from lack of healthcare.

Above and beyond these capitalist horrors, imperialist confrontations kill tens of millions in wars over resources in Africa, Iraq, and Afghanistan, and in Obama's terror drone attacks over Yemen, Somalia and Pakistan.

## Rulers' Racism Runs Wild

Finally, there is the racism built against Arab and Muslim workers by the U.S. rulers' closing of their embassies in Africa, the Middle East and South Asia. This trumped-up panic move demonizes these workers as enemies who can be killed with impunity. Racism is wielded as well by the U.S. rulers' cops as they murder black and Latino youth across the country. And by the prosecutors and judges who incarcerate millions in prisons on frame-ups or petty, non-violent violations of the bosses' laws.

These horrors will end only when this capitalist hell is destroyed by a communist revolution. Only by building a mass, revolutionary Progressive Labor Party can the world eliminate the bosses and their profit system. Only then can we create a society run by and for workers, one without wars, racism, sexism, unemployment and poverty.

## Syria, the Bosses' Latest Battlefield

The U.S. dispute with Russia has killed more than 100,000 workers in Syria over the last two years. Russia maintains a na-

val base there, backs the anti-U.S. Assad regime, and fosters its alliance with potential nuclear power Iran. Obama's Russian-Syrian problem centers on the need for continued flow of Middle East oil under Exxon Mobil, Chevron, and other allied brands. A Russian-assisted Assad victory will strengthen Iran's anti-U.S. rulers, who are threatening to shut off U.S. and British firms' oil exports through the critical Strait of Hormuz. On the other hand, Obama has been reluctant to support anti-Assad Islamists after al Qaeda forces gained dominance within their camp. The success of this opposition could imperil the slave-state monarchy of Saudi Arabia, Exxon Mobil's biggest partner.

A less publicized U.S.-Russian battle is raging for supremacy in the crucial European gas arena. New production technology, known as hydraulic fracturing or “fracking,” has for the first time made U.S. gas a globally significant commodity.

Fracking extracts natural gas from wells far below the earth's surface by shooting water mixed with sand and chemicals at high pressure into shale deposits that contain oil and gas, bringing them cheaply to the surface. It also contaminates ground water and drinking water, forces gases and chemicals to the surface, and has been known to sicken animals and people and cause cancer. But geostrategic and profit considerations have quickly overcome the environmental opposition.

## Fracking the Working Class

The racist U.S. ruling class, which murdered millions of Native Americans in the 19th century, has renewed its genocide by fracking on reservations in North Dakota and other Western states. Residents are forced to boil drinking water while they suffer from air pollution caused by huge fires that erupt as natural gas burns off over the prairies.

Two years ago, the rulers' New York Times published a series called “Drilling Down” on the evils of fracking. Its headlines warned of “toxic materials,” “tainted water,” and “polluted air.” By 2012, however, the Times did an about-face with articles headlined “Revisiting the Facts on Fracking,” and “Rethinking Opposition to Fracking.” The U.S. ruling class has closed ranks to break Moscow's energy stranglehold on Germany and other European Union countries, which have had to rely on Russian gas.

Michael Levi of the Council on Foreign Relations, the U.S. imperialists' leading think tank (which counts Exxon Mobil, Chevron, Citicorp, and JP Morgan among its “founders”) told Congress on April 23:

*U.S. LNG [liquefied natural gas] exports would also help Europe maintain leverage vis-à-vis Russia — even if, as appears likely, little U.S. natural gas is actually shipped to Europe. In the wake of the U.S. shale gas boom, Middle Eastern and North African suppliers have turned to Europe to sell their surplus natural gas, creating intense competition in the European market and increasingly*

# PL'ers Spark Anti-Racist Protest Against Trayvon Verdict

**FORT WORTH, TX August 1** — Following the George Zimmerman not guilty verdict, we have increased the anti-racist fight back in our area. While anti-racist demonstrations around the country erupted in the days following the verdict, the response in our area was almost non-existent.

To get the ball rolling, several PL'ers descended upon a local mall armed with leaflets condemning the racist killing of Trayvon Martin and blaming the capitalist profit system for letting Zimmerman go. The leaflet linked the racist killing to those of black and Latino youth by police around the county. We also pointed out how capitalism profits from this racist terror through the mass unemployment and a low-wage workforce that mass incarceration and police attacks help perpetuate. Our leaflet was well-received, especially by many black and Latino students.

Over the next few days we took our leaflets, signs and bullhorn to busy street corners around town. We received a wonderful response from the community. Our multiracial crew handed out hundreds of leaflets to passersby and held signs promoting multiracial unity in order to fight back against the bosses' racist terror.

The city's "official" black leadership eventually got wind of our actions and began organizing a rally to put forward pacifism and voting as the only acceptable responses to the daily racist outrages. By the weekend, church leaders and the Democratic Party had organized a "peaceful" prayer vigil downtown. Hundreds of black workers attended and each one received our leaflet.

During a speech by the representative for the Democratic Party, a black worker interrupted and demanded that the community be allowed to speak. He boldly pointed out that only "official" leaders were cleared to speak and that the community was being shut out. Church leaders led the crowd in a series of prayers, subduing some of the anti-racist anger.

