

# CHALLENGE



THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

volume 46 no.5

March 12, 2014

suggested donation \$0.50

## Imperialists Battle while Workers Suffer

# Fascist Movement Building in Ukraine

As CHALLENGE goes to press, the struggle between imperialist factions and their capitalist allies in Ukraine remains in flux. After three months of increasingly militant protests exploded late in February, Viktor Yanukovich, the country's Russia-leaning President, was ousted from power and driven from the capital city of Kiev. Armed workers seized the president's opulent palace, a monument to the bosses' greed. Yanukovich, charged with "mass murder" in connection with the shooting of dozens of protesters, is now camped among his supporter in Eastern Ukraine. The country's parliament has set a new presidential election for May, and politicians tilting toward the European Union (EU) dominate the field. All of the top candidates are also allied with local fascist forces. (See box.)

The next phase of this conflict is unpredictable. Civil war — and the potential splitting of Ukraine into two or more states — remains conceivable, especially if Yanukovich can marshal support in his eastern stronghold. Another possibility is intervention by Russia, where the capitalists represented by President Vladimir Putin can ill afford to lose Ukraine from their economic and military sphere of influence.

All of these scenarios hinge on the competing interests of imperialist super powers and the local bosses who represent them. In the absence of a revolutionary movement for communism, none of them will serve the interests of workers in Ukraine, the region, or the world. (See editorial, page 2.)

### Independence for the Rich

The protests in the Maidan, Kiev's central square, were sparked when Yanukovich canceled a pending trade agreement with the EU in favor of a closer alliance with his Russian patrons and Putin's plan for a Eurasian Economic Union. These protests built on deep anger at the dire conditions for workers throughout Ukraine.

Soon after the country voted its independence during the last days of the Soviet Union in 1991, wealth became concentrated among a handful of oligarchs, the group of entrepreneurial businessmen who made immense profits during Ukraine's transition from state capitalism to a market-based economy. By 2008, according to the Eurasia Daily Monitor, the country's 50 richest oligarchs controlled 85 percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product. The social safety net was shredded. Real wages dropped by nearly two-thirds. Today, about one-third of the population lives below the poverty line. The health system is a shambles, with adult death rates among the highest in the world. Government corruption is everywhere.

With life so miserable under the sway of the Russian imperialists, there is much talk in Ukraine of revolution. But many workers mistakenly look to Europe or to the local fascist opposition to solve their problems. The EU offers nothing but more misery for the country's working class. If the EU and the International Monetary Fund replace Russia in propping up Ukraine's hyper-inflated economy, the aid will come with strings attached — the same austerity policies that have ravaged workers in Greece and Spain. Changing imperialist rulers is not revolution.

### Energy and Opportunism

The conflict in Ukraine has been reported in the U.S. bosses' press as a battle for democracy, Western values, and freedom from autocracy and Russian domination. Politicians from Republican Senator John McCain to President Barack Obama cheered on the demonstrators as they occupied government buildings, hurled firebombs at the police, killed several cops and captured many more. Obama went so far as to threaten sanctions against the Ukrainian government if it failed to reverse recent legislation restricting demonstrations.

What's really going on here? Ukraine has long been of vital interest to the Russian bosses, before and after its nominal independence. Its eastern provinces were once the Soviet Union's breadbasket, and millions of Russians settled there after the famine of 1933. Russian remains the first language for many in that area, which generally supported Yanukovich in previous elections.

In this light, the effort led by German and U.S. rulers to pull Ukraine into the EU is an attempt to weaken Russian imperialism while exploiting the country's workers and fertile agricultural land. Opportunities for energy profits loom large as well. The U.S. backed Shell Oil's agreement last year (with Yanukovich) to explore recently discovered shale gas deposits in Ukraine. Successful exploitation of these reserves, estimated at four trillion cubic feet of gas, would allow Ukraine to reduce its energy dependence on Russia. Current plans by Shell and Ukraine include exports

### Nazis Running the 'Euromaidan' Opposition

The opposition to the deposed Yanukovich regime is a coalition of three political parties called "Euromaidan," named after its pro-European Union (EU) stance and the central square in Kiev (the "Maidan"). One is the right-wing, pro-capitalist Fatherland Party headed by multi-millionaire Yulia Tymoshenko, modeled after European Christian Democratic parties. Another is the Ukrainian Democratic Alliance for Reform, which is aligned with German Chancellor Angela Merkel's Christian Democratic Union Party.

The third party, so closely linked to the other two that they hold joint press conferences, is the outright fascist Svoboda, a neo-Nazi outfit that received over two million votes in the last parliamentary elections. This is the group that toppled the Lenin statue in Kiev, replacing it with the black-and-red Nazi occupation flag from World War II. Svoboda and the paramilitary neo-Nazi Pravy Sektor are the political descendants of western Ukraine leaders who sided with the Nazis during World War II.

These fascists spearheaded the recent street demonstrations with Molotov cocktails, paving stones and iron bars. They led five thousand people in storming the regional administration building and took control of arms depots.

Svoboda's bastion is in Galicia, to the west, where they have organized large celebrations in memory of World War II Nazi collaborators and the Nazi Waffen SS (storm troopers). The party has taken power in small localities there, instigating a reign of terror jointly with other fascist groups, assaulting Jews and working-class fighters.

Svoboda and Pravy Sektor attract the most racist and reactionary elements of Ukrainian society. They are being given free rein by the other opposition parties, and this fascist-tainted alliance is unreservedly backed by the EU and U.S. imperialists.



A Soviet Union poster during World War II. Communist have defeated Nazis in the past, and we will defeat them again. The caption reads, "Death to the Fascist Beast!" Build an international workers movement for communism with Progressive Labor Party.

to Western Europe by 2020, a direct challenge to Russian imperialist domination of energy in this region.

The opposition Euromaidan movement (see box) is pro-EU and wants to de-emphasize Ukraine's historic relationship with Russia. Its proponents include former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, released last week from prison and now a likely candidate for president in the May election. Tymoshenko is a multi-millionaire, a rank opportunist who maintained strong relations with Putin in the past but now backs the U.S. and European capitalists competing for dominance in Ukraine.

Only communist revolution, not fascist-led revolt, can meet workers' needs. As workers rise in revolt and rebellion throughout the world, we must build an international communist party, the Progressive Labor Party, to organize a revolution and smash capitalism once and for all.✊

## OUR FIGHT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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### WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

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

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

CHALLENGE/DESAFIO (ISSN 0009-1049) published bi-weekly by Challenge Periodicals. 1 issue \$0.50. One Year: \$15. Six months: \$10. Send address changes to CHALLENGE Periodicals, GPO Box 808 Brooklyn, NY 11202, March 12, 2014. Volume 46, No. 5

## Editorial

# U.S.-Russian Oil Rivalry Stokes Ukraine Firestorm



Ukraine represents but the latest flashpoint in a sharpening great-power conflict that reaches every country on earth. It pits rising China as well as a resurgent Russia against the declining but still predominant U.S. empire. At stake are the planet's profit sources — workers' labor, oil and gas — for opposing capitalist blocs in a potential World War III.

It's difficult to predict what direction Ukraine's deadly crisis will take. But one thing is certain: In the absence of a mass communist movement, the conflict's course will be determined by the competition between U.S. and Russian imperialists and their local puppet politicians. Workers have no stake and no say in this fight among thieves and mass murderers. A communist-led movement would mean rebellions against all bosses and the spread of working-class ideas. It would mean control by workers, not the fascists and their allies now creating the turmoil in Ukraine (see box on page 1).

