

CHALLENGE



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Part of War Against Capitalism

Battle Racist Schools

NEWARK, NJ, February 25 — Over 500 students, parents and education workers attended the Newark Board of Education meeting ready to battle Superintendent Cami Anderson, the face of the city's racist and fascist education reform movement. Her One Newark plan would centralize education, close schools, replace public schools with charter schools, fire teachers, bust the teachers' union, and under the guise of "school choice," set up a process that would make it easier to close schools in the future.

While the Superintendent refused to appear, PLP was there with our literature seeking to spread communist consciousness amongst the masses. We distributed over 400 leaflets and CHALLENGES. While waiting for the meeting to begin, many sat in their seats with CHALLENGE spread wide open, reading each article carefully. What follows is the leaflet we distributed. It's our attempt to join with workers who are fighting to get local control (Board of Education rather than state control) and get rid of the Superintendent while also struggling with them to see that these reforms will not solve the problems of education under capitalism. After reading it, many parents came up to the PL members telling them that they liked the flyer and took extras to give to their friends:

If you talk to most parents, teachers, students and community fighters in Newark, then you'll hear two popular demands: "Cami Must Go!" and "Bring back local control!" While members of the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) are committed to fight alongside workers and students to get rid of Cami Anderson and state control, we also know that the working class must prepare for the bigger war against capitalism. Schools are the main way the ruling class (the big money — from JP Morgan Chase to the Walton Family to Gates) controls how the working class thinks and behaves. Governor Christie and Cami are just carrying out the plans of these capitalists. Therefore, it will take something much bigger — communist revolution — to create an education system that will prepare future generations to become leaders in a society free of racism, sexism, imperialism and exploitation.

State Control Is Racist

The working class in Newark should be angry about state control. When Christie said he doesn't care what the community thinks about Anderson, he was only confirming what the ruling class has been thinking for the past 20 years, that the working class, particularly black and immigrant workers, should not have a say in how their children are educated.

Anderson's One Newark plan shows this racist attitude. Attacking students, parents and education workers in mainly black neighborhoods, she is implementing the centuries-old "divide-and-conquer" tactic. By dividing black workers from their white and immigrant working-class brothers and sisters (particularly in the East Ward), Anderson hopes to get through a large part of her plan. This does not mean other workers are safe. After she gets done with this first phase, the working class will be a lot weaker to fight her future plans, thus making it easier to attack the East Ward and other parts of the city that are "safe" for now.

Schools Get Students Ready For Imperialist War!

Fascism and racism go hand in hand. One aspect of fascism is disciplining the working class into bearing more racist and sexist attacks from the bosses. As the U.S. ruling class prepares for bigger wars, they will need the money, soldiers, and racist ideologies to win. The main criticism thrown at Anderson is that she is selling public land to private companies so that they can make a profit. Pink Hula Hoop

is a company that raises money to buy public schools put on the auction block by the state-appointed school administration. This is one way that charter schools raise money from state sources. Either way, the money comes from working class pockets.

While this is true, it's not the primary goal, which is to create a cheap education system that trains young students to be obedient workers.

When Anderson says that a school is "failing," she means it has failed to create a workforce ready to be exploited by their bosses and die for the ruling class in its imperialist wars. That's what's meant by "disciplining the working class." That's why Anderson promotes schools like TEAM that force students to sit on floors and "earn" their desks. The bosses intend to create the kind of obedient workforce and army they need.

Anderson also has to discipline the current working class. Her attacks on unionized workers have already begun. Cafeteria and custodial workers have felt the wrath of Superintendent Anderson over the past few years. After layoffs and cutbacks, these workers are still under attack. Anderson is now planning on firing at least 700 teachers. The smashing of the unions will create cheap and loyal workers that will help carry out these plans. This is the main goal for the bosses that Christie and Anderson represent.

Their Schools Will Never Serve Us

Even if Newark workers win back local control, these schools won't work for us. For the past 150 years, schools have always been the bosses' tool. That's because the education system is a part of capitalism, the same capitalist system that will always have racist unemployment, police brutality and foreclosures. The same system that engineers the mass murder of workers in the Middle East through their wars creates the conditions for gang violence here in Newark. So why would we think that they would give up their power so easily? Sure there have been times where teachers and students might have had a bigger piece of the pie, but that was only because we fought for them. In the end, the bosses will still control the state — the government, military, cops, education and prison systems.

Smash 'One Newark' System — Fight for One Working Class

We must fight the school closings, mass layoffs and attacks on parents and teachers, but if we're serious about creating a world based on equality, then the only solution is to fight for communism. PLP is building to do that. Join us as we continue to build the Party to end the attacks in education and plan for the larger war against racism and capitalism. Fight for communism!✊



JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

★ EDITORIAL

Ukraine: U.S.-Russian Rulers' Oil Dogfight Hits All Workers
page 2

★ CHICAGO

Teachers, Parents, Students Unite: 'Teach, Not Test!'
page 3

★ COLOMBIA

Pacifism Can't Defeat Bosses State Power
page 3

★ UKRAINE

The Truth About Nationalism
page 8

OUR FIGHT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

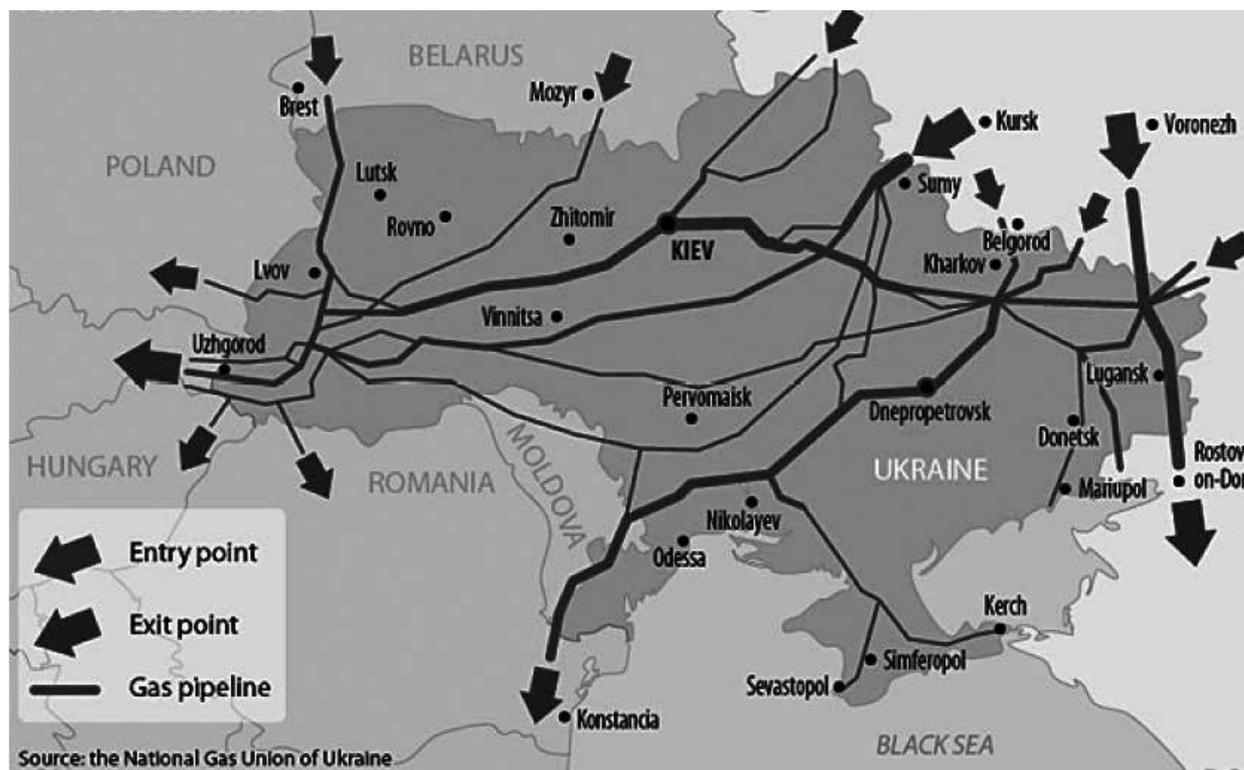
The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP's criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a "following" around any particular individual.