The final message was for workers to go vote and then to go home. But as soon as the vigil ended, PL and our friends in the crowd started a chant, "What do we



Protesters rally for Trayvon Martin, take over streets in Houston on July 15

want, justice! When do we want it, now!" and "Trayvon Martin Means We've Got to Fight Back!" Hundreds in the crowd joined in. The anti-racist message shook the streets and showed the potential and desire for more militant fightback.

After an intense, week-long series of anti-racist actions, we had distributed over 2,000 leaflets and met several new anti-racist fighters. And while the city's "official" misleaders have told people to pray and go home, we have been creating more opportunities to bring people out and spread the message of anti-racist fightback.

We recently went with a group who participated in the Trayvon events to go see Fruitvale Station — a movie that depicts racist profiling and a day in the life of Oscar Grant before Bay Area police murdered him (see review, page 7.) We met for coffee afterward and continued the

discussion about Trayvon. It ranged from fighting back against racist cutbacks on our jobs to organizing against racist police terror by making a banner with images of all the black and Latino youth killed recently by police and vigilantes. We also made plans for future anti-racist movie nights.

These past few weeks have shown that armed with PL's line on fighting racism, small changes can quickly lead to bigger ones. Racist terror is how most black and Latino workers experience capitalism on a day-to-day basis, and many want the opportunity to participate in anti-racist struggle. By creating opportunities in our area, we helped put hundreds of people in motion against racism. We will continue to create opportunities for anti-racist struggle and to put forward PL's politics in the mass movement.☺

## Racist Rulers Trash Justice, Ramarley Spurs Fightback



Just back from the August 10 protest in the working-class Bronx, NY against the system's refusal of justice for Ramarley Graham. On only 12 hours notice, 200 of us gathered in response to Frank Graham's call to rally for his son once again, in front of the Bronx District Attorney's office. The demand, the theme, was "justice": but the reality is the exact opposite. The chants were all familiar and strong, peoples' whole bitter lives pouring into their voices. "They say get back, We say fight back!" In Ramarley's name, in the names of all our fallen.

On procedural grounds, a judge threw out the first case against the cop Richard Haste who murdered the unarmed Ramarley in his own bathroom in front of his grandmother, but, ever "impartial," left it open for a re-indictment from another grand jury. Last night the grand jury declined to do that. "They say get back." The Graham family now wants to demand a federal investigation. "We say fight back."

My heart bleeds for them in this moment when, Frank says, "everything is dark," but the feds investigating NYPD

death squads in the Bronx is a farce! The U.S. government is the king of racist death squads all over the world, from Vietnam to Congo to El Salvador to Iraq, just to name four places in my lifetime that have seen their Ramarleys shot down in their own homes by U.S. government thugs. "We say fight back." How, then? An image comes to mind from Ismaël Ferroukhi's film *Free Men*, of the women and men Algerian communist workers in Paris who fought the Nazi occupation alongside their French sisters and brothers only to see colonial France turn the guns on them back in Algeria.

We will always fight back. But it will have to be in a way that takes account of the cruel predicament of our Algerian communist predecessors, and of the Grams today. Fighting back is always necessary but no one fight, it seems, is ever sufficient. Think of how, even with state power won and kept at terrible cost, the first communist revolutions had such a

hard time transforming the rotten world they were left with.

No one struggle, not even revolution, is ever enough. Every thing always seems dark when that truth hits home. It's the dialectical truth that nothing is at rest at last, nothing is final, nothing is secure, everything changes; we must keep moving and stay with the pace. "Freedom is the consciousness of necessity."

But if we toughen up, somehow the fight goes on harder and smarter the next time. A handful of people from my union were there, as we have been throughout this long year, because Ramarley Graham should have lived to be our student. A sobering day, being this close to official state murder of a young black Bronx high-schooler. "NYPD, KKK, How many kids will you kill today?" The black sign in back said simply "Richard Haste, you can't hide": everyone there knew how that chant, introduced by PLP, goes on: "We charge you with genocide."

A long history of genocide, in this racist city, this racist country, this racist continent, this planet of racist slums, and lengthening as we speak. But always with those who say no. Who will have the last word? What will that word be? For now, it's "No!" The Graham family has been inspiring speakers of that saving word. It will be "No!" until our last breath, until we can speak that other word, for all our fallen sons and daughters. Freedom.

New York teacher

# Student Actions Hit University Fee Hike

**PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI, August 1** — In June, students at the State University of Haiti (UEH) waged a struggle against the university administration to prevent a fee increase for entry to UEH (see CHALLENGE, (07/17/13). This increase, which aimed to limit the entry of workers’ children to UEH, had been proposed by a reactionary leader close to the government and its ruling class.

For three weeks, students from several faculties (campuses) here organized a series of student general assemblies, militant marches, sit-ins and demonstrations.

Following the initial demonstrations, the Rector and a few reactionary teachers took the offensive, calling for the arrest of student leaders, accusing them of

criminal activity — (breaking windows of the administration building and spray-painting government cars). They used the bosses’ press to divert us from the real question: their attack against the interests of students and their parents. These bosses have even announced their intention to break their word about rescinding the fee increases.

This student struggle achieved some success, expecting only a doubling of the registration fee to 1,000 gourdes (about U.S. \$25) instead of tripling. And the bosses are in a total state of disarray: every day they take to the media to announce a different point of view and decision. They’re not even on the same page regarding the totality of student demands beyond the fee increase.