### Capitalism Creates Poverty in Ukraine

While official Ukrainian unemployment is around 8 percent, the actual jobless figure is closer to 25 percent. (Ukrainian bosses do not report laid-off workers.) Often workers go unpaid for several months before being laid off. Wages are so low that many families need at least two wage-earners to barely survive. The lack of job opportunities has driven 4.5 million workers — nearly 20 percent of the labor force — to seek work abroad.

Geography makes Ukraine indispensable for Russia's biggest capitalists. It is the passageway for the bulk of lucrative and strategically vital gas exports to Europe. Ukraine harbors Russia's naval fleet in the warm-water port of Sevastopol. It borders Poland and lies across the Black Sea from Turkey, two members of the U.S.-controlled North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

U.S. bosses cynically envision a Ukraine torn by bloody civil wars that weaken Moscow's grip and clear the way for NATO intervention on "humanitarian" grounds. The New York Times (2/23/14) sees "the establishment of two or more rival power centers pushing the fractured nation into a Yugoslav-style disintegration" as the "most ominous" likely outcome of the current strife.

Serving the finance capital wing of the U.S. ruling class, the Times is painting Ukraine as a prospective replay of the Balkan genocide of the 1990s — another opportunity for U.S. imperialist intervention. U.S. President Bill Clinton seized on sectarian conflict in Bosnia and Kosovo to mount massive NATO bombing raids on pro-Russian Serbs. Thousands of workers were killed. While Russian influence hardly vanished from the former Yugoslavia, the Pentagon exploited the war's carnage to install Camp Bondsteel, a permanent base for seven thousand troops, in Kosovo. With the demise of the USSR, the installation sits on the edge of the empire that the capitalists represented by Russian President Vladimir Putin are striving to rebuild.

### Putin Wields Energy Weapon

In Ukraine, Putin wields energy as a geostrategic weapon. He shut off gas supplies twice in the last decade when the country was getting too close to the West. More recently, Putin tried using a carrot instead of a stick. His November 2013 promise of cheap gas (and a \$15 billion loan) led Viktor Yanukovich, the Ukraine president turned fugitive, to turn down a prior European Union bailout offer.

But energy dictator Putin is only aping the worldwide

extortion racket run by ExxonMobil and Chevron, along with Dutch and British allies Shell and BP, since the end of World War II. These companies determine how and when most of the world not under Moscow's control gets oil and gas.

Any challenges to these "super majors," in the wake of their loss of control over critical Iranian and Iraqi crude sources over the last 35 years, steer U.S. foreign policy and the allied war machine. Two massive invasions and years of sanctions killed a million working-class Iraqis, though U.S. rulers still failed to gain the upper hand there. Iran's ayatollah oil bosses, who ousted the Exxon stooge Shah Reza Pahlavi in 1979, remain the top target of the Pentagon's short-term attack plans.

### U.S. Aims to Break Putin's Stranglehold

U.S. strategists hope they have turned a corner by using new drilling techniques to significantly increase domestic oil and gas production. The Exxon- and finance-capital-dominated Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) think tank recently published an article entitled "America's Energy Edge: The Geopolitical Consequences of the Shale Revolution." Its authors, Robert Blackwell and Meghan O'Sullivan, advised the George W. Bush administration in its energy-driven invasion of Iraq. They envision breaking Putin's stranglehold on Europe by pumping more oil and gas in the U.S. Combined with Canadian production and the completion of the Keystone pipeline from northern Canada to the U.S. Gulf Coast, this development could enable the U.S. to surpass Russia as an energy exporter. Blackwell and O'Sullivan wrote:

*Countries that like to use their energy supplies for foreign policy purposes — usually in ways that run counter to U.S. interests — will see their influence shrink. Of all the governments likely to be hit hard, Moscow has the most to lose.... Putin's influence could diminish, creating new openings for his political opponents at home and making Moscow look weak abroad.*

Increased U.S. energy production means invigorated U.S. imperialism, not isolationism. According to the CFR brain trust, a military abandonment of Exxon's Saudi Arabian oil fields is not in the cards:

*Washington will...maintain an interest in preserving the stability of international markets. Nowhere is that truer than in the Middle East, where vital U.S. interests... will endure. So will the need to police the global commons, such as the major sea-lanes through which trade in energy and other goods flows.*

In preparing for World War II, U.S. rulers capped oil exports to use for their war machine. But now they're moving to uncap any restrictions in order to cement and expand their coalition for the next potential world war. Ukraine and India, along with the European Union's NATO members, would be ready to sign on.

But it appears that another great power has a similar idea. As Reuters reported (2/16/14), "Top oil producer Russia is aiming to eventually triple exports to China to some 1 million barrels per day...to secure market share."

### Chinese-Russian Axis

A potentially world-altering military and economic marriage of convenience is looming. "Russia is being pulled into China's orbit, even as the Kremlin looks to exert its influence globally by expanding its customer base" said the Toronto Financial Post (1/30/14). "The partnership suits China as it doesn't like depending on sea lanes that are patrolled by the United States."

However they play out, these inter-imperialist battles inevitably consume the lives of millions of workers internationally. They give us all the more reason to build the revolutionary communist Progressive Labor Party as the workers' main weapon to bury the bosses and their capitalist system. Join us! ☪

# The New Jim Crow At Chicago Transit

**CHICAGO, IL February 21** — Close to 1,000 transit workers have been fired by the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) over the last two years, the vast majority being black workers. Most were members of Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 241, on the bus side. Tim Stovall was a member of ATU Local 308, on the train side. In 2010, Tim was falsely arrested for selling marijuana while on the job. The racist police lied and said he had a prior conviction and that he had pled guilty to a felony in the past. Tim filed a grievance and provided documentation to prove that the police were lying. The Grievance Committee voted to take his case to arbitration.

Then Local 308 President Robert Kelly (salary \$134,000/year), who was fired for stealing about 20 years ago, convinced the Grievance Committee to change its vote and deny Tim an opportunity to fight for his job. At the membership meeting, Kelly only read the racist police report, and based on that, the membership voted not to arbitrate. The best Robert Kelly could do was to offer Tim a \$9/hr. job (barely a third of the regular pay rate) in the 2nd Chance Program for ex-felons, even though Tim was never convicted

of a crime (and the program has since been disbanded). Our union leaders belong in jail!

What happened to Tim Stovall is not an isolated incident. We have been under attack from the CTA bosses and their junior partners in the ATU leadership for over a decade. Workers are being fired for one safety violation and accelerated discipline allows the company to treat a minor incident as if it were one in a string of major accidents. These attacks mirror the racist budget slashing of the Cook County Healthcare System and public education. The bankers and real estate developers are making billions while millions are out of work and millions more are under-employed working for poverty wages.

The "war on drugs" has always been a lie, a war on workers and youth that has filled the prisons, disenfranchised millions and forced black and Latino youth into dead-end poverty-wage jobs. We will continue fight to get Tim Stovall's job back. And while we do, we will build the revolutionary communist Progressive Labor Party in the bus garages and train yards. A measure of our success will be to have CTA workers march on May Day with PLP!✊

# PLP Forum Exposes Racist Deportations



**LOS ANGELES, February 25** — At a Progressive Labor Party forum attended by about 30 workers and students, the stark statistics of deportation sparked discussion on the role of racism in immigration policy under capitalism. In the U.S., undocumented Latinos are more likely to be deported than undocumented Asian or European immigrants, by a factor of 8-16 to 1, depending on what countries are compared.

The absolute number of deportations jumped sharply in 1997, following a law signed by President Clinton appropriating more money to immigration enforcement. The next major increase in deportations came with the creation and funding of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) under the Homeland Security Dept. in 2002, under Bush. Under Obama, deportations have been pushed higher still. As of now, Obama has deported two million people — more than all previous presidents combined. "Removals" of long-time U.S. residents now outnumber those turned back at or near the border.

