

CHALLENGE



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Mass Fight Against School Privatization Sweeps Mexico

MEXICO CITY, September 30 — It's been a month since teachers from states throughout Mexico, organized in the National Coordinating Committee (CNTE), struck against the rulers' attack on workers in the guise of education reform. Now the struggle has spread throughout Mexico as other teachers, parents and diverse groups of workers and students join the fight.

The bosses' government, headed by the criminal lackey of imperialism and the local capitalist class, President Enrique Peña Nieto, is pushing this reform. It will privatize schools and put them out of reach for most working-class children.

When teachers nationally learned of this cruel news, their struggle grew through massive actions in areas normally controlled by the sellout leadership of the National Union of Education Workers (SNTE), along with the Mexican bosses' three largest parties: PRI, PAN and PRD. The national strike of workers and students grew from 300,000 to 500,000. More than 300,000 protesters occupied the Mexico City center. Huge marches have blocked the international airport there. Numerous actions at the state level have strengthened the movement to squash these latest fascist laws.

No Peaceful Retreat

September 13 marked the historic battle of the Heroic Children of Chapultepec against the 1847 invasion by U.S. imperialism. The Mexican ruling class spent millions of pesos on this "patriotic holiday" in a crude attempt to mobilize people to cheer the president — and as a pretext to send 4,000 federal cops to brutally evict the CNTE from the city center. These fascists expected us to peacefully retreat on our knees. Instead, teachers, neighbors and students courageously resisted the attack. The goons injured hundreds and arrested 32 CNTE members. But many cops who "lost" their weapons got what they deserved. While the cops emptied the plaza, the bosses' campaign to build Mexican nationalism and patriotism failed.

This is how the dictatorship of the



Protesters fight the police during a protest against President Nieto.

ruling class works. The capitalists disguise it as "democracy" and use their laws, ideology, and repressive apparatus to impose their interests on the working class. When that doesn't work, they resort to more open fascism — to military dictatorship and state terror.

The violent eviction in Mexico City, far from diminishing the struggle, sparked a nationwide expansion. CNTE grew stronger. On September 19 and 20, it organized a 48-hour national civic strike. Twenty-eight of 58 union locals, including SNTE members, joined militant actions. They effectively shattered the control of the sellout leadership headed by Juan Díaz de la Torre.

Trade unions and peasants, university students in Mexico City and parents, community police in Guerrero and

Michoacán — all have joined the struggle. They have blocked roads, ports and airports. They have taken over custom offices, bridges and government buildings.

Bosses Scapegoat Teachers

Since August, the liberal capitalist dictatorship, masquerading as a democratic government led by Peña Nieto, began implementing a series of "structural reforms," a pro-capitalist and anti-working class project. They are backed by the leadership of the main bourgeois parties (PRI, PAN, PRD and PVEM), grouped in the so-called "Pact for Mexico." They are also supported by the mafia of goons and pimps who compose the Senate and Chamber of Deputies.

The treacherous Pact for Mexico first

cooked up a criminal plan to impose labor reform and privatization of the education sector. They launched a huge media campaign to extol the virtues of the reforms. At the same time, they waged relentless attacks against the SNTE and teachers in general, blaming them for the backwardness of education in Mexico. Local 22, the militant Oaxaca local, was particularly targeted for a media lynching by the media.

Televisa fired the first shot with "De Panzazo" ("Belly Flop"), a mediocre film produced by the deceitful Carlos Loret de Mola and sponsored by the Mexicans First Industrial Group, whose main interest is to turn education into a lucrative business. This pack of hounds was joined

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OUR FIGHT

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

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

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

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

★Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society’s benefits and burdens.

★Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of “race.” Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit black, Latino, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.

★Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women — sexism — and divisive gender roles created by the class society.

★Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

★Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion’s false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.

★Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

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

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

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Editorial

Mideast Wars, Oil, Imperialist Rivalry: A Lethal Mix

The murderous conflict in Syria and the killings in Iraq and Kenya are becoming yet another front in the world’s inter-imperialist rivalry. Bosses are jockeying for position in the fight over Middle East oil and gas. U.S. rulers are using a divide-and-conquer strategy — both to oppress the U.S. working class and to maintain their global supremacy over their capitalist enemies.

It is the task of communists in the Progressive Labor Party to transform this imperialist struggle into a class war to overthrow capitalism. Only communism can end the bosses’ perpetual carnage.

In 1990, U.S. president George H. W. Bush invaded Iraq with more than half a million troops to recapture the Kuwaiti oil fields seized by dictator Saddam Hussein. Soon after, U.S. forces withdrew. Then President Bill Clinton used sanctions and missiles to soften up Iraq for George W. Bush’s grab for the country’s oil wealth. Bush’s advisers thought that the collapse of the Soviet Union, previously the main U.S. rival, gave them an opportunity to take over Iraq swiftly, on the cheap, and with a relatively small army.

Over the next 20 years, the U.S. ruling class killed several million Iraqis and forced four million more to flee the country. But it never achieved its goal, and Iraq remains up for grabs. The U.S. rulers are slowly learning this lesson, as their halting threats to attack Syria indicate.

Bosses Choose their ‘Heroes’

When terrorists killed dozens of shoppers in the upscale Westgate Mall in Nairobi, Kenya, the world’s media published touching stories of the victims’ lives and tales of heroism. But workers in Iraq are suffering a Nairobi-level massacre once a week with scant media coverage. Terrorists’ bombs and bullets have killed more than 4,000 people there this year, including 804 in August alone.

Meanwhile, Barack Obama used the attack in the Navy yard in Washington, DC, to tout the victims as heroes and “patriots” and heighten nationalist feeling in the U.S. Soon afterward, a Sikh Indian Columbia University professor was attacked on the street as an “enemy jihadist.”

Two causes underlie the media’s inattention to Iraq. First, since the murdered Iraqis are mainly poor workers, they matter less to capitalist media barons than affluent mall-goers. Second, full publicity would expose U.S. imperialism’s hand in the slaughter.

In 2003, the small number of troops the U.S. put on Iraq’s soil failed to pacify its warring Shiite, Sunni and Kurdish factions, the main sources of today’s terror attacks. In fact, it was only when the Pentagon paid off the insurgent Sunnis to switch sides — as the decisive element of its “surge” — that the U.S. was able to put al Qaeda forces on the defensive. While the payoffs stopped when the current pro-Shiite Maliki regime took control, U.S. rulers are still using religion and nationalism to provoke conflicts in their class interests.

Shaky security, among other issues, blocks U.S. and allied oil companies from significantly raising Iraqi oil production. It stands nowhere near the predicted 12 million barrels a day needed to satisfy both U.S. and foreign firms, and Iraqi factions.

Exxon Divides to Conquer

ExxonMobil also seeks to build its share of Iraqi oil by playing one group against another, further fueling sectarian flames. Exxon was supposed to come out victorious in Iraq. As the U.S.’s flagship oil firm, it had won majority rights to Iraq’s West Qurna I oil fields, one of the largest in the world, with estimated resources of around eight billion barrels. But Exxon is pumping less than a fifth of what it should from Qurna:

Exxon entered into a technical service contract with the Iraqi government in 2010, to boost the production rate from the field to 2.8 million barrels per day (MMBD) from 0.25 MMBD. The field is currently producing over 0.5 MMBD and is expected to reach a level of 0.6 MMBD by the end of the year (Trefis, 9/27/13).