The students have not lost everything, but neither did they win. Why? The reduction of the increase stemmed from their ability to *mobilize*. But because they did not continue to *organize* students to press for all of their demands and to make alliances with workers, they’re at a standstill. And PLers have not yet made a protracted struggle to win an understanding of the role of the university under capitalism — which aims to recruit and train youth to be the agents and allies of the capitalist state, and the need for an egalitarian communist revolution.

However, the struggle continues, both on the reform level and ideologically among students. PLP is committed to this and is ready and able to give better communist leadership on campus and beyond.☺



# Haiti: Masses Rip Imperialists’ Cholera Epidemic

**PORT-AU-PRINCE, August 4** — July 28 was the date of the first U.S. invasion of Haiti in 1915. Today the current fascist government and its ruling-class masters chose it for a celebration. a “festival of flowers.” This is how they commemorate almost a century of imperialist-led crimes against the masses in Haiti.

For almost 19 years, from 1915 to 1934, the U.S. bosses waged a relentless fight against the peasants, workers and students of Haiti. They killed many rank-and-filers during their bloody occupation, and murdered their leadership as well. One was Charlemagne Peralte, an organizer of the rural group called the Cacos, which had fought for many decades against the abuses of the local landowners, and then turned their fight-back against the U.S. invaders.

Today, it is MINUSTAH, the United Nations-led imperialist force, which has been repressing, exploiting, raping and murdering the peasantry, working class and youth of Haiti since its arrival in June 2004. It is fronting for the major imperialists who want to control Haiti — the U.S., Canada and France.

Thousands of peasants and workers have died from cholera, imported by these imperialist forces. As of early August, over 1,000 days after its introduction into Haiti, 671,702 have become ill and 8,251 have died. [<http://www.just-foreignpolicy.org/haiti-cholera-counter>]). The U.N. has yet to even apologize,

or take steps to remedy its crimes.

Several working-class social groups organized a demonstration on July 26 in the Carrefour suburb here to continue the fight against these crimes of capitalism.

PLP took part in this event, distributing leaflets linking cholera to racism and other problems created by the capitalist system, and carrying signs advocating the need to destroy it. These were well-received by the rank-and-file. In fact, the demonstration and these slogans were used as teaching tools a few days later during some classes preparing high-school graduates to take the competitive exams for entry into the State University of Haiti.

However, the carnival-like atmosphere of the demonstration and the limited organization in the working class changed the character of this protest. Yet it did show the potential of the working class and its allies to respond positively to revolutionary ideas and a revolutionary party.

There is real room for PLP’s growth in Haiti and around the world as the bosses show their utter contempt for workers through their unrelenting attacks on our class.☺

# Obama-Putin War vs. Workers’ Class War

continued from page 2

*forcing Russia to sell its natural gas on transparent, market-based terms rather than through opaque, politically charged contracts. Even the possibility of significant U.S. natural gas exports will help sustain pressure on Russia to sell natural gas on these*

*[cheaper] market-based European terms.*

## Flaunting the Nuclear Threat

While Washington and Moscow wield their energy resources as a means of control, they are clashing over the nuclear weapons that protect their respective empires. “In October, Putin let it be known that he would not renew America’s Cooperative Threat Reduction [CTR] program, which has safeguarded nuclear stockpiles in former Soviet countries since the 1990s” (Boston Globe, 8/11/13). In 1992, a severely weakened Russia had agreed to CTR, under which the U.S. oversaw the dismantling of warheads in Russia’s traditional stronghold, Eastern Europe and the old Soviet Union. But today Putin calls the nuclear shots there, and Russia is flaunting its nuclear threat in these former Soviet republics and satellites. Georgia, which Russia invaded in 2008 to suppress its opening to the West, is making similar noises today — and getting a harsh response from its old master. As Georgian Prime Minister Bidzina Ivashvili wrote in the Wall Street Journal on August 5:

*Georgia is already a key byway for Caspian energy.... [W]ith four key oil pipelines running through Georgia, our government has declared its intent to join the [European Union-run] Energy Community. We intend to make the country an example of a stable democracy and a reliable partner for Europe and the U.S., as well.... Georgia has already moved closer to NATO [the U.S.-controlled North Atlantic Treaty Organization].*

The next day, Moscow went literally ballistic. Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev appeared on Georgian television to declare:

*We do not welcome Georgia’s*

*membership in NATO, to put it mildly....Russia is a very large country with a huge nuclear arsenal.... If there’s a state which is a member of another military-political alliance whose nuclear missiles are aimed at targets located on the Russian territory, we cannot welcome this....you [Georgia] would become a member of a big military political alliance which...is a potential enemy if certain situations arise.*

Medvedev is referring to a potential world war. Like U.S. rulers, the Putin regime has two priorities: bolstering its territorial sphere of influence (including Georgia and the rest of Eastern Europe), and cementing grand alliances. This summer saw large-scale military and naval exercises between Russia and China.

Significantly, it was the Atlantic Council think tank that plastered Medvedev’s menacing speech on the front page of its website (8/7/13). The Council, funded both by U.S. capitalist “philanthropies” and the Pentagon, is at the front of the line in applauding NATO’s expansion. More aggressively, it pounds the drums for the formation of a U.S.-led axis to confront its imperialist rivals. In his last act as Atlantic Council boss, before he became Obama’s Secretary of Defense, Chuck Hagel published a report outlining a pro-U.S. “dream team” of strategically located allies: India, Brazil, Indonesia and Turkey. All four could potentially mobilize massive armies to help fight the enemies of U.S. capitalism.

