

CHALLENGE



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Rally Protests Greek Neo-Nazi Gang



Workers in Greece blast Golden Dawn fascists.

ASTORIA, QUEENS, NEW YORK, October 9 — Over 200 people rallied in a church this evening to discuss preventing the Greek neo-Nazi group Golden Dawn from opening an office in this largely Greek neighborhood. A number of people from Greece were there, including one of the former leaders of the Stella D'Oro strike in the Bronx, as well as teachers, students and labor activists.

The meeting began with a panel of six speakers, who provided a history of Golden Dawn — a group that uses Nazi symbols, celebrates Hitler's birthday and has a record of attacking and beating immigrants and leftists. Fortunately, the latter have

often defended themselves and "shown the fascists the pavement." This is the only response thugs like the Golden Dawn respect.

Speakers also reasoned that Golden Dawn has gained some support in Greece, 7% of the electoral vote this year, because of the capitalist crisis that is also driving millions of workers there into poverty.

Golden Dawn, with origins in Greece, pretends to be against the fascist austerity programs demanded by the Athens government and the European Commission, European Central Bank, and International Monetary Fund. However, when workers fight

back with a general strike or surround Parliament in protest, Golden Dawn is nowhere to be found!

Capitalism has left the Greek economy in terrible condition: one-quarter of the population is unemployed, and half of all young workers are jobless. Real wages are plummeting, poverty is rising and the recession is growing worse. The Greek government owes European and U.S. banks tens of billions in loans, so the bailout money it receives from the European Union goes directly back to those banks. As one speaker astutely pointed out, "This is a bailout of the big banks, not the people of Greece, who are suffering!" If the government fell,

the banks would lose a source of stolen profits. It is in this painful crisis that Golden Dawn is helping the Greek and international ruling classes by winning workers to blame immigrants, Jews and leftists for the problems caused by the wealthy business interests. Appealing to nationalism, Golden Dawn frames the issue as one of "defending Greek sovereignty" rather than the working class fighting to defend its interests.

Older workers remember what fascism meant to them. In World War II, the German and Italian occupation of Greece killed hundreds of thousands of

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Obama, Romney Debate: How Best to Widen War

While the capitalists' election circus offers nothing of value to workers, it is an important mechanism for opposing sections of the ruling class to battle out their differences. The U.S. presidential campaign fight between Barack Obama and Mitt Romney reflects in part a disagreement over the best way to expand the looming inter-imperialist conflict with nuclear-bound Iran.

The major difference pits a less expensive warfare policy of air strikes and Special Forces (Romney) versus a longer-term, mass mobilization for a full-scale ground war (Obama). At stake is nothing less than U.S. imperialism's top-dog status over Russia, China, and other imperialist rivals.

Securing Iran's oil and gas reserves—the second largest in the world, after Saudi Arabia's—has

been the Pentagon's mission since the fascist Shah of Iran, the U.S.-installed puppet, was ousted by the fascist ayatollahs in 1979. It remains the top long-term priority of finance capital, the dominant wing of the U.S. ruling class. These are the bosses who bankroll the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), whose board members include Exxon Mobil CEO Rex Tillerson. A recent CSIS report states:

U.S. national security planners accept the fact that the [Persian] Gulf is and will remain the location of a strategically vital share of the world's petroleum resources. The U.S. is deeply tied to a global economy dependent on the flow of Gulf energy exports to Europe and Asia and to manufactured imports that require such oil and gas exports.

U.S. imperialism's real power derives in large measure from Exxon's ability, backed by the Pentagon, to dictate the terms of Middle East energy supply to 120 countries.

The Obama-Romney disagreement over Middle East strategy parallels the bosses' differences over taxes. The wing represented by Obama sees the need to tax the rich at a much higher rate, in line with their financial contributions to World War II, while cutting unneeded military programs. Romney's backers want to reduce taxes on the rich while maintaining and adding to the military budget in the name of "national security."

Obama's Bosses Are Winning — for Now

Despite Romney's success in the first debate, Obama's backers, the proponents of global war, currently seem to have the upper hand. Romney champions the faction that followed the path of Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense under President George W. Bush: war "on the cheap" to "fight with the army you have." (The Rumsfeld forces temporarily won out over the faction allied with former Joint Chiefs Chairman Colin Powell, who advocated the use of overwhelming force.)

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (a Romney ally) was all for a preemptive strike against Iran's nuclear facilities, but pressure from Obama forced him to back off. Speaking at the UN General Assembly, Netanyahu laid out his "redlines" for striking Iran's nuke sites but pushed back his deadline well into next year. The top donor for both Romney and Netanyahu, casino billionaire Sheldon Adelson, raged at Obama's time-buying alternative, charging that the president's Iran sanctions "contain loopholes that you could drive a warhead through.... They won't stop Iran's nuclear program" (Jewish News Service, 10/11/12).