The shortfall is mostly due to the constraints that Iraq’s President Maliki, a pro-Iranian Shiite, imposed on the deal (see box).

In addition to dividing anti-Baghdad Kurds and the Maliki government, Exxon is emboldening anti-Shiite Sunnis against Maliki’s wishes: “The Ninewa Provincial Council has authorized Gov. Atheel Nujaifi to negotiate directly with oil companies, including ExxonMobil (Iraq Oil Report, 9/18/13). Nujaifi is a leader of the Sunni Mutahidoun political bloc. So is his brother, Osama Nujaifi, who had met with Exxon’s James Jeffrey a month before (National Iraqi News Agency, 8/19/13). Exxon put Jeffrey, formerly Obama’s ambassador to Iraq, on its payroll early this year (Iraq Oil Report, 2/8/13) to grease its anti-Maliki deals with Kurds and Sunnis.

Exxon Fights Iraqi Regime over Oil Profits

The Iraqi government’s national oil company, not ExxonMobil, owns the oil in Iraq’s West Querna I fields. It pays Exxon from \$1 to \$2 a barrel merely to pump the oil out of the ground. Since Exxon can’t put these reserves on their books as owners, it lowers the company’s perceived value. It also hurts the company’s profits, since it earns nothing from the actual sale of the oil.

The technical service contracts awarded by the Iraqi central government....do not allow the companies to gain from higher oil prices, which makes the return on these projects look less lucrative compared to the ones governed by production sharing contracts... As a result, despite significant production ramp-up potential, there is little incentive for oil companies to develop the oil fields in southern Iraq (Trefis).

In the name of profit, “Exxon angered the central government by signing a more lucrative exploration agreement” with the Kurdistan Regional Government for the oil in that province, owned in part by Exxon. “[I]t has offered attractive production sharing contracts, which allow companies to report their share of production volumes and gain from higher oil prices” (Trefis website), enhancing their profit from pumping operations. Exxon is pushing for Kurdish crude exports into fuel-poor NATO member Turkey. This fits with war secretary Chuck Hagel’s initiative to enlist populous Turkey as a potential U.S. ally in a potential global war.

Maliki Using Syria War vs. Exxon

Maliki, for his part, has jumped on the Syria crisis to temporarily chase Exxon from Qurna:

An Iraqi Shiite militia group has threatened to attack U.S. interests in Iraq and the region if Washington strikes Syria, whose President Bashar al-Assad is backed by Tehran.....Exxon, particularly at risk because as an American firm, is taking no chances, re-basing most of its workforce from the southern West Qurna-1 oilfield project to Dubai until tensions ease. (Reuters, 9/11/13).

Exxon’s short-term plan is to ally with Sunnis and Kurds in an effort to destabilize Shiite-led Baghdad. In fact, Exxon keeps threatening to abandon its pumping operation in Iraq (see box) — a potential problem for Maliki, since Iraq lacks this expertise.

The Middle East’s political complexity makes Exxon’s path a tricky one. The oil company’s main allies, the Saudi monarchs, are Sunnis, but so are al Qaeda fanatics. And Exxon’s hired hand Jeffrey is urging a dialogue with Shiite bosses, even as his employer demonizes them: “Keep in mind that the states where Shiites are a majority — namely Iraq and Iran — probably have more than 300 billion barrels of oil reserves between them. That is almost two-thirds of the reserves of the Gulf Cooperation Council states, including Saudi Arabia, and more than 20 percent of global reserves.”

Obama understands it would take more than a million troops to conquer Syria. With Congress paralyzed and the U.S. public leery of another Middle Eastern war, the best Obama could do was to brandish a U.S. missile strike — and then back off as soon as Russian President Vladimir Putin gave the U.S. an out. Confronting Iran would require at least as many troops. Global conflict with China or Russia would demand a full military mobilization.

Answer Imperialism’s Hell with Communist Revolution

All of these imperialist maneuvers spell more death for the workers of the world. Besides the 100,000 killed in Syria, two million workers and their families have been forced to flee their homes to tent camps in nearby countries. U.S. drones are killing thousands in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Yemen, on top of the tens of thousands slaughtered by the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan and the millions killed by the two Iraqi wars and Clinton’s sanctions, including half a million Iraqi children. This does not include the 500,000 U.S. GI’s suffering from post-traumatic-stress syndrome, which results in 18 suicides a day.

There is only one answer to this world capitalist carnage, and to the mass unemployment, racism, sexism and poverty the profit system engenders. That answer is mass communist revolution, which the Progressive Labor Party is organizing. Build PLP. The time to join is now!☛

Workers Fight Pro-Boss Union Hacks over Hospital Jobs, Wages

PHILADELPHIA, PA, September 24 — Today Local 1199C members marched around Jefferson Hospital and then several blocks to the headquarters of Aramark, a subcontractor famous for low wages. A few years ago Aramark took over management of Jefferson's environmental services, dietary and transportation departments. The march protested the attacks on jobs, wages and working conditions by Aramark and Jefferson itself. A protest letter written by a Jefferson worker was delivered to the Aramark bosses.

One strength of the march was that it was organized by a group of rank-and-file union delegates and that almost two hundred workers responded despite some organizational problems. The workers were angry and enthusiastic. Energy was high as we marched around the hospital and even more electric as we marched into the lobby of Aramark's headquarters.

However, this energy is limited and undermined by how most of us view this struggle. Almost all the union members expect the union leaders to lead it and see the fight itself mainly as an effort to defend what was won by earlier generations of union members. This view cripples us.

Unions were organized to get workers a bigger piece of the pie under capitalism. While there's no denying the benefits of past union struggles, the problem is that they never had the ultimate goal of overthrowing capitalism itself. Even

if unions are victorious, the bosses still make their profits and keep state power, that is, they run the government. And since our labor creates all wealth, any profit the bosses make is theft from us. No matter what wage and benefit increases we win, under the profit system the bosses still profit and the working class never gets the wealth we create. Only communism can do that.

Yes, we must fight tooth-and-nail to protect our hard-won union benefits and wages. But we can't forget that unions and union leaders accept and defend capitalism. Unions accept that the capitalists have a "right" to profit from our labor and that the capitalists have a "right" to make laws to restrict workers' struggles. And when the inevitable crises of capitalism drive the bosses to fascism and crushing of the unions, the union leaders cannot provide the leadership we need.

For example, the day before the march the union leaders attempted to convince the delegates to call off the march. The Jefferson union delegates refused, but many union members were amazed and felt betrayed. We need to remember this lesson.

Trying to stop the Jefferson workers' march was the union leaders actually doing what they're supposed to do under capitalism: protect their positions as class collaborators, prevent us from seriously fighting the bosses' attacks, and blind us to the need for communist revolution.



Workers storm into Aramark Headquarters, while dumbfounded security guards and administrators watch.

Our older brothers and sisters fought hard, sometimes giving their lives, for the wages and benefits the bosses now take back. Let's get off this damned merry-go-round!

We're not just in a fight against Jefferson and Aramark, we're in a fight against fascist attacks on the working class that are worldwide and connected. Our fight to protect the union at Jefferson must have the ultimate goal of building a

movement to overthrow the capitalist system that always takes back whatever victories we might win.

