

CHALLENGE



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CUNY Workers and Students TURN UP AGAINST CAPITALISM

THE BRONX, November 11 — Worker-student alliance leads the way across City University of New York campuses. Drawing inspiration from the striking college students in South Africa who shut down universities and roads in response to a tuition fee, hundreds of students here were involved in teach-ins or rallies to challenge capitalist ideas.

Regular classes were suspended at some campuses, as professors brought their classes to teach-ins. These included panels about the fight against racism, the role of contingent labor, the exploitation of part-time faculty, tuition hikes, the history of CUNY and historic struggles for open admissions and free tuition.

At one teach-in, over 60 students saw a presentation of the video "Professors in Poverty" and discussed why so many are living below the poverty level (see page 5). We discussed the need to fight back and follow the lead the students in South Africa. In the biggest student protest to hit the country since the end of Apartheid in 1994, students fought the cops' stun grenades and water cannons with working-class violence. The mainly Black students say they cannot afford fee increases and have even rejected a government bribery to restrict increases to 6 percent.

Meanwhile, CUNY bosses have

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Onlooking students protect communist speech against racist campus cops.

THE RALLY THAT FIRED UP THE STRUGGLE AT MEDGAR EVERS COLLEGE

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OUR FIGHT

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

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

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

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

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

★Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of "race." Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit Black, Latin, 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

2016 Election

U.S. Bosses Seek Unity for Next War

The capitalist class that runs the United States appears to be tentatively settling on its two presidential candidates: Hillary Clinton and Marco Rubio. The 2016 U.S. presidential election is more than the media-driven circus it appears to be—for the bosses, the stakes are high. While U.S. imperialism still dominates the world, its relative power is in decline. It faces growing challenges from the capitalist bosses running China and Russia and upstart regional imperialists like ISIS.

Elections in any capitalist country, from the U.S. to Malaysia, are used to discipline the bosses' ranks, to centralize power in times of crisis, and to deceive the international working class into backing the rulers' agenda. Above all, the mission is to protect and expand the capitalists' profits.

Rubio and Clinton: Birds of a Feather

For the dominant wing of U.S. financiers and industrialists, including JPMorgan Chase and ExxonMobil, the 2016 election is a means to guarantee the future use of military force to maintain control of the energy-rich Middle East—and gear up for a broader conflict with Russia or China or both. For the moment, at least, the bosses are leaning toward Rubio as the Republican nominee: "Marco Rubio will take the mantle of 'establishment' or 'business' candidate from Jeb Bush" (Fortune, 11/1/15). On the Democratic side, the warmakers' current choice is Hillary Clinton. A reliable servant of U.S. imperialism as Barack Obama's former secretary of state, Clinton engineered the mass slaughter of workers in Libya in 2011. The liberal Democrat "insurgent," Bernie Sanders, is in fact a pro-imperialist tool of the same establishment that now favors Rubio (see CHALLENGE, 8/12/15). His job is to lure disillusioned young people into the charade of electoral "democracy" before he steps aside for Clinton or some other capitalist shill acceptable to the bosses.

While no one can predict the outcome in 2016 with any certainty, one thing is certain: The next U.S. president will serve the needs of U.S. imperialism, just like Obama, George W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and those who came before them.

Fascism: Capitalism in Crisis

The main U.S. bosses are also using these elections to reassert their dominance over more domestically oriented capitalists like billionaire industrialists Charles and David Koch. In contrast to the ExxonMobil wing of the ruling class, with its trillions invested in the oil wealth of the Middle East, the Koch brothers' assets are concentrated in refineries in Minnesota and Texas. Where the ExxonMobil faction has defended the crude it pumps in Iraq at the cost of three million workers' lives and counting, the Kochs and their Tea Party allies oppose the corporate tax hikes a major ground invasion would require. The Koch network plans to raise close to \$900 million in 2016 to elect Republicans who will "push for deregulation, tax cuts and smaller government" (New York Times, 1/26/15). Koch backer Chris Rufer, a California tomato processor, said the network's "central goal...is to stop the centralization of power" (The Hill, 10/21/15).

"Centralization of power" is code for fascism, a form

of capitalism in crisis, when the bosses can no longer rule in the usual way. The finance capital wing is putting the Koch faction on notice that it needs to fall in line, contribute its share of cash to finance the coming imperialist wars, and help coerce the working class to fight them. For the international working class, fascism means more open racist and sexist terror by the state apparatus—the cops, courts, and prisons. U.S. workers will be forced into a military draft amid mass racist unemployment. Workers outside the U.S. will face a sagging imperialist power that will be only more desperate — and brutal — to stay on top.

