

CHALLENGE



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As Bosses Vie for Power

Shut Down Capitalism with Communist Revolution

The current impasse over the federal debt ceiling (and the resulting government shutdown) reflects a sharp disagreement on how — or whether — to pay the spiraling costs of broader wars. This argument reflects the bosses' growing insecurity as their top-dog status is challenged by China, Russia, and other imperialist rivals. The coming mobilization for war has also triggered a controversial push for more centralized economic control, a key element of the Obamacare health reform.

But despite their serious differences, all wings of both the Democratic and Republican parties wholeheartedly agree on one thing: escalating their attacks on the working class. While \$3.5 million in salaries were shelled out to members of Congress during the first 13 days of the shutdown, the impact on workers was devastating. While the media blathered on about re-opening the Statue of Liberty and the national parks, racist and sexist cuts hit the Women Infants and Children (WIC) food program. These subsidies help sustain life for millions of babies, cared for by predominantly black and Latino mothers. At the same time, cuts in food



Working-class families protest outside the capitol building. The government closure denies assistance to thousands of children, infants and parents in need.



stamps made it that much harder for tens of millions of working-class families to put food on their tables.

Obama proposed a cut in Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid totaling into the billions. But as the New York Times noted (10/5/13), "Both sides [Democrats and Republicans] recognize that the United States must confront the rising costs of the benefit programs, especially Medicare and Medicaid but also Social Security. Those are driving projections that the mounting debt will become unsustainable after 2016." The Times portrayed right-wing Republicans as "embracing several of Mr. Obama's plans that would trim Medicare and Medicaid expenses by \$400 billion."

Food inspections have been suspended, making millions vulnerable to food poisoning. Cost-of-living increases have been halted. Housing applications for mortgages are curtailed. But the U.S. military, 1.4 million strong, is exempt from the shutdown. So is the National Security Agency, whose main job is to spy on every man, woman, and child within reach of an automated camera or cell phone. Neither party is willing to discuss a sub-

stantial source of the multi-trillion-dollar federal debt: the 20-year funding of wars and one thousand U.S. military bases in 120 countries worldwide. Nor do they mention the \$2.5 trillion stolen from the Social Security Trust Fund over the last 30 years to feed the federal budget and finance this military machine.

But other problems are not so easily papered over. The capitalists have no credible plan to address the country's fraying infrastructure, reform its corrupt banking sector, or narrow the gap between the society's haves and have-nots. Widening income inequality, an inevitable feature of capitalism, undermines the bosses' ability to enlist working-class support for their war plans.

Bosses Need Fascism

Whenever the capitalists face a crisis that threatens profits, they must heighten their oppression of our class to try to escape their system's contradictions. At the same time, they must discipline their own class, includ-

Continued on page 2

JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

★ WASHINGTON, DC

Protesters Slam
Racist Police Murders
page 3

★ NEW YORK CITY

Drive Out Dead-Squad
Petraeus; Build Anti-
Imperialist Movement
page 3

★ MEXICO

Striking Teachers
Battle Fascism
page 5

★ LONDON

History Lesson: A Half
Million Workers
Routed British
Fascists
page 8

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.

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Editorial

Shut Down Capitalism Once and for All



Federal workers protest government shutdown

continued from front page

ing the faction that controls the Tea Party, to protect their long-term interests and survival against bosses with a shorter-term outlook. These parallel trends mark a move toward fascism, a period when the rulers strip away the veneer of liberal "democracy" and expose their brutal class dictatorship.

On one side of the capitalists' internal struggle stand the dominant finance capitalists, rooted in big banks like JP Morgan Chase and Citigroup and the huge firms they control, like ExxonMobil and GE. These bosses foresee a costly and global armed conflict threatening their far-flung interests. At stake is control over gas and oil in the Middle East, the essential commodities for any imperialist super-power.

On the other side, smaller U.S. bosses zero in on tax reduction and "smaller government" as cures for their own declining profits. This faction derives profit mostly from domestic investment, as distinct from imperialist adventures abroad. Its main backer is Koch Industries, among the largest privately held U.S. firms, not openly traded on the stock market. The Cato Foundation think tank, a mouthpiece for these smaller bosses, regularly rails at Obama's efforts to raise the debt ceiling to pay for the U.S. war machine.

Just as the Washington crisis began, Cato published "America Is Spending Too Much on Defense" (Cato website, 10/3/13). To U.S. imperialists backing Obama, this was heresy: "A cataclysmic conflict like World War II is unlikely to recur. As such, the continued spending for an ever-receding likelihood needs to be seriously assessed....There is no need for the maintenance of a large standing military force." The piece denied U.S. imperialists' war justifications: "Europe seems to face no notable military threats, the Taiwan/China issue remains a fairly remote concern, and Israel's primary problems derive from the actions of substate groups" [Hamas and Hezbollah].

Big Capital Begg to Differ

JPMorgan and Exxon and their Washington stooges, however, differ on every count. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel toiled most recently for the Atlantic Council, a "nonpartisan" think tank funded by JPMorgan and Exxon. This group ceaselessly warns of Russia's menace to Europe: "Russia, in turn, cannot be certain of NATO and U.S. intentions in Central and Eastern Europe and thus feels compelled to modernize its defenses to protect the deterrent value of its strategic nuclear forces" (Atlantic Council website, 5/21/13).

As for China, U.S. imperialists' big worry is that the inevitable clash may come sooner than expected. As *Foreign Affairs*, another Exxon-JPMorgan organ, published by the Council on Foreign Relations, noted: "There is a real danger that Beijing and Washington will find themselves in a crisis that could quickly escalate to military conflict....The danger of a crisis involving the two nuclear-armed countries is a tangible, near-term concern" (September/October 2013).