U.S. workers face unemployment, reduced wages and benefits, and police harassment and brutality. U.S. bosses are trying to direct workers' rage away from themselves and against immigrant workers, claiming they're "stealing our jobs."

The bosses even try to divide undocumented immigrants against each other. Obama and some congressional Democrats promote the Dream

Act, legislation that would provide a path to permanent residency for undocumented immigrants who arrived in the U.S. as children. They would have to be of "good moral character," have lived in the U.S. for at least five years, have a high school diploma, and go to college or join the military for at least two years. To apply for permanent residency, they would have to obtain a bachelor's degree or, in typical cases, serve an additional four to six years in the military, creating a large pool of war-ready soldiers. So far, no version of the federal Dream Act has passed.

A participant in the forum said that the Dream Act would improve the lives of some undocumented immigrants, and asked whether PLP supported it. A Party member responded that we don't support plans of any section of the capitalist class, but we do participate in reform movements such as the "Dreamers." Within those movements we fight alongside those who want the reform, at the same time trying to win them to fight for communist revolution.

It is PLP's goal to win these students and workers to see their future as members of the working class, united to fight against the capitalist class's racism and exploitation and to organize for a future where differences in skin color, national origin, language and culture are meaningless, where people are valued for their commitment to organizing a communist society.✊

# Anti-Racist Struggle Raging at D.C. Metro

**WASHINGTON, DC, February 20** — Today Muriel Bowser, a DC city council member and board member of Metro/WMATA (the DC Regional Transit Agency), held a hearing about getting Metro to change its policy on background checks. Thanks to PLP members, friends and many workers, the issue has gotten sharper throughout the city and politicians like Bowser feel they must address it.

Several people testified, some who work at Metro or others who have tried to get hired. One mechanic testified that he and his co-workers are very concerned now about what will happen if they have to take leave of more than 90 days and go through a background screening when they come back. Another, a contractor who for years built Metro bridges, tunnels, and railways, said that he has not had work from Metro since the new policy went into effect because of his record, which is decades old.

A lawyer from the NAACP Legal Defense Fund testified that his organization is currently representing four people in cases related to this issue and is willing to take on more. She highlighted the racist effect of the policy, excluding more black and Latino workers than others because they are arrested and convicted at higher rates.

Racism is endemic to capitalism; that is how the bosses divide and superexploit workers to maximize their profits. In a communist society run by workers, the economic and political basis for racism will be demolished.

Two union officials showed up. The current Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 689 president testified that her union opposed this policy from the beginning (even though she did not fight Metro when they changed to the stricter policy in 2011). She again avoided mentioning the racist character of Metro's background check policy.

A former president of the union and PL'er testified that the policy was racist in its differential impact on black and Latino workers. The policy, he argued, was implemented without any investigation or study to see if ex-offenders were more or less likely than others to commit crimes while at work at Metro, and was simply a biased racist policy that had to change.

The vice president of the union echoed what we've been hearing from Metro workers for months: to the riders, the face of Metro is black, and now the Metro administration seems to be trying to change this while stigmatizing the current workforce. In fact, in an area where 50.1 percent of the population are black, Metro hired only seven D.C. residents out of the 1,300 people it hired in 2013!

When Bowser questioned the head of the DC Department of Employment Services (DOES), he testified that DOES was warned by the federal Department of Labor not to work with agencies that have discriminatory practices. So even the U.S. Department of Labor seems to suspect that Metro's background check policy is racist.

Finally, Bowser called Richard Sarles, the General Manager of Metro to speak. He argued that Metro has to protect its riders (including children and handicapped riders) and that only violent offenses automatically disqualify someone from working at Metro. Like much of what he said, this is a lie, and is directly contradicted by the testimony that workers had submitted. He admitted that Metro has no data to prove that workers with criminal records are more likely than anyone else to commit crimes on the job.

It's clear that the Metro board and management are feeling the pressure. We need to keep up the fight, and not get distracted by politicians like Bowser. She may have called for the hearing, but we are the ones who made it happen.✊



# Racist Union-busting at Volkswagen

**NASHVILLE, TN, February 20** — Much is being written about the loss suffered by the UAW in the union election at the Volkswagen (VW) assembly plant in Chattanooga, TN. The plant is one of only three non-union VW plants in the world (the other two are in China). This campaign was the key to a strategy of organizing a number of foreign-owned auto plants, including BMW in South Carolina, Mercedes in Vance, Alabama, and Nissan in Canton, MS. (The State of Mississippi passed three anti-union laws just days after the VW vote, targeting the UAW Nissan campaign). The UAW has filed charges with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), challenging the interference of Tennessee's top elected officials, but that could linger for years before it is resolved.

The election reflects just how far down the road to fascism the U.S. has travelled, and how workers are caught in a crossfire between right-wing, Tea Party union-busters and a union leadership that sees its main job as guaranteeing the bosses' profits.

VW and the UAW signed a neutrality agreement, where the company agreed not to oppose the union campaign and the union agreed to "maintain VW's competitive advantage." In other words, the UAW promised to maintain the same anti-union advantages that the right-wing politicians gave to VW in the first place! This was the result of many trips to Germany to meet with the company and with IG Metall, the German metal workers union.

There was a very active union committee inside the plant. VW workers from around the world were brought to Chattanooga to meet with workers and show international solidarity for their campaign. The union was confident. Yet, on the 77th anniversary of the victory of the Flint Sit-Down Strike, which won union recognition at General Motors after a 44-day plant takeover, the UAW lost the VW vote 712-626. A swing of 44 votes would have changed the outcome.

Along the way, the UAW ran into what John Logan (Director of Labor and Employment Studies at San Francisco State University) called, "a firestorm of interference" from a fascist coalition led by Grover Norquist.

In an openly racist appeal to the mostly white workforce, billboards referred to the United Auto Workers as the United Obama Workers, and pictures of abandoned Detroit factories were displayed as the work of the UAW.

One racist group even compared the union campaign to a Civil War battle in Chattanooga where the Union Army was defeated. "Let's stop them again," was the message. Anti-union town hall meetings were held in the area and the top elected officials threatened the loss of jobs if the union won. These threats, made during the voting, are the basis for the UAW's NLRB challenge to the election.

This reflects one of the fault lines in the U.S. ruling class, the anti-tax, anti-union billionaires, led by the Koch brothers vs. the liberal rulers who want to maintain some safety net and raise the minimum wage. This struggle reflects that, at least for the moment, the more open fascists have a mass base and a plenty of clout in the South.

But even more important, convincing workers that bosses and workers have the same interest, and our security lies in the bosses being fat and rich, is also leading the workers to fascism. In a period of growing imperialist rivalry, trade wars and the growing threat of shooting wars, unity with the bosses will lead to going to war against other workers to guarantee markets and profits for "our" bosses.

The fact is, workers and bosses have nothing in common! The bosses profit from our exploitation. We can only secure our future by abolishing wage slavery and building a communist world, where we produce for the needs of our class, not the profits of the shareholders. We should view these organizing campaigns, from auto to fast food workers, as opportunities to sharpen the class struggle and to win more workers to PLP.☺

## Bowing to Bosses Brings UAW to the Brink

The UAW has been collaborating with the auto bosses for over 60 years, especially in the 1970s, again in the financial crisis of 2008 and the auto bailout of 2009.

### Anti-Asian Racism Rampant

The more U.S. auto bosses were threatened by international competition, the more the UAW came to their defense. Instead of "Workers of the World, Unite," the slogan was "Buy American!" In the 1970s, anti-Japanese racism was rampant; local unions would charge \$1/shot to smash an imported Japanese car with a sledge hammer. The racism hit a fever pitch when a young Chinese student, Vincent Chin, was beaten to death in a Detroit bar by two Chrysler employees who thought he was Japanese! Foreign cars were banned from UAW parking lots, and tires slashed.