Only communist revolution can give us a system run by workers, for workers. We urge more Philadelphia hospital workers to read and distribute CHALLENGE and to join PLP study groups. (Call 267-319-3515 for more info.)✊

March Hits NYPD Racist Reign of Terror

BROOKLYN, NY, September 21— Over 200 people rallied and marched in Flatbush to demand justice for Kyam Livingston. Kyam was a 37-year-old African-American mom who was denied medical attention while in Brooklyn Central Booking and died in police custody. The death of Kyam, due to the callous indifference of the cops, is yet another instance of the racist reign of terror which is U.S. capitalism.

It has been over two months since Kyam's murder by the NYPD, and still no one has been held accountable. The NYPD has refused to release the videotapes documenting what happened to Kyam and will not release the names of the officers responsible for her death. Marchers called out, "We want the tapes! We want the names!" as they followed in Kyam Livingston's final footsteps.

Today's march and rally focused on Kyam Livingston's murder. But this particular instance of state-sanctioned terror must be seen in the context of a pattern of death after death after death of mainly young black and Latin working-class victims. As one speaker declared, there is something wrong with a system in which such deaths go unpunished. The threatened closings of three hospitals serving central Brooklyn's black and Latin working-class communities, he pointed out, will certainly lead to more deaths. There is something wrong with a system in which money for needed hospitals can't be found, but money for imperialist war budgets is never in short supply. Such a system must be smashed.

Speakers at the rally included the family, the family's lawyers, city council representatives and labor movement officials. Ms. Anita Neal, Kyam Livingston's mother, vowed never to stop until justice was served and the officers responsible for her daughter's death were prosecuted. Progressive Labor Party will join with the family and friends of Kyam Livingston in their fight for justice. We must point out that that racist police terror won't end until we overthrow the capitalist system that creates, profits from, and promotes the conditions under which Kyam and countless others have died.✊

Mexican Bosses Seek School Profits

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by TV Azteca, the press, radio and other media owned by the ruling bosses.

Constitution: For and By the Bosses

The Mexican Constitution legitimizes capitalism, a system designed to serve the capitalists and exploit the workers. In a move to maximize their profits, the bosses' stooges recently amended Articles 3 and 73. These changes legalize repressive measures in education and steal back the gains we have won through the blood and lives of thousands of fighting workers in this country and worldwide, including the SNTE teachers' strike and numerous struggles by the CNTE over the last 30 years.

After militant CNTE members trapped them in their legislative chambers, these thieving deputies hid in the Banamex executives' auditorium. There, protected by their capitalist masters, they passed the secondary laws that were later approved by criminal-in-chief Peña Nieto.

Under capitalism, education is constructed to serve the needs of the bosses. It teaches students a full curriculum of bad ideas, from individualism to competition among workers. Now the bosses are determined to make a bad system worse. They have the legal justification to strike the final blow against education workers' employment and labor rights, and to eliminate free, secular, public education. Through the punishing mechanism of standardized evaluation, they are making teachers' employment conditional on passing the test. The tests will lead to temporary contracts without labor rights or job guarantees.

Over time, the bosses plan to lay off 1.5 million workers, teachers and school support personnel. In rural areas, education will be under municipal control. In cities, it will be privatized and controlled by private companies and universities. Televisa and TV Azteca have already established a competitive edu-

cation project. Parents and students will be forced to pay high enrollment fees. Families who cannot pay will go without. Educational inequality and illiteracy will soar.

The workers' growing resistance movement has the potential not only to repeal the bosses' nefarious reform laws, but also to remove the sellout SNTE leadership. These would be positive steps, but they are not enough. The only true solution for teachers, students, and parents is to overthrow the fascist government that oppresses us and to establish a communist society under the leadership of a mass Progressive Labor Party.

Beyond Reform Struggles, to Communism!

Trade union struggles may achieve temporary benefits for workers. But these gains are inevitably reversed by the rulers as they move from one capitalist crisis to the next. Reform movements, no matter how militant, cannot destroy capitalism. The working class must go beyond nationalist, pacifist groups like Lopez Obrador's National Regeneration Movement, which seeks to benefit local bosses. Workers must reject armed nationalist movements, like those in the Middle East, that serve the imperialist powers. We must recognize that today's "socialism" is a state-capitalist fraud led by a new class of oppressors and exploiters. As we have learned from hard experience in the Soviet Union and China, socialism does not lead to communism.

Our fight must be directly for communism, for a new system of production and distribution without oppressors and exploiters. In a communist world, we would study and work collectively for the common good, to serve the needs and wellbeing of the whole working class. This is the goal of the Progressive Labor Party. Join and build it!✊

Send support letters and donations for our struggle to:
laurentinovillegascaballero@gmail.com

Attack in Nairobi Masks Kenya's Slaughter of Somalis

Since October 2011, when Kenyan military forces were deployed in Somalia, there have been dozens of terrorist attacks in Kenya: shootings, grenades, explosives. More than a hundred people have been killed and hundreds more injured. In the most recent attack, on the upscale Westgate Mall in Nairobi, at least 61 people were killed, hundreds were injured and 71 are still missing. As usual, workers are caught in the middle and we grieve with all those who lost families and friends. As in the World Trade Center attack in September 2011, the Westgate assault was directed at symbols of wealth but took the lives of many working-class people.

Meanwhile, the mainstream media has remained silent about the plundering of Somalia. The capital-

ist ruling classes have been using violence against workers on a daily basis all over North Africa. Three months after the invasion of Somalia in October 2011, the Kenyan military reportedly slaughtered 700 Somali militants. Since 2007, as many as 3,000 African Union peacekeeping troops have been killed. The Somalis that somehow make it to Kenya face severe hardships. There are also concerns that the Somali community in Minnesota will be targeted in the wake of the Westgate attack (New York Times, 9/28).

On November 19, 2012, Kenyan police unleashed a wave of violence and torture against Somali and Ethiopian refugees in the Nairobi suburb of Eastleigh. These abuses are nothing new. Since 2009, Human Rights Watch has repeatedly reported Ken-

yan security force torture, rape and inflict other violence. The authorities have yet to prosecute anyone for these crimes. The racist character of this officially sanctioned brutality was revealed when the report quoted local police as saying "All Somalis are terrorists."

While the bosses' newspapers analyze the Shabab, the terrorist group claiming responsibility for the Westgate attack, it's important to point out that the capitalist rulers are the biggest terrorists of all. The ruling class uses its military to carry out mass murder. The president of Kenya, Uhuru Kenyatta, has been charged with crimes against humanity by the International Criminal Court. We should never see this type of violence as any more acceptable than terrorist attacks.☸

'ROTC Off Campus!'

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Their pro-ROTC views were echoed by very few. Many questions came from the floor. What about U.S. military sexism and the rape and assault inflicted on a third of women soldiers? The weak answer was, "We only speak for ROTC, not for military policy in general."

What about U.S. use of chemical weapons like napalm, depleted uranium, and white phosphorus? "We only speak for ROTC, not for the military as a whole."

What about the illegal imperialist invasions and occupations, the drone strikes, the targeted assassination of U.S. citizens, torture and renditions, Guantanamo, and more? "We only speak for ROTC." By the end, ROTC hypocrisy, lies, and evasions were exposed to everyone.

The anti-ROTC views were varied. Some faculty said that their ideals of bringing mass democratic college education to CUNY students were the exact opposite of the inhumane ideals of the military. They pointed out that building character and critical thinking was the province of educators, not military recruiters.