U.S. Bosses Prepping for Fascism

Rubio's break with the Koch faction made the dominant U.S. imperialists happy. On October 30, the big bosses' New York Times celebrated with a front-page article: "Paul Singer, Influential Billionaire, Throws Support to Marco Rubio for President." Singer's pro-Rubio manifesto read in part:

There are enormous power vacuums [worldwide] in one hot spot after another...Senator Rubio grasps this reality in his bones...His instincts are excellent, and he knows the terrain and the risks. He will stand with our allies and stand up to our adversaries.

Just who is Paul Singer? He heads Elliott Management, a Wall Street "vulture" hedge fund known for buying up defaulted loans in countries like Peru and the Republic of Congo, "rejecting any attempts at restructuring, then firing up lawsuits to claim full repayments plus more" (Wall Street Journal, 6/25/14). A significant contributor to both the Koch network and the past Republican presidential campaigns of George W. Bush and Mitt Romney, Elliott is ideally placed to help unite the ruling class behind a willing servant like Rubio.

As Russia deepens its military involvement in Syria and China colonizes the South China Sea, the U.S. bosses' problems are deepening by the day. Michael O'Hanlon of the Brookings Institution, an influential pro-imperialist think tank, writes that Syria is "an example of how we might want to send or have to send 10, 20, 30,000 forces to one mission or another...there are security stakes around the world that still could necessitate more than just drones and Special Forces" (NPR, 11/1/15).

The bosses know they cannot win over workers to fight in the next profit-driven bloodbath without getting their own house in order and bringing the Koch brothers to heel.

No War But Class War!

The revolutionary communist Progressive Labor Party is against all imperialist war. We stand for revolutionary class war! PLP is organizing in more than two dozen countries to build a mass international Party to fight for communism. We reject the bosses' election circus. We say: Don't vote, organize! Organize anti-racist struggles on the job, on the campuses and in the bosses' militaries. Only PLP represents the working class. Only a mass international PLP can smash imperialism for all time. Join us! ☛

Worker-Student Alliance Grows

NEW YORK CITY, October 27—Forty students, joined by church and community groups and members of Progressive Labor Party, rallied to protest the exploitation of campus workers at Columbia University, a wealthy ruling-class school with a long history of attacking the working class.

Student Worker Solidarity has been organizing for three years at Columbia, which pays students about \$9 an hour while hoarding a \$9.6 billion endowment and lavishing its president, Lee Bollinger, with a salary of more than \$3 million a year (businessinsider.com, 12/16/14). At today's demonstration, students told of how they earn so little that they cannot afford both food and books. One student noted that vital positions—like sexual violence hotline counselors—are not paid at all.

Only a system based on wage slavery would force workers to pay for the bare necessities of life. Under communism, work will be organized according to the needs of society and the commitment of the individual. There will be no money or wages. Incentives will be political, not material. We will work to serve our class.

Today's demonstration culminated in a march into the office of the provost, the university's number two official, with the group chanting loudly all the way. After the provost failed to respond to their demonstration on October 13, as one student put it, the protesters had "no choice but to escalate" the class war.

Under the profit system, all businesses—from fast-food chains to hospitals to colleges—attack workers on a daily basis. As an elite educational institution, Columbia helps develop next-generation leaders for U.S. capitalism as the rulers move toward broader war and rising fascism. That's an important job, and Columbia will crush anyone who gets in its way. In recent years, Columbia students have sided with community residents against police sweeps of adjacent, mostly Black and Latin public housing projects. They have exposed the university's racist designs to displace long-time neighborhood residents in campus expansion schemes.



Reform Struggles, Revolutionary Ideas

Fifty years ago, when PLP was founded, it undertook a strategy to inject revolutionary content into student anti-war and anti-racist movements. A worker-student alliance was born. PLP's early growth among students was rooted in the conviction that capitalism was the real enemy, and that only a revolutionary party could lead workers to a communist world that will liberate us all.

During the Vietnam War, anti-imperialist campaigns at Columbia and other campuses, along with PLP summer projects, inspired students to take jobs in factories and transit. This Party-led movement produced com-

mitted revolutionaries who dedicated their entire lives to overthrowing the whole rotten capitalist system.