On Obama's side, in a New York Times op-ed piece, "Why Netanyahu Backed Down," Graham Allison and Shai Feldman of Harvard's Belfer Center crowed that the Israeli leader "ended speculation that Israel might mount a unilateral attack on Iran before the American presidential election." Netanyahu gave up the thought of acting alone because the Obama administration was "upgrading American security assistance to Israel" at a "level of support... greater than ever in Israel's history." The authors cited a poll in which "77 percent of Israelis now oppose a military attack on Iran that is not approved by Washington, although 71 percent would support

an attack with American consent."

U.S Rulers' Grand Plan for Iran

The dominant finance capital group of U.S. imperialists has still grander plans for Iran. On October 10, their CSIS think tank updated its ongoing study, "Iran and the [Persian] Gulf Military Balance." Envisioning far more than a "surgical" strike, it details "the order of battle," the relative strengths in troops and armaments of Iran and its potential foes in an all-out regional war. CSIS examines the potential military contributions of Britain, France, Israel and the oil-rich sheikdoms of the Gulf Cooperation Council to an anti-Iran alliance led by the U.S. In various CSIS scenarios, Israel becomes but one member of a group aimed at smashing the regime in Teheran. Its 207-page report begins:

The most threatening form of U.S. and Iranian competition takes place in the military and security arena.... The growth of Iran's capabilities for warfare in the Gulf, changing the military balance in the region, creates a growing risk that this aspect of U.S. and Iranian competition could lead to a major clash or even war in the Gulf.

This is the essence of Obama & Co.'s dressing down of Romney-Adelson-Netanyahu. CSIS also criticizes the on-the-cheap military disaster in Iraq that was engineered by Rumsfeld in 2003. Influenced by the same neo-conservatives who now advise Romney, Bush failed to commit an occupation-sized army there. His limited investment in Iraq and the ensuing sectarian strife led to the destruction of Saddam Hussein's army, a force that the U.S. could have used to check Iran today:

Iraq is a major wild card in the competition in conventional forces. [T]he U.S. invasion of Iraq stripped away Iraq's capability to deter and defend against Iran, and act as a regional counterbalance.

U.S. rulers had previously backed Hussein's army in Iraq's eight-year war with Iran, supplying him with intelligence and weapons for use against Iran's military. In fact, before his rise to power, Saddam was a paid CIA asset who helped fight off anti-U.S. forces in Iraq's government.

Imperialist Rivals Shape Up for World War

Foreseeing unavoidable worldwide combat, CSIS repeatedly identifies Russia and China — currently Iran's biggest allies and arms suppliers — as future opponents of the U.S. Wary of past miscalculations, the think tank declares, "There are no rules that define Iran or the course of some future conflict — only uncertain probabilities."

If finance capital has its way, a wider war in the Middle East will have a devastating effect on the international working class. After the slaughter of the two Gulf Wars prosecuted by George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton, it will kill millions more in that region. More U.S. soldiers will also be sacrificed in the name of imperialist greed. As the presidential campaign spectacle swings into its final weeks, it is clear that neither of the two ruling-class forces represents the interests of our class. Their argument is limited to how best to advance the cause of the capitalist system. Both sides are seeking maximum profit by increasing exploitation of the working class.

While the candidates debate their nonsense about "saving the middle class," tens of millions suffer mass unemployment and underemployment. Racist police attacks on black and Latino workers and youth are rising. Women are oppressed through wage differentials and a degenerate sexist culture. Immigrant workers are super-exploited amid mass deportation. U.S. prisons and jails contain 2.4 million inmates, more than in any other country in the world, and 70 percent of them are black and Latino. Workers' homes are being foreclosed by the millions as an economic crisis devas-

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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. Everyone will share in society's benefits and burdens.**

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

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

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

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

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

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Why Articles Are Not Signed

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.

Rally Protests Greek Neo-Nazi Gang



en Dawn, Nikolaos Michaloliakos, became friendly with some of the imprisoned former colonels from this junta and was encouraged to form a new fascist party. Today, the Greek police actively support Golden Dawn — 50% of them cast their vote for the neo-Nazis. The cops stand idly by while the racist goons attack immigrants and leftist rallies.

One of the speakers at the meeting pointed out that Hitler wrote in his book,

Mein Kampf, that the left had the opportunity to crush the Nazis in Germany in the 1920s when they were small. By 1933 it was too late, and the fascists proceeded to put leftists — especially leaders of the working class — into concentration camps. We can't make the same mistake.

Progressive Labor Party members and friends plan to be active in the committees that were formed to continue organizing against Golden Dawn. We will emphasize two things:

- Multi-racial unity: The meeting was mostly white. We need to broaden our base of support, by participating in anti-racist and pro working class struggles throughout the city. Although no one mentioned it at the meeting, NYC cops recently murdered Noel Polanco, a 22-year-old young man

who worked in Astoria. Mr. Polanco was stopped in his car and unarmed when a policeman shot him without any justification. We will join community protests, spreading the idea that we need working-class solidarity to win.