Others objected to using their university to legitimize a military discredited by war crimes. One or two blasted U.S. imperialism as the real explanation of the recent role of the military. They correctly stated that ROTC should be kept out because the university has used military recruiting to support and enforce imperialist foreign policy, beginning with genocide against indigenous people in the Americas. One student described the racism he experiences every day at the hands of the New York police, and said the U.S. military is doing the same thing to his sisters and brothers overseas. The antiwar vets were eloquent about the abuses they saw in Iraq and Afghanistan and how their own thinking had changed. The student activist linked ROTC to Petraeus, Department of Defense research at CUNY, and pro-war curriculum.

CUNY Bosses Push Militarization

The next step will probably be a debate in the Academic Senate. Faculty are angry at growing administration arrogance taking away their authority over academic matters like curriculum and departmental organization.

They see the imposition of ROTC on the campus as another example of university managers seizing more control. They understand that it is the CUNY bosses who are responsible for militarization.

Students connect more immediately to the racism of ROTC's plans at CUNY because many of them experience racism every day. The ROTC move and the Petraeus hiring have exposed to some students the CUNY administration's function of enforcing capitalist class rule. This movement must grow both in numbers and in political understanding, as PLP at CUNY forms communist study-action groups and distributes more CHALLENGEs.☸

Professors and Staff: 'Hands Off Our Students'

The Professional Staff Congress (PSC) Delegate Assembly unanimously passed a resolution in support of students after watching a video showing several NYPD cops holding a man down on the ground while another repeatedly kidney punched him. Two City University (CUNY) students then addressed delegates and seven hundred dollars was collected toward the legal expenses of the six people arrested.

PSC Resolution Against KKKop Brutality of CUNY Students

On September 17, 2013, the New York Police Department arrested six people, including four CUNY students, in an unprovoked police attack against a peaceful protest by students and faculty against CUNY's appointment of former CIA chief ex-General David Petraeus. CUNY students were punched, slammed against vehicles and against the pavement by NYPD officers...

As the union representing faculty and professional staff at CUNY—and as people who have dedicated our professional lives to the well-being of CUNY students—the Professional Staff Congress/CUNY expresses outrage at the violent and unprovoked actions by the NYPD against students peacefully protesting the appointment of David Petraeus as a Visiting Professor...

We call on the City of New York to drop all charges against the students. Further, we call on the CUNY Administration and Board of Trustees to join us in condemning the use of police violence against CUNY students engaged in peaceful protest and to take all necessary steps to ensure that [such] protest will not be met with police violence.

While the resolution pushed by these workers is commendable, the PSC leadership failed to make a head-on attack against the presence of war criminal Petraeus at CUNY.

The president told us that a resolution calling for his ouster would be ruled out of order. Legal counsel had advised that according to state labor law, the union was obligated to represent all of the members of the bargaining unit. Therefore, the union could not call on the employer to fire an employee. And so the union cannot take a stance to fire Petraeus. At the next Delegate Assembly we will fight to overturn this ruling.☸

CUNY = Same Enemy, Same Fight

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bers of the ruling-class think tanks such as Council on Foreign Relations, corporate lawyers, politicians who control labor forces, and more minions who have international ties for the U.S. imperialists.

Meanwhile, protesters picketed outside, drawing attention from passers-by and other students getting out of class. We need to make the connection that these local bosses are tools for imperialism. Our decision on uniting with our professors and attacking the trustees while still having some forces hound Dead Squad Petraeus at the Honors College was a step in that direction.

We also need to struggle for our friends to see the limits of unions as the negotiator of exploitation. They chanted,

"Who's got the power? We Got the Power!"

What kind of power? Union Power!"

Some student PL'ers tried to change the chant to "workers power!" but without much success. Our professors and staff need more than just a good contract. We need political control of our own labor. For that we need to build a communist movement. Progressive Labor Party is doing just that. We have a long way to go in building a worker-student alliance that even machine guns can't break.

See Petraeus Run

It was announced this afternoon that CUNY has just moved war criminal Petraeus's seminar from the Macaulay Honors College building to 555 W 57 St, a location with increased security. The new location provides underground garages so racist Petraeus can arrive and leave without being detected.

As CHALLENGE reported (10/2), militant students with faculty support, confronted war criminal and former CIA Director Petraeus in the street every Monday, charging him with genocide. On the evening of last Tuesday, September 17, NYPD attacked and brutalized six students, who have come to be known as the CUNY 6 (see box on the left).

We were not intimidated by this attack! The following Monday, over 150 students and workers came out! The cops sealed off the entire residential block from vehicular traffic. NYPD brought out their most muscular cops, lined them up directly in front of the protestors. The thugs were ready to go, with their packets of plastic handcuffs hanging off their waists. Not counting the cops waiting at the street corners, inside the building, and around the block, there were 30 thugs in blue failing miserably to intimidate us.

Shortly after 5 PM, a line of cops pressed up against the pen and contained all the demonstrators — we were not "arrested" but we were in a "frozen zone." Leaving his class early, bloody racist Petraeus came out and stepped into an SUV coming down the block going the wrong way on the a one-way street. Students led a march out of the pens and off to Columbus Circle, chanting:

"1,2,3,4 — Defeat U.S. Imperialist War!"

5,6,7,8 — Petraeus Out, We Can't Wait!"

Slowly but surely, a working relationship is being developed between students and professors and staff. PL'ers at CUNY have developed concrete plans to build an anti-imperialist movement through film showings and teach-ins on campuses throughout the city. They will build local campaigns on their campuses through their mass organizations.☸



Bangladesh: 200,000 Garment Strikers Shock Rulers

DHAKA, BANGLADESH, September 28 — “We will not hesitate to do anything to realize our demands...The economy moves with our toil,” declared Nazma Akter, the woman who is among the leaders of 200,000 mostly women workers who struck hundreds of the country’s garment factories demanding the tripling of their monthly minimum wage from \$38 to \$104. (Reuters, 9/23) As if to give substance to her declaration, workers from ten factories in the city of Savar attacked a military base, seizing rifles and ammunition and injuring five para-military Guards (ACA News, 9/22).

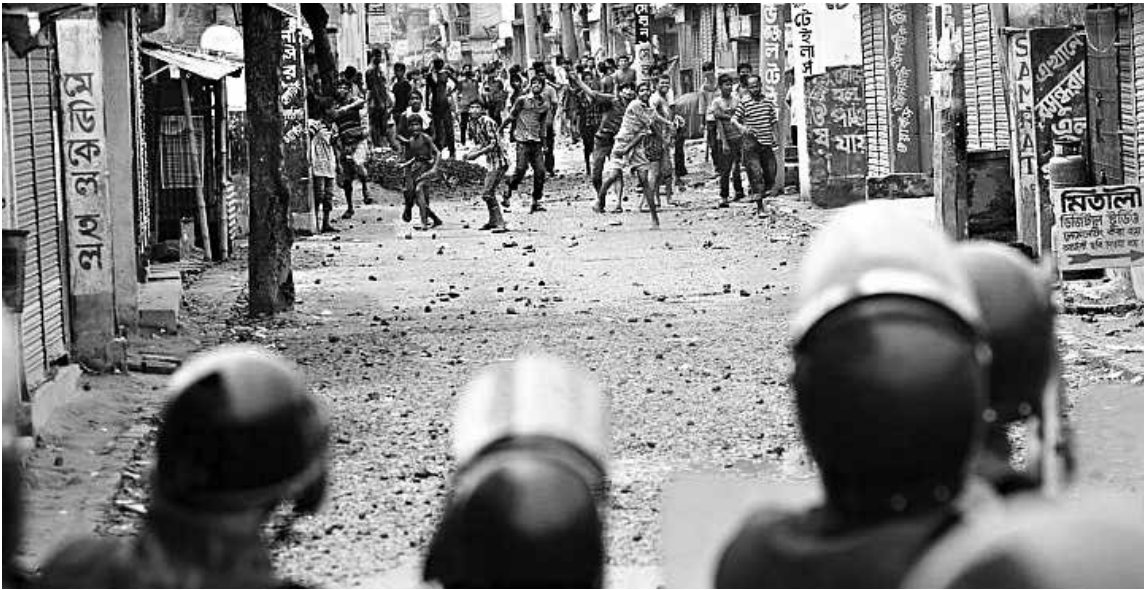
“One hundred dollars is the minimum we have asked for,” one striker told Agency France Press (9/23). “A worker needs much more than that to lead a decent life.”