This tension was evident at the recent meeting of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, involving 40 Asian countries, which Obama had to miss because of the U.S. domestic crisis. China took advantage of his absence as it steadily expands its Asian sphere of influence.

Fascism is a period when the rulers strip away the veneer of liberal "democracy" and expose their brutal class dictatorship.

Israel, which Cato dismisses as a minor worry, is part of the oil-rich Middle East, cornerstone of the U.S. global empire. By discounting Israel, Cato ignores Iranian and al-Qaeda threats to U.S. energy interests in Iraq, Kuwait and, above all, Saudi Arabia.

On October 4, the Atlantic Council (10/4/13) quoted Director of National Intelligence James Clapper's attack on the radical Republicans and their threat to U.S. imperialism: "I've never seen anything like this. From my view, I think this — on top of sequestration...seriously damages our ability to protect the security and safety of this nation and its citizens.... This is not just a beltway [inside Washington] issue. This affects our global capability." The same piece, "National Security and the Shutdown," urges Obama to secure war funds. Until there is certainty in the defense budget, the Council argues, "credibility and readiness will decline."

Finance capitalists within the Republican Party are also alarmed. The New York Times reported (10/13/13): "One top [Republican] party fundraiser said the Wall Street financiers and corporate executives he counts on for support are 'having fits' over the [Republicans'] brinkmanship strategy, especially related to a potential default if Congress does not agree to raise the debt ceiling later this month. 'The donors I raise money from understand the vital importance of credit markets and are upset that the U.S. credit system is being put at risk'" (Washington Post, 10/5/13).

Only One Side — The Workers' Side

As these two gangs of bosses vie for power and profits, the working class has no stake in either side. Both spell death for our class. Both exert state power on behalf of the capitalists and against the workers. It is our job to expose them and organize direct opposition to their attacks. We must fight back against racist police terror, mass imprisonment and unemployment. We must attack the special oppression of women in the workplace and the degenerate depiction of women in the bosses' media.

Only a movement of millions led by a mass revolutionary communist party, the PLP, can destroy the profit system and the misery it creates. Only a communist organization can establish a workers' state run by and for our class.

Shutdown, yes! Shut down capitalism completely, once and for all! Join PLP!☘

D.C. Protesters Slam Racist Police Murders

WASHINGTON, DC, October 8 — Today PLP rallied at a major subway station to denounce the police murders in this area over the past few days. PLers and friends distributed over 400 leaflets and CHALLENGEs to outraged workers and students. Several workers asked for bunches of flyers to share with their friends, and others expressed the need to take action against the kkkops. A resolution calling for the indictment of the cops has been introduced at the Association for Humanist Sociologists meeting in Arlington, and others are joining this effort against police brutality and racism.

The Case of Miriam Carey

In a gross display of brutal overkill, the Secret Service and the Capitol Police shot 17 times and killed Miriam Carey, an unarmed young black woman. She apparently tried to first crash her car into the White House and then tried to crash it into the Capitol. The cops put out the word that there was “an active shooter incident” to get the public behind them, but the only shooters were the trigger-happy cops. In fact, Cathy Lanier, Chief of Police, boasted that the bollard barriers to both the White House and Capitol, put in place after 9/11, worked perfectly. If that was the case, there was absolutely no reason to gun down the driver. But if you’re black, the cops shoot first and ask questions later.

In Prince George’s County

The day before, in Prince George’s County, the cops chased a man through the woods and shot and killed him as he supposedly reached into a bag. The seven-year veteran cop claimed he feared for his life. But no



Miriam Carey, killed by police in Washington D.C. with her one-year old daughter in the car with her.

weapon was found at the scene — other than the cop’s gun.

Behind Police Brutality

The “War on Drugs” by the government and cops intensified their targeting of black and Latino workers and

led directly to the mass incarceration that jams the jails and prisons throughout the country. The “War on Terror” similarly unleashed military-style attacks against any “threat to the homeland.” The working class is enduring ever greater fascist terror, in addition to massive cutbacks in social programs, wages, and benefits. More devastation lies ahead unless the working class mobilizes to fight back to limit such attacks.

Ongoing Struggle

In a related action, workers and students in the Peoples Coalition in Prince George’s County recently rallied to demand the indictment of the county cops who killed Archie Elliott 3rd as he sat handcuffed in the front seat of a police cruiser in 1993. This case, like the murder of Medgar Evers, the Mississippi NAACP leader, and the murder of four black Birmingham girls in a church bombing, cries out to be re-opened and the killer cops brought to justice. After protest and mass petitioning by the Coalition, the states attorney finally met with Archie’s mother and her supporters. But the response? There was no way the state of Alabama would re-open the 20-year-old case, even as the states attorney acknowledged that the cops were out of control in the 1990s.

Now there are two more bodies that the killer cops have given us, in D.C. and in Prince George’s County, and more throughout the nation. The cops will continue to play their role of terrorizing the working class with brutal racist repression. Justice cannot be won in a racist capitalist system. But the working class can stop them cold with communist revolution.✪

Drive Out Death-Squad Petraeus, Build Anti-Imperialist Movement

NEW YORK CITY, October 15 — More than 90 people filled the room to “Defend the CUNY Six--Drop the Charges Now!” Others were barred from entering by campus security. As reported in the last issue of CHALLENGE, students demonstrating against General David “Death Squad” Petraeus teaching at the City University of New York (CUNY) were attacked by the NYPD on September 17. A panel composed of two students, two professors, and an Iraq war veteran addressed students and their supporters. They denounced the militarization of the community and explained how U.S. Imperialism must be defeated. While the audience responded well to the speeches, little practical plans were put forward.