Meanwhile, the UAW forced through billions in wage and benefit concessions to help U.S. bosses compete against the "foreign competition." While factories and union halls closed, the palatial UAW/GM Training Center was being erected on the Detroit River. The threat moved from opposing imports to Asian and European auto bosses building factories in the U.S., mostly in the South, where they still enjoy a huge labor cost advantage. The UAW has failed to organize any of them. The union became so tied to the auto bosses that they would share their fate.

Then in the economic crash of 2008 and the auto bailout of 2009 the UAW agreed to the "restructuring" of the industry, meaning that 70 years of hard won gains would be wiped out for new workers. As the UAW shrunk from 1.5 million members to 380,000 (only half of that manufacturing), the union became the target of the growing anti-union Right to Work (RTW) movement. With the GM, Ford and Chrysler (Fiat) contracts expiring next year, over 50 percent of the UAW membership is in RTW states, including Michigan (60 percent if Ohio goes). When these contracts expire, union membership will be voluntary. Thousands of new workers, doing twice the work for half the pay, with diminished health care and no pensions, may very well leave the union.

# College Youth: No Recruitment for Imperialist War

**BROOKLYN, NY, February 19** — Sixty friends and PLers shouted down the military recruiters at the Medgar Evers College (MEC) town hall meeting today. While the administration and recent recruits claimed the program was a way to "provide opportunities and diversity," the protesters successfully exposed its imperialist agenda. There is potential in turning this anti-war struggle into a fight for communist politics.

PLP hung up Wanted Posters of war criminal David "drones" Petraeus, who is now a professor at one of the university campuses, directly linking these military recruiters to "warrior scholars" like Petraeus they partially aim to produce. CHALLENGE was well-received by all, including the student recruits.

ROTC (Reserve Officer Training Corps), a college program recruiting youth to a hyper-sexist and racist institution of war — has illegally circumvented the college council and installed itself on this nearly all black and Latino campus where 75 percent of the students are women. One PL student declared that ROTC's presence at this particular campus is no accident. "This is the same community where Shantel Davis, Kyam Livingston and Kimani Gray were killed [victims of NYC cops]. Essentially you're trying to recruit black and brown youth — who are policed and killed here — to kill black and brown people across a fake border. That's a racist agenda!"

Several students agreed, referring to the antiracist spirit of Medgar Evers as they pointed out ROTC's "dishonorable" tactics. MEC is named after the fighter against segregation in Mississippi and Alabama. He was murdered by the Klu Klux Klan and White Citizen's Council. Black and brown students are still targets of racism in this era of the new Jim Crow. No matter what the bosses say or try to do, they cannot be antiracist. Perpetuating racism is built into their system. Racism — the economic exploitation, ideology that justifies it and the bosses' institutions which enforce it — is the backbone of capitalism.

Medgar Evers is not ROTC's sole target. York Col-

lege, another branch of the City University system, also an overwhelmingly black, Latino and female college, has also installed the military program. The bosses have been complaining that the third-largest university system in the U.S., CUNY, had no ROTC program. During the anti-Vietnam War era, students and faculty kicked ROTC off campuses. The bosses are concerned about an all-white Southern male military. Think tanks such as American Enterprise Institute worry about the "dangers of a military disconnected from the civilian population."

Another concern for the bosses is related to the military's sexist nature. In 2012, soldiers were 15 times more likely to be raped than to be killed in combat. Already, a half million women and men have reported sexual assaults in the past 22 years. One panelist at the town hall meeting was a female combat Iraq veteran, who stated she was "lucky not to have been assaulted." CUNY is welcoming a sexist institution onto a majority-female campus. Sexual violence is a weapon of imperialism — towards both its soldiers and the civilians it is attacking.

### Leadership for Which Class?

Behind the rhetoric of an "opportunity to succeed and diversify" is a buying of working-class youth to a war agenda. Some ROTC recruits argued, "Why are you trying to get rid of ROTC if it helps us with our dreams. It has provided me [a young black woman aspiring to be a doctor] with room and board and schooling [scholarships]." ROTC is exploiting the desperate conditions of students. The ruling class itself has created these conditions of racism, sexism, unemployment and underemployment.

Another ROTC recruit cited "pride, respect, leadership and discipline" as his reason for joining. While the students are genuine in their aspirations, what is left unchallenged is discipline to do *what* — be cannon fodder? Pride in *what* — shoot their own class interests in the back? Leadership for *which class* — the imperialists thirst for oil or the workers fight for class libera-

tion? One PLer encouraged the ROTC recruits to aim their guns at the warmakers by organizing their fellow cadets and to read CHALLENGE. Newly gained contacts are open to such a struggle.

As one faculty comrade stated, "Are the functions of college and army compatible? The military is organized violence of the state. And colleges can reproduce those ideologies. Or college can be a site of struggle."

MEC is a site for exactly that. This event may rekindle friends from past years to wage a fight. One brought friends from their campus club and others joined us for a study group later in the week to discuss the first chapters of Vladimir Lenin's *Imperialism: Highest Stage of Capitalism* (more next issue).

A growing number of students and faculty are fighting ROTC's racist and sexist nature in particular and amplification of imperialist agendas on campus in general. This was evident last semester in our fight against Drones Petraeus as a professor on campus (see CHALLENGE, 9/18 to 12/25). Our friends at the College of Staten Island have already successfully pushed back against ROTC. We must carry on the fight.

### Why ROTC? Why Now?

As the previous CHALLENGE editorial (2/26) illustrates, the main threat of another world war seems to be between the U.S. and China, and the bosses are debating the best tactics to win such a conflict. The ruling class understands the need for youth to pledge allegiance to the bosses' "national interest," both as soldiers and political supporters. In 2012, the Council on Foreign Relations published a report on *U.S. Education Reform and National Security*, stating students need to be trained to "safeguard America's future security and prosperity."

The ROTC move and the Petraeus hiring have exposed to some students the CUNY Administration's function of enforcing class rule. To extend the fight from exposing to destroying these capitalists, PLP and the long march for communism must grow.☺

# KKKop Kerik Fronts for Phony Prison Reform

There's a growing mass movement in the U.S. against mass incarceration, police brutality, and racism. But there are capitalist-class reformers waiting to co-opt this movement, directing it towards keeping the overall system of social control and exploitation.

This was evident at a January 29 talk about "a united front on prison reform" held by OAR (Offender Aid and Restoration), an Arlington, VA., nonprofit that helps people returning from prison. I went to spread the word about the criminal background checks at Metro, D.C.'s transit system, and to publicize a rally at Metro headquarters.

The speaker was Bernard Kerik, a former NYPD cop and police commissioner, and NYC commissioner of prisons. He also trained cops in Iraq after the U.S. invasion and testified to the 9/11 Commission in favor of pre-emptive strikes. George W. Bush nominated him to head Homeland Security, but had to withdraw his name because Kerik was under investigation for hiring an undocumented worker as his nanny. Then he ended up spending three years in a minimum security prison for fraud. Since then Kerik has become an advocate for prison reform, especially for getting rid of mandatory minimums in sentencing and for using other types of punishment besides prison.