The uprising, now in its sixth day, saw angry workers battling cops in the streets, 10,000 blocking major highways in and around this capital city, setting fire to warehouses, attacking plants that stayed open, pelting factories with bricks and smashing police vehicles. When club-wielding cops shot rubber bullets and tear gas canisters at the striking workers, the latter responded by hurling broken bricks at the cops. At the latest count, 70 workers and eight cops had been injured in the clashes.

The bosses got to the heart of the problem: capitalism’s drive for maximum profits. The Press Trust of India (9/26) reported they said, “Major [wage] increases would erode Bangladesh’s advantage as a cheap labor source compared to other garment exporting countries like India, China and Vietnam.” The Associated Press (9/25) described “global brands [as] unwilling to pay higher prices amid stiff competition.” Thus, competing bosses engage in a “drive to the bottom.” Bangladesh’s exploiting garment bosses reap \$20 billion from exports to the U.S. and Europe, supplying billion-dollar companies like Walmart, GAP, Sears and Target.

Bosses’ ‘Industrial Peace’ vs. Workers’ Class War

The workers’ militancy, which has exposed the profit system’s racist exploitation in this former colonial country, has unnerved the rulers. No wonder The New York Times, leading mouthpiece of the ruling class, devoted an editorial (9/26) to a call for higher wages and better



Young workers throw stones at cops. Many factories reopened on September 26 after militant protests. Workers are threatened with tougher crackdown and promises of wage increases by November.

conditions. It stated that the Bangladesh government and bosses, and the Western companies profiting from these low wages and hazardous working conditions, “all have a stake in industrial peace.” They fear that its absence could provide fertile ground for class war under communist leadership. Eventually, this could lead to a revolution for the complete overthrow of capitalism that pays these indecent wages and reaps billions in profits stolen from the workers’ labor.

In a communist society run by and for our class, there will be neither bosses and profits, nor their racism and sexism which rake in super-profits. Nor will there be the kind of death traps which killed 1,132 workers in the Rana Plaza factory last April. The working class will act from each according to their commitment and collectively decide what should be produced by our labor and distribute it according to need.

Now the garment bosses have offered a 20 percent increase — to \$45 a month! — which the workers declare is “inhumane and humiliating.” So after “assurances” of a negotiated pay hike by November, they say the strike was ending after five days. But on the sixth day workers were in the streets of Savar and Navayangan, cities where they have closed 300 factories while the government continues to deploy troops in the Gazipier industrial district.

The workers in Bangladesh, especially the women garment workers, are setting a shining example for the entire international working class. Their actions are telling us that class war against the bosses is the road to travel. Our signpost must read, “Forward to communism!”✊

France: Steelworkers Mock Bosses’ Socialist Prez

FLORANGE, FRANCE, September 26 — Workers waving trade union flags jeered French president François Hollande when he came to the Florange steelworks today. Workers also demonstrated their bitterness in front of the ArcelorMittal Steel Corporation offices.

In February 2012, the corporation was threatening to shut down the Florange steelworks. The union leaders endorsed Hollande for president and led the workers to welcome him with open arms when he came to the site during his presidential election campaign. He promised a law to force corporations to sell a factory instead of shutting it down.

Today, the steelworks has been shuttered and the law has been watered down to an obligation to “look for” a buyer.

For months, Hollande has been promising to bring unemployment down. When the latest figures showed the number of unemployed falling by 50,000 in August, the Socialist Party exulted that “the president has made the strategic choices that our country requires.”

In reality, the fall resulted from 77,500 workers being struck off the lists because, the phone system to which they are required to regularly call was broke. This resulted in the loss of unemployment benefits. Since opinion polls show support for the Socialist Party plummeting in the run-up to the March, 2014 municipal elections, the Socialists will stoop to any trick to try to persuade workers that the French economy is improving.

Official figures show 5,397,200 jobless workers, 19.1% of the workforce, including part-time workers who want full-time jobs.

Rulers’ Racism Rampant

When the government isn’t trying to deceive the working class with misleading data, it’s trying to divide it with racism. Interior minister Manuel Valls — France’s “top cop” — said on September 24 that “it’s illusionary to think that we’re going to solve the problem of the Roma population through integration alone.” He added that “the Roma are destined to go back to Romania or Bulgaria.”

This sort of racism can be expected from Valls. In June 2009, as mayor of Evry, he complained about seeing too many “non-white” faces at the municipal flea market.

An additional 840,000 households — mostly previously-exempt low-paid workers — will pay income tax this year. The Socialist government labels this “sharing the burden” of the austerity measures taken to guarantee that France pays its sovereign debt to finance capitalists.

This is the capitalist hell of unemployment and racism that the “lesser-evil” Socialist government presides over. It exposes the futility of participating in the bosses’ electoral circus and depending on their promises to solve workers’ problems.

Toasting Pesticides with French Wine

But workers here would be ill-advised to try to

drown their troubles in wine. A report just published by the consumer protection group Que Choisir indicates that all French wines contain pesticides — from 300 to 3,000 times as much as is legally allowed in drinking water.

France does not limit the amount of pesticides that wine can contain. This makes the capitalist grape-growers happy while poisoning the working class (seven of the 33 different pesticides detected cause cancer). Scientific studies also show that vineyard workers have up to 11 times as much pesticide in their bodies as other people, and die more frequently of cancer.

Meanwhile, French bosses offered to lead an attack on Syria which workers in France roundly rejected. In France, like everywhere else in the world, the only solution to the ills of capitalism is communist revolution.✊



Gravestone that the bosses quickly removed from the Florange site after it was erected in April 2013. It reads: “Betrayal. Here lie the promises of change that F. Hollande made to the workers and their families in Florange on Feb. 24, 2012.”

LETTERS

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

HEAD

In the eastern part of the State of Mexico , thousands of workers are terrified with home foreclosure notices if we do not pay the electrical energy company.

After Felipe Calderon Hinojosa dissolved the company Luz y Fuerza del Centro, thousands of workers in the Mexican Electricians Union (SME) took to the streets. The cost of the service has increased and worsened. Four years later, SME workers are still struggling to get their jobs back.

Many families were deceived by television and the press, which are subservient to capitalist interests. They believed the lies of the PAN government that the Federal Electricity Commission (CFE) will provide better and cheaper service. The media claimed that SME workers were the cause of the poor service, but today we realize that the bosses and their ruler are evil and liars.

Since then, the CFE have been threatening workers, seizing their houses , cutting off the supply or even jailing them, if they do not pay the hiked price. Many working mothers have become sick and some have even been killed.