Students in Student Worker Solidarity are becoming accomplished organizers as they recognize the need to unite with workers. The next step is to deepen our understanding of the limits of capitalism, a system that can never provide a decent standard of living for most workers. In fact, as international competition for markets and resources intensify, and inter-imperialist conflicts inevitably follow, cuts in wages and services will only get worse. Ultimately, capitalism has got to go! And that means joining PLP to create a world of work without the exploitation of wage slavery.✊

Worcester: PL'ers Build Fightback



WORCESTER, MA, October 10 — The class struggle between antiracists and the capitalist state is intensifying here. In response to solidarity demonstrations with the Ferguson and Baltimore rebellions, the local government is distracting workers with token concessions and empty dialogues. Progressive Labor Party is calling out the bosses on their racism. We're promoting the only real winning strategy: multiracial unity.

Carrot and Stick

Since the rebellions in August 2014, the Progressive Labor Party and groups like the Communities United Collective have led the antiracist fight here. We supported college students in leading a citywide walkout and blocking traffic. We also participated in militant

meetings at Worcester City Hall.

The city government was shaken by this resurgence of student militancy and feared the outbreak of rebellion. In an effort to undermine the coalition, the city created a new position of chief diversity officer. The bosses' politicians hoped to mute our voices by having our some of our groups' leaders compete for it. But nobody was fooled; the antiracists understood that the position will have no real power.

To further intimidate PLP and others fighting racism and economic inequality, the city brought criminal charges against several protesters and initiated a financial audit of a neighborhood center that supports the protests.

DOJ Distractions

When the city recently invited the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) to hold so-called "Dialogues on Race," PLP recognized this sham to distract people from the crimes of capitalism: police terror, racist unemployment, and the school-to-prison pipeline. Even worse, you could count the number of Black and Latin workers present on one hand.

We used these DOJ meetings to explain how the profit system requires racist police terror to divide workers and impose its economic misery. We also called out the Worcester police as brutal and racist, noting that one local cop is being tried for beating a shackled prisoner while using racist hate speech. At the last DOJ hearing, PL'ers shouted from the floor while holding signs in front of the stage that accusing the city organizers of being part of the disease that is racism in the City.

These dialogues are an opportunity for PLP to meet antiracist workers and raise antiracist, antisexist issues. But we also know they have limitations. DOJ reformers can never end racism or police terror because their job is to maintain capitalism.

As a follow-up, Progressive Labor Party and the Massachusetts Human Rights Committee held a forum titled "Reform and Revolution."

Divided We Fail

PLP also challenged ideas that white workers should organize separately from Black workers, a doomed strategy. The super-exploitation of Black, Latin, Asian and immigrant workers opens the door for attacks on white workers. Our struggles are interrelated; we must fight as one united working class. These struggles and forums have moved several people closer to PLP.

We need the unity of workers, students, and soldiers willing to smash this racist system. Along the way, we will continue to struggle with our friends and comrades who have nationalist ideas. We will continue the struggle for multiracial unity and against reformist ideas being peddled by the ruling class. Only communism will end racism. Join us!✊

BUILD STUDENT-

South Africa Student Rebellion Inspires CUNY

Continued from front page

planned to continue to implement tuition hikes at \$300 per year, before fees. This is in addition to the five-year hike that's already in effect! Some student discussed the struggle to survive, balance work, and travel costs along with tuition and book expenses. Like South Africa, these hikes are racist and hit Black students the hardest. CUNY Students are planning a protest against tuition hikes November 12 (see next issue).

At one campus, students and faculty set up tables in the cafeteria to make signs about the CUNY crisis. Many signed up to be part of a fight-back committee.

At one community college, an all day teach-in was organized that drew over 200 students. Panels included a discussion of the militant struggles of students in 1989, where protests shut down campuses, forcing then Governor Mario Cuomo to withdraw a \$200 tuition hike. Another lesson we can learn from this is that no reform is safe under capitalism.

PLP in the House

We have an important lesson to learn from students in South Africa,

whose parents had fought Apartheid and were dished Black capitalism and reconciliation. Not only do we need to fight back, we need to arm ourselves with communist politics as our weapons.

Progressive Labor Party is experiencing some success in bringing communist ideas to our campuses. Our analysis about what the ruling class is up to in its drive towards war and fascism resonates with many students and faculty.

From the Bronx to Brooklyn, PLP is raising the red flag of communism (see Medgar Evers article). In the Bronx, we are continuing last year's study group with students and faculty. We discuss CHALLENGE, campus issues, and how to fight.