An anti-war veteran of the 1960’s struggles gave the most concrete remarks. He stated, “The best defense is a good offense!” Because of the week-by-week demonstrations, Petraeus has been forced to teach his Monday seminars in a bunker-like environment with underground garages. PLP and friends must resume these demonstrations wherever he hides, wherever he goes. More importantly, we must build a large citywide anti-imperialist movement on every one of the CUNY campuses because most CUNY students do not yet know about Petraeus, and the foul deeds of the U.S. military and the CIA.

More than that, Progressive Labor Party must be at the forefront of this struggle, calling for communism — a system without wages, imperialist wars, racism, and sexism — as the only solution to the terror capitalists rage against workers and students, domestically and internationally. PLP should use this momentum to build for their International College Conference to Smash Imperialism on November 8 and 9, as it will provide a real alternative to building illusions of a safer capitalism. The conference will engage friends in critical questions, such as what is the relationship between imperialism and fascism; how do we build an antiracist and antisexist movement on campus; why is a communist party, PLP, necessary to building, sustaining, and advancing a communist world.

The veteran suggested that we concentrate our

forces next week on a particular campus. For example, the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) center is at City College. Despite strong faculty opposition voiced at a Town Hall meeting at the College of Staten Island,

Build the International College Conference: Smash Imperialism to provide a real alternative to illusions of a safer capitalism.

the Provost continues to connive to bring in ROTC (see CHALLENGE 10/16). Progressive forces from CSI must be brought together with folks from the three campuses where ROTC has already been instituted: City College, Medgar Evers, and York.

At any rate the students are determined to fight on. They have received letters of support from the Professional Staff Congress (PSC-CUNY). Money has been raised to replace broken glasses and to pay for legal expenses. The workers in PSC will raise more money if needed. But the students alone cannot sustain the struggle by themselves. They need to build strong relationships with faculty and other campus workers, and with soldiers and sailors as well. History shows us that during the course of the struggle against the murderous Vietnam War, both soldiers and students alike rebelled against imperialism. And the majority of the U.S. working class was won to see that slaughtering workers in other countries was not in their interest.

Today the task of building an anti-war movement is more difficult than in the 1960’s because we live in a period of developing fascism. Police terror against black and brown youth has increased. The union movement



has been decimated. Thousands of people remain in detention even though they haven’t been charged let alone convicted. More undocumented immigrants have been deported under Obama’s reign than in any other point in history. Every day new reports come out of increased government spying on civilians at home. Why is all of this happening now? U.S. capitalists are on a collision course with capitalists from China, Russia and other countries. (Russia has a naval base in Syria). To prepare for future conflicts the U.S. government plans a stronger military with more black and Latino officers being trained in ROTC on NYC campuses. The ruling class also plans to develop more and more patriotism among workers and students. Well, we are not going to go along with this program! With communist ideas and practice, fight back!✪

Latest Bosses’ Attack in the Classroom

Rotten to the [Common] Core



Teachers in brooklyn protest bosses’ racist education reform.

As the bosses’ economy continues to tank, one news report after the next warns that young people are entering the worst job market ever. This “new normal” of high unemployment and relentless attacks on salaries, benefits, and unions has teachers running scared as well. In hot pursuit is the main wing of the U.S ruling class. As these capitalists find themselves losing ground to their imperialist rivals, they are pushing for greater, more centralized control over what is being taught.

Most recently that push has taken the form of the Common Core — our common enemy.

The Common Core is a set of learning goals the bosses have established that require even more high-stakes testing. It is a part of President Barack Obama’s “Race to the Top,” a competition where the losers — students and teachers alike — are trained to blame themselves, not the racist, exploitive capitalist system. Education workers, parents and students must not be fooled by the bosses’ stated goal to use the Common Core to ramp up “critical thinking.” Real critical thinking would uncover the truth that capitalism can never work for the vast majority.

Budget Cuts Tied to Imperialist Wars

The budget pressure facing schools across the U.S. is directly tied to the multi-trillion-dollar expenses from the failed imperialist adventures in Iraq and Afghanistan, and to the need to fund future wars in the Middle East and eventually Asia. The budget cuts are frontal attacks on teachers and their unions. But their primary targets are working-class students. Today these young people spend their days in degraded learning conditions. Tomorrow they may be battlefield casualties in the bosses’ next imperialist war.

United, teachers, parents, and students could effectively fight back against these anti-worker education reforms. That’s why the bosses design these reforms

to drive a wedge between education workers and the families they serve.

Common Core is the latest development in a long-standing ruling-class effort to produce workers to serve its industrial and military machines and to control school curricula. In the 1930s and ‘40s, the Rockefeller Foundation contributed heavily to the creation of the Educational Testing Service, the agency that spawned the College Board and its racist and hated SAT. Starting before World War II, the Carnegie Foundation, a leading force in the racist eugenics movement (breed only genetically “superior” people), spent millions to develop standardized tests. In 1965, it initiated the National Assessment of Educational Progress, which is still used today as a national standard to measure the fitness of the working class for industrial and military competition with the U.S. bosses’ overseas rivals. With an estimated 30 percent of high school graduates now lacking the tools for military service, the crisis of capitalist education is acute.

The same U.S. ruling class forces are now positioning themselves in a desperate fight to maintain supremacy, a struggle that will inevitably lead to bigger and broader wars. Every education reform pronouncement of Barack Obama and Education Secretary Arne Duncan is framed by a thinly veiled rhetoric of war. The priority, they tell us, is to make sure U.S. capitalism is not “surpassed,” by its rivals, and that its workers are prepared to compete in the global economy. As surely as trade wars lead to shooting wars, education workers, students and parents must harbor no illusions about the true purpose of education reform: war preparation.