Some have chosen to hide behind laws, but it was not enough because the laws serve the bosses. The Office of the Defense (CJF) defends bosses and refuses to punish the CFE. The Solicitor is appointed by the president of the PROFECO (Office of the Federal Prosecutor for the Consumer). The president Peña Nieto serves the interests of bosses against workers. Politicians and rulers are not our friends; they are our class enemies. The laws and courts have never ruled in favor of workers; they always protect the boss.

Due to the constant threats that workers suffer, on Wednesday, July 31, more than 200 users, mostly women are organizing against these bosses. We should support them with more militant actions and organization, such as marches and sit-ins in front of the CFE and PROFECO. PLP members and friends attended the meeting and distribute 75 CHALLENGES.

As CHALLENGE readers , supporters and members of the PLP can strengthen the the struggle to stop the attacks and physical and psychological threats by the CFE. We must point out the root, capitalism, that constantly threatens the lives of all workers. We must unite to destroy the capitalist system. We must fight for a society that truly meets the needs of workers — a communist society of equality.

Mexico Worker

Fast Food Strikers Give Bosses Indigestion

Impressive; that's the only word I can use to describe a rally that took place at a McDonald's Restaurant in New York City. I was very moved by the group of workers, trade unionists, and members of the community who marched to the restaurant chanting slogans and then, in a surprising move, occupied the restaurant where they remained for a while, calling on workers to join the strike.

After a while they left but continued their rally in front of the restaurant, still chanting their slogans, to which they added one that I've heard for the first time in this type of struggle: STRIKE, STRIKE, STRIKE! After a while, the restaurant workers came out and actually called a STRIKE.

I believe this was a small preview of what will happen when the international working class unites under communist leadership to overthrow this brutal capitalist system and its bosses, and then establishes a communist system with workers' power in our hands.

A Red Fighter

Correction

On the back page of Oct 2nd issue's "Inter-Imperialist Rivalry Behind Mexico's Energy Reform" article, there was a translation error. In 2008, the super-rich received 132 *billion* pesos, not million, in tax breaks. Bosses like Carso Group, Mexichem, and more have business deals with PEMEX of about, not 3 million, but \$3 *billion* USD. Greater the reason for communist revolution!

Pizzeria's Foul Taste of Sexism, Poverty Wages

WORCESTER, MA, September 19 — Members and friends of PLP, and many workers from an unemployed workers' organization held a rally outside of Harry's Pizzeria.

The workers here are fighting back against physical assaults, sexual harassment, and poverty wages.

In March of 2013 the manager at the restaurant struck a worker on the job. When the worker filed a battery complaint, the bosses' court dismissed it. A woman worker filed a separate complaint against the restaurant for sexual harassment from the bosses.

The workers from the area took our flyers and agreed that something should be done to stop the injustices. The working class needs communism to take the bosses out of the driver's seat of society. Only then will these attacks on the working class be ended. ☸



Israeli Rulers Used Arafat to Oppress Palestine

September 13 marked the 20th anniversary of the Oslo Accords, signed as a "Declaration of Principles" at the White House between Israel's Yizhak Rabin and Palestine's Yasser Arafat and hailed by U.S. president Bill Clinton as ending the bloodshed between Israel and Palestine. Actuality, backed by the U.S. ruling class, it continued Israeli oppression of, and violence against, the workers and farmers of Palestine.

Fifteen months before the 1993 Oslo Accords, an election coalition led by Rabin's Labor Party ended the 15-year reign of the right-wing Likud party. The new administration promised to reach an agreement with the Palestinians within nine months and for the first time sought a political alliance with the parliamentary members of the Communist Party-led HADASH — Democratic Front for Peace and Equality — although the latter was excluded from the coalition administration itself.

However, the Shas religious party soon limited its support of Rabin so the latter asked HADASH to support him in a parliamentary Vote of Confidence. HADASH agreed, to ward off return of a Likud administration, and to encourage a turn in the official policy towards Israeli-Palestinian peace, equality for Israel's Arab population, a struggle against unemployment and respect for the social rights. HADASH followed the old communist movement's "lesser-evil" politics — that is, preferring Rabin's neo-liberal economic policy of budget cuts and tax hikes over the Likud party's more extreme neo-liberal economic policy and resistance to peace with the Palestinians.

Reasons for the Oslo Accords

Israel's rulers were finding it difficult repressing the First Intifada, a popular uprising of the masses of Palestine. Although Arafat initially rejected this uprising, he was brought back to Palestine because Israel realized it had to replace direct colonialist rule of millions of Palestinians with a neo-colonialist (indirect colonialist) Palestinian Authority led by Arafat. Direct occupation cost Israel millions, and also many soldiers' lives, and increasingly exposed Israel as a colonialist state. (This, of course, was the same Rabin who had ordered the Israeli military "to break the bones" of the Palestinians in the First Intifada.) He now preferred a Palestinian Authority to repress the masses of Palestinians "with no Supreme Court and no Betsalem" (critics of Israel's policy in the West Bank and Gaza).

A wider geo-political reason for the Oslo Accords was the U.S. bosses' desire for a "peaceful" Middle-East, allowing it to invest in its local markets and exploit its workforce and natural resources without interruption. The continued conflict between the Zionist movement and the Arab world was a stumbling block for U.S. economic and political interests.

Therefore, the Oslo Accords were accompanied by the Paris Accords, which essentially used the Palestinian Authority to get workers in Palestine off street protests into low-wage sweatshops, many owned by U.S. and European capitalists.

Meanwhile, HADASH's previous support for Rabin degenerated when, in July 1993, his administration launched a wide-ranging military operation in Lebanon, including a naval blockade and the destruction of 75 villages by Israeli "Defense" Force (IDF) air raids, turning tens of thousands of Lebanese and Palestinians into refugees.

The Rabin administration, representing mainstream Israeli rulers, stuck to the Oslo Accords despite demonstrations by far right-wing Zionists, and even forcibly repressed them. Far-right violence climaxed in Rabin's assassination in November 1995. Coincidentally, Benjamin Netanyahu, today's Israeli Prime Minister, rode the wave of anti-Rabin demonstrations to bash the government and pave his way to power.

Problems with the Oslo Accords

In the years following the Oslo Accords, many acts of terrorism killed hundreds of Israeli citizens while Zionist fascists murdered scores of Palestinians in the 1990's. Meanwhile, the IDF continued its terrorism against civilians in the West Bank. After several years of simmering conflict, in October 2000 the Second Intifada erupted, virtually destroying the Oslo Accords. Workers in Palestine found themselves slaving away for starvation wages in factories owned by U.S., Western European and Israeli, investors (such as in the Erez Industrial Zone). "Peace" brought slavery, not prosperity for the working class. Additionally, Fatah, which became the Palestinian Authority's ruling party, merged with the Palestinian ruling class (the Sulda).

Direct Israeli occupation was replaced in 20 percent of the West Bank by the neo-colonial Palestinian Authority. It forcibly crushed strikes and uprisings and forced workers to bow down to the factory owners of the joint industrial zones, as well as to the capitalist Sulda. In the rest of the West Bank, Israeli occupation continued unhindered, with Palestinian rule of small enclaves within it.

Following the Second Intifada came the proliferation of checkpoints and roadblocks inside the West Bank and the separation of Palestinian workers from their job-sites and families. Israel continued to hold most of the areas containing Israeli settlers, and soon expanded them. Israel controlled most of the West Bank (and, until 2005, part of the Gaza Strip).