One professor uses CHALLENGE regularly in his class and is meeting more students who want to get involved. Last year, Bronx students were involved

in a number of struggles including supporting workers in the neighborhood who were being underpaid, helping to organize a mass teach-in about Ferguson, and leading a walk-out against police terror. The attacks on CUNY students are part of the

ongoing systematic exploitation of the working class. As the U.S. gears up for more war, the working class must gear up to fight back and fight to win!✪



On Veteran's Day, students and teachers brought a rally against imperialism inside the college, rousing antiracists and upsetting cops (see next issue).

MEC: Anti-Racist Rebellions Spark Communist Organizing

Over the last few years, the Progressive Labor Party college club in Brooklyn has organized at Medgar Evers College (MEC). We've known people there for some time, but the rebellions in Ferguson and Baltimore sparked more focused communist organizing. We got more involved with rallies, forums and marches. With regular internal struggle, we're distributing CHALLENGE in class, at public forums and rallies, and at regular public sales—from 100 to 250 copies every issue.

Now we need to recruit more people to the Party and to fight back against racism, sexism and imperialism. Even as work in reform struggles, we never forget that revolution is primary—and that it will take a lifetime commitment to fighting for a communist world.

Baltimore Rebels Lead to Small Breakthrough

One of our biweekly dinner discussions fell on April 21, the night of the Baltimore rebellion, when Black workers again led the way and we tried to follow their heroic example. As we watched CNN berate the protesters, we felt compelled to take action. That study group turned into an organizing meeting. Five PLers and friends planned a march from the cafeteria and a rally in front of the school. When the campus cops came and tried to shut us down, we kept speaking. Students surrounded our bullhorn, and some formed a human chain to defend us. Finally we left, victorious. We made several contacts who are now solid members of our study group. Thanks to those militant, anti-racist Black rebels in Baltimore, we have made a small breakthrough at MEC!

That action led to larger and livelier study groups every two weeks, like clockwork. Consistent work and perseverance pays off—dialectically speaking, quantity turns into quality. Students came from MEC and

other schools; some became regulars and brought their friends. The discussions are often heated, with topics ranging from Black workers as the key to revolution to the false notion of white privilege to the growing likelihood of inter-imperialist world war.

Don't Vote; Revolt to Smash Imperialism

On November 9, the study group discussed the idea of "Don't vote, revolt." This study group was one of our largest yet, with 13 participants in all, including several new people. Wow! Dinner was at six, the formal discussion started at seven, and the last person left at 10:30. The voting issue was not resolved, but everyone wanted to come to the next study group. The struggle continues.

We scheduled a rally for election day where we used CHALLENGE's front-page headline: "Don't Vote, Smash Imperialism." We distributed 200 papers, including one to a person who came out because his friend texted him that the communists were outside with their paper.

Join PLP! Fight For Communism!

Many of us need to get more involved in campus life outside the classroom. Join a club and fight for communism. Organize a poetry slam and fight for communism. Join a dance group and fight for communism. Write for the student newspaper and fight for communism. No matter what you do, go where the people are—and bring communism!

We have a fantastic group of young people in and around our club, most from Medgar Evers but from other colleges as well. We need more of them in Progressive Labor Party. These students are committed to fighting for a better world. They are knowledgeable, bright, bold, multiracial women and men. The fight for a better world is a lifetime commitment, and that means join-

Letter from Student 'The Fight for Change Starts with Communists'

My day following the Baltimore rebellion with my fellow comrades in PLP was absolutely bold and insightful. I got the great opportunity to be a part of two protests back to back. The first one in Medgar Evers was challenging because my comrades and I had to make the college aware that the murder of Freddie Gray could be any of us.

Even though there were many people who paid us no mind, others came and joined us. They chanted in our fight against racism, capitalism, imperialism, and most importantly, killer cops. We didn't just get some of our youth; we also got our elders to see that the fight for change starts with communists.

The second march I was a part of was in Union Square. My comrades and I got the chance to have our voices heard by a large crowd with our large bullhorn. I got the chance to have conversations with people and give out Challenge. The highlight of my day was marching, chanting and feeling unstoppable. That day was the first real time I believed change would really happen.

ing the Party. A bigger Party would enable more struggles, more involvement in campus issues and events. It would bring us a step closer to revolution and a communist world. It's a long hard fight, but we have a whole world to win!✪

-WORKER ALLIANCE



NEW YORK CITY, November 4 — “No Contract, No Peace!” Today, 800 workers and students rallied outside of City University of New York headquarters demanding a raise. This struggle is intensifying the contradiction between union leadership and the need for communist leadership.