## Capitalism, No — Revolution, Yes!

In the wake of the Obama-Putin flare-up, U.S. politicians and pundits are debating whether the mid-century Cold War between Russia and the U.S. is back. In fact, much worse lies in store for our class. But as always, the working class is fighting back, from rebellions in South Africa to garment strikes in Bangladesh, from anti-austerity demonstrations in southern Europe to street protests against police murders of black youth in New York City.

But we must go beyond protests and demonstrations. Workers must turn the capitalists’ attacks against us into class war. Led by the Progressive Labor Party, we can overthrow them with communist revolution. Join us and help lead our class along that road.☺





# Providers Get Wise, Organize Against Fascist Healthcare

**LOS ANGELES, CA** — An indicator that capitalism is a sick system and needs to be replaced is when doctors, who generally live very comfortably, become disgruntled and burnt out from the “assembly line” our healthcare system has become. They recognize the harmful effects it has on patient care, particularly the most vulnerable: poor, black, Latino and immigrant patients.

For the last year, our “not-for-profit” HIV organization has almost doubled its first quarter profits, \$95 million to \$181 million from the 1st quarter of 2012 to the 1st quarter 2013. It has continued its attacks on our wages, benefits, scheduling and the staffing of our clinics. Short of rumblings in various staff meetings or side conversations, these attacks have gone virtually unchallenged until recently.

For the last three months, the providers (physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants) have been meeting in secret trying to figure out how to respond. It’s been a truly heartening experience to deepen ties with this group as venting sessions after work quickly morphed into serious conversations that moved beyond talks of our individual pay and productivity and into conversations about our coworkers and our patients. With leadership from a Party member in this circle, the group decided to unionize. Now over 85 percent of providers have signed the petition to unionize.

Clearly, this is a far cry from being communists and joining PLP, but this growing solidarity and anger, which have trumped much of our initial fear, are part of the process of learning how to fight back. With the use of CHALLENGE and communist leadership we can continue to learn how to fight and recognize the limits of unionizing and reformism. As to be expected, there are many illusions about what the union can offer us (even if there are short-term gains).

This HIV organization is one of the largest in the world, and we will be the first to unionize here in the U.S. We recently found out that a group unionized in South Africa, although at this point we know very few details. However, the president of our company has used our passion for treating HIV as a mechanism to pay us less while overworking us. This organization makes profits off its pharmaceutical sales because it can buy highly expensive HIV medications at 30-40 percent off (called 340B pricing) and then bill at full price the insurance companies or Medicaid/Medicare, AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP). The remainder counts as profits. Like the Walmart of HIV care, this company is expanding by swallowing up smaller HIV clinics that do not have their own pharmacies and with cuts in reim-

bursements from Medicaid cannot afford to survive. Like a virus that preys on and weakens the immune system, this company preys on the sick while making millions in the process: a model company under capitalism.

“Healthcare” under capitalism, in this period of economic crisis and war, means that there will have to be more and more cuts and attacks on workers and patients while Obama and others spread the illusion of increased access to care. We’ve already seen, here on our job as well as nationally, what Obamacare really means for our patients.

Patients at our clinics who now qualify for “Healthyway LA,” a new insurance for the poor, get less access to medications than they had on ADAP. Moreover, if they need a referral to see a specialist like oncology (cancer specialists), they have to go to the County system just as they would have without health insurance. The County system has been continually dismantled over the last several years. In other words take your insurance and get in line, an ever-expanding line!

What will this mean for our undocumented patients who are not eligible for insurance? The federal government will likely stop funding ADAP, the only source that pays for their HIV medications and care. Once again, it is the illusion of access and the reality of more racism, illness and death!

And what will this mean for those of us with so-called good “Cadillac” health insurance? The sick irony is that we can get a glimpse by taking a look at what is happening right now to retired workers in Detroit (home of GM, makers of Cadillac). To save the bankers and government from bankruptcy, they are targeting retired public workers who currently have better coverage through Medicare and will force them into “choosing” a new health insurance plan which the New York Times (7/29/13) admits will mean inferior care and increase payments for the patients.

Like good Nazis, the Detroit bankers and politicians are starting with the elderly, those deemed no longer productive to society, who Hitler called “useless eaters.” This is fascist healthcare. From the “Charitable Foundation for Institutional Care” that collected money from the families of children murdered by the Nazis to Obama’s “Affordable Care Act” we must recognize the essence of these changes so as not to be complicit. Fighting back against these attacks on the job is the first step to recognizing the much greater problem of capitalism as a whole, and fascism as merely an expression of capitalism in crisis.

We’ve had many discussions on the job, but these broader conversations about our role under fascist healthcare and how to fight it have yet to occur. One friend and fellow provider has seen the most recent CHALLENGE and has read the rough draft of this article. There are three other providers that I will definitely show the next issue of CHALLENGE to, and hopefully, this article will be the beginning of a series that documents our progress and the growing challenges within this reform struggle. The fight for real healthcare means the fight for communism!

Barefoot PA

# Brazil: Masses Slam Rulers’ Austerity



**SALVADOR, BAHIA, BRAZIL** — Masses of students and workers took to the streets condemning the Brazilian government’s austerity attack on the working class while it pours billions into its ostentatious hosting of the World Cup and the Olympics. Workers and students protested on July 22, in the downtown square called Campo Grande, made famous by the carnival of Salvador-Ba in northeastern Brazil.