The Liberal Myth of Opportunity

The broad shift in the U.S. economy away from manufacturing and toward the so-called “service sector” has placed new pressure on the rulers to dress up their schools as places where any young person can unlock their opportunity to a better future, if only they try. Rac-

ism makes a mockery of this promise. Liberal commentators like Diane Ravitch take this hypocrisy seriously — reforms like the Common Core undermine U.S. democracy, as she says repeatedly. In Ravitch’s world, we ought not to expect proficiency from all students. She believes we ought to be honest in saying that schools must do a better job in more fairly sorting out young people for various rungs on the job market ladder. And as the job market trends toward a status quo where a small number of highly educated (and debt-ridden) college graduates claw their way into a “knowledge economy,”

Literacy, For What?

Ruling Class Purpose:

Train workers to be more useful tools of capital by teaching them certain skills necessary for capitalist production.

Train workers in capitalist ideology so they can better serve the needs of the capitalists preparing for war against their economic rivals.

Workers who can’t read are generally unreliable for the bosses, both on the job and the battlefield. They are almost certainly disenchanted with the system, angry and bitter. Jails to control “unmanageable” workers and youth are only one part of the rulers’ strategy. They need loyal workers who will fight and die for capitalism.

Communist Purpose:

For communists, literacy is a weapon to understand and change the world. Workers need to analyze and understand events. They need to better understand the Party’s ideas so as to deepen their commitment to communism. This creates determined revolutionary members and leaders, who are vital to move the working class to power and construct the first truly communist society.

High Communist Standards for the Working Class

In every subject area, we can plan lessons that critique aspects of capitalism. For example, when a local hospital was conducting experiments to “prove” black and Latin youth were “violent by nature,” a ninth-grade English teacher developed a unit on “controversial issues.” By investigating issues from all sides, students unmasked the racist nature of these experiments and wrote letters to a mass organization fighting the experiments. Through this they learned: (1) literacy strategies for reading difficult material; (2) how to evaluate sources; (3) the perfect form for business letters; and (4) appropriate vocabulary (like “fascism” and “pseudoscience”). They also attended and spoke at a scientific forum condemning the experiments. Later, after a local police murder, these students could make the connection between the racist experiments and racist police terror. More could have been done to link the classroom learning to class struggle against capitalism, but several youths were recruited to the Progressive Labor Party out of this work.

while most remain locked into a lifetime of sporadic employment and low earnings, the myth that every worker had a chance at success becomes ever more important. To make workers continue to blame ourselves for the failures of the capitalists’ system, the mirage of a high-quality education available to all becomes ever more crucial. Enter the Common Core.

The Common Core exists in the same world as the one where racist police murder and National Security Agency surveillance go unchecked. The Common Core’s intensified monitoring and computerization provides the rulers new avenues for control over what is said in classrooms and staff meetings. National teacher union leaders have embraced these steps toward fascism. On the local level, union leaders have done little more than question or negotiate the pace of their implementation. Talk of “higher standards” and “critical thinking” is a foil to win well-meaning and anti-racist teachers into the patriotic fold.

True critical thinking would lead to massive strikes and walkouts. We should aspire to this higher standard of learning and action. Yet the important teachers strike in Chicago last fall teaches us that we must aim for even more. A radical, militant, anti-racist alternative is desperately needed in battles against segregation and racist school closures in Chicago, New York, and throughout the U.S. The Progressive Labor Party is establishing a beachhead for bigger battles to come. Education workers, students and parents must fight tooth and nail against the Common Core and war budgets with our eye on the biggest prize. We must organize a movement for a working-class revolution. Our goal is to win the world our children — and theirs — deserve: a communist world.☺



Students fight school closings

Mexico: Striking Teachers Battle Fascism

MEXICO CITY, October 13 — The fascist repression against the striking teachers of the National Coordinating Committee (CNTE) unleashed by the bosses' government of President Enrique Peña Nieto reveals the criminal and anti-working class nature of the capitalist system. The complicity of Miguel Angel Mancera, the mayor of Mexico City, also illustrates how politicians of all the electoral parties — PRI, PAN, PRD, or PT — are capitalists' loyal servants bent on turning education into a profit-driven business during their global crisis.

The brutal eviction from the city center carried out on September 13 by thousands of federal cops and Federal District riot police, and the subsequent military occupation of the city center, exemplify the fascism the bosses will use to impose their plans.

CNTE teachers' courage in resisting fascist repression (see CHALLENGE, 10/2) as well as the attacks from the bosses' media, has inspired thousands of teachers nation-wide, to go on strike, occupy public squares and fight the cops.

Fascist Dictatorship and Imperialists' Interests

In two CNTE-sponsored discussions about education reform, columnist Luis Hernandez Navarro presented the paper "The Counter Education Reform," describing how the ruling class, represented by businessman Claudio Gonzalez, outlined for Peña the content of the reform, and how to pass it into law.

The September 13 fascist repression demonstrates the role of the police and the army as enforcers of their law. That apparatus serves the interests of the class in power, the bosses, as do the executive, legislative and judicial branches, at the federal and state level.

As long as the bosses hold political power, the laws and the might of the state will be used to impose the interests of the ruling class on the working class — a dictatorship of a minority of millionaires oppressing an impoverished majority.

In the U.S. the education market is valued at \$1.3 trillion. For the multimillionaire Rupert Murdoch, owner



of Fox News, the business of education in the U.S. represents an "opportunity" of \$500 billion (La Jornada, 1/3/13).