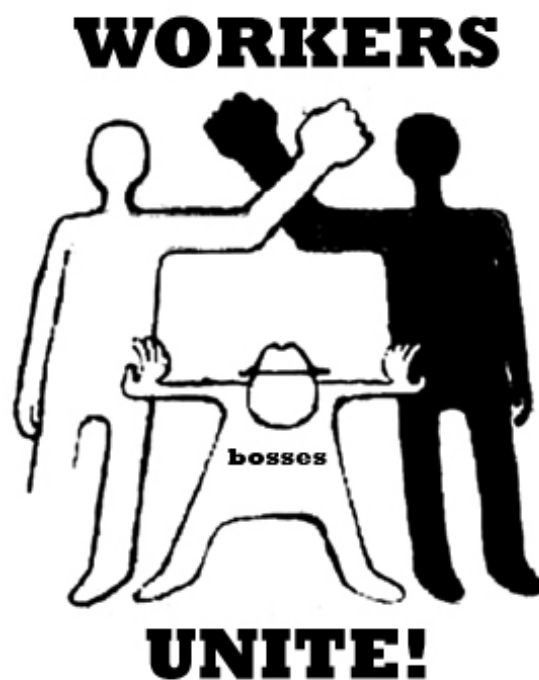
In his speech, Kerik said it hurts the economy to incarcerate people because prisoners are not out working and spending money; that incarceration has a ripple effect on families; that it's difficult for people with records to get jobs; and prison makes someone more likely to commit future crimes. Responding to an audience member, he also said private prison corporations are profiting and perpetuating mass incarceration. They offer to take over prisons from city and state governments, saving them money, but only if the governments agree to keep the prisons 90 percent full. That gives the governments a financial incentive to lock up as many people as they can, for as long as they can.

But Kerik is no friend of the working class. Before

prison, he represented the capitalist class, and this speech showed he hasn't changed. He said he doesn't regret being a cop "because the people I put away were bad people." He had no class analysis, and little understanding of racism. When he was asked how come 50 percent of the prison population is black (even though black people are only 13 percent of the national population), he only repeated his main point about eliminating mandatory minimums, saying this will "help black communities." Nothing about the racism that puts so many black workers in prison to begin with.

## The Flag of Exploitation

Under Kerik's reforms, stop-and-frisk can continue,



along with police brutality, capitalism's mass unemployment and poverty, and global attacks on workers in other countries. He opened his presentation with a U.S. flag behind him, saying that he loves the flag and the country. No one at the event asked Kerik to answer for his own actions in helping U.S. imperialism and mass incarceration. He ended by praising business owners who hire prison returnees — separating the "good" capitalists from the "bad." Yet even a boss who hires all returnees is profiting off their labor, and will exploit them harder to compete against other businesses.

My mention of the Metro background checks (see page 3) got nods and claps. Afterwards I distributed flyers about the upcoming rally and a petition to change the Metro policy. Many already knew about that policy and were interested in helping oppose it.

During a positive conversation with three people, an OAR board member asked me to stop distributing the flyers. "I thought we were on the same team," I joked while the people I'd been talking to quickly grabbed my flyers. The board member said he just "wasn't sure" I should be handing out anything at an OAR event if I wasn't part of OAR. He seemed most concerned about the upcoming rally, since the only action mentioned at their event was "writing to Congress."

The event showed growing consciousness about incarceration. The number of people affected by it is so great now that a mass movement is forming. But not everyone who says they want prison reform is an ally. Capitalists like Kerik will try to co-opt this movement. His emphasis on cost makes one wonder if the ruling class itself is divided, between those who believe they can control workers without prison, and those who'd prefer to keep large numbers of workers locked up, out of fear or because they profit directly from the prison system. In any case, under capitalism there are never enough secure jobs for all workers, in prison or out of it.

*Antiracist Fighter*

## Building a Base in the Working Class

During this week's rally, a young black man started the PLP chant, "White cop, black cop, all the same! Racist terror is the name of their game!" The idea behind that chant has changed the outlook of committee members.

**BROOKLYN, February 21** — How does the working class learn and grow during a struggle? How are their contradictions resolved? These questions were raised recently with some members of Progressive Labor Party involved with the Justice for Kyam Livingston Committee. Nothing can be resolved until people get to know each other.

The committee was formed after the criminally negligent death of Kyam Livingston. (Kyam was in a holding cell in Brooklyn Central Booking, crying out in great pain and distress for seven hours while the jailers refused her medical help. The women in the cell with her kept calling for security to do something for their sick cellmate. They were all told to be quiet. Finally Kyam went into convulsions and died.)

The committee included Kyam's mother, Anita Neal; Kyam's god-daughter; and members of the Malcolm X Grassroots Organization, another group that supports victims of police abuse, our church social action

committee, and the retiree association of a municipal workers union. Going in we knew each other, but just slightly. The mother had decided that she wanted to have some kind of demonstration on the monthly anniversary of her daughter's death. She also had a number of demands:

- The names of the officers on duty whose criminal negligence killed her daughter;
- Surveillance videos of the holding cell showing what happened that night;
- Prosecution of the guilty officers;
- A thorough investigation of conditions in Brooklyn Central Booking.

PLP knew the family in small ways. D., the god-daughter, had been a member of our church and our social action committee, and had strong nationalist views. It was she who first called the group together. We originally met at Kyam's funeral and talked for hours. Some of the people we drove home became part of the committee. We began to get to know the members better by discussing the issues around Kyam's death.

Another committee member from the church knew people in other religious organizations in Brooklyn and reached out to them. In fact, he and Anita recently spoke to about 500 people at a large Baptist congregation. The senior minister promised he would bring hundreds of people to a demonstration and that they would hold a speak-out for Kyam. The mother was joyful. Activities like these have led to a deeper understanding of PLP's positions through intense discussions and struggle with one another.

Since the first demonstration on August 21, we have held seven monthly events. Each time we meet beforehand to talk and make plans. After the event we sometimes eat together and talk and plan some more. We often leaflet together.

Anita is very angry at the racist system that treated her daughter so callously, especially since Kyam herself worked as a security guard. While the family and com-

mittee have pressured elected officials to changes in the system, Anita often remarks that one or another politician is "full of crap." On the role of the police, she says, "Enough with this blue wall of silence!" PLP's struggle is to provide clear leadership in showing the connection between the needs of capitalism and the functioning of the state apparatus and its flunkies.

During this week's rally, a young black man started the PLP chant, "White cop, black cop, all the same! Racist terror is the name of their game!" The idea behind that chant has changed the outlook of committee members.

Kyam's god-daughter saw that the people who were interested in this fight were those who are politically committed to an internationalist, working-class, multi-racial future. Bit by bit, our discussions and actions began to make it clear that ideas of unity, not separation, were most useful for everybody.

A PL'er who often speaks at these demonstrations put forward the line that racist violence against working-class people could happen any time, anywhere, and we all have to fight together to end it. He brought the issue to his retiree union chapter and they endorsed the struggle.

The process moved forward with tea or coffee, conversation, struggle, practical work, and leafleting. At times individuals were unable to be present because of sickness or other problems, but they always came the next time. Sometimes they brought others from their church or workplace as speakers or supporters.

The road to communism is a long one. Unless it is filled with comradeship, friendship and caring, with laughter as well as struggle, it cannot move forward. The building of trust and unity comes directly out of working with individuals and proving we are serious. We cannot tell people we are serious; we have to show it. Practice is always primary. Theory flows from practice. ☺

# LETTERS

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

## Pete Seeger Inspired by Workers' Struggles

In early January 2014, Pete Seeger, an icon of American folk music, passed away. He was known worldwide for his progressive music accessible to everyone from coal miners and factory workers to college students and professors. His years as a musician and political activist spanned nearly seven decades reaching all generations.

In 1936 at age 17, Seeger joined the Young Communist League (YCL), then at the height of its popularity and influence. He attended Harvard College with the dream of being a journalist but lost his partial scholarship because he did so much political work in the YCL that his grades suffered. He left Harvard in 1938. In 1942 he became a member of the Communist Party (CPUSA) itself, but left in 1949.

In the 1950's, he was a member of The Weavers. Many of their songs were controversial and they were banned and/or censored by most mainstream radio and television stations for years. Even today, YouTube clips with Pete trying to play controversial songs such as "The Big Muddy" on the TV show "The Smother Brothers" are cut out.