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

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Editorial

Ukraine: U.S.-Russian Rulers' Oil Dogfight Hits All Workers



The imperialist powers have escalated their clash over energy resources, distribution, pricing and control — the cornerstones for global supremacy. The conflict pits Russian corporate gangsters, known as oligarchs, against the nationalist oligarchs in Ukraine, backed by U.S. and European billionaires and oil giants ExxonMobil, BP and Shell. These huge oil companies are the main beneficiaries of the neo-Nazi takeover in Ukraine (see CHALLENGE, 3/12).

Ukraine's Russian-leaning president, Viktor Yanukovich, was ousted by street demonstrations led by the armed, fascist Svoboda party, which was backed unreservedly by U.S. and European Union (EU) imperialists. The corrupt Yanukovich regime, in league with Russian President Vladimir Putin, created massive poverty, unemployment, and the lowest living standards in Europe. The pro-U.S. coup paves the way for the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to "stabilize" Ukraine's feeble economy. Established by the U.S. in 1943 to ensure the dominance of the U.S. dollar, the IMF squeezes poorer nations to attack workers' wages and social services and guarantee payment of the nations' debts to U.S. banks. These IMF reforms increase profits for both the big-power bosses and the local capitalist class.

In other words, the plight of Ukraine's working class is likely to go from very bad to much worse. No matter which set of capitalist rulers prevails in their dogfights, workers always lose.

As these assaults on our class intensify worldwide, there is all the more urgency to build Progressive Labor Party. The fight for communism is the only answer to capitalism's racist savagery. Now is time for us to take the offensive on the long march to communist revolution.

Austerity and Profits

Much is at stake in Crimea, which set a vote on secession from Ukraine for Sunday, March 16. On October 29, 2013, Oil-price.com, a London-based, pro-U.S. industry journal, made an argument for a U.S.-led Ukraine takeover. It spelled out the benefits to Ukraine's West-tilting oligarchs: independence from Russia; greater access to the EU; political leverage in Washington on a Turkey-Ukraine liquefied natural gas (LNG) deal; control of the EU market for LNG; and strategic leverage in the Middle East, especially between competitors Qatar and Iran.

U.S. capitalists have their own agenda. They want Ukrainian ports to be major receivers of LNG from Qatar, where Exxon is the top producer and the U.S. Air Force has its largest Middle East base. The U.S. bloc also wants to use its superior drilling technology to develop Ukraine's gas fields for itself and further undermine Russian influence. For lack of infrastructure, however, none of these plans are close to execution. As yet there are no facilities to import LNG into Ukraine's Black Sea port in Odessa and compensate for Europe's potential loss of energy imports from Russia.

On the other side, Ukraine serves Russian capitalists as a European pathway for pipelined exports from Gazprom, the mega-energy company controlled by the Russian government. (Gazprom is the world's largest extractor of natural gas.) Ukraine also plays a critical strategic role in harboring Moscow's Black Sea Fleet.

Putin understands that the clash in Crimea will motivate the billionaires he serves to support Black Sea aggression on behalf of energy control. By invading and controlling Crimea, he hopes to consolidate Russia's control of energy supplies throughout the region. As Putin mouthpiece Sergei Markov wrote under the headline, "Why There Will Be War in Ukraine": "Russia is prepared to move its forces into southern and eastern Ukraine if repressive measures are used against the Russian-speaking population or if a military intervention occurs" (Moscow Times, 3/6/14).

A broader Crimean counterattack by Russia could turn the Black Sea into a naval war zone. U.S. strategists, preoccupied of late with their anti-China "pivot to Asia," must now refocus on the European theater and build a coalition for the broader war that may start there. In particular, they must confront a growing Eurasian alliance by Russia and China to control oil routes from the former Soviet central Asian republics to China.

U.S. Not Ready for War

In the wake of the fiascos in Iraq and Afghanistan, all current polls show that two-thirds of the U.S. population opposes further U.S. invasions. In short, the U.S. is not prepared for all-out war, even assuming U.S. workers would support one.

U.S. bosses must weigh their inevitable need to take on Russia (and China) against their state of unpreparedness. Some ruling-class planners are impatient—notably Ian Brzezinski, son of Zbigniew, the author of President Jimmy Carter's doctrine for perpetual U.S. war for Middle East oil. In a website posting for the Atlantic Council think tank (3/3/14), Brzezinski proposed immediate "activation of the NATO response force" and "deployment of NATO naval forces to the Black Sea."

U.S. Has Shaky Allies

Other NATO members, however, are more cautious. For the foreseeable future, capitalists in Germany and Poland cannot do without gas that flows — on Moscow's terms — through Ukraine. U.S. gas exports remain years from realization.

Nor can U.S. rulers count on British support in Ukraine, not when Putin-allied billionaires own 50 percent of the London Stock Market. An Op-Ed piece in the New York Times (3/8) put it squarely:

A confidential report on how Prime Minister David Cameron's government should respond to the Crimea crisis....recommended that Britain should "not support, for now, trade sanctions" nor should it "close London's financial center to Russians...."

It boils down to this: Britain is ready to betray the United States to protect City of London's [London's Wall Street] hold on dirty Russian money. And forget about Ukraine....

Putin gets it: you pay them, you own them....Here, in their capital city, the English are no longer calling the shots. They are hirelings.

continued on page 4

East Africa: 'Free Market' Ruins Workers' Education

The education system is in crisis not only in Tanzania but in Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Latin America, the U.S. and the worldwide. The crisis is caused by the fact that the schools are in the hands of the bosses. The bosses control of education leads to inequalities in the system, the haves and have-nots.

In the colonial era the educational system worsened in the African states because it was based on "races." Whites were favored as were certain tribes that the colonialists chose to prepare for managerial and professional duties. Most of the schools were built in urban areas where whites used to live.

After independence the masses thought that the educational system would improve but it remained a cursed system on the African continent and in the world at large. Education remained a commodity in which the sons and daughters of the rich got better education, especially in private schools owned by the bosses, while the poorer majority failed to get any education at all. In 1985, Tanzania succumbed to the pressures of neocolonialism and became a "free market economy." Through the UN's machinery, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the World Trade Organization, and UNESCO, education became too expensive for most Tanzanians.

The IMF imposed conditions on the Tanzanian government. In order to get aid they had to cut back on government expenditures, like public education, health services, public transportation, and communication. They caused the stagnation of technology by draining Tanzania of its experts, like professors, doc-

tors, engineers. Their offers of investment were tied to the importation of their expensive finished goods.

The net result of these policies means that today about 85 percent of Standard Three pupils in government schools are unable to read Kiswahili and solve mathematics problems (Zaida Mgalla). Mgalla reports that English performance is even poorer. Her results show that vast numbers of children are not acquiring basic skills in primary education. Ms. Mgalla said, "We are in a society of two classes. The privileged with more wealth who can afford private schooling do much better than most people. When it comes to education, Tanzania is not one nation." The reforms that she calls for could never succeed since the system is still owned by the bosses.

Education is serving the imperialist system that blocks true economic advancement for the masses. Teachers and students need to form an alliance to fight for free and equal education for all, to end employment benefits for some while others face a lifetime of insecurity, for a good supply of food to the students, for extra-curricular activities for students to keep them physically fit and mentally stable.