- Communism: While anti-fascist protests are great, we need to remember that capitalism has always — and will always — produce fascist groups to do its bidding. In the midst of the worst economic crisis in eighty years, not to mention the billions who are always facing grinding poverty, we need to build a revolutionary communist answer to capitalism while we organize against the fascist thugs that it gives life to.✶

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civilians, some by torture and execution, others by starvation. The communist-led Resistance movement heroically fought and defeated the occupiers and their Greek collaborators. They were later suppressed by the British Army. In 1947 U.S. forces, under the global anti-communist Truman Doctrine, replaced the British military. From 1967 to 1974, a right-wing military junta brutally suppressed the working class, abolishing their unions and their political parties, forbidding demonstrations and subjecting tens of thousands to torture and/or prison. In 1974 the junta was overthrown and the new government tried and imprisoned the junta leaders.

During the 1980's, the eventual leader of Gold-

IMPRESSED BY YOUNG LEADERS

I commend the PLP for its activities at the recent AFT (American Federation of Teachers) convention in Detroit this past summer. I participated in selling CHALLENGEs, distributing leaflets and talking to teachers and autoworkers.

What impressed me most was the leadership of young comrades who directed these activities with enthusiasm and skill. They were multi-racial and consisted of women and men from several parts of the country.

As a veteran PL member, I gained more confidence in the Party's capabilities and the future of our movement. Hopefully, some of these comrades will consider moving to Detroit and help rebuild the PLP in fertile ground.

Veteran Comrade

DC Transit Rank and File Sharpen ANTI-RACIST CONTRACT FIGHT

WASHINGTON, DC, October 16 — The bosses and their union misleader allies continue to attack Metro Access workers here. These drivers handle special trips for the disabled and elderly. In most major cities, such para-transit systems are generally treated as stepchildren of the mass transit systems, with wages and benefits far below regular bus and train operators. The bosses rely on private contractors to provide these poverty-level jobs and on racism to super-exploit these mainly black workers.

Here Metro Access is operated by MV Transportation, a contractor that is barely represented by ATU Local 1764. One DC Metro Access worker contacted a PLP member known for his long-time activism in the Metro transit union and said the workers wanted to leave their local because it didn't serve their needs. However, the PL'er said it would be better for workers to organize a their own fight around a new contract for January 2013, including preparing to strike.

A group of eight workers met to map out such a contract and prepare for a strike. They made a priority elimination of the two-tier wage system which is dividing the workers. Nobody receives a decent wage. Under the current contract senior drivers make \$17/hr while new employees are capped at \$12/hr.

The group also discussed the is-

sue of anti-communism since PLP is involved in this effort, and copies of CHALLENGE were shared with the workers. The campaign has just begun. MV Transportation has over 800 workers at two locations. The workers have organized a strong committee, but need to approach the entire

workforce. They launched a web site to help in this effort: <http://www.roaddawgonline.com/> and prepared a flyer for mass distribution

So far the union leadership has refused to meet with this rank-and-file committee. They've told the workers they should disband because the un-

ion president will "take care of the contract." Exactly! Another sellout! That's the problem! Let's get organized to sharpen the anti-racist class struggle of these workers.✶



SANTIAGO, CHILE — Students and workers battle cops for free education.

Rebellion in South Africa

MINERS WAGE MASSIVE STRIKES VS. RACIST NEO-APARTHEID EXPLOITERS

JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA, October 11 — The wildcat strikes and rebellions of 80,000 miners have spread across seven of this country's nine provinces to include 30,000 truckers and a pending walk-out of 190,000 government workers for higher wages. Port workers may soon join in. It is a massive assault on the racist apartheid system that still permeates South Africa in the form of the war between the two opposing classes.

Striking miners have mobilized to stop scabs; truckers have torched scab trucks. The bosses are retaliating with mass firings. When Anglo-American Platinum, the world's top producer, fired 12,000 strikers after workers refused to attend company "hearings," and said it would hire scabs to replace them, one worker declared that could happen only "over our dead bodies." (Associated Press, 10/11) Another warned that, "Those who are dismissed will make sure there will be no operations and that [hiring of scabs] will cause a massacre just like at Marikana" (BBC News, 10/9) where, on August 16, cops murdered 34 miners. (See CHALLENGE, 9/19)

The rebellious Youth League, which is opposing the re-election of African National Congress (ANC) leader, President Jacob Zuma, said of the firing that Anglo-American Platinum "has made astronomical profits on the blood, sweat and tears of the very same workers that today the company can just fire with impunity" which it said is "a representation of white monopoly capital...uncaring of the plight of the poor."