When not performing publically on networks he went to summer camps and performed for children. This may have planted the seeds in the minds of these very young children that contributed to the social rebellions of the 1960's and 1970's. Despite the setbacks and obstacles with television networks due to his socially radical ideas, Pete Seeger continued on and had a show called "Rainbow Quest" on CBS network out of New York in the 1960's.

A number of progressive artists performed on the show. Tom Paxton sang "Buy a Gun for Your Son," a subtle and sarcastic song criticizing the patriotic war-supporting agenda of the far-right political agenda. Seeger also was closely associated with the 1960s Civil Rights movement and in 1963 helped organize a landmark Carnegie Hall concert, featuring the youthful Freedom Singers, as a benefit for the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee. This event and Martin Luther King's March on Washington in August of that year brought the Civil Rights anthem "We Shall Overcome" to wide audiences. A version of this song, submitted by Zilphia Horton of Highlander, had been published in Seeger's People's Songs Bulletin as early as in 1947.

On July 26, 1956, the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) voted 373 to 9 to cite Pete Seeger and seven others (including playwright Arthur Miller) for contempt, as they refused to cooperate with HUAC in its attempts to investigate alleged subversives and communists (later PLP members would also refuse to cooperate with HUAC). Seeger testified before the HUAC in 1955. This was one of his darkest moments, when his personal freedom, his career, and his safety were in jeopardy. Seeger had an international following of millions of workers and progressive-minded intellectuals who were anti-war and pro-union and supported workers' rights.

Even though Seeger was the product of the revisionism/reformism of the "old" communist movement, much of his music and lyrics about workers' struggles are inspirational. By playing and sharing his music today, we may have a way to reach and politicize both young and old people alike. His music is a valuable tool to use with friends on our jobs and in other organizations if they are progressive enough to begin the conversation about fighting back and the problems of capitalism.

All that hear Seeger's message can gain a historical context for the workers' struggles against racism, too. By listening to his music, people learn the history of the struggles and tribulations of the working class as they started to organize collectively in the mid-to-late 20th century. In his "Songs of Struggle" album his music encourages workers to think for themselves with songs like "Which Side are You On?" and "Talking Union" written with Lee Hays and Millard Lampell. The last verse of "Talking Union," written by Seeger, illustrates the potential to use his works in PL our own attempts to win workers struggling for their rights and to help students understand these struggles:

*But out in Detroit here's what they found,  
And out in Frisco here's what they found,  
And out in Pittsburgh here's what they found,  
And down in Bethlehem here's what they found,  
That if you don't let Red-baiting break you up,  
If you don't let stool pigeons break you up,  
If you don't let vigilantes break you up,  
And if you don't let race hatred break you up —  
You'll win. What I mean,*

## Eddie Healey: Flying the Red Flag for 40 Years



On February 14, Eddie Healey, a long-time member of the Progressive Labor Party, passed away. He and a co-worker stopped to help a motorist who was stuck in the snow. Eddie collapsed helping. He was rushed to the hospital, but could not be revived. Eddie will be sorely missed.

Eddie came around the Progressive Labor Party when he was a student at Prince George's County Community College in 1972. He joined the Progressive Labor Party at that time and for the next 40 years helped build the fight against the capitalist system.

*Take it easy — but take it!*

Pete Seeger is gone but his message lives on to empower the working class.

*A comrade fan of Pete Seeger*

## Community Fighter Won to Communism

I am a person who since I became involved have learned what communism signifies. It gives me joy and confidence that a struggle exists that understands the necessities of all of us who are part of the working class and that we are not alone.

I would very much like to pass on the word to more people that because of fear they remain quiet and that like me, I have learned what the word communism means. Now it is our job to inform and transform everyone, that because of capitalism, we are all suffering the consequences of bad administrators of the country and as always, these politicians pass the guilt around, blaming each other, pretending to fill a well-intentioned agenda with a president on his way out and being replaced by another and finally never doing anything. That is why I think that the Progressive Labor Party should never disappear. With organization, intelligence and anger, we shall keep communism alive and not lose the hope that in the not-so-distant future, we can say we've gained more ground against capitalism.

First and foremost, I very much congratulate your Party for letting me get involved in your fight against the corruption of the world's monster named capitalism.

*Pro-communist fighter*

## CIA-Owned U.S. Media

Comrades, I'm sure I don't have to tell you the media's role in reproducing the superstructure continually oppressing us. Last August, we saw how privatized the news is when Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos purchased the Washington Post for \$250 million. Some may think these purchases are relatively recent in history. However, subversion of the press leaves a trail extending back to the 1940s, draped in secrecy.

In 1948, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) created the Office of Police Coordination (OPC), a psychological and paramilitary action organization. OPC was specifically designed as the CIA's covert action branch. Per its own secret charter, the department's goal was spreading "propaganda, economic warfare, preventive direct action, including sabotage, anti-sabotage, demolition and evacuation procedures; subversion against hostile states, including assistance to underground resistance groups, and support of indigenous anti-communist elements in threatened countries of the free world."

To lead this department, the CIA enlisted Wall Street lawyer Frank Wisner, who had strong hatred for the U.S.S.R. Later that year, Wisner created Operation Mockingbird, a program where the CIA bribed journalists from multiple media outlets to spread their propaganda.

He drove the sound truck for May Day in DC for over 20 years and he also joined the military to organize soldiers for communism.

He was a dedicated fighter in the struggle against racism. From fighting the Nazis in Arlington, VA to stopping the KKK from marching in Washington D.C., to defending Terrance Johnson (who, at the age of 15 killed a cop who was beating him inside a police station) and fighting police brutality in Prince George's County, Eddie never wavered from his commitment to the anti-racist struggle.

He worked for 37 years as a cable splicer in the underground at PEPCO, the electric utility in D.C. Eddie, as a member of IBEW Local 1900, militantly led picket lines during strikes, shared CHALLENGE with his co-workers, and fought hard to sharpen the battle against racism at PEPCO. Many of his co-workers spoke at his wake and funeral of his overwhelming commitment to help his fellow workers every day, as well as anyone else in need.

Comrade Eddie, we salute you for a well-lived life, dedicated unswervingly to our multi-racial class. We will do our best to support your widow Angela and son EJ, and commit ourselves to emulating your dedication to fellow workers. ☪

Per *Katherine The Great* by Deborah Davis (which first exposed Mockingbird): "By the early 1950s, Wisner 'owned' respected members of the New York Times, Newsweek, CBS and other communications vehicles, plus stringers, four to six hundred in all, according to a former CIA analyst."

Mockingbird managed to influence at least 25 newspapers and wire services throughout the United States. The CIA even used it to influence 1949 elections in Italy, after Italian communists joined the race. Their efforts helped lead to the communists' defeat.

It should come as no coincidence that this happened alongside the dawn of McCarthyism, where anyone who even looked different was suspected of being a communist.

The '50s saw Mockingbird take up one-third of the CIA's covert operations budget; three-thousand salaried and contracted Agency workers eventually became involved in the propaganda efforts. Fast-forwarding to the present day, we see Mockingbird's continuing effects. Mass media still presents stories from a racist and sexist perspective, routinely attacks students protesting fascist militarization on campuses and gives virtually no attention to government programs such as the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) This act, signed by Obama, authorizes \$662 billion in funding, among other things, "for the defense of the United States and its interests abroad."

This only further proves that what we see, read and hear daily will never serve our class interests. The government has literally owned hundreds of journalists for decades now. It is important we learn this because many still believe in the lie of "unbiased" reporting the bosses' love pushing on us. And when you believe their dangerous lies, you'll be less likely to take up workers' struggle.