As this alliance organizes struggles, PLP has an opportunity to build a truly international party in East Africa and to win workers and students to the idea that a profit system will never truly educate the working class. We must seize power from the bosses in order to end classes and free us from exploitation. Then education will be for and by those who actually create all value in society: the working class.✪

Colombia: Pacifism Can't Defeat Bosses' State Power

BOGOTA, COLOMBIA, March 12 — When Attorney General Ordoñez dismissed Bogota's Mayor, Gustavo Petro, on December 9, he laid bare the capitalist farce behind the current crisis. It clearly demonstrates to the workers that under capitalism we cannot hope to live humane lives, or, as Petro himself claims, to mutually co-exist without the big tycoons hoarding everything and leaving only a few crumbs for the working class.

That's why the corrupt Colombian state, represented by the Attorney General, deposed a mayor who had become a royal pain because of his attempts to eliminate some of the unfair benefits enjoyed by the country's owners in his attempts to reduce the bleeding of "public" coffers. That was exposed in the garbage collection contract whose cost infinitely exceeded its real value, in addition to similar rotten contracts he uncovered.

That's why the organized mafias retaliated by taking advantage of the 1991 Constitution which gave supreme powers to the Attorney General. He can act autocratically, investigating, judging and sentencing, clearly exposing the nature of this "democracy." Even more pathetic is that Mayor Petro, in his defense speech, underscored the role he and others played in writing that Constitution as something positive for peace and democracy in Colombia.

Petro asked for peaceful ways to express discontent and suggested the formation of committees of indigenous communities, peasants, students, workers, environmentalists, LGBT and anti-bullfighting groups to defend the "Humane Bogota" on behalf of a "democratic" revolution. Aida Avella, a survivor of the genocide launched against the UP (Union Patriótica), also argued, like Petro, for a pacifist struggle to defend "democracy" and praised Nelson Mandela as an example of the "possibility of social change through peaceful means."

Progressive Labor Party advocates many forms of struggle and in this case supports many workers organizations, but we clearly don't believe in the false capitalist "democracy," and even less in this "peace" being promoted since our class is murdered with bullets and misery on a daily basis.

Leaders like Mandela and Gandhi become capitalism's useful tools in exchange for some apparent gains and a comfortable position while doling out crumbs to the working class. Just look at India and South Africa where the working class is exploited by the big mining corporations after the pacifist leaders abandoned any real struggle.

To the contrary these same "leaders" expose their commitment to pacifism by repressing the working class, as did Petro himself when he used the police to defend the "Rights of States." Such was the tragedy for the working class.

That's why we must organize the working class around PLP's communist program, take advantage of all workers' struggles, clarifying what must be the final objective, the elimination of capitalism. Then the working class, led by its communist party, can determine its own destiny and bury the handful of exploiters of our labor.

Red Worker

Teachers, Parents, Students Unite: 'Teach, Not Test!'



CHICAGO, March 10 — Chanting, "Let Us Teach", 250 teachers, parents, and students rallied in support of 25 Chicago teachers who have taken the bold step of refusing to give a state-mandated test. The Illinois State Achievement Test (ISAT) is given over an eight-day period for two hours a day. In addition to teacher boycotters, more than 1,000 parents have signed "opt-out" letters telling the schools they don't want their children to take the test. Top dogs at Chicago Public Schools (CPS) have had a virulent reaction to the stand taken by teachers and parents.

CPS has called opting-out parents every day for a week urging them to have their children take the test. They have patrolled the classrooms of active anti-ISAT schools, making sure that testing, not teaching, was occurring. Although non-testing students should have been allowed to read a book or engage in another quiet learning activity, at some schools students were forced to just sit there with the test booklet in front of them. Teachers were threatened with loss of their teaching license. At Saucedo School, where 20 teachers boycotted, educators were admonished for teaching opted-out students. They were told not to do any more teaching, just to supervise silent activities.

This seemingly irrational behavior on the part of those running the school system is motivated by

power and control. As U.S. capitalism fights to retain its world dominance and prepares for the next world war, they need to control education. This was made very clear in the March 2012, Council on Foreign Relations report about military preparedness.

They write that more than half of all high school students either don't graduate or are unable to pass the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery and "many U.S. generals caution that too many new enlistees cannot read training manuals for technologically sophisticated equipment." Condoleezza Rice and Joel Klein, authors of this report, recommend "the creation of more meaningful assessments and

simulations of student learning and, then, a coordinated, national effort to create targets and repercussions tied to the Common Core."

ISAT is an old test, not tied to the national Common Core standards, but CPS does not want teachers and parents to get in the habit of deciding what to teach or what tests students should take. Current education policies — national standards, attacks on unions, and accountability tied to test scores — are consistent with a plan to shape the workforce and the military to best serve capitalist interests. Schools have always played this role, but the intensity of worldwide competition makes schools particularly important now.

The teachers who bravely stood up to CPS and decided to teach, not test, put the interests of the students first. They broke the rules. Although these teachers are not communists, they have demonstrated the important communist principle of allegiance to the working class. This display of allegiance also brought on the harsh CPS reaction. PLP looks forward to the day when even more students, teachers, and parents rise up against the racist, oppressive education capitalists provide and fight for a communist future.✪

Racist Obama and Allies' Perpetual War on Working Class

The hypocrisy of the Obama administration is off the rails. Obama has denounced Russia's president Putin for a "breach of international law" by seizing the Crimea in the conflict over the Ukraine. His Secretary of State, John Kerry, has accused Russia of being "in direct violation of international law." Their mouthpiece, the New York Times (3/3) claims Putin "stepped outside the bounds of civilized behavior." And the European Union (EU) is backing the U.S. all the way, "in defense of Western values."

Dictator Putin sending troops into the Crimea is relatively minor compared to the actions of U.S. rulers — presently and historically — along with EU members France, Britain, Germany and Belgium, among others. While Obama poses as a global sheriff on the side of "international law," actually he is the world's outlaw-in-chief. Under capitalism and imperialism, "international law" boils down to the law of the jungle. It represents anything that capitalist powers can get away with, especially through the use of military force.

War By Terror, A Presidential Duty

Last October the McClatchy news service reported that "the Obama administration violated international law with top-secret targeted-killing operations that claimed dozens of civilian lives in Yemen and Pakistan." And Karen Greenberg, director of the Center on National Security at Fordham University's law school, indicated the scope of the Obama U.S. government's ongoing contempt for that international law:

According to Senator Lindsey Graham..., the Obama administration has killed 4,700 individuals in numerous countries, including Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia. Obama has successfully embedded the process of drone killings into the executive branch in such a way that any future president will inherit it, along with the White House 'kill list' and its 'terror Tuesday meetings. Unbounded global war is now part of what it means to be president.

Obama's war machine protects over 1,000 bases worldwide, including dispatching Special Forces for targeted assassinations. But his administration is only following U.S. rulers' war policies to maintain U.S. top-dog status, especially to control the flow of oil and gas which usually is behind many of its invasions. Hardly a year has gone by in the 20th century and into the 21st that the Pentagon and the CIA haven't engaged in invasions, the overthrow of elected governments and assassinations. Beginning in 1898 when they grabbed Cuba and the Philippines (where they first introduced waterboarding and killed thousands, "outside the bounds of civilized behavior"), then throughout Central and South America in the first half of the 20th century and then triphammer style in the post-World War II era.