U.S. bosses are enacting reforms to destroy public education and turn it into a lucrative business. It's the same plan being implemented in Mexico; Claudio Gonzalez is advisor to private schools and is connected with Televisa, the media conglomerate.

We Need A Revolutionary Party

Labor, education, energy and fiscal reforms are all interconnected, responding to the needs of the imperialists and local capitalists. It means more oppression, fascist control and exploitation for the working class, and more profits and power for the capitalists. Trade union struggles are limited in confronting these interests and their leaders defend the system.

We must fight these attacks, which affect all workers. But we need to be organized as a class to destroy the

capitalist system that's behind these attacks. It's in the bosses' interest to separate these reform struggles and separate those involved in each one.

Working-class liberation can only be achieved by seizing political power through a communist revolution, led by a workers' revolutionary party, not a bosses' electoral party. Only a revolutionary party can tie these struggles together, not just to fight the bosses' attacks, but to smash the capitalist dictatorship and build a workers' dictatorship.

We must unite as a class internationally since similar reforms confronting us affect workers worldwide.

We're calling on all teachers in struggle, and to the working class as a whole, to join Progressive Labor Party. The best lesson teachers can give their students is to join the struggle for a socially just society: communism! That's REAL education.✊

A History Lesson

A Half Million Workers Routed British Fascists

continued from back page

At Cable Street the massive wall of people held their ground and only retreated to pick up bricks or bottles to throw at the cops and fascists. Soon wounded police, fascists and protesters were carried off. The anti-fascist forces were so aggressive that a myth grew declaring that the police had surrendered to the crowd. One recently married young electrician who was hit in the face with a nightstick would talk about it proudly 30 years later.

Bearded Jews, Irish Dockers Unite

The fascists were under a constant hail of bricks, bottles and stones. As the crowd continued to fight, over 100 anti-fascist fighters were arrested, but still the police could not move the masses who held the cops within a vise grip. One demonstrator was moved to tears seeing bearded Jews and Irish dockworkers standing together to stop Moseley, saying "I shall never forget that as long as I live!"

At 4:15 the Police Commissioner canceled the BUF's right to march. But now the police had to save them from being killed by the crowd. They surrendered Cable Street and attempted to escape two blocks away to Gardener's Corner where they could leave the East End. The BUF hastily turned at Gardener's Corner, but the anti-fascists — waiting for them — shouted, "Get them!" and crashed through police lines. They then chased the fascists out of London's East End.

Later that night an elderly woman asked a band-

aged fighter if he had been at that day's battle. Fearing her disapproval, he denied being there. To his surprise and joy she said, "A curse on you that you did not fight this day." To him it sounded like a Shakespearian quotation.

For days people celebrated throughout London. The fascists continued to try to organize, but now much of the ruling classes withdrew their open support (many began to view Hitler as a rival imperialist threat) and it was clear that workers wouldn't be easily won to fascism. In early December, Edward VIII abdicated, having been king for only 10 months. The official story stated he left "to be with the woman he loved," but among the working class it was common knowledge that he was forced out because of his open fascist ties.

From this battle we can see the working class should never give in to nationalist leaders. Both Jewish and Irish community and religious leaders tried to convince the masses not to fight the fascists, fearful of "causing more problems." But if the fascists had not been fought at Cable Street, they would have been a much stronger ally of Hitler inside Britain during World War II.

The constant communist-led, anti-fascist organizing over many years led to the understanding and empowerment of the working class.

Dare to struggle — dare to win!✊

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LETTERS

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

Building A Revolutionary Party in L.A.

Progressive Labor Party held the first of a series of fundraising dinners to support the organization financially and to help develop Party members capable of leading the working class in the struggle to build a revolutionary communist movement.

A mix of forty students, teachers and professors, and public health, industrial and transit workers attended the event, raising a significant sum. The fundraiser began with a screening of the film “Seeing Red” which documents the role of communists in building the U.S. labor movement and leading class struggle, which resulted in reforms such as Social Security, unemployment benefits and the 40-hour week.

A speaker then discussed the struggle at a local clinic to build a union among public health workers. He pointed out how important it is for us to learn from the mistakes of the historical communist movement. He specifically talked about the need for a party with an ideology that moves workers beyond reforms to a revolutionary communist outlook. The next two speakers provided an international perspective on PLP’s work. One comrade provided an update from PLP’s growing work in El Salvador. Another comrade analyzed U.S. intervention in Syria from the perspective of PLP in Israel/Palestine.

Finally, a comrade concluded with a discussion of the recent international communist school in New York and a future summer project in Los Angeles, emphasizing the importance of financially supporting these leadership-building activities. All in all, this was a successful activity and just one of many such events that could help our Party to grow.

The Los Angeles Reds

PL’ers Expose Real Story of Syria Civil War

During the Syria crisis, when the war hawks Obama and Co. began to threaten military action against Assad’s government for the use of chemical weapons, PL’ers who work in a mass community organization in the Latino working-class neighborhood of Bushwick in Brooklyn, NY immediately requested the opportunity to give a workshop in one of these committees. Surprisingly, we were given the green light to give a half- hour

workshop on the current Syrian crisis.

In the workshop we explained the history of the use of weapons of mass destruction in wars by the U.S. against civilian populations such as in World War II against Japan and during the Vietnam war. We also used a map of the world to point out the rivalry of the U.S. and its allies vs. Russian/Chinese allies for the control of natural resources and in this particular case, natural gas and the pipelines for it. We explained that there are two proposed, competing gas pipelines: the South Stream Pipeline and the Nabucco Pipeline. We said this conflict is all about the bosses’ push for control of natural gas and its profits.