The Palestinian Police received small arms from Israel and turned them against Palestinian workers when they dared rise up. Israeli rulers have forcibly erased the possibility of Palestinian Authority "control" of the West Bank and Gaza by erecting and expanding settlements and "Jewish-only" roads between them, deep into the West Bank. Zionist "peace" retains most of the lands grabbed by Zionism since 1948.

Even if an independent Palestinian state were established in the entire West Bank and Gaza Strip, its workers would continue to suffer from economic oppression. The lands of the deportees of 1948 will be retained by the State of Israel, which stole them initially. There would be no "independence" from U.S., Western European and Israeli investors, who will use these workers as cheap labor.

Israeli workers also continue to suffer, whether under Zionist war or Zionist "peace." The essence of Zionism is capitalist control (especially U.S. and Western European) over Jewish and Arab workers. The capitalists prepare us for more wars, amid the intensifying conflict between imperialist powers. For the working class there's no hope in a world dominated by capitalism. We must seize our destiny and replace capitalist oppression with communist liberation and working-class rule from the Jordan River to the Sea as one stepping stone towards a free proletarian world.

Red Housekeeper from Tel-Aviv

A Tribute to Comrade Knut Langsetmo



A strong, quiet man, Knut Langsetmo preferred deeds to unnecessary words. He was only two days away from this 60th birthday. He was a dedicated friend to many and a beloved comrade. Knut was a scientist and a communist, a scholar and a warrior. Born in Norway, Knut grew up in Minnesota. Although a talented student and swimmer, he chose to work as a truck driver for several years after high school. This experience helped develop his anti-racist, pro-working class political consciousness, as well as the grit and work-ethic that made him a successful scientist.

In his mid-twenties, Knut enrolled at the University of

Minnesota to study biology, eventually earning a PhD. It was here that he met the International Committee Against Racism and the Progressive Labor Party, beginning a lifelong commitment to organizing for an egalitarian society. He also joined the National Guard to win GIs away from serving the U.S. war machines.

During the late 1970's and early 1980's, neo-Nazi and Klan organizations attempted to hold rallies in Minnesota and other parts of the Midwest. Knut helped to lead workers and students to oppose these groups. Drawing on his experience in the military, he drilled groups of students and workers in preparation for attacking these fascists. He provided tactical leadership at many anti-fascist counter demonstrations, forcing the racists to crawl back into their holes.

At the University of Minnesota, Knut was active in the anti-apartheid movement on campus. He was a key leader in the demonstration that seized the administration building, demanding the university divest its investments in South Africa. Knut later moved to Boston to do his post-doctoral work at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). In spite of the heavy academic demands placed on him, he remained an active member of the Boston PLP organization. There were many tense and sometimes violent demonstrations against the local racists, the Klan and the police.

Knut enthusiastically participated in all of these demonstrations as well as distributing literature, organizing study groups, social events and other Party building activities.

Knut made a key contribution to the communist movement by helping to establish the web version of CHALLENGE newspaper. He recognized early on that

the internet could be an important tool for spreading ideas and organizing political activity. For many years, he maintained the www.plp.org website, scanned and digitized key Party documents and many articles from PLP magazine, The Communist. This was especially important to the international work of the Party, enabling groups of workers and students from around the world to study PLP's ideas.

In his scientific career, Knut was very forthright about his political convictions. You could always find CHALLENGE and other political literature when visiting his lab or office. After leaving MIT, Knut went to Boston Biological Research Institute (BBRI) where he spent the majority of his career. There he became the go-to person for the many experiments being conducted, often putting others' work before his own. He became a teacher and mentor for dozens of young scientists. What he contributed to these young co-workers was more than just scientific techniques and procedures. He shared with them a communist understanding of the world and the need to change the social order.

This past spring, Knut learned that he had late-stage cancer. He thought first about the impact that this would have on his family, especially his teenage daughter Signe, as well as his friends. He fought to maintain an upbeat attitude for the many people who came to visit. Although he had been dealt a horrible hand, Knut felt that he was fortunate to have lived the life he did. He understood the world both scientifically and politically. He fought courageous battles against racism and capitalist exploitation, and for communism that will have a lasting impact. He was a great father and a wonderful friend. His life was special, not only because he understood the world, but because he had worked to change it. Bella Ciao comrade Knut, rest assured, you will be remembered.☘



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

Obama to aid fascists? Stay tuned

NYT, 9/13 — Two years after thousands of Egyptian protesters risked their lives to bring down the dictator Hosni Mubarak, the military-controlled government in Cairo is expanding a repressive system that may ultimately be worse than the one Mr. Mubarak built and managed.

On Thursday, with much of the world distracted by Syria, the Egyptian generals and the civilian officials they have appointed extended a country-wide state of emergency for two months. After overthrowing Mohamed Morsi...two months ago...security forces have also begun to round up other dissenters, a chilling warning that no Egyptians should feel safe if they dare to challenge authority.

That was not the kind of country that most Egyptians envisioned...when they...demanded jobs and education....

There seems to be no end to the draconian controls as the military seeks to restrain the news media, manipulate the courts, misuse security services and restrict civil society groups....The results are...regarded by many Egyptians as illegitimate.

All this comes on top of a crackdown on peaceful demonstrators after the coup that killed more than 1,000 people. The Obama administration... [is] soon to decide whether to transfer aid to the military....

Profit motive brings miner deaths

NYT, 9/13 —Massey Energy, which ran the Upper Big Branch mine at the time of the deadly explosion.... agreed to disclose details of...a decade-long conspiracy — going up the company hierarchy — to cover up widespread violations of federal mining laws, putting miners at grave risk. The disaster, the worst loss of miners' lives in 40 years, was traced to an explosive combination of coal dust and methane gas that investigators found the company allowed to build to lethal amounts.

....Massey managers routinely obtained tip-offs of pending visits by safety regulators and overlooked bla-

tant hazards in pursuit of profits.

Hard toil brings waitress poverty

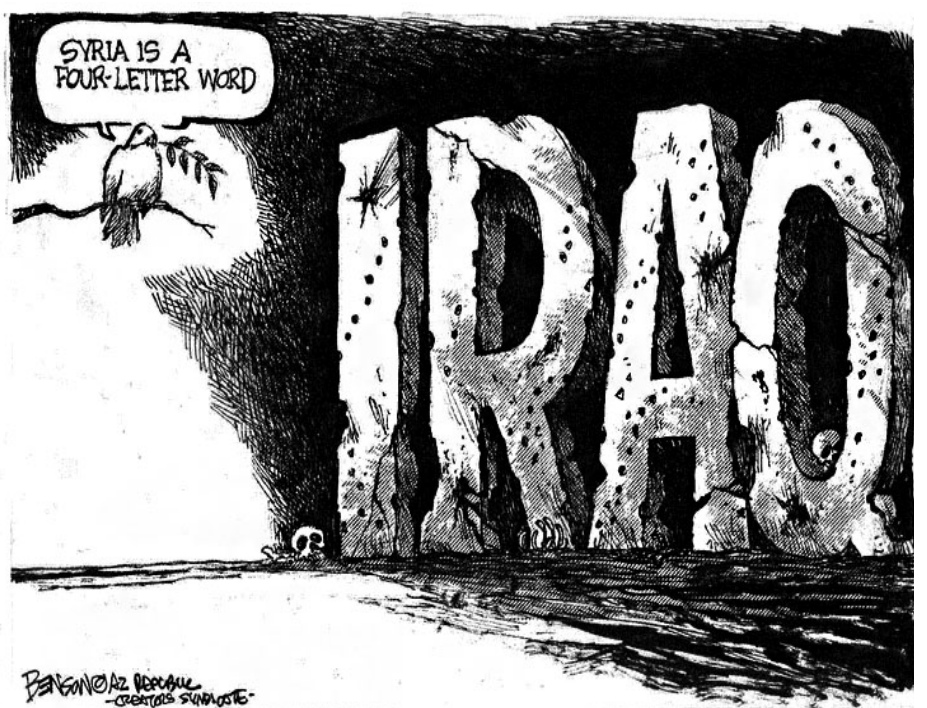
NYT, 9/15 — In...diners and other...restaurants that employ most of the nation's burgeoning ranks of waitresses (the vast majority of servers are women), tips...are part of a parallel economic universe in which employers are allowed to pay sub-minimum wages, with predictably devastating results. According to census data, servers are far more likely than other workers to live in poverty....