U.S. Presidents' Military Machine Marches On

Their "breaches" of a non-existent international law included:

- 1953: Overthrowing the elected government of Iran and installation of the dictatorial Shah (Eisenhower);
- 1954: Overthrowing the elected government of Guatemala which led to 100,000 deaths (Eisenhower);
- 1962: The CIA-directed assassination of Congo's elected Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba (Eisenhower);
- 1965: Invasion of the Dominican Republic to eliminate an elected president who didn't bow to Wall Street's wishes (Johnson);
- 1971: The CIA-aided anti-communist massacre of over a million workers in Indonesia by dictator Suharto's government (Johnson);
- 1963-1973: Invasion of Vietnam and accompanying bombing of Cambodia and Laos, a failed effort which led to five million deaths over ten years (Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon);
- 1973: CIA-Henry Kissinger-inspired overthrow of the elected government of Salvador Allende in Chile and takeover by the fascist Pinochet (Nixon);
- 1979: The \$30 billion CIA campaign from Pakistan to invade Afghanistan and counter the Soviet presence there (which led to the Taliban seizure of power and training of Osama bin Laden) (Carter);



- 1983: Invasion of tiny Grenada that presumably had a "Marxist" government (Reagan);
- 1979: Arming and backing of fascist death squads in Nicaragua and El Salvador (Reagan);
- 1989: Invasion of Panama to squeeze out Japanese banking influence (Bush, Sr.);
- 1994: U.S. Invasion of Haiti (Clinton);
- 1999: Wholesale bombing of Yugoslavia which killed thousands and destroyed huge amounts of infrastructure (Clinton);
- 2003: "Shock and awe" invasion of Iraq — on the pretext of non-existent weapons of mass destruction — which killed hundreds of thousands and displaced four million, leaving that country in a shambles of daily killings (Bush, Jr.);
- 2001: Invasion of Afghanistan, a key to the oil and gas of central Asia (Bush, Jr., Obama);
- 2010: The deployment of the U.S. Navy around Haiti and backing of the UN force there, keeping workers under wraps (Obama);
- And now the invasion of U.S. Special Forces into southern Libya to fight "enemies" in four adjacent African countries (Obama);

'I was a racketeer for capitalism...'

(Excerpt from a speech delivered in 1933 by Major General Smedley Butler, U.S. Marine Corps)

I spent thirty-three years and four months...as a member of this country's most agile military force, the Marine Corps....During that time I spent most of my time being a high class muscle-man for Big Business, for Wall Street and for the Bankers. In short, I was a racketeer, a gangster for capitalism....

I helped make Mexico...safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in. I helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American republics for the benefits of Wall Street....I helped purify Nicaragua for the international banking house of Brown Brothers in 1909-1912....I brought the light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests in 1916. In China I helped to see to it that Standard Oil went its way unmolested.

...Looking back on it, I feel I could have given Al Capone a few hints. The best he could do was to operate his racket in three districts. I operated on three continents.

European Bosses No Slouches Either

But EU capitalists, while not up to U.S. "standards," are no slouches either. French imperialists engaged in the slaughter and torture of tens of thousands in its carnage in Algeria. It now has troops in half a dozen African countries to protect its investments in these former French colonies. Belgian King Leopold perpetrated a holocaust in the Congo, killing and mutilating up to 15 million workers and peasants in 1876--1908. Over two centuries, British capitalists ran roughshod over central Africa (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, among others), South Africa and India. Nazi Germany under Hitler enslaved and slaughtered tens of millions in his master-race scheme. These are the "Western values" they're protecting in the Ukraine whose people are suffering from a Nazi-led overthrow of another autocratic government, protected by Putin.

It's time the international working class put an end to hypocrite-in-chief Obama, his capitalist allies and fascist Putin. Only a communist revolution can destroy this motley crew of "breachers" and put our class in the saddle.☺

U.S.-Russian Rulers' Dogfight

continued from page 2

Meanwhile, Germany gets a major share of its energy resources from Russia, which also accounts for nearly 40 percent of Germany's trade. The German bosses can't afford to cut off this source of wealth for the sake of ExxonMobil and friends.

Bosses Need to Buy Time...

The most influential U.S. warlords are trying to buy the time they need to build up for global conflict. Henry Kissinger, the Rockefellers' protégé and a chief architect of U.S. genocide in Indochina, wants a de-escalation in Ukraine before the wider war down the road:

Wise Ukrainian leaders [should] then opt for a policy of reconciliation between the various parts of their country. Internationally, they should pursue a posture comparable to that of Finland. That nation ...cooperates with the West in most fields but carefully avoids institutional hostility toward Russia The time for [confrontation] will come soon enough (New York Post, 3/7/14).

Kissinger's message meshes with Obama's plan to reallocate the armed forces and cut wasteful military expenditures while preparing for new types of wars in the 21st century. The bosses' media loves to note how Depression-strapped U.S. rulers boosted troop strength from roughly 400,000 to more than 15 million in short order in the 1940s. A quick Pentagon build-up, they're reminding us, is easily within U.S. capabilities.

At the moment, Ukraine doesn't compare to Pearl Harbor, the Japanese attack in 1941 that triggered U.S. entry into World War II. But sharpening inter-imperialist tensions make such a collision unavoidable. It will come soon enough.

...Our Time Is NOW

If U.S. rulers need to stall before their next worldwide bloodbath, a communist-led working class must seize today's opportunity and speed our efforts to counter their attacks. We must build a mass international party strong enough to destroy their brutal system, and develop a communist society run by and for the working class. Join and build PLP!☺

International Women's Day Has Communist Roots

The only day the world recognizes women is the one to celebrate their "reproductive" role as mother and wife, Mother's Day. But it was the Soviets, the communist movement, that celebrated women as political beings with revolutionary power. March 8 is International Women's Day (IWD), the day that communists organized to salute the strength and contributions of women workers.

Women are not docile but have been organizing and fighting back for hundreds of years. In the United States, the fight of the slave and of women began from the same thread. The Grimke sisters fought against slavery and for women's rights as one and the same battle. Angelina Grimke declared, "Until he [a slave] gets his rights, we [women] shall never have ours." Struggles led up to the German communist Clara Zetkin taking the initiative in 1910 to organize an official International Working Women's Day. Anti-sexist struggle makes it a historic day for all workers, women and men.

Communists Fought to Smash Sexism

During Czarist Russia, the struggle for working-class women became synonymous with the open call for the overthrow of the government. During World War I, the Russian Bolshevik Party tried to turn March 8th into a demonstration of women workers against imperialism. On that day in 1917, the women of St. Petersburg began and led the February revolution.

Re-centering IWD within its rich revolutionary communist history helps increase the class-consciousness and organization of working-class women. This militancy is crucial to the future of the working class.

Sexism Inherent in Capitalism

The inherent sexism in capitalism is clear within the context of maximizing profits. Historically, profits haven't always existed as part of society. When people began accumulating wealth, society changed from a primitive egalitarian society to one defined by class (see PL pamphlet *Communism and the Struggle Against Sexism*). In fact, the enslavement of women, the ultimate producers of labor, was essential to class society. To produce surplus, despots had to have unpaid labor and therefore they subjugated and enslaved women. As bosses increased their accumulation of surplus value (profit, value produced by workers over and above their wages), the gendered divisions of labor — previously based on mutual agreements in hunter-gather societies — became coercive. Hence, sexism is an inherent part of capitalism.

Capitalism has become an international parasitic system, and the world is made dependent on the major capitalists. Women and families are alienated, coerced, evicted from their land, and forced to migrate to imperialist countries to earn wages. These women are given the lowest-paying, labor-intensive jobs, which again profit the ruling class. The U.S. profits significantly from the sweat and blood of black, Latino, and Asian immigrant women. Immigrant women are ruled under fascist conditions — working nearly from meal to meal, while non-immigrant women workers, such as single mothers on welfare, are also treated in a viciously sexist and racist manner.