While workers were on a hill near the company's Rustenberg mine protesting the firings — and demanding the indictment for murder of the racist police who massacred the Marikana miners — cops fired rubber bullets and tear gas and murdered still another worker. The strikers have been out since September 12 and are demanding a monthly wage hike of up to 400 percent, from \$500 to \$2,000.

Bokoni Platinum fired another 2,160 strikers who wildcatted on October 1 and Gold Ore International fired 1,400 more at its Ezulwini operation.



Meanwhile, the original rock-drill operators at the Marikana mine rejected a company offer to return to negotiations which was accepted by the ANC-allied union, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). The wildcatters have held solid, with 96 percent staying out. (Reuters, 10/9) On October 3, 3,000 marched through the streets near the Lonmin mine, the largest protest since the racist massacre.

Under the current neo-Apartheid regime of the ANC, the country's unemployment rate is 25 percent while President Zuma urges the miners to return to work, calling the strikes "illegal." Zuma's tiny black elite is allied with what the New York Times reported (10/14) is a "white-dominated capitalism [that has] remained in place." The Times also said there are "reports that the government is paying for \$27 million in renovations to Mr. Zuma's private village home."

A glaring example of this alliance occurred when miners, fired in June after a wildcat strike, joined those laid off two years ago to try to stop scabs entering the Gold One International mine, formerly managed by the Aurora company. It turns out that Aurora was bought two years ago by a group including Zuma's nephew and a grandson of Zuma's predecessor Nelson Mandela. The two allegedly

never paid for the mine but stripped it of its assets, while failing to pay tens of thousands of dollars owed to miners thrown out of work. (AP, 10/11) Apartheid of the rich against the working class rolls on.

Meanwhile, capitalism's exploitation rules. The Times says (10/14), "Schools in townships and rural areas are a shambles. Hunger and disease still gnaw at the poorest. Unemployment is rife. [25 percent] And the misery is not equally shared: South Africa also has one of the world's highest levels of income inequality. A tiny wealthy black elite has emerged, while millions more remain in poverty."

Any wonder that truck driver Morris Sello told the Times, "I am very disappointed in this government....They are stealing...and leaving us with nothing."

The strikers who have launched this massive movement are threatening the profits of a huge industry netting billions off their exploitation. South

Africa has proven mineral reserves worth three trillion dollars. It holds the world's largest reserves of manganese, chrome, and platinum and among the largest reserves of gold, diamonds, coal, aluminum, iron ore and vanadium. (The Examiner,

10/5)

South Africa produces 75 percent of the world's platinum and is number four in chrome production. The struck Goldfields company is the world's fourth largest gold producer.

It is our class that produces all this value reaped from our labor but most of which is stolen by the owners of the means of production as their profits. The militancy of these striking workers has shown the world a microcosm of the potential power of the working class to shut down that production and the flow of profits that come from those huge mineral resources. However, the bosses control state power, the government, and in this case have Zuma in their back pocket.

The working class needs to smash that state power and the profit system along with it. This can only happen if workers join and are led by their own revolutionary communist party whose goal is to do just that. We will establish a society run by and for the working class, without bosses, profits, racism, sexism and imperialist wars. That is the aim of the Progressive Labor Party which is establishing itself on five continents and must be brought to these miners and to all workers fighting the horrors of capitalism.✊



PARIS, October 11 — Over 4,000 retirees demonstrated here, and hundreds more in Marseilles, Lyons and other cities nationwide demanding an immediate across-the-board 300-euro-a-month increase (\$387) in pensions, guaranteed access to health care, aid for those unable to live alone and an increase in the minimum monthly pension to 1,425 euros (\$1,838). A trade union coalition organized the demonstrations.

"We won't be the laughing stock for the suckers!" the protesters in Lyons chanted, mocking the bosses who say they "won't be suckers" and bear any tax increase.

"Retirees are not privileged, it's the financiers who should be taxed!" the Paris protesters chanted. Today's protests were sparked by government plans to tax pensions 0.15 percent next year and double it in 2014. The tax is supposedly to pay for care for old people who can't live alone but in reality, it's to help ensure that France pays off its \$1.9-trillion sovereign debt (2011 estimate) to the world's finance capitalists.

Ten million retirees will have to pay the new tax while only the poorest 30% will be exempt. But from experience they know they're next.

The Paris protesters also chanted, "Hollande, can you hear? the retirees are in the street!" This echoed a chant from 2010, when then-President Nicolas Sarkozy upped the retirement age, triggering massive protests. This has exposed current President Hollande and his "lesser-evil" Socialists as every bit as evil as the right-wing UMP party.

Raising the retirement age has increased the number of people aged 55-64 having to work by 3.8%. But the bosses' economic crisis has spiked that group's unemployment rate from 4.6% in 2008 to 6.5% in 2011.