Federal law...sets the minimum wage for tipped workers at \$2.13 an hour, compared with an already measly hourly minimum of \$7.25 for other workers.

Black women artists reached left

NYT, 9/22 — In her book "Harlem Nocturne: Women Artists and Progressive Politics During World War II," Farah Jasmine Griffin, a professor at Columbia University... uses the lives of three female artists — the choreographer and dancer Pearl Primus, the writer Ann Petry and the composer and pianist Mary Lou Williams — as signposts through an era....

Griffin's narrative...also highlights two movements that will be less familiar to contemporary readers: the Double V, or Double Victory, campaign, in which "black Americans fought...overseas for their country but also to be recognized as citizens at home"; and the Popular Front initiative, conceived by the Communist Party in response to "the economic crisis of the Great Depression



and the rise of fascism."

"For black people," Griffin writes of Double V, "the war provided an opportunity to accelerate their demands for equality....Black Americans highlighted the...reality of ongoing racial inequality....

The Popular Front..."focused on culture as an especially important forum for educating and mobilizing audiences in support of an antifascist agenda...." Without...venues like Café Society, or publications like PM, a leftist newspaper, it is doubtful that Petry, Primus and Williams could have met with success.

Griffin argues that her three main subjects "consistently confronted the darkness of our nation's soul. They were critical of white supremacy and the excess of American capitalism....Of the three women in Griffin's narrative, Primus was the most progressive politically, joining the Communist Party when it was still one of the few organized...movements to challenge Jim Crow and the violence that fed it. The FBI opened a file on her in 1944.

MORE ITEMS AVAILABLE AT WWW.PLP.ORG

Vets, Workers, Students Blast ROTC's Return on Campus

NEW YORK CITY, SEPTEMBER 24 — Today vigorous opposition to Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) filled the auditorium at the College of Staten Island (CSI) campus of the City University of New York (CUNY), where the Administration had been forced by anti-ROTC faculty to call a Town Hall meeting. CUNY administrators are determined to impose ROTC on this campus as well as at York and City Colleges. ROTC was thrown out of CUNY during the protests against the Vietnam War and has been gone since 1971.

A growing movement of students and faculty against the militarization of CUNY has targeted the administration for trying to bring back ROTC as well as for hiring former general and CIA director David Petraeus to teach at the elitist Macaulay "Honors" College. At the Town Hall meeting, among the dozen CSI faculty or staff who spoke, not a single one supported ROTC. PLers in this movement believe that we need to link the concepts of fascism and imperialism to understand the current militarization of universities (see box).

A few students spoke in favor of ROTC, for their right

to choose, and the character-building, career opportunities, and freedom from debt they said ROTC brings to working-class students. Other students pointed out what's missing from this rosy picture: ROTC trains officers for a military which uses the 1,000 U.S. bases in 130 countries around the world to kill people by the hundreds of thousands and send back home thousands of dead, maimed, and psychologically devastated U.S. vets. Killing and dying is the name of ROTC's racist game as it tries to recruit, especially, black and brown CUNY students to their killing machine.

The panel of speakers included two recent anti-ROTC vets and a student leader of the CUNY anti-militarization movement. The unimpressive speakers for ROTC included a regional ROTC officer, the head of ROTC at City College, and a faculty member from York College. The latter spoke proudly about the new War Sciences curriculum at York, allegedly to be academically respectable and to develop critical thinking.

continued on page 4

Militarization = Fascism & Imperialism

PLers are asking our CUNY friends to examine what we mean by "militarization." Yes, military aims, methods, and personnel are increasingly integrated with other sectors of society like the university:

- the "military-industrial complex" in heavy industry (Boeing, General Electric);
- communications (the National Security Agency [NSA] spies with Verizon);
- media (journalists "embedded" with the military, attacks on "leakers" and their journalist partners);
- ideology and culture (gun-worship, video games, overt racism and sexism);
- urban policing (stop-and-frisk like war-zone checkpoints, police heavy armor and weaponry, racist police murders, surveillance as counter-insurgency);
- immigration policy (military at borders, airport detentions, immigrant raids and round-ups)
- and the university and schools too, as anti-ROTC speakers pointed out. The list is endless.

But what explains militarization, and its ideological partners, racism and sexism? This requires the concept of fascism, in which the ruling class shifts its use of state power increasingly from capitalist "democracy" to more open, direct use of force and the militarization of so-called "civil society." Why this shift towards fascism now? Imperialism right now is no longer a matter of unchallenged U.S. domination of the post-Cold War world, but of a bitter rivalry between the U.S. and other imperialist powers, principally China and Russia, and their regional allies like Iran. Check today's headlines.

Inter-imperialist rivalry leads to world war, as we saw twice in the 20th century. Fascism may become necessary to ruling classes as they shift more and more to this war footing. PLP will spread this political understanding of militarization — an aspect of growing fascism, and imperialist moves towards war — among the CUNY students, faculty and staff, and vets. They're beginning to take action against the CUNY bosses, who are simply agents of the ruling class.

The anti-militarization movement on campus must become an anti-imperialist, anti-fascist movement, linking up with workers' struggles. Changes in the university are dictated by the needs of the imperialists who control the university as they do all other sectors of society. We resist them as best we can. In the long run, fascism and war can only be smashed by abolishing capitalism itself and building a communist world. Then the workers hold power, including the power to lift new egalitarian, collective forms of education, science and culture to heights the world has not yet seen. That is the communist horizon of PLP.✊

Petraeus, Pathways, Jobs — Same Enemy, Same Fight



The Professional Staff Congress (PSC) union for the workers of the City University of New York (CUNY) had called a protest, demanding the trustees respond to the no-confidence in Pathways and the workers' lack of a contract for the past three years. Pathways is the racist common core of this public university system that went into effect this semester. It is an assembly-line style curriculum that limits what professors can teach, lowers the standards for these working-class students, saves the administration loads of money. Pathways is a crisis-ridden curriculum for a system in crisis.

NEW YORK CITY, September 30 — Nearly 400 workers and students rallied in front of the Board of Trustees meeting at Baruch College today. We attacked our local enemy, the trustees who are responsible for hiring general David Petraeus, raising students' tuition, decreasing services on campus, and forcing professors and staff to work to petty wages and under fascistic control of their departments and curriculum.

Over 60 protesters were inside the trustees meeting, calling them out on their anti-worker agenda. They chanted, "A good contract makes a good education." The Trustees are bankers, former counterintelligence FBI agents, former presidents of multinational corporations, mem-

continued on page 4



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