Sexism Means We Must Fight Back

Women workers have always fought back against oppression. In Bangladesh, thousands of garment workers, mostly women, shut down 700 factories and the roads to the capital, Dhaka. They also hurled bricks at the sexist cops who tried to tear gas and beat them.

These workers produce billions of dollars of profit for corporations such as Walmart and H&M clothing stores, while only earning pennies. Part of the struggle against sexism begins on the factory floor, where women learn to fight fear, an instrument through which the bosses' state rules.

As these women fight against their super-exploitation, Arab women and children are defending their village against the Israeli fascists. Women nurses in Brooklyn joined their male colleagues in multi-gender unity, are also fighting hospital closings and massive cutbacks in benefits and wages.

Feminism HURTS Women Workers

Feminism, a bourgeois philosophy, disregards the class nature of sexism. Anti-sexist struggles must reject it, because it divides the working class by blaming male workers and shunning them from anti-sexist struggles. This all-class unity for women sets us up for fascism by mobilizing women against their own class interests and sharpening the racist attacks on all workers.

It is communism, never feminism, that fights to eliminate the sexist divisions of the working class. Only communism can eliminate sexism by abolishing the wage system where work will be divided based on need and commitment, liberating women from the di-



rect responsibility of pre-natal care and child-rearing. It will be shared equally with men. This will remove incentives for sexist divisions and workers will struggle to eliminate gender roles. Women will be valued according to their role in giving political leadership. This egalitarian foundation will give way to producing a society free from treating women as commodities.

For Communism, Women Must Lead Revolution

Historically, women are the most exploited of the working class. Class struggle is sharpest among the most exploited sectors of the working class. The experiences gained from this special oppression provides the basis for this leadership. Therefore, women are key to communist revolution.

The battle against sexism is an international one. When the woman worker in Haiti is raped, when a girl in Pakistan is sold into marriage, when a mother from South Africa is faced with eviction, this is an attack on the working class as a whole.

When we sharpen the contradictions between the ruling and the working class, workers will put anti-racist and anti-sexist politics at the forefront, doing away with the identities capitalism uses to divide us. We cannot fight sexism without having strong communist leaders who are women.

Though communists had made the greatest advances for women in the Soviet Union and China, most of the leadership was still male. PL has been fighting against sexism by maximizing women's revolutionary potential and having them take more leadership roles, as occurred with the women who led the bakery workers' fight against Stella D'Oro (see CHALLENGES in 2009).

We need to expose sexism at work and in all the struggles we are involved in. The fight against sexism is a day-to-day struggle. Challenge sexist notions of male supremacy among co-workers. Raise anti-sexist politics at school. Rally against sexist healthcare cuts at your workplace. Write to CHALLENGE about your struggle against sexism. Women and men, black, brown, and white, must embrace communism as the only weapon against sexism. ☪

What is Sexism?

Much like racism, sexism is a systematic tool used by the bosses to divide the working class against itself. It is the special oppression of female workers. This is manifested in many forms. In 1921, Lenin wrote:

Under capitalism the female half of the human race is doubly oppressed....not only are they exploited as members of the working class, "they continue to be 'household slaves,' for they are overburdened with the drudgery of the most squalid, backbreaking and stultifying toil in the kitchen and family household" (Supplement to Pravda No. 51).

Part of this women's unpaid housework includes raising children, which is seen as an extension of their "reproductive" role. These children go on to become the next generation of workers.

Bosses also use women as a disposable labor force. Not only are they paid less to do more work than their male counterparts, they are also sexually harassed, objectified, and subject to mass violence and genocide. Black, immigrant, Asian, and Latino women are triply exploited because of the racist nature of capitalism (see PL pamphlet *Smash Racism*). The super-exploitation and oppression of women workers affects the whole working class.

Men's wages are depressed precisely because women's are especially depressed. The differential pay between male and female wages serves to divide the working class. If men buy into the idea that their work is worth more, not only are they making it easier for bosses to super-exploit women, they are also making it easier for bosses to exploit them. Women working in unpaid labor at home are seen as profitable for men. The inexcusable violence against women is used to justify that it is "natural" for men to beat women. Both notions disregard the class content in sexism. When women are treated as domestic slaves, men become complicit with capitalism's systemic inequality. Violence is a safety valve for capital, projecting men's frustrations in their exploitation as wage slaves onto women.

How does a man who degrades his wife and children hurt from sexism? That male worker has divided himself against his family. In what could have been his source of strength against his alienation at work is now a source of disunity. And any temporary "gain" from having women perform tasks for men is greatly outweighed by the losses he experiences as a worker and as a father, partner, or friend of a female member of his own class.

LETTERS

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

Need to Take a Stand Against Racism

At lunch recently, one of my coworkers related some of his experiences working in Saudi Arabia. He said that he worked for a private employer who employed several hundred workers. His boss would seize their passports and demanded to be paid whenever they needed their passports to travel to neighboring Dubai or to visit family in India, where many were from. He said that he experienced many instances of racist discrimination because some Saudis disliked darker-skinned people who were non-Muslim. His brother, who still lives in Saudi Arabia, was in a minor car accident in which the other driver was a native. The driver beat his brother and fled, and when the police arrived they did nothing to help. It seems that immigrants are discriminated against all over the world.

This reminds me of another lunchtime conversation in which several coworkers were making disparaging comments about Middle Eastern and Arab immigrants to the U.S.

One said that they manipulate the system by getting LINK cards (gov't. assistance) while driving expensive cars and owning businesses. Another worker said she helped a neighbor from the Middle East do his tax return, and that his wife makes tax-free income by cleaning houses; while he is a truck driver. She stated they were able to buy an expensive house because his employer, who is also from the Middle East, exaggerated his income. I did not say much to this.

After conveying this discussion to my comrades, they suggested that I should have said that the same false ideas are pushed about black and other dark-skinned workers under capitalism. These racist ideas permeate the working class to keep us divided and to keep the rulers in power. The main manipulators of the system are a small group of capitalists who profit from exploiting labor power throughout the world. They are responsible for profiting while workers suffer from poverty, racism and constant wars for world domination.

I was reminded that in order for the working class to make progress toward achieving a communist future, I should make a plan with my coworkers to take a stand against the racist conditions we face every day on the job, including understaffing, cutbacks and lack of equipment. This letter represents a first step in that direction.

Red Worker

Seeger Went Only So Far in Opposing Rulers

I believe that the letter/eulogy in the March 12 issue of CHALLENGE is a "bit" too optimistic about Pete Seeger and his "contributions" to the struggle to destroy capitalism. In his late youth and early adulthood, Pete played an active role in many union-organizing campaigns. His overall approach was to "embarrass" the ruling class into seeing the "errors of their ways." But this strategy has never worked and never will. It is to Seeger's credit that he recognized the inhuman essence of "free" enterprise.

However, Seeger never went beyond this, even after being blacklisted by the entertainment industry and after the infamous House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) called him to "testify" at one of their circus "hearings."

I, too, was a fan of Pete Seeger and it was very difficult and very sad when I realized that he had abandoned the fight that helped to inspire me to join the Progressive Labor Movement in 1963 and the Progressive Labor Party in 1965. To understand the depth to which Seeger had sunk, consider the letter in the NY Times shortly after his death.

The letter-writer recounted that Seeger had been invited to perform at the local high school and the right-wing elements in the community attempted to prevent his appearance based on his earlier support for workers and unions as well as his opposition to the War in

Vietnam. As things turned out, the crude attempts to prevent Pete from showing up were soundly defeated. However, to the letter-writer's delight, the evening began with Seeger singing The Star Bangled Banner. Clearly, he wanted to show that he was a "loyal American, just like you and me!"