"I can't afford meat or fish," said Josiane Bar-



'By our actions, we are giving a future to our retirees.'

dot, 82, who lives on a 900-euro-a-month pension (\$1,161), while paying 300 euros for rent. Francis, 87, lives on 1,200 euros a month (\$1,548), but can eat meat only one day a week after paying 300 euros for rent plus a steep heating bill. "If I had an extra 100 euros a month, I could eat in a restaurant once in a while," he said sadly.

An estimated 1.5 million retirees live below the poverty line (964 euros a month — \$1,243 — in 2010). Some 8.6 million people — 14 percent of the population — live in poverty. Some retirees live alone in the slums on 600 euros a month.

In 2010 the Alerte collective said retirees would face increasing impoverishment, especially those who'd experienced periods of unemployment. Because of racist discrimination, black people and those of Arab origin suffer the most unemployment. In old age, they suffer disproportionately from poverty. The same is true of women, who often leave work or work part-time while raising

children.

Many retirees no longer have complementary health insurance and are skimping on health costs. Some have to choose between food and health care. More need help to pay their heating bills.

Meanwhile, the Socialist government has just decided to maintain special social security provisions that pump up the profits of private-sector retirement homes. That's no surprise: Luc Broussy, the Socialist advisor on the issue, headed the private retirement-home lobby for twelve years.

Thus the “lesser-evil” Socialists maintain the system that impoverishes the poor and enriches the rich. Between 2004 and 2007, the income of the richest 0.01 percent rose steadily, by 40%.

What's needed is overthrow of the capitalist system which exploits workers while they're young and relegates them to poverty when they're old. This can only be accomplished through communist revolution — the goal of the Progressive Labor Party. 🌟

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tates the well-being of the entire U.S. working class. Meanwhile, similar policies advanced by capitalists in Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America are wrecking the lives of workers there.

The capitalists' oil-driven imperialist war has targeted millions of workers worldwide in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, and the rest of the Middle East, along with hundreds of thousands of U.S. youth who are sent to their deaths or to lifetimes of physical and psychological trauma. The class struggle against the capitalists is raging in Indonesia, Spain, Greece, Portugal, and France. It is rising in the U.S., where workers in a dozen cities mounted the first multi-store strike in the history of super-exploiter Walmart. It is up to the work-



ing class, led by the revolutionary communist Progressive Labor Party, to rise up against this hellish profit-driven carnage. We must use our position in this class struggle — in workplaces, schools, communities, campuses, churches and especially in the military — to drive the capitalists into their graves.

PLP's goal is a society of, by and for the working class, without bosses, profits, racism, sexism and capitalist-created borders. That's communism. Join us!🌐

Walkouts Spread

Wal-mart Workers Fight Slave Labor



Workers at Wal-mart have spread their strikes and protests against the world's largest private-sector employer — 1.4 million workers — to at least 28 stores in 12 states and counting, over the issues of poverty wages, exorbitant hours, wage theft, uncertain schedules, arbitrary firings, physical threats, unhealthy working conditions and lack of healthcare coverage.

The workers are planning a massive strike and protest for the biggest shopping day of the year, "Black Friday," the day after Thanksgiving.

Immigrant workers have led the way, sparking the nationwide actions when they began a strike last June in the small town of Breaux Bridge, Louisiana, against C.J.'s Seafood, a Wal-mart supplier. They were "guest workers" from Mexico who were paid much less than the minimum wage, forced to work shifts up to 24 hours with no overtime pay, and threatened with beatings if their breaks lasted more than five minutes. Twice they were locked inside their workplace to force them to work from 2:00 A.M. until 6:00 P.M. without overtime compensation. And if they challenged any of these horrors, they were threatened with deportation. C.J.'s Seafood brings in an annual revenue of up to \$50 million and sells 85 percent of its production to Wal-mart.

Soon the strikes spread to Wal-mart stores and warehouses throughout California. In early September, 30 workers at a warehouse in Mira Loma, Ca., walked out for 15 days to protest unsafe working conditions, reporting temperatures up to 120 degrees, no access to clean water or regular breaks and faulty work equipment. Another 60 walked out in L.A. on October 4, and 250 in Pecora, followed by workers striking or protesting in San Diego, Sacramento and Pico Rivera.

Workers vs. the SWAT Team

Meanwhile, workers at a Wal-mart contractor warehouse in Elmwood, Illinois, the company's largest distribution center struck in mid-September seventy percent of all imported products Wal-mart sells in the U.S. move through that facility. When a mass protest of 600 blocked the warehouse, a Chicago SWAT team was called in and arrested 17 demonstrators. Those workers had sued for non-payment for all hours worked and for overtime and for being paid less than the minimum wage. They cited work-days varying from two hours to 16 hours, inhaling dust and chemical residue, enduring extreme temperatures, forced to lift 250-pound boxes with no help, and discrimination against women workers.