We received some good feedback from the community organization members, and they did have questions. The workers were surprised that nothing that we mentioned in our workshop was discussed in the U.S. media, such as natural gas and the pipelines. It made sense to them since according to the U.S. media Russia was also involved in the conflict. But the workers’ main concern was a possible war with Russia and World War III. War is always a horror for the working class, and so the bosses always have to build political support and nationalism with lies in order to get the working class to fight their wars. Workers understand very well who will benefit from these wars and who will suffer.

The following day we got feedback from the leaders of the community organization, who had not been too happy with our workshop. They told us that the organization is not worried about issues that people cannot control, such as the conflict in Syria. These leaders basically indicated they are primarily concerned with actions such as voting and supporting liberal politicians. This is very hypocritical, since they always claim they are not a political organization. But we know all too well that it is led by the Democratic Party so they are always pushing members of the organization to vote for their candidates.

We followed up the workshop with a PL study group with some of our friends who are interested in learning more of the Party’s communist analysis. They said they wish we could have more workshops such as the one on the crisis in Syria. One of the women at the study group believes that Assad is an evil man, because he murders his own people. We then questioned how is Assad any different than Obama who is closing down hospitals and also killing his own people.

The study group helped sharpened our communist analysis with our friends, bringing home the idea that capitalism will always bring war and suffering to the working class so the ruling class can profit, and that the only solution is a communist revolution.

Communist Organizers

How Racism Rules the Schools

After relocating to Indianapolis, Indiana I am now a substitute teacher at charter schools teaching kindergarten to middle school. Even in this experience, one can see rotten capitalism and why parents and teachers should join PLP to fight for a communist future.

On my first day, I taught third graders at a racially segregated (nearly all black students) school because their parents could only afford living in this one neighborhood. (There are multiracial charter schools in the suburbs where middle class parents live.) If these black workers were not paid lower wages by racist bosses, they would be able to live in less racially segregated communities.

It was quite an experience teaching young minds. I really like this new career. I have had numerous assignments. One was in a racially segregated mostly white neighborhood where the parents had more money. (Capitalism tries to divide workers by “race” and money.)

My most unforgettable school was terrible beyond words: It was a

charter school for emotionally troubled kids who were kicked out of other school districts. These children were violent, and the administration put me in the school’s “Intensive Support Room” which was a horrible jail-like facility. It was socializing kids for the REAL jails! It even had two holding rooms (cells) for students. There was even a cop there. I hated it.

When I volunteered for the assignment, I had no idea what I was getting myself into. I will never go back to that school again. Putting kids in school jail is not a solution to their “bad behavior.” These kids are unstable due to capitalism and poverty and are having an extreme reaction to it! (Marx did say, “being determines consciousness.”) Kids like that were cared for after the Bolshevik and Chinese Revolutions, which instead of punishing them, treated them better than oppressive capitalism.

I would like to learn more about Marxist educators. Capitalism is bad for not only kids, but also their parents. The only way out is through communist revolution led by PLP.

Indiana Red

Syria’s Massacre of Refugees from Palestine

Working-class unity towards a communist revolution will end the nightmare in Syria.

The mainstream media in the West have hidden the fact that since the conflict there began, the people suffering the most are Arab workers from Palestine who’ve been refugees in Syria since the 1948 Zionist ethnic cleansing and fascist colonization of the historic territories of Palestine.

According to several reports, the protest turned into an armed struggle mainly due to Western imperialist intervention along with the reactionary regimes of Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey and the repressive attempts to crush it by Assad’s regime itself.

Since that process began, the Arab workers from Palestine have been treated as a “fifth column” both by the regime and the insurgencies. Both sides commit massacres in the Palestinian refugee camps. Probably thousands of innocent workers have been murdered amid a severe shortage of water and food. Moreover, due to the heavy battles in the refugee camps, the humanitarian aid agencies have been evacuated.

In addition, it seems that both the insurgencies and the regime have adopted the notorious slogan: “Smash the Palestinians and save Syria.”

Politically, it seems that the new governing formula in a future Syria will be divide and rule among the various religions and ethnicities there.

This nightmare can be ended only by uniting all workers, no matter their ethnicity, and formation of a mass revolutionary communist party which can join the anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist struggle in the Arab world and the working class worldwide. That political force can be built from the grassroots resistance movements inside Syria and with international working-class solidarity. One of the first crucial steps of the revolutionary party is to end the massacre of the workers from Palestine. This will be the most stable foundation to realize the right of return of these refugee workers.