J Red

CHALLENGE Must Expose Exploitation of White Workers Too

I must make a criticism with regards to something the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) in general and CHALLENGE "did not say" in regards to our sister and brother workers who are white. In the CHALLENGE editorial of February 12, 2014, the editorial says, "These conditions fall mostly on black, Latino, and Asian workers and youth because of the racism intrinsic to capitalism. Without racism, and the divisions and super-exploitation that stem from it, the profit system could not sustain itself." While we all can agree 100 percent that nonwhite workers are super-exploited and super-oppressed, what about white workers?

From reading this and other CHALLENGE articles, you would hardly know white workers had any problems under capitalism. This is only going to confuse readers because white workers are also oppressed — political economy clearly illustrates that white workers are oppressed in terms of relative exploitation, while in terms of absolutes nonwhite workers are super-exploited by the bosses. While black and Latino workers' living standards have deteriorated, white workers standard of living has also fallen.

For example, now new autoworkers work for about \$14-an-hour across the board, down from about \$30-an hour. Racism has helped lower the wages of already exploited white workers. The Party, i.e CHALLENGE, needs to do a better job in pointing out the plight of white workers, as we want to win them to see fighting racism is crucial and to communist revolution along with our nonwhite sisters and brothers internationally.

As someone who has been living in Indianapolis for seven months, I have seen that whites too have many issues due to the horrors of capitalism. In downtown Indianapolis the majority of homeless workers are white. In many of the suburban schools where I work, white students are being sugarcoated the message "of serving in the military," but not being told exactly WHO benefits, (the U.S. bosses) and at what costs to these future soldiers. (Suicides, being maimed, homeless).

To quote comrade Karl Marx, "Labor in the white skin can never free itself as long as labor in the black skin is branded."

Indiana Red

CHALLENGE comment: Our comrade is absolutely correct in saying that white workers are exploited by capitalism. No worker is immune from capitalist exploitation. However, we have repeatedly said in article after article involving workers' struggles that white workers are hurt by the racist divisions in two ways: in cuts in wages, health insurance, mortgage, foreclosures, among other attacks. Secondly, we've always made the point that the racist super-exploitation of black, brown, and immigrant workers is used as a club to threaten white workers' conditions and drag them down. In fact, we point out that racism divides and weakens the whole working class.

Syria Editorial is Misleading

Comments on the back-page article on Syria (2/12/14 issue)

This impressively sweeping article was very informative about the history of shifting rivalries among various imperialist nations over Syria and the Middle East in general. The major imperialists (capitalist-ruled nations) were at first Britain and France in the early 20th century, and after World War II the US and the Soviet Union (later Russia, already becoming state capitalist by that time).

We would add, however, that the way of describing the various imperialist ruling classes is unintentionally inconsistent and misleading. Sometimes the ruling classes are described as "rulers" or "imperialists," but other times the name of the nation they rule is substituted. For example, instead of saying (next to last paragraph, column 1), "The French were harsh colonial masters in Syria" this would be better stated as "The French rulers were harsh..." After all, given that France was, and is, a capitalist society, the French working class was subject to that same harsh rule.

It is important for all readers to realize that such terms as "The French" instead of the "The French rulers" was nothing but a shorthand way of saying the same

thing. But unless it is stated as "rulers" or "imperialists," or even "capitalists" (a word that doesn't appear even once in the article), it risks reinforcing the idea — one that we are all taught from birth — that countries that call themselves "democracies" act as a unit. This idea implies that the responsibility for the actions of any nation's ruling capitalist class is placed squarely on the shoulders of the workers of that nation, along with those who rule our lives. We cannot remind readers too often that all nations are divided into classes with opposing interests, even if doing so makes an article longer or more repetitive.

We would also emphasize explicitly a couple of other points that are only implicit in the article as written. The first point concerns the way that alliances among various rival imperialist rulers of different nations are always temporary and keep shifting as the rulers find their circumstances changing. Another way of putting it is that there is no honor among thieves, and all alliances are merely ways of satisfying the immediate goals of each capitalist ruling class.

A second point to be emphasized is that the article, perhaps to fit it on one page, omits explanation about the internal class conflicts in Syria or any other country in the Middle East. What effect these internal class conflicts have had on the successes or failures of the rival imperialists in reaching their goals is left unexplored. An even more likely reason for this omission is that we have yet to research this area enough, so our knowledge of it is still poor. It is, however, a vital area to be explored in the future. We all have a lot to learn.

Two Comrades

Racist Cover-up Proves Cops Murdered Kyam Livingston

Recently-revealed documents prove NYPD cops are lying about the death of Kyam Livingston in custody last July. Kyam Livingston was a Brooklyn mother arrested for allegedly arguing and becoming violent with her grandmother. She died after being held for many hours in a cell at Central Booking, despite suffering from intense stomach pains and diarrhea. Her family has been campaigning against the police cover-up ever since, and holds monthly demonstrations.

According to her fellow inmates, when they brought Livingston's deteriorating condition to the cops' attention, one approached the cell and said, "Shut the f**k up, or we'll lose your papers." Livingston curled over in intense pain for over seven hours.

The NYPD claims Livingston died in an ambulance en-route to Brooklyn Hospital Center on July 21st. But when the Livingston family's lawyer wrote to the hospital asking to see the ambulance reports for her, they replied, "We are unable to comply with your request at this time for the following reason(s): We show no treatment at this facility for the dates of service you requested."

No records? No treatment? If the hospital has no records for Livingston whatsoever, it proves the NYPD lied about getting her medical attention. It suggests the cops didn't even bother placing any 911 calls, and that she virtually died at Central Booking.

But there's more. Media reports keep referring to Kyam as a "drunken woman." But officers first took her to Kings County Hospital after her arrest, and her chart there does not show any blood, urine or breathalyzer tests taken. The second page of that report also featured instructions to officers to "get prompt medical attention if any of the following [symptoms] occur." The list included "increasing upper abdominal pain." It is apparent the pigs in command ignored those instructions.

And if Kyam was truly drunk upon arrest, why is her toxicology report negative for all ethanol and basic drugs?

Overall, these reports show there is a massive cover-up going on. More importantly, it shows the racist, sexist mindset that permeates the Ideological State Apparatus surrounding our lives. The media smeared this woman as drunk, despite no facts to back that up. And even if she was drunk that day, that will never justify how Livingston died. Police officers treated her as if she wasn't even human, or even deserving of any medical care.

A black woman's life under capitalism will always be undervalued! It's about time we put a permanent stop to that, and all forms of exploitation people of color worldwide endure on a daily basis.

Red Journalist

Correction

Due to an editing error in our March 12 article on the imperialist clash over oil in Venezuela, CHALLENGE referred to Hugo Chavez, the late Venezuelan president, as Cesar Chavez, the co-founder of the National Farm Workers Association in California. Both Hugo and Cesar were fake-leftist sellouts who misled workers and served the capitalists well. Nonetheless, CHALLENGE regrets the error.

Figures Don't Lie but Liars Sure Can Figure

Unemployment rate: is it 6.7 percent or 23.2 percent? Obama's Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) continues to understate the true number of U.S. unemployed workers by a huge margin. And it uses "guesstimates" that distort the true figures even further.

The BLS U.3 statistic — the one getting all the headlines in the bosses' media — marked the February jobless rate at 6.7 percent. However, its U.6 statistic — generally ignored by the media — shows a rate nearly double at 12.6 percent because it includes what the BLS defines as the "marginally employed": the short-term unemployed (the "discouraged" workers — those out of work up to one year) and those working part-time because they can't find non-existent full-time jobs. But that is far from the true picture.

The BLS defines away millions of unemployed "discouraged workers" by no longer counting those out of work more than a year; one could define them as the "disappeared" jobless. There has been a heavy continuing rollover of the regular discouraged workers (less than a year) into the "disappeared" category, the worst since the Great Depression.