Workers have walked off the job since then in Dallas, Seattle, Miami, Hallandale Beach, Florida, Orlando and Washington D.C., and in Min-

nesota, Maryland and Kentucky. In Massachusetts, 300 protesters picketed 30 stores, demanding a \$25,000 annual minimum wage plus healthcare coverage. The demonstrators were equally divided among union members, students and churchgoers. Two hundred Wal-mart workers descended on a company investor meeting at its corporate headquarters in Bentonville, Arkansas, advancing their demands.

While Wal-mart has been claiming these workers' charges were false and were a "publicity stunt," saying that it involves just a tiny group of disgruntled employees, they are actually taking the movement very seriously, having distributed a secret memo to all managers on how to handle the strikes and protest. (Huffington Post, 10/14)

Wal-mart's Reaps Super-profits From Workers' Labor

Wal-mart's profits are based on all this super-exploitation. It had an "operating income of \$10.2 billion through July 3 of this year" and "expects to generate \$9 billion in on-line sales alone in 2013. The heirs to founder Sam Walton rank among the richest people in the U.S. with a combined wealth reportedly matching 42 percent of the country's population." (Home Media Magazine, 10/12)

While many of the strikes and protests have been led by the rank and file, organizations such as the National Guestworker Alliance, "Our Walmart," the Organization United for Respect at Walmart, "Making Change at Walmart" and the United Food

and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union all have been involved.

However, none of these groups have pointed out the real source of the workers' oppression: capitalism. They are all trying to reform the profit system, an impossibility. Wal-mart is driven by the same force that drives all bosses — maximum profit. That's why Wal-mart exploits workers in China and other low-wage countries, and uses the same methods in the U.S. Profits are the name of the game, and it's an international operation. There are no borders when it comes to accumulating profit.

The Bosses' Government is NOT Neutral

Moreover, governments are there to enforce this system, whether in Beijing or Washington, D.C. They are not neutral. That Chicago SWAT team was not called in to force Wal-mart to accede to the workers' demands; they were ordered in to arrest them.

While workers may be urged to resort to help from the U.S. Department of Labor to enforce

so-called labor laws, that agency's Wage and Hour Division employs a meager staff of 1,038 investigators to cover more than 135 million workers in over 7.3 million companies, leaving each inspector responsible for one and a quarter million workers! Most of these workers will have died before an inspector reaches their workplace. Neither Obama nor Romney will change that since their job is to enforce the profit system.

PLP calls on all workers to support the Wal-mart strikers and protesters in their efforts to achieve their demands and to join their picket lines, to raise this need for support in all their unions, mass organization, communities where Wal-mart exists, churches, schools and on college campuses. But we should have no illusions — as long as capitalism exists, Wal-mart and all their profit-making competitors will refuse to give up their drive for maximum profits. That is the essence of capitalism.

Progressive Labor Party must bring this dual message to the rank-and-file Wal-mart workers, and win them to join a revolutionary communist party, PLP, which fights for the only real solution to their abominable conditions, a communist society, without bosses and profits, run by and for working class which produces all value.☸

Additional sources include the New York Times, Salon.com, Nation of Change, ABC News, Boston Business Journal, Florida Sun Sentinel.



Community Fights Boss-Gov't Anti-Immigrant Gang-up

OAKLAND, CA ,October 16 — The coalition that organized the May Day March in the Bay Area is now mobilizing to support workers at the Mi Pueblo supermarket. PLP members are participating and joining the community boycott and picketing here on October 20.

Mi Pueblo has 21 stores and 3,200 employees, the majority of whom speak Spanish or are bi-lingual. The owner, Juvenal Chavez, expanded and got rich by selling traditional products from Latin America at high prices in immigrant neighborhoods while paying workers substandard wages. Many, both women and men, fought these conditions and have been fired. Meanwhile, Local 5 of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union is trying to unionize this workforce as part of a state-wide campaign, the Mercado Workers Coalition, aimed at non-union, immigrant supermarket workers.

In August, Mi Pueblo announced the voluntary implementation of the Federal E-Verify program to check the immigration status of new employees. Recently Mi Pueblo revealed that the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) division of the Department of Homeland Security is carrying out I-9 audits, called "silent raids."

E-Verify, I-9 and ICE are all part of the fascist federal apparatus which is destroying the jobs, wages and living conditions of ALL workers in the U.S. It may appear to be aimed only at immigrants. Some politicians have argued that these "reforms" will open up more jobs for citizens. However, the experiences at Pacific Steel (over 200 fired; see CHALLENGE, 3/12), at Able Building Maintenance

(450 fired) and at American Apparel (2,000 fired) show how "legal" citizen workers are hurt. Bosses like Juvenal Chavez can cooperate with ICE to fire long-time, "illegal" workers and then turn around and hire new "legal" citizen workers, currently unemployed and desperate for work, at an even lower wage.