CHALLENGE Reader

Columbus Mass Murderer

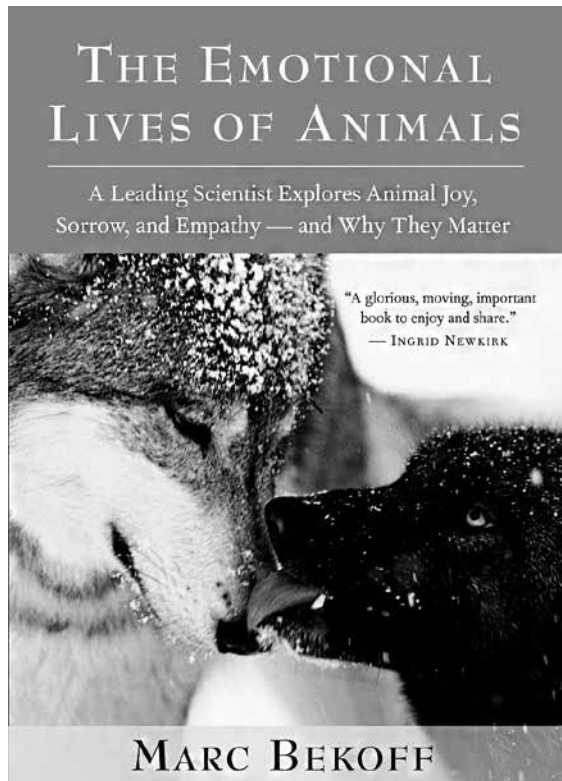
This month, the U.S. and Western capitalists will celebrate Columbus as a great navigator and “discoverer”. But history shows he was a genocidal mercenary who was financed by stock-holding capitalists and a Spanish kingdom in which two percent of nobility owned 95 percent of all land. Columbus was promised ten percent of the profits from gold, silver, slaves and the governorship over stolen lands. The Catholic Church in Spain that had expelled all Jews and black Africans (Moors) supported the genocide of millions of native people who practiced “godless” communist sharing of goods and land. The total populations on some islands like Haiti were eliminated and black African slaves had to be brought in to work the mines and plantations. The Indian population north of Mexico when Columbus came was ten million and by 1776 was reduced to less than one million.

Capitalism has used mass murder and slavery for the primitive accumulation of capital that has financed endless wars and exploitation leading to today’s worldwide imperialist slaughter. Capitalism has also produced a revolutionary working class with the potential to end the horror that is capitalism when they organize for communist revolution.

Old-Time Comrade



Cooperation Is the REAL Human Nature



Many people talk about human nature, saying that competition is “natural,” and that it leads to progress and that the selfishness of capitalism is really natural and acceptable. An important book puts a big hole in that idea, using scientific research into the emotions of animals. And it points out how capitalism has distorted the science for its own reasons by emphasizing competition over cooperation.

Marc Bekoff’s book, *The Emotional Lives of Animals*, (2007) records anecdotal evidence that most “higher” animals show rich emotional behaviours, more similar

than different from the joy, grief and anger of humans. There is a foreword by Jane Goodall, famous for her years of observing primates in their natural habitat. Bekoff’s purpose parallels her work in his description of the interactions of many species. But by far the more interesting conclusion from his work lies in his secondary thesis that cooperation forms the basis for continuation of the species of all social animals.

Distorting Darwin

We have been taught that Darwin’s legacy is survival of the fittest (and from that, the “social Darwinist” theory that the spirit of competition ensures superiority of the wealthy under a profit system). Current capitalist philosophy takes this distortion of Darwin to promote the idea that basic human nature needs to be self-centered to win the race of life. On the contrary, Darwin and many others have observed that most animals are social beings whose collective societies can only survive through mutual aid and co-existence. Bekoff quotes Darwin, “Those communities which included the greatest number of sympathetic members would flourish best and rear the greatest number of offspring.”

In *The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals*, Darwin argues that “emotions evolved in both animals and humans for the purpose of furthering social bonds in group-living animals.” He believed that emotions connected us with the rest of our community and with the rest of the earth. He discussed morality as a natural extension and outgrowth of such social instincts.

As an example, Bekoff’s book cites evidence of parallel “brain-wiring” for cooperation which exists in both animals and man. A study from *The New Scientist*, December 2, 2006, reported that in many species of whales — humpback, fin, killer and sperm — spindle cells were found to be in the same area of their brains as human spindle cells. This brain region is linked with social organization, empathy, intuition about the feelings of oth-

ers . . . And whales have more of them than humans! (p. xix preface)

The critical nature of social interaction has been documented through observation by Bekoff and others. His fieldwork among coyotes for over seven years in the Grand Teton National Park revealed the importance to survival of group dependence where those yearlings who drifted away from their society suffered a 55% mortality rate, compared to less than 20% for their stay-at-home peers.

Egalitarianism = Survival

Coyotes, as well as many domestic animals, compensate for differences in strength and size during play and close social connections in order to prolong the activity. They manifest self-handicapping (lying down, exposing their stomach) and role-reversing (when a large animal plays with a much smaller one) to make the interaction more mutual. This “egalitarianism” as Darwin labelled it, is another basis for the survival of species.

Further, Bekoff says that affiliative behaviour, the egalitarianism of fair play, and shared caring for the young is a precondition for evolution of humans. He concludes that, in the “survival of the fittest” philosophy, cooperation has long been ignored because of the ideological basis of competition. He says the “more we look for cooperation, the more we discover its presence. Animals certainly will compete, but cooperation is central in the evolution of social behaviour, and this alone makes it key for survival.”

The first primitive communist societies of tribes shared resources and cherished the land. Today, billions living in poverty survive by employing collectivity, and fighting back against their exploiters who profit off their misery. History is teaching working people that class struggle for communism is the real key to survival and happiness. ☸

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

Test industry hurts many students

NYT, 10/9 — To the Editor:

In more than four decades of teaching, including 23 years as a secondary school principal, I have become increasingly dismayed at the growing influence of standardized tests and the test preparation industry for students as young as those entering preschool to those who are preparing to enter graduate-level programs. So I was heartened by the news last month that most New York City private schools are likely to drop the E.R.B. entrance exam for kindergarten and first grade.

Yet this is but one small step in dismantling a financial behemoth that not only produces unrelieved anxiety for students and their parents, but also interferes with students’ independent thinking, deep engagement with ideas in the classroom, and, ultimately, intellectual and moral development.

Cola profiteers claiming sainthood

NYT, 9/1 — The Coca-Cola Company plans to erect 150 kiosks in 20 countries that will offer water, electricity and internet connections; they may also sell Coke and other products....