Shadowstats.com calculates the inclusion of these "disappeared" unemployed as raising the jobless rate to 23.2 percent, a far more accurate figure, completely buried by the bosses' media.

However, two other factors make even that rate too low:

- The BLS uses what it calls the Birth-Death Model (BDM). It adds in its "guesstimate" of the number of workers hired by newly-created businesses while assuming those firms going out of business as still having their previously reported payroll. This results in an overstatement of employment figures and distorts the percentages it has already used to assess the unemployment rates.
- The BLS conducts two probes to figure the jobless: (1) the household survey, which counts the number of workers with jobs, and (2) the

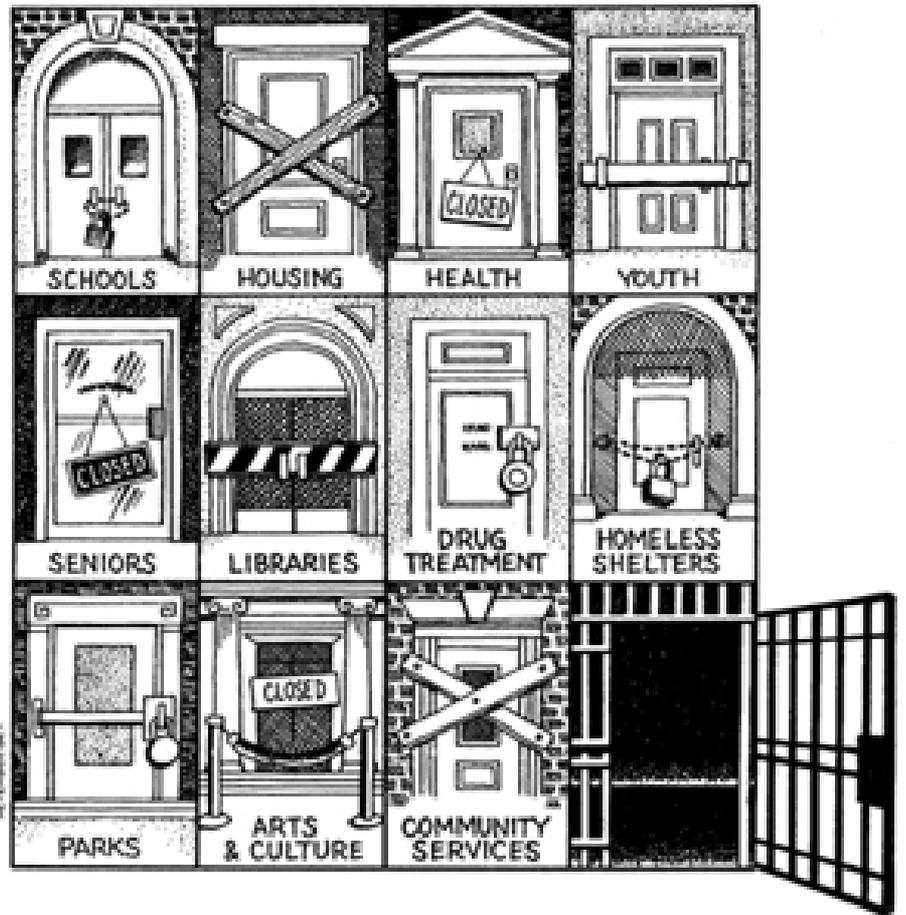
payroll survey, which counts the number of jobs, adding in those workers with more than one job, automatically raising the employment numbers by including multiple job-holders. It uses the latter survey to report jobless rates.

Thus, both these factors contribute to a distorted unemployment rate, which, if corrected, would raise the true rate even higher than 23.2 percent. On top of this, the jobless rate excludes workers on welfare who would seek jobs if they had childcare and young workers who cannot find jobs and therefore join the military, the so-called economic draft. Once in the armed forces, they're dropped from the unemployment rolls.

And because of racism in hiring, black and Latino workers, historically the last hired and first fired, suffer as much as double the jobless rates of white workers.

Unemployment is built into capitalism. The system has never existed without it, except when it drafts millions into its war machine, as it did in the U.S. with 14 million in World War II, thereby "ending" the Great Depression's mass unemployment. In fact, its economists denote five percent unemployment as "full employment."

The only way to end this mass suffering is to destroy the system that profits from it, which uses the army of the unemployed to threaten those with jobs, to lower the wages of the working class overall. The answer is a system run by and for our class, without bosses and profits, in which everyone contributes to the society as a whole — universal employment. That's communism. ☺



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

Police often rob immigrants

NYT, 3/3 — Coram, NY — The story unfolds roughly the same way each time. A Latino immigrant is driving a car with out-of-state license plates, and a police officer pulls him over and asks for his driver's license.

The driver, because he is an...[undocumented] immigrant, does not have a license, so the officer tells him to step out of the car and face the other way. The officer may ask to see the driver's wallet; then he starts to search the car. After a few minutes, he hands the wallet back to the driver, tells him that everything is fine and sends him on his way.

Soon afterward, the driver discovers that money is missing from his wallet....

Undocumented immigrants from Latin America have told immigrants' advocates and the Suffolk County district attorney that they were robbed by a police officer....

The men said that they had remained quiet until now because they feared reprisals by the police, or even deportation....

Hidden surveillance cameras caught [an] officer... taking a \$100 bill from an envelope of cash on a seat and slipping it into the cuff of his shirt....

[An] arrest has given other immigrants the confidence to step forward and make their own allegations, advocates said.

Higher education making inequality worse

NYT, 3/2 — More Americans than ever [now] enroll in college, but the graduates who emerge a few years later indicate that instead of reducing inequality, [the] system of higher education actually reinforces it. Three out of four adults who grow up in the top quarter of income spectrum earn baccalaureate degrees by age 24, but it's...less than one out of...10 in the poorest [bracket].

That's before...differentiating by type of college. Higher education is becoming a caste system, separate and unequal for students with different family incomes....

China one-child law repealed, but...

NYT, 2/26 — After three decades of a Chinese policy that limits most families to one child, many families say they will not take advantage of a major change allowing a second child, [citing] the rising cost of child-rearing.

"With two kids you have less money to give them the best..."

Anti-slavery, Vesey needed violence

NYT, 2/26 — On Feb. 14, a group...in Charleston, S.C., unveiled a life-size statue of Denmark Vesey, a black abolitionist who was executed in 1822 for leading a failed slave rebellion in the city.

For many people, Vesey was a freedom fighter and proto-civil rights leader. But the statue, the work of nearly two decades, brought out furious counterattacks; one recent critic called him a "terrorist," and a historian denounced him as "a man determined to create mayhem...."

There's no doubt that Vesey was a violent man, who planned to attack and kill Charleston whites. But those who condemn him as a terrorist merely demonstrate how little we, as a culture, understand about slavery, and what it forced the men and women it ensnared to do....

When the plot was foiled and Vesey and his co-conspirators captured, white Charleston erupted in anger. During his trial in June 1822, the justices charged him with "a diabolical plot" designed to instigate "blood, outrage, rapine and conflagration." Outside the castle-like structure, black women sang and prayed as city authorities sentenced Vesey and 34 of his followers to hang....

"Why not work within the system for liberation," [people]...asked, or even "stage a protest march?"

Although well intentioned, such questions reveal how far American society has to travel before...reach[ing] a sophisticated understanding of the past. There was no "system" for Vesey to work within; his state had flatly banned...the freeing of slaves in 1820. The only path to freedom was to sharpen a sword....

Pedophile hides self behind church

NYT, 2/7 (Reuters) — A Roman Catholic order whose late founder lived a double life as a pedophile and womanizer officially denounced him...and apologized to his "many victims."