If we accept divisions among workers based on ethnicity, gender, national origin or migration status, we lose. However, when we recognize ourselves as one international working class and develop multi-ethnic unity and internationalism among all workers, we gain! Workers' struggles have no borders! An attack on one worker is an attack on the whole working class.

PLP believes that the boycott and pickets can mobilize and help organize this struggle. The boycott might force Juvenal Chavez to make concessions and a union contract might give some immediate relief to arbitrary firings.

However, both are not sufficient to get at the root of the problem, the capitalist system, of which Juvenal is a willing, profitable part. Underlying this struggle is capitalism's creation of massive racist unemployment, massive migration around the globe, repressive laws, discrimination of all kinds and institutional racism. In the long run, we must organize to destroy capitalism, even as we fight for relief from today's oppression.

Join with us to build a new society, led by and for the international working class.

Communist revolution opens the door to abolishing racism, sexism and national borders if we make international working-class unity part of to-

BOSSSES' UNIVERSAL GOAL: LOW-PAID LABOR

The Center for Immigration Studies (CIS) think tank in Washington, D.C. advocates suppression and reduction of "illegal immigrants" while assuring employers they still will have a large pool of low-paid labor to exploit:

If, through enforcement, a large fraction of illegal immigrants returned to their home countries, there would seem to be an ample supply of idle American workers to replace them, particularly workers who have relatively little education.

This is exactly the policy of Obama's "Secure Communities" program from which deportations reached record numbers, 300,000 annually since 2009, almost double the annual average of his predecessor George Bush.

Immigration "reform" will never limit the need of the capitalist class for cheaper labor, no matter who wins the 2012 elections.

day's battles. In a truly communist society there's no money, no production for sale and profit and no wages to create differences among workers. This is a world that finally realizes the potential for all to participate according to their ability and receive according to their needs, sharing the value the working class collectively produces.✶

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

Gov't uses 'terror' to build fascism

OtherWords.com — The terrorist menace is proving useful to the U.S. government, much as the communist menace did many years ago. What could be more convenient than tagging dissidents and opponents as "giving material aid to terrorists"?....

Hence, we witness a steady parade of alleged underwear bombers, shoe bombers, car bombers, dirty bombers, Jihad Janers and other miscellaneous prospective murderers — many of whom, curiously, seem to have been egged on and supported by the FBI until their arrests. The media...reports these stories to the hilt.

Diallo-killer cop gets his gun back

NYT, 10/3 — ...Three years after the police shooting of Amadou Diallo, Commissioner Raymond Kelly has agreed to restore a service weapon to one of the four New York City officers involved, a decision that Mr. Diallo's mother characterized as a betrayal....

The police fired 41 shots, killing Mr. Diallo as he stood in the vestibule of his apartment building in the Bronx on Feb. 4, 1999. Although the officers said they believed he held a gun, Mr. Diallo was unarmed.

The Police Department offered no official explanation...about restoring a gun to the officer....

The fusillade of bullets, 19 of which struck Mr. Diallo, prompted furious protests against the police. The officers, all white and members of the elite Street Crime Unit, said they believed Mr. Diallo had a gun. It turned out to be his wallet....

Anguished protesters marched, and relations between the police and many black people soured.

Portuguese rally, talk of revolution

GW, 10/5 — "We have reached the limit. People are tired of making sacrifices because you don't see any improvement whatever. Quite the opposite"....

Two weeks ago, hundreds of thousands marched in the streets of Lisbon and other cities in the biggest protests since the end of the dictatorship in 1974. The rallies forced the prime minister into a U-turn over social security reform — one of the first times a government tied into austerity has reacted so decisively to popular revolt.

Last Saturday, demonstrators again marched against the spending cuts.... At Lisbon's port last week, the cranes were still as dockers staged one of a series of strikes taking place over a five-week period. Graffiti around the town call for an end to the cuts, a general strike, even revolution.

Capitalism lies to dull militancy

GW, 10/5 — Rich lists are stuffed with people who either inherited their money or who made it through rent-seeking activities, by means other than innovation and productive effort. They're a catalogue of speculators, property barons, dukes, IT monopolists, loan sharks, bank chiefs, oil sheikhs, mining magnates, oligarchs and chief executives paid out of all proportion to any value they generated. Looters, in short. The richest mining barons are those to whom the government sold natural resources....

Almost all...rags-to-riches tales turn out to be bunkum. "Everything Ann and I have," Mitt Romney claims, "we earned the old-fashioned way." Old-fashioned pirates, perhaps....

The financial sector has become a job-destroying, home-breaking, life-crushing machine, which impoverished others to enrich itself. The tighter its grip on politics, the more its representatives must tell the opposite story: of life-affirming enterprise, innovation, of brave entrepreneurs making fortunes out of nothing but grit and wit.