The demonstrations opposed the government spending while workers faced intense poverty. Demonstrations are continuing throughout Brazil, encouraged by the wave of opposition to the corrupt administration of the cities and the government budget. The police have answered with violence against the protesters who are fighting, the neglect of health and education and subjugating of women.☺



# LETTERS

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

## My Road to Becoming A Communist

I am a communist. Typing those words feels so odd. So wrong. So right.

Recently, I attended a communist school run by the Progressive Labour Party. I walked in with my mom and her friend, who I was angry at for getting us into all of this. Communists are crazy. I thought communism was impossible, extreme, and unjustified. I was sure I was a socialist. All we need to do is help out the poor a bit so that everybody has food, a place to live, healthcare, education, and the like. We live in such a rich country, why can't we manage that?

As I went through the various workshops, I was so conflicted. Things they were saying were so logical. Their goals agreed with everything I believed in. And yet, I couldn't bring myself to admit I was a communist. Something about the word just made me feel wrong. Though I never agreed with senator McCarthy, [fascist anti-communist, persecutor in the 1950s] I still accepted that communism is a terrible infection that needs to be cured. Plus, these people were advocating for violence. Brutal, blatant violence. I have never been comfortable with violence.

And yet, I couldn't stop returning to everything they had right. The simple, clear concept of dialectical materialism. The racism and sexism resulting from capitalism. They were right. Communism was the only solution. And yet, I couldn't be a communist. I talked to my mom's friend about some of my conflicts. Human nature is selfish. Communism can never work for that reason. He calmly asked me, "Why shouldn't we strive for the best system?" I wasn't sure. I responded that it was bound to fail, so why try? I think part of me was selfish. I don't want to have to sweep floors or clean up. More than anything, though, I could not fight the negative stigma of communism. Or rather, I didn't want to.

On the last day of the school, people went up to the stage and praised all of its great things. The first speaker said she had just joined the Party. That one line would not let go of me: "I realized there was no other way."

I slowly came to terms with who I am. One night, I watched a documentary about the war on drugs titled

The House I Live In that was life-changing. I saw how the ruling class had changed drug laws over time to stay in power and systematically disenfranchise, oppress, and obliterate minorities and the poor. It all clicked. It all made sense. I decided to write this after watching the movie because I can now say with conviction that I *am* a communist.

I still struggle with certain aspects of communism, as well as the Party. However I now feel safe to explore and am no longer afraid of communism. I don't want to conceal who I am, but I also know that persecution and judgement is a reality for many people who go down this path. I also feel especially alienated from my peers, because they are so upper-class and it angers me that they are so blind.

Despite my ongoing inner conflicts, I know I have chosen the right path. I know the road ahead will be long, lonely, and trying, but it is worth it. I now know I must not settle. I must fight for the best future there can be, and communism is the only way down that road.

*Editor: Welcome to the communist movement! We hope you are able to help your friends understand that communism is not only possible but really the only way out of the abyss of capitalism's wars, racism, sexism, and destruction of the environment. We are confident that millions of workers will join you in this quest for liberation. We hope you will join our Party and bring its ideas and struggles to the many young people with whom you interact. Remember — urgency and patience are the dialectical requirements for building the revolutionary movement!*

## Junk Food Hurts Working Class Most

Because capitalists need to make maximum profits, the capitalist system cannot provide for people's most basic needs. As long ago as 1845, Frederick Engels described how capitalists were adulterating food to boost their profits. (See his book, "The Condition of the Working Class in England.") Proof that nothing has changed comes in an inquiry just published by the French health ministry.

It seems workers in France eat more sugary junk food than other social classes. An earlier 2010 study had

found that, on average, 42% of the children of factory workers drink soda pop four times a week, while only 20% of the children of executives do.

As a result, the working class's health is worse than other classes. The latest study says that by age 6, 30% of the children of factory workers have already had at least one decayed tooth, compared with only 8% of the children of executives. By age 15, the figures rise to 58% and 34% respectively.

In addition, the study holds junk food responsible for obesity. In kindergarten, the children of factory workers are 3.6 times as likely to be obese as other children.

Capitalism has been poisoning workers and their children with junk food for centuries. Obviously, reforming capitalism is impossible. Only a revolution which establishes communism can produce to satisfy people's needs, not to boost profits for an exploiting class.

*A friend in France*



# Capitalism Can't End Racist Exploitation

continued from page 8

arrested on petty drug offenses, the majority for simple possession.

🔊 *Mass unemployment.* Over the half-century since 1963, the government's "official" rate for white unemployment has averaged 5.1 percent, less than half the black unemployment rate of 11.6 percent. (To put this in perspective, the overall unemployment rate during recessions in this period has averaged 6.7 percent.) As of last month, the "official" jobless rate for black workers was 12.6 percent. More than four of ten black youth are without work.

Moreover, these official figures exclude workers who have given up looking for non-existent jobs, part-time workers who can't find full-time jobs and workers who have been jobless for more than six months. With these groups factored in, the true unemployment rate becomes 23 percent (shadowstats.com). And for black workers it may be well over 40 percent.

Even those who find jobs are often mired in poverty. In 1963, the minimum wage was worth more than \$9 an hour in 2013 dollars. Today it stands at \$7.25.