The Legionaries of Christ, which former members said was run like a secretive cult, accused the founder, the Rev. Marcial Maciel Degollado, who died in 2008, of "reprehensible and objectively immoral behavior" as head of the order from its founding in 1941 until Pope Benedict XVI removed him in 2006.

Once a favorite of the Vatican because it drew many young Catholics to religious vocations and made sizable financial donations to the church, the order has been in Vatican receivership since 2010 and came close to being disbanded.

The apology...came a day after a United Nations committee singled it out in a scathing report accusing the church of ignoring child abuse by priests.

Making life harder for elderly

NY Daily News, 3/4 — Hundreds of elderly and disabled tenants who get federal rent aid have been warned they may have to move into smaller apartments or face rent hikes....

"We're distraught," said Rita Popper, 75, president of the Knickerbocker Plaza tenants association....

Some 42% of these tenants are disabled and one-third are senior citizens....

"Everywhere I go, people are walking around with these letters in tears...."

The downsizing campaign...is disastrous for mostly elderly women....

Gilda Leitner, 86....dreads a return to smaller space. "Trying to open up a sofa bed, I just can't imagine...."

Carmen Morales, 76, a widow, [said]...."I will have to get rid of everything — my pictures, my memories. After 40 years, where can I go?"

The Truth About Ukrainian Nationalism

The far right-wing is strong in Ukraine in part because it is backed by the Ukrainian government, which masquerades as “not far right.” Under Viktor Yushchenko, president of Ukraine from 2005 to 2010 and a leader of the so-called Orange Revolution, fascist lies began to be accepted as the official truth, taught in Ukrainian schools and promoted by Ukrainian academics.

The two basic lies involve the “Holodomor” of the 1930s and Ukraine’s “freedom fighters” during World War II.

Here are the facts

There never was any “Holodomor” or deliberate starvation of Ukrainians, or of anybody else in the So-



viet Union (USSR). It’s a lie disseminated by Ukrainian nationalists and fascists, with no historical evidence. The “Holodomor” myth was politically motivated from the start. It originated in the Ukrainian diaspora (Ukrainians living outside Ukraine), a population led by veterans of Ukrainian Nazi forces.

While the famine of 1932-33 took a terrible toll, it was only one of a long series of catastrophes. Russia and Ukraine had experienced famine every two to four years for a millennium — yes, for a thousand years, at least — and devastating famines every decade or so. There were serious famines in 1920-1923, 1924-5, 1927-8, and again in 1932-33.

The Soviet leadership, Joseph Stalin included, did not understand the extent of these famines for some time. No one did. When they finally realized it, they sent millions of tons of food and grain aid to Ukraine and to other regions of the USSR. They also sent tractors and “political departments” to organize agriculture. The result was a good harvest in 1933, which ended the famine.

About 10 percent of the population of Ukraine died from the 1932-33 famine, roughly the same percentage as in 1920-23. The 90 percent who survived brought home the harvest and stopped the famine — with significant Soviet aid.

Thanks to the collectivization of agriculture, which took place mainly in 1930-31, farming was re-organized on a large-scale and increasingly mechanized basis. Collectivization was the greatest humanitarian triumph of the 20th century. It put an end to the famines that had devastated Ukraine and Russia for a thousand years or more! (There was one more famine in the Soviet Union, in 1946-47. It was caused by the devastation of World War II plus the worst drought in

centuries, and affected all of Europe and much of Asia. Even England had to institute bread rationing.)

The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) were trained by Germany’s Nazis. They entered the USSR with Adolph Hitler’s troops and participated in mass murders of Jews, Poles, and communists. As many as 100,000 Polish civilians were slaughtered in 1943-44.

Stepan Bandera led the more hard-core fascist wing of the OUN and eventually consolidated control over Ukraine’s nationalist forces. He was deemed unreliable by the Nazis, who imprisoned him for a time. Then they let him out so he could fight the Red Army again. In 1941, the Banderist leadership declared an “independent” Ukraine state, which was in reality a satellite of Nazi Germany.

The Ukrainian Insurgent Army was formed in part from the 14th Waffen-SS Division (storm troopers), an all-Western Ukrainian Nazi SS division.

Lies and Damned Lies

In short, both of Ukraine’s foundational historical myths — or, more accurately, lies — have a Nazi origin. And both are taught as “truth” in today’s Ukraine by the Ukrainian government and its institutions!

Russian-speaking workers in eastern Ukraine are affected by these lies as well. But they also question them, and many reject them. As they should do.

Now the open fascists are becoming prominent in the new Ukrainian government in Kiev. This isn’t surprising, since fascist lies have been officially propagated and taught in Ukraine for the past 15 to 20 years.✪

The Real Causes of the Ukraine Famine

When the massive famine of 1932-33 took hold, the Soviet leadership had no choice but to take grain from peasants in the countryside and redistribute it in a more egalitarian manner, as well as to feed the cities and the army. Excesses or cruelty occurring during collectivization resulted from errors in carrying out the plan; unevenness in the abilities of the tens of thousands of activists; the response of the peasants themselves; and attacks from kulak landowners. All were faced with a terrible situation under drastic conditions. Many people would inevitably die of starvation.

Two bogus explanations of this famine — known to Ukrainian nationalists as the “Holodomor” — have gained wide acceptance. The nationalists claim that Joseph Stalin and the Bolshevik leadership withheld grain from Ukrainian peasants in order to export it, or that they deliberately starved Ukrainian peasants to suppress the peasants’ strivings for independence.

Another distorted interpretation — the official position of the state capitalist Russian government — states that the famine was caused by the collectivization of agriculture, which led to disruptions, mismanagement, and peasant rebellion. This is the official position of the Russian government. There is no evidence to support any of these contentions.

A Mythical Genocide

Cynically modeled on the Jewish Holocaust, the “Holodomor” originated in the Ukrainian diaspora, particularly among those who had fought alongside the Nazis and fled with German troops to the West as the Red Army advanced. In true Nazi fashion, early proponents of this “deliberate famine” myth blamed the Jews for it.

When Ukraine became independent in 1991, these forces flooded into the country and took a dominant role in historical and ideological discussions. They celebrated the Ukrainian “freedom fighters,” who were guilty of mass murders of Jews, Poles, and Soviet citizens.

The “Holodomor” story was politically motivated from the start. Officially adopted by the Ukrainian state, it is now taught compulsorily in schools and promoted by Ukrainian academics. In fact, the main causes of the 1932-33 famine were environmental: drought in some areas; excessive rainfall in others; and plagues of crop diseases, insects, and mice that destroyed the crops. Weeds were widespread, caused by a shortage of labor due to population flight to towns and cities and the weakness of the remaining peasants, many of whom were starving. Labor shortages left much of the land

unplanted or unharvested.

Many horses, the main animals used for plowing, had been lost or severely weakened by an earlier famine in 1931-32. Although the Soviet state imported and manufactured some tractors, they were insufficient to overcome the loss of horses. And much of the land had been planted with grain for year after year, resulting in soil exhaustion that reduced fertility.

As a result of all of these factors, the harvest was so small that the food available in the Soviet Union could not meet the needs of its population.

The Soviet leadership failed to fully understand the environmental causes, nor did local Party leaders. They tended to overemphasize human factors like mismanagement, faulty leadership, and peasant resistance and kulak sabotage. Nevertheless, the Soviet government greatly reduced its grain exports to support the population in Ukraine and elsewhere. It also began to ship aid in food and seed to Ukraine and other hard-hit areas.

Many peasants who hated the kolkhozy (collectivized farms) nevertheless worked hard on them. Many other peasants worked willingly throughout this period and sided with the socialist system. On the whole, peasants accepted collectivization.✪

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