This is also why it is so important that we all read and distribute CHALLENGE newspaper. Our revolutionary communist paper is the only paper that truly reports on, and represents the interests of, the international working class. We should all make or renew our commitment to distribute many more as this is our strongest weapon against our enemy, capitalism.

*Red Journalist*

## 'Top Secret America': NSA Exposed Before Snowden

In July of 2010, more than two years before Edward Snowden published his revelations about the National Security Agency (NSA) and two years in the making, the Washington Post newspaper published three articles describing what it called "... an alternative geography of the United States, a Top Secret America hidden from public view and lacking in thorough oversight." To be sure, the motives behind the Post stories were far from those of Mr. Snowden. On the contrary, The Post was

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# LETTERS

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alarmed that the entire national security apparatus had become too large, too in-grown, and quite incapable of even performing a protective role.

The idea was not to expose any of the by-their-own-laws-illegal activities of the U.S. government. Rather, the Post saw itself as a totally patriotic organization alerting the country to severe problems that needed to be fixed so that the U.S. could continue as the world's leading capitalist economy.

The Post saw nothing inherently wrong with what was going on; it only wanted to get rid of the vast waste and inefficiency that it believed was crippling "our" ability to defend "ourselves." Moreover, the Post claimed that its "...online database of government organizations and private companies was built entirely on public records. The investigation focused on top-secret work because the amount classified at the secret level is too large to accurately track."

It is noteworthy that the Post knew that the NSA (only a part of the national security apparatus) was collecting daily 1.7 billion e-mails, phone calls and other types of communications. In other words, the overall activities of the NSA that Snowden exposed were quite well-known. The Post mentioned this data collection to show how ludicrously immense it had become because even with their super-fast computers, the NSA couldn't analyze the majority of the information it was gathering.

Clearly, the facts that Snowden exposed were well-known to Washington insiders; the only ones who didn't know were the so-called "American people."

The articles make it clear that only very high-ranking individuals could afford to identify themselves when substantiating the articles' claims. This thoroughly demolishes the idea that "Snowden should have and could have gone through the proper channels rather than publishing the information the way he did."

The Post said that its online database is at [www.washingtonpost.com/topsecretamerica](http://www.washingtonpost.com/topsecretamerica) but I couldn't find it. Perhaps they took it down after Snowden's exposures to perpetuate the fiction that "no one knew what was going on."

A Reader



## Sochi Olympics: Capitalists Win, Workers Lose

Much has been written about the hundreds of billions in profits made from commercialism, real estate deals and security costs created by the Sochi Olympics. However, its real function is to convince the suffering working class that they are all winners under capitalism. The games are designed to foster a fierce nationalist corporate spirit and hero worship that propels workers to identify with their bosses' profit agendas and wars against competitor countries, much as the 1936 Olympics in Hitler's Germany preceded World War II.

### Olympics and Oil Wars Destroy Workers' Lives

The background to the Sochi Olympics is the oil war between Russia, the number one producer, and the U.S., number three. The U.S. combined with number six, Canada, leads oil production. The nearly completed Keystone oil pipeline from Canada to the U.S. Gulf Coast is mainly for export to energy-poor countries like China and India, to make them dependent on the U.S. instead of Russia. The U.S. is supporting the struggle against Russia in the Ukraine, whose oil and gas pipelines supply much of Europe. Russia's continuing imperialist war for Chechnya's oil resources, that killed over 160,000 rebels, is costing the Russians billions in security because Sochi is near Chechnya.

There are also high-security costs for the U.S. because of its Mideast oil wars and Special Forces killer operations in over 120 countries, along with missile drone attacks. U.S. ships were anchored off Sochi for evacuation purposes, and their athletes were ordered not to wear any nationalist uniforms for fear of retaliation from millions of victims of U.S. imperialism.

Impoverished Russians have been taxed \$51 billion for the Sochi facilities which displaced thousands of workers from public housing, private homes and farms. Other Olympics have also given corporate real es-

tate developers the power to evict millions worldwide in many countries like Brazil and China while encouraging other capitalists like the U.S., which recently displaced thousands of workers in Brooklyn, NY for the Barclays Center and a high-priced apartment complex. In Russia 25 workers were killed building the Sochi complex because of speed-up and unsafe conditions. Many thousands of workers have not even been paid because the project is \$40 billion over budget.

### Hunger Olympics

Many criticize the Olympic athletes' recruiting process which makes them virtual slaves to corporate and military sponsors for funding and training, linking that process to a *Hunger Games* scenario. Child athletes are separated from their families and schools for years and become the property of corporate sponsors like Verizon, who control their lives, and require constant endorsements of their sponsors. Olympic designers demand increasingly dangerous conditions be built into the events to produce new records and thrills, resulting in deaths and injuries among the athletes.

### All Workers Win with Communism

Capitalism produces mass poverty, unemployment, homelessness, and imperialist wars, along with an unequal economy that allows the world's richest 85 people to have more wealth than half the world's population (3.5 billion). Communism is the only system where no workers are losers and everyone is special. With communism, cooperation replaces competition, devotion to serving others replaces serving oneself and pursuit of socially useful goals replaces profits and dangerous entertainment for a handful of lucrative careers. PLP fights for communism, a social system that needs everyone to rise to the heights of their ability and to produce and share equally according to need. Join us.✪



## 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

### New Jim Crow persists in South

NYT, 2/21 — Oxford, Miss. — On the campus of the University of Mississippi, a few hundred yards from a monument honoring Confederate soldiers, a statue of the university's first black student, who enrolled in 1962 amid rioting that left two people dead, stands as what administrators call a powerful symbol of progress.

But when two unidentified men placed a noose around the bronze neck of James Meredith...and left behind a flag with the Confederate flag emblem, it set into motion a new round of soul-searching in a place where past and present still restlessly coexist.

"These events continue to happen semester after semester and year after year," the student newspaper... said in an editorial. "All our actions seem fruitless and impotent, leaving us broken, scared, humiliated and with burning, difficult questions: What do we do about it? How to we stop these events from transpiring?..."

But reminders of the university's Jim Crow past continue to permeate its...campus....

An epithet-saturated demonstration in the aftermath of President Obama's 2012 re-election resulted in the arrests of two students.

### Profiteers pushing unhealthy foods

NYT, 2/12 — To the Editor:

Re "Why Nutrition Is So Confusing" (Sunday Review, Feb. 9):

I disagree.... The elephant in the room is the food industry's marketing campaign. Given that the food produced by the industrial food industry is largely unhealthy, the corporate strategy is to confuse the science so as to make consensus impossible.

Then it becomes a matter of who speaks loudest, which no one does better than professional marketers....

All it takes is one such study to be the reference point for a billion-dollar advertising campaign, reducing science to a matter of opinion as we weigh conflicting conclusions. The food industry successfully touts the word "science" to support its claims while at the same time undermining the word's credibility.

### Sex abusers try hiding behind Jesus

NYT, 2/12 — Administrators called victims liars and sinners....For decades, students at Bob Jones University who sought counseling for sexual abuse were told not to report it because turning in an abuser from a fundamentalist Christian community would damage Jesus Christ.

### No limits on cops lying to suspects?

NYT, 2/21 — Declaring that there are limits to the lies and deceptions the police can employ to get a person to confess to a crime, New York State's highest court... ordered a new trial for a man convicted five years ago of killing his infant son.

...The court held that detectives in Troy, N.Y., had gone too far during the interrogation...and that his confession, stating that he had thrown his son onto a bed, should never have been revealed to a jury.

Detectives threatened to arrest Mr. Thomas's wife if he did not take responsibility for the baby's death. They repeatedly told him he would not be charged with a crime if he confessed to abusing his son. Finally, they told Mr. Thomas that his son's survival depended on his remembering what he might have done to cause a brain injury, even though the baby was already brain dead....