🔊 *Massive school segregation.* Nearly 60 years after Brown v. Board of Education, 30 years after violent racists tried and failed to stop integration in Boston, school districts throughout the U.S. have resegregated with a

vengeance. While Reagan and both Bushes were openly hostile to school desegregation plans, neither Bill Clinton nor Obama have done anything substantive to stem this tide. By 2010, 38 percent of black students were in schools with fewer than 10 percent white students. Sixteen percent were in apartheid schools where white students numbered less than 1 percent.

As documented by Gary Orfield of the Civil Rights Project, separate is still unequal. Segregated black and Latino schools tend to have fewer resources, less experienced teachers, and less politically connected and wealthy parents. Inferior schooling creates an achievement gap, and gaps in future income and health as well.

🔊 *Massive inequalities.* As reported by the New York Times (July 30), the United States — the sixth-richest country in the world, based on national income per person — has the highest infant and maternal mortality rates among the developed nations. The U.S. also ranks among the highest for child poverty and overall poverty, and among the lowest for life expectancy. Due to racism, all of these numbers are much worse for black and Latino workers.

Racist wage differentials, alongside hospital and school closings and deadly cuts in social services, add up to super-profits into the trillions for the capitalist class. They pay for the bosses' wars in the Middle East and Africa while funneling billions to Wall Street CEO's.

## Smash Racism with Communism!

It's a good start to march for jobs and human rights, but we cannot stop there. To put an end to the inequalities and all the racist horrors of capitalism, we need to smash a system built on profit and replace it from the ground up, with a society based on workers' needs. We need a communist revolution led by a revolutionary party — the Progressive Labor Party. Join us!🔊



Brooklyn youth march against the kkkop murders of Shantel Davis and Kimani Gray.



# Fruitvale Station: A Racist System Murdered Oscar Grant

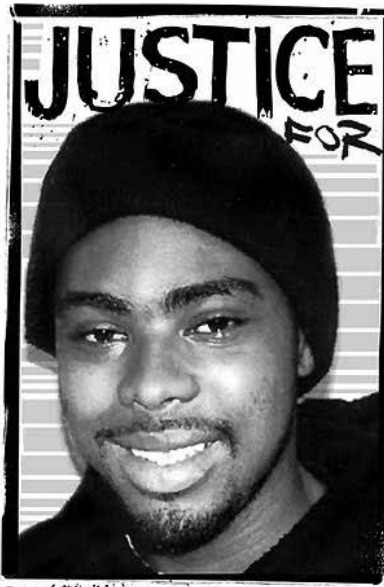
The movie *Fruitvale Station* documents the last days of Oscar Grant III, a twenty-three-year-old black worker from the Bay Area in northern California who was murdered by a cop from Oakland's Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) Police Department in 2009.

The movie illustrates how Oscar, after having been in jail, attempts to restore his life and help his family. The movie excels at showing the hard decisions that Oscar has to face in this capitalist state where working-class people experience unemployment and racism. He was fired and was unable to find another job. He then had to decide whether or not to sell drugs to pay the rent, which he ultimately decides not to do because he does not want to end up back in jail.

## Oscar Fights Effects of Capitalism

Through the lens of the camera, illustrating the real-life harsh reality under capitalism and vivid family relationships, we see Oscar's love for his four-year-old daughter as he helps her get ready for school. Sophina Mesa (Oscar's partner) struggles as the only one employed in the family, and Oscar tries to also help his sister pay her rent. These are the simple and human characteristics of a young man and family aspiring to make ends meet as the end of the month draws near.

However, despite the family's effort to create a better future, they are unable to do so. The family's turning point comes when, while riding the train to celebrate the New Year, Oscar is confronted by a person with whom he had had previous confrontations in jail, and is forced to fight him. The racist police arrive on the scene and immediately force only African American young men to sit on the platform. While there, Oscar and a racist BART cop get into a verbal disagreement and the cop tries to put him in handcuffs. While Oscar is pinned to



the ground, another cop pulls out a gun and shoots him in the back.

The film depicts this as only one incident in a string of "unfortunate" events, but the reality of this system is that Latino and black men are disproportionately incarcerated, unemployed and killed by the police. They find their choices limited because that is how capitalism attempts to keep the working class powerless and oppressed. This system blames the individual for not trying hard enough. The film does not illustrate that this is a deliberate systemic problem of capitalism that contin-

ues to leave young black workers with only dead-end opportunities and choices. Oscar lived in a system that uses racism and racial profiling to rob working-class men and women of their full potential. Many laws, such as "stop-and-frisk," perpetuate this system.

## Film Omits Protests, Role of Cops

The film also mentions that the "punishment" of the murdering cop was two years in jail but he ended up serving only 11 months. However, the film does not show the major working-class protests that were led by Oscar's family as a result of this sentence. The working class cannot negotiate with a racist system that uses cops to oppress and kill them! The film does not expose the police as the tool that the ruling-class uses to physically intimidate and control working-class individuals. Instead, the film illustrates the murderer as an "inexperienced" officer, who did not know how to "handle" an escalating confrontation with a detainee. However, cops and their violence and racism are used by the ruling class in its attempt to intimidate the working class from organizing and rising up.