Soft drink companies are often accused of contributing to obesity epidemic and Coca-Cola has been criticized for expanding its line of sugary products into poor countries where nutrition is subpar and dental care is lacking. Coke executives have countered that their bottling plants [also] supply clean water and small entrepreneurs make money selling their drinks.

Religions are slipping

NYT, 10/1 — The first major survey of American Jews in more than 10 years finds a significant rise in those who are not religious, marry outside their faith and are

not raising their children Jewish....

The intermarriage rate, a bellwether statistic, has reached a high of 58 percent for all Jews, and 71 percent for non-Orthodox Jews — a huge change from before 1970 when only 17 percent of Jews married outside the faith....One-fourth do not believe in God....

Drivers use drinking as a defense!

NYT, 10/4 — Martin Heidgen went on a drinking binge for 10 hours in Manhattan and Nassau County, then drove his pickup the wrong way down Meadowbrook State Parkway for miles, killing a...driver and a 7-year-old girl.

Taliyah Taylor took ecstasy, stripped naked during a screaming match with her mother, then sped away in her car, reaching 80 miles an hour on Forest Avenue in Staten Island with her headlights off before she slammed into a pedestrian and killed him.

Franklin McPherson drank himself into a stupor at a Hempstead nightclub, then got in a car and sped down the Southern State Parkway in the wrong direction; five miles later he collided with a Jeep and killed a man.

Jurors convicted all three of second-degree murder....A [review] panel of judges wrestled with a thorny legal question: Can people become so intoxicated that it is impossible for them to be in the state of mind the law defines as depraved indifference?

During more than an hour of intense questioning from judges, defense lawyers argued their clients were too drunk or high to understand what they were doing and were oblivious to the threat they posed to others....

In a series of recent cases,...the Court of Appeals had held that depraved indifference is a state of mind. Those rulings have given prosecutors the extra burden of proving that a defendant consciously and will-



ingly showed “an utter disregard for the value of human life”...in drunken driving cases.

Appeals upheld a lower court’s ruling that a driver... was so drunk when he entered a highway going the wrong way that he was “oblivious” to the danger he had created.

That ruling left open the possibility that extremely heavy drinking would be a defense in vehicular homicide cases....

Mr. Heidgen’s lawyer...argued that prosecutors... never proved that his client...knew he was driving the wrong way down the highway. She said...they did not prove he consciously disregarded the risk....

Lesson from History

A Half Million Workers Routed British Fascists

October 4 marked the 77th anniversary of a great battle against fascism — the “Battle of Cable Street” in London’s East End. Stories of that day are still talked about amongst the British working class.

For 300 years the East End of London had been a passageway of poor working-class immigrants into Britain. In 1936 the area’s population was largely Polish and Russian Jews, Irish Catholics and non-immigrant English working class. Most streets were a crooked tangle. Tiny houses were crammed together — 18th century industrial housing with flush toilets out the back. Many people worked on the nearby docks and in small factories, garment sweatshops and open air markets.

At that time, Sir Oswald Moseley’s Blackshirts — the British Union of Fascists (BUF) — was by far the largest fascist grouping of many that were growing in Britain and elsewhere in Europe. They had close ties to Hitler. Moseley’s group sent committed fascists into the East End to beat up and terrorize Jews. They wanted to divide the Jews from all the other immigrant groups. They labeled Jews “tyrants of international banking.” On the streets, fascists would scream “kill the kikes” and “get rid of the yids.” Amid a severe depression, Moseley’s movement was growing among the unemployed, white collar workers and small businessmen.

Ruling Class Funds the Fascists

A lot of Britain’s upper and ruling class funded the BUF. Some of Britain’s big newspapers — the Daily Mail, Evening News and Sunday Dispatch — promoted it. Even the recently crowned King (Edward VIII) had wealthy fascist friends in Britain, France and Germany. The police often turned a blind eye to the fascists’ beatings of Jews. Communists and trade unionists — many themselves Jews — led the attack on the fascists in the streets.

Moseley decided to show his strength by marching 10,000 uniformed Blackshirts and thousands of supporters directly through the Jewish/Irish neighborhood. Police Commissioner Sir Philip Game ordered his cops to



A woman marched shouting, “They shall not pass!” and headed towards Aldgate. By the time she reached it, thousands were following her.

“support the march.”

October 4th dawned bright and sunny. Ten thousand police were assigned to protect Mosley’s fascists. The official Jewish leadership advised workers to stay indoors and not show aggressiveness to them. But up to 500,000 people from the East End and other parts of London came to stop the fascist march. Mass and individual acts of heroism flooded the streets of the East End. The names of Cable Street, Gardener’s Corner and

Aldgate joined the list of great working-class battles.

At Mile End (an East End street), a woman marched shouting, “They shall not pass!” and headed towards Aldgate. By the time she reached it thousands were following her. At Cable Street, jeering and singing crowds tried to breach the wall of cops to get at the fascists. The police attacked using nightsticks while mounted police charged the crowd. The horses stumbled from children hurling marbles under their hoofs and bursting bags of pepper under their noses. Women threw the contents of chamber pots from windows. The Nazis screamed, “The yids, the yids. We gotta get rid of the yids.” But the people chanted, “They will not pass!”

The masses erected barricades. A truck was turned on its side to block the street; old mattresses, bricks and pushcarts were thrown on top. An Irish anti-fascist bus driver drove his double-decker bus across the road, forming a barricade between the police and the anti-fascists. It was later pushed on its side. Red flags hung from windows. The army of fascists demanded the police escort them through the masses of people.

Continued on page 5



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