"What transpired during the defendant's interrogation was not consonant with, and indeed completely undermined, defendant's right not to incriminate himself — to remain silent," the judge wrote.

### No free speech in 'democratic' India

NYT, 2/21 — ...Simple reporting the news in India has become a potentially dangerous undertaking. In a report published last week, Reporters Without Borders ranked India 140th for free speech out of 180 countries surveyed. Journalists regularly face pressure, including direct threats, to tread lightly when reporting or commenting on Hindu-nationalist views or candidates.

### U.S. sex-trafficking 100,000 yearly

NYT, 2/13 — Boston. Emily, a 15-year-old ninth grader, ran away from home in early November, and her parents are sitting at their dining table, frightened and inconsolable.

The parents, Maria and Benjamin, both school-bus drivers, have been searching for their daughter all along and pushing the police to investigate. They gingerly confess their fears that Emily, a Latina, is being controlled by a pimp.

I'm here to try to understand the vast national problem of runaways, and I ask if they have checked Backpage.com, the leading website for prostitution and sex trafficking in America. They say they haven't heard of it. Since I've written about Backpage before and am familiar with how runaways often end up in its advertisements, I pull out my laptop — and, in ten minutes, we find an ad for "mixed Latina catering to your needs" with photos of a semi-nude girl.

Maria staggers and shrieks. It's Emily....

More than 1.6 million American juveniles run away or are kicked out of their homes each year....A former president of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children has [said]...at least 100,000 kids are sexually trafficked each year in the United States.

# Brazil: Genocide of Black and Indigenous Workers

The Progressive Labor Party has always said that racism is an essential aspect of worldwide capitalism. A case in point is the murder of poor black young people in Brazil, which is such a common occurrence that it rarely gets reported. Last fall, however, there was sharp struggle in Sao Paulo after the “accidental” killing of 17-year-old Douglas Rodrigues by a cop responding to a noise complaint. Douglas was simply walking on the street with his 12-year-old brother.

Brazil’s President, Dilma Rousseff, admitted that the same violence that killed Douglas is suffered by “thousands of other black youth.” Human rights organizations, including the National Council for Equality, demanded urgent measures against “the genocide of Brazil’s black youth.”

There are more than 60,000 violent deaths each year in Brazil. According to the Institute of Applied Economic Investigations (IPEA), black or biracial victims account for two-thirds of them. The homicide rate in the black community is 36.5 per 100,000 residents, more than double the white homicide rate. According to the IPEA, this murder epidemic reduces the life expectancy for black youth and workers by more than 20 months.

Moreover, these victims keep getting younger. In the 1980s, the average homicide victim was 26; today, the average victim is 20. In 2010 alone, according to an investigator from the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences, 35,000 black people in Brazil died from violent acts. He wrote, “These numbers should be worrisome for a country that appears to not have ethnic, religious, border, social or political conflict. The number of violent deaths represents a much higher volume than those of many of the regions of the world that go through armed struggle.”

### Criminalizing Black Youth

Raquel Villadino, coordinator for the Program for the Reduction of Lethal Violence among Teen and Youth in Rio de Janeiro, criticized the fact that only eight percent of the country’s violence prevention programs include racial data. “Racism is a structural element of the fatality of black youth,” Villadino said. “We are not only facing a process of criminalization of poverty, but, particularly of black youth.”

Over the last few years, violence against working-class youth there has intensified. Millions of black youth are out of school and unemployed. Since their lives are of little value to the exploitative capitalists, they are more vulnerable to becoming victims of violence. But racism

towards black youth and workers in Brazil is not limited to physical violence. They are also victimized by structural poverty. According to federal government data, 68 percent of the 81 million Brazilians in poverty are black or biracial.

Racism also affects healthcare. According to Psychologist Crisfanny Souza, a member of the National Network of Social Health Control of the Black Population, “All the rates of health of black women are worse than those of whites. Black women are given fewer breast exams and receive less anesthesia during childbirth.”

A black child is 60 percent more likely than a white child to die before the age of 18 of infectious or parasitic disease, and 90 percent more likely to die of malnutrition. The public healthcare system is not prepared to deal with diseases faced by the black population, including hypertension, sickle cell anemia or type 2 diabetes.

While slavery was abolished in Brazil in 1888, racism continues to oppress black workers and youth. Despite a 2012 affirmative action law to increase the number of poor and black students in public universities, the top universities are still monopolized by middle- and upper-class students from the prestigious private school system. Public primary and secondary schools continue to deteriorate.

### Death and Inequality

Brazil’s indigenous communities are especially vulnerable to racist violence. According to the Missionary Indigenous Counsel, a group linked to the Catholic Church, violence against indigenous communities increased by 237 percent in 2012. These incidents include homicides, death threats, assassination attempts, assaults and sexual violence. In many cases, these attacks were instigated by landowners seeking control of land. In the last decade, 563 indigenous people reportedly have been assassinated — all of this in a society that glorifies itself as racially mixed.

In May 2013, the television network Globo commemorated the 125th anniversary of slavery’s abolition with a satirical skit poking fun at the abolitionist movement. Douglas Belchior, a history professor, attacked Globo TV’s racism, pointing out that more than seven million Africans and their descendants were kidnapped and killed during the 388 years of Brazil’s slavery.

The history of slavery in Brazil is one in a long list of crimes against humanity

by the capitalist system worldwide:

- The killings of hundreds of innocent men, women and children in Pakistan and Afghanistan by the U.S. imperialists’ drone attacks;
- Wage and benefit cuts of up to 50 percent for workers in Detroit, while President Barack Obama gave millions to the auto bosses;
- More deportations of U.S. immigrant workers than under any previous administration in U.S. history;
- The most intense segregation in U.S. public schools since 1968, with Obama leading the charge

for hyper-segregated charter schools;

- Police killings of black youth, including Ramarley Graham, Shantel Davis, Kimani Gray, and Rekia Boyd — to name only a few.

Workers of the world must fight racism and the capitalist system that creates it. Justice for this system’s victims will only come with capitalism’s destruction. And capitalism will only be destroyed when the international working class join the revolutionary PLP. Only then will we smash racism and sexism, and the division and exploitation of the working class. Only then can we end inequality. This is PLP’s fight. Join us!✊

## Venezuela's Oil: Imperialist Dogfight Victimizes Workers

Inter-imperialist rivalry is shaping events in Venezuela. The capitalists’ main fight is over oil. Venezuela is the United States’ third largest oil supplier and the leading exporter to Latin America. It has the world’s second biggest oil reserves. This is a huge bonanza for the imperialists.

The fight within the country pits president Nicolás Maduro (following Cesar Chavez’ pseudo-leftist politics) on one side, backed by the Chinese and Russian imperialists. Gustavo Cisneros, one of the richest men on the planet, supports Maduro’s regime.

On the right-wing side are Henrique Capriles and Leopoldo Lopez. The latter was one of the leaders of the 2002 coup against Chavez, which was supported by the United States. These two represent U.S. imperialism.

Neither gang represents workers’ interests. Workers in Venezuela are victims of capitalism’s world crisis, suffering high unemployment, mass poverty, slum housing and miserable health care. The capitalists are taking advantage of workers’ discontent, similar to what’s happening in Ukraine or Africa: to divert workers’ anger the bosses are pushing workers to fight each other by siding with one or another bosses’ camp.

The working class in Venezuela has a rich history of struggle against the capitalists but unfortunately they’ve never had a party fighting for a communist society. Progressive Labor Party is appealing to workers to join our revolutionary communist party and fight shoulder to shoulder, internationally, to break the chains of the imperialists’ puppet governments. Let’s build a world free of misery and oppression, a world where the riches of nature are enjoyed according to workers’ needs and commitment, not controlled by a profit-hungry bunch of capitalists.✊

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