Oscar's tragedy resonates with the Zimmerman trial and acquittal because forums, protests and near rebellions broke out throughout the country after both incidents. At the time of this writing, the New York courts have just refused again to indict the cop who killed Ramarley Graham in the Bronx (see page 3). These are not separate incidents but a series of attacks by the fascist cops and courts against black and Latino working-class youth. The only way to fight against these racist cops and the court system is to destroy capitalism.✊



## 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

### Red Army saved the West

NYT Book Review, 8/10 — To the Editor:

As a Briton living in the United States, I occasionally hear an obnoxious taunt from Americans: "We saved you in World War II." [The book reviewer] repeats the canard. "No less than Churchill [and]...Roosevelt saved Western civilization from the greatest menace it has ever known."

...The military force that "saved Western civilization" was the Soviet Union's; 80 percent of German military casualties in the war were inflicted on the Eastern Front. The turning point in the war in Europe came when Hitler [invaded the Soviet Union and] launched Operation Barbarossa in the summer of 1941. ....Yes, America played a part...but it was in a supporting role.

It's time to give up on the Hollywood version of World War II.

### Race is a lie, racism is real

NYT 7/17 — To the Editor:

What should we do about "race"?

Over many decades, those who study genetics have found no biological evidence to support the idea that humans consist of different "races." Based on such scientific data, Ashley Montagu published "Man's Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race" in 1942. New discoveries have confirmed what he said then. So why, over seven decades after his book, do we keep talking and living as though biological "races" exist?...

All "racial" classifications are inherently flawed, because they are based on the false idea of "race."

The myth of "race" has supported the horrors of slavery, apartheid, segregation, eugenics, and the Holocaust. It continues to support racism....

The...ethical goal should be to eliminate the false idea of "race" completely. But how do we both destroy the myth and remedy the harm it has caused?...

### Poor? Banks may shut you out

NYT, 7/31 — Mistakes like a bounced check or a small overdraft have effectively blacklisted more than a million low-income Americans from the mainstream financial system for as long as seven years as a result of little-known private databases that are used by the major banks.



The problem is contributing to the growth of the roughly 10 million households in the United States that lack a banking account, a basic requirement of modern economic life....

But consumer advocates and state authorities say the use of the databases disproportionately affects lower-income Americans, who tend to live paycheck to paycheck, making them more likely to incur negative marks after relatively minor banking missteps like overdrawing accounts, amassing fees or bouncing checks.

....The databases have ensnared millions of low-income Americans....

Hundreds of thousands...are being shut out for relatively small mistakes.

### Rules bar poisoning kids, but....

GW, 7/26 — Authorities in the eastern Indian state of Bihar have ordered head teachers to taste all school lunches before they are served, after 23 schoolchildren died eating a lunch contaminated with pesticide....

However, the move has done little to allay concerns. Critics pointed out the directive only restated existing orders which were rarely followed....

### Tobacco biz helps us not quit

NYT, 8/5 — To the Editor:

[Your article] suggests that smokers continue to smoke because they "exhibit poor self-control in the face of immediate temptation." Notably missing from the discussion is the role of the tobacco industry in exploiting this widely shared character trait.

For example, tobacco manufacturers pay retailers to locate large displays of tobacco products immediately behind the cash registers. Numerous studies have shown that these displays prompt impulse purchases and make it significantly harder for smokers to quit....

### McDonald's advises its low-paid

GW, 7/26 — ...McDonald's...has tacitly responded to criticism that you can't get by on a McJob, with some handy budgeting advice for its staff. There are several glaring omissions in the sample budget, including frivolous extras such as heat, food and gas... [and] a suggested budget of \$20 a month for health insurance....

Being told to "spend less money than you make" by the very people who pay you as little as \$7.70 an hour isn't altogether a winning move.

# Capitalism Can't End Racist Exploitation



Attica Prison Rebellion in 1971

On August 28, 1963, 300,000 demonstrators converged in multiracial unity for the March on Washington For Jobs and Freedom. Fifty years later, with racist inequalities growing wider all the time, we can see the limits of reform under capitalism — and the urgent need for communist revolution.

The 1960s were a brighter time for the U.S. working class. Despite reversals of workers' power in the Soviet Union and China, the revolutions in those countries still inspired class struggle. Two mass movements — for civil rights and against the war in Vietnam — galvanized millions of workers and youth. Rebellions broke out in oppressed and brutalized poor black neighborhoods, from Harlem and Newark to Watts and Detroit.

The March on Washington was designed to channel this anger into a set of legalistic demands. Not everyone went with the program. Malcolm X denounced the march as a "circus" and a "farce." The author James Baldwin was banned from speaking by mainstream civil rights leaders who were currying favor with President John F. Kennedy. Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee's (SNCC) John Lewis did speak, but only after the organizers censored his critique of the president's pending civil rights bill. Among the lines they struck: "Mr. Kennedy is trying to take the revolution out of the streets and put it into the courts."

### Legal Reforms Can't Protect Workers

The approved demands were read aloud to the throng by pacifist Bayard Rustin. Among them were the passage of "effective" civil rights legislation, the immediate end to segregation "in every school district" in the U.S., the "defeat" of unemployment, an increase in the national minimum wage, and a call for "black men and men of every minority group" to get "all of the rights... given to any citizen."

The capitalist ruling class, shaken by the urban uprisings of the sixties and the threat they posed to the profit system, gave its bought-and-paid-for politicians a new set of marching orders. The Civil Rights Act was passed by Congress in 1964, the Voting Rights Act in 1965, the Fair Housing Act in 1968. The number of elected black officials grew from 1,469 in 1970 to more than ten thousand today.