There is an obvious flip side to this story....If you are born poor or born rich...you are likely to



stay that way....

Equal opportunity, self-creation, heroic individualism: these are the myths that predatory capitalism requires for its political survival.

Charter schools — non-union — lag

LA Times — The unrelenting attack on teachers unions has some measurable consequences....

The presumably numbers-driven educational reformers are highly selective when it comes to which number they take seriously. For years, many have touted charter schools (which usually are not unionized) as the preferred alternative to (unionized) public schools. But the most extensive survey of student performance at charter schools, from Stanford University's Center for Research on Education Outcomes, found that, of the 2,403 charter schools tracked from 2006 to 2008, only 17 percent had better math test results than the public schools in their area, while 37 percent had results that were "significantly below" those of the public schools and 46 percent had results that were "statistically indistinguishable" from their public-school counterparts.

MORE ITEMS AVAILABLE AT WWW.PLP.ORG

Protest UN Troops in Haiti, Inaction on Cholera



NEW YORK CITY, October 12 — Members of the End Cholera in Haiti Organization (ECHO) came out today to rally at the UN in ECHO's first public action in NYC, building on a petition campaign. This will be a long struggle with many such actions. We joined a protest with other Haitian groups and international activists against the continued stationing of UN Minustah troops in Haiti.

We highlighted the demands of our campaign to end cholera in Haiti: universal vaccination, beginning with schoolchildren; a country-wide network of treatment centers; and most fundamentally, a modern infrastructure for clean water and sanitation.

Comrades from Progressive Labor Party were there distributing CHALLENGE and explaining how capitalism continually causes these preventable water-borne diseases. It is an example of the gross racism of the imperialist system towards workers in places like Haiti or West Africa where these epidemics are allowed to spread.

It was Minustah who brought cholera to Haiti via their troops from Nepal who carried the disease. In October 2010, human waste from their base near the Artibonite River was dumped into the river. The first case of cholera in Haiti since the 1700s occurred just downstream of that Minustah base. The strain of bacteria in the resulting epidemic was found to be the same Asian strain that the Nepalese troops carried.

The disease spread like wildfire after that, infecting 600,000 and killing over 7,400, and crossing into the Dominican Republic where hundreds also died. Because of the continuing lack of access to clean water and decent sanitation in Haiti, the epidemic is far from over.

Earlier this year, the World Health Organization (WHO) predicted that at least 100,000 more Haitians would become infected in 2012. Despite the consensus in the international health community that Minustah was guilty of introducing the epidemic to Haiti, the UN has yet to take responsibility and move decisively to stop the spread of this deadly disease.

In many parts of the world cholera is endemic or entrenched in the population. In such areas people carry the disease and continually spread it, making it very difficult to eradicate.

Some health experts fear that this is already happening in Haiti. Cholera outbreaks continue to be on the rise globally, currently affecting 3-5 million people and accounting for 100,000-120,000 deaths yearly, according to the WHO.

These statistics will only worsen with the increasing trend toward the privatization of water. In fact, access to clean water and proper sanitation is the only real way to control this disease. That is why ECHO's most critical demand is to force the rulers to come up with the billion dollars required to build a clean water infrastructure for the people of Haiti.

Although the area outside the UN where the rally was held was not as busy as hoped, it was most inspiring to see the enthusiasm of young ECHO members who chanted and picketed with posters and banners. One high school student of Haitian

background, an ECHO leader, came forward and addressed the rally. He sharply made the point that the U.S. imperialists and the UN/Minustah troop occupation have brought only misery and death to people in Haiti. Another college student, who learned of the campaign only a week before, collected pages of signatures and expressed interest in joining the campaign steering committee.

Nearly everyone at the protest who was asked signed the ECHO petition. Several demonstrators noted that ECHO was not merely there to protest, but was attempting to build an international struggle and gave us their contact info to learn more. We work in concert with the campaign in Haiti itself, where another in a series of demonstrations is planned for October 19.

Judging by the response to our message thus far, we are encouraged.

ECHO members have already begun speaking to student, union, church, health and community groups and have plans to reach out to more. Next time we return to the UN it will be in substantially greater numbers to put forward our demands more forcefully. PLP members working in the campaign argue that this vital effort should also be linked to building a revolutionary communist movement internationally. Joshua Horn's book *Away with All Pests* tells the story of how communists in China eradicated diseases that capitalism has never been able to, such as syphilis.

For PLP fighting cholera is part of a struggle for a world which banishes the ultimate "pest," capital itself, a world in which workers will never again be allowed to die of racist neglect.✊

Workers Shut Down Indonesia's Capital



INDONESIA, October 3 — Two million workers struck across the country and brought the capital Jakarta to a halt. They are protesting the government's slave-labor wage policy. The minimum wage for a 6-day week is below \$80 a month (see CHALLENGE 10/17).

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