But none of these laws or politicians can alter the fundamental fact that U.S. capitalism is in crisis. The bosses' rate of profit is falling. Imperialist rivals are rising. (China has overtaken the U.S. as the world's leading manufacturer, and is building a modern deep ocean navy.) With no mass movement to be pacified, and no other nation standing as a communist beacon, U.S. capitalists have been free to intensify their attacks on workers' standard of living. While median household income has been flat since 1973, and conditions for the poorest are in free fall, the 400 richest U.S. billionaires are now worth \$1.7 trillion. According to Forbes magazine, their assets — essentially the profits they've stolen from the working class — grew by \$200 billion in 2012 alone.

The civil rights movement represented millions of honest working people — black, Latino, Asian and white. Many sacrificed careers and even their lives in this anti-racist struggle. But the movement had no chance to realize its goals because its leadership focused on legal reform within the status quo. Under capitalism, laws can always be changed or reversed or ignored to suit the rulers' needs of the moment. (This was true long before the Voting Rights Act was gutted last month in a

transparently racist decision by the U.S. Supreme Court.) Laws are the smoke and mirrors the bosses use to conceal what really runs their system, the rule of maximum profit.

### New Presidents, Same Old Racism

We've had nine presidents after Kennedy: Republicans and Democrats, conservatives and liberals, white men and Barack Obama. Nine administrations later, the movement's "dream" is fast receding amid the nightmare of capitalism. Officially sanctioned racism is on the rise, from police murders of black teenagers to

Obama's wholesale deportation of nearly two million immigrants. Racism will never be reformed away; it's an essential component of the profit system. The capitalists need it to exploit workers (including white workers), and also to keep them from seeing their common interests — or their common enemy.

Today, material conditions for the working class in general and black workers in particular are deteriorating. Despite countless waves of reforms, we are in many respects worse off than we were thirty or forty years ago. Jobs and freedom, among other things, are harder to come by than they were in 1963. Consider:

🔊 **Mass incarceration.** In 1963, the U.S. incarceration rate (per 100,000 adults) was less than 200. Today, despite violent crime dipping to record-low levels, the rate has surged to more than 700 per 100,000 — far higher than in any other developed country. A total of 2.2 million people — 70 percent of whom are black and Latino — are now behind bars, according to the Pew Research Center. Nearly five million more are on probation or parole.

Mass imprisonment and the bosses spreading of drugs was a response to the black rebellions in many U.S. cities. The bosses created the racist "War on Drugs," instigated by Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan and sustained by every president since. As a result, black men are incarcerated at more than six times the rate of white men. More than one of ten young black men between 20 and 34 are behind bars; one of three can expect to go to jail or prison in their lifetimes. Most were

continued on page 6

## Malcolm X Speaks: On the Sellout of the 1963 March on Washington

Just ten weeks after the historic civil rights march in August of 1963, Malcolm X gave an important speech — "Message to the 'Grassroots'" — in which he attacked the civil rights misleaders who'd collaborated with the ruling class and sold out the anti-racist struggle of the day.

When reading Malcolm's insightful analysis, quoted below, it's helpful to keep in mind that — back then — Malcolm still viewed nearly all white folks as enemies and advocated black capitalism. But within a year, after two trips to Africa, he would make profound changes in his thinking. He came to recognize that all oppressed people, including white workers, are part of a common, international struggle against a common oppressor. When Malcolm uses the word "white" in this speech, we can substitute "capitalist" to better reflect where he was heading.

He came to the conclusion that the real enemy is capitalism. As Malcolm X put it, "You can't operate a capitalistic system unless you are vulturistic; you have to have someone else's blood to suck to be a capitalist. You show me a capitalist, I'll show you a bloodsucker."

Leading up to the summer of 1963, there was growing anger against racism, with lots of working-class struggle. As Malcolm explains, the March on Washington was spurred by militant grass-roots leaders:

*It was the grass roots out there in the street. . . [It] scared the white power structure in Washington, DC to death; I was there. When they found out that this black steamroller was going to come down on the capital. . .*

*they called in these national Negro leaders that you respect and told them, "Call it off."*

*Kennedy said, "Look, you all letting this thing go too far." And Old Tom said, "Boss, I can't stop it, 'cause I didn't start it." I'm telling you what they said. They said, "I'm not even in it, much less at the head of it." They said, "These Negroes are doing things on their own. They're running ahead of us." And that old shrewd fox [Kennedy], he said, "Well If you all aren't in it, I'll put you in it. I'll put you at the head of it. I'll endorse it. I'll welcome it. I'll help it. I'll join it."*

Malcolm went on to describe how liberal capitalists bought off the "Big Six" civil rights leaders, including Martin Luther King, A. Philip Randolph, James Farmer, and Whitney Young, with \$1.5 million for their new coalition, the Council for United Civil Rights Leadership:

*Soon as they got the set-up organized, the white man made available to them top public relations experts; opened the news media across the country at their disposal; and then they begin to project these Big Six as the leaders of the march. . . . They became the march. They took it over. . .*

*And as they took it over, it lost its militancy. They ceased to be angry. They ceased to be hot. They ceased to be uncompromising. Why, it even ceased to be a march. It became a picnic, a circus. Nothing but a circus, with clowns and all. . . I know you don't like what I'm saying, but I'm going to tell you anyway 'cause I can prove what I'm saying. . . [I]t was a sellout. It was a takeover.*

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