The cops made a mass arrest of 54 workers who staged a planned act of civil disobedience by blocking the entrance of the building (see letter). They are part of the Professional Staff Congress union (PSC). We salute our sisters and brothers and respect their willingness to put themselves on the line.

This rally had many strengths: the spirited leadership by workers, the multiracial and intergenerational unity. The chants included calling for a strike and calling to shut down the city. College students played a leadership role in the march and called for a massive student march next week. One worker in PSC said, “We will need some uncivil disobedience.” While civil disobedience can bring public attention to the CUNY crisis, they can also build the illusion that workers can negotiate within this capitalist system.

Don't Negotiate, Fight Back!

What kind of leadership do professors and students need at CUNY? The limits of leadership under union president Barbara Bowen are high and lead us down a path of negotiation with oppressors. What we need is communist leadership leading us on the path to revolution. Let's go on a strike against racist attacks on our class with other city workers and students to shut this city down.

It is no surprise that 25,000 have been working without a contract for six years at a university system that teaches 500,000 students. Clearly, putting the emphasis on contract negotiations has not borne fruit. The union itself described the latest contract offer as a “severe disappointment.”

We can push the limits of this struggle. PSC failed to unite with its natural allies: campus workers. The largest labor union in the city, DC 37, also has been working without a contract. These are some of same workers

LETTER FROM JAIL

Along with 53 of my sisters and brothers, I spent a recent evening in jail at One Police Plaza in NYC. We had sat down in front of City University New York (CUNY) headquarters, blocked the entrances, and chanted, “Tax the Rich, Not the Poor, Stop the War on CUNY!” and “No Contract, No Peace!” We were so loud we could barely hear the police commander announce we would be arrested if we didn't leave. As we were taken to police vans in handcuffs, a crowd of six hundred professors, staff members and students chanted and cheered.

We spent hours in the police van and in a holding cell, where we exchanged stories about struggles on our campuses to resist both the concessionary contract offer from CUNY and Governor Cuomo, as well as another round of tuition increases for our students. We discussed teach-ins and rallies and an upcoming strike authorization vote. We talked about how we're fighting a Governor who's allied with some of the most powerful, wealthy businessmen in the country — Wall Street and real estate magnates. We can only withstand their attacks with the unity of faculty, students and tens of thousands of other campus workers.

Taxing the rich isn't enough. If we want to have a university, a society and a world that serves the needs of working people, it's the capitalists and their political servants who need to be put in prison.

who keep the college campuses running. Professors and staff at PSC should unite with workers from DC 37, who are mainly Black and Latin manual laborers.

We also need to politicize our campuses about the nature of capitalist education and racism. The fight for high wages cannot stay an economic one. It must be the one and the same fight against tuition hikes and police on campuses. A lesson we are learning here is not to underestimate what the working class can do when they are mobilized.

It's our job to continue to build inside the PSC and transform the fight for our daily needs into the fight for communist revolution. PLP members hope to win many union members to become communist organizers. Moving forward, we must discuss the historical role of unions in global capitalism.✊

Whose CUNY? Not Our CUNY

CUNY, like all schools, is a place where capitalist ideas are driven into the minds of the working class. From kindergarten, we are taught that competition is better than cooperation; some people are smart and others dumb; the rich and poor deserve to their place in life; racism and sexism have always and will always exist; and the individual is the most important thing. We have all been told that capitalism, even if it's not the best society we can think of, is the best society we can hope for. And just in case we don't quite believe it, they add a large serving of anti-communism and lies about the Soviet Union.

So, it's no surprise that all of the racism, sexism, exploitation and union-busting are on full display at CUNY. The faculty and staff are engaged in the fight for a better contract against the Board of Trustees and Governor Cuomo (see sidebar). More and more classes are taught by adjuncts, which have zero job security, little benefits, and earn literally starvation wages. One out of every four adjuncts lives at or below the poverty level, and are in a government assistance program like Medicaid or food stamps (The Atlantic, 8/15/15).

CUNY is a racist institution where Black, Latin, and South Asian students are shuffled into community colleges and Reserve Officer Training Core (ROTC). The senior colleges are increasingly white. This segregation divides students and leads us to blame each other for the failures of capitalism. The CUNY bosses just approved continuation of annual tuition hike! Yet, the rulers want to rally support for war from the same students they alienate. After decades of sharp struggle to kick them out, ROTC programs have returned to two campuses. David Petraeus, former head of the CIA and military commander in Afghanistan and Iraq has been teaching at CUNY, despite protests against his appointment. There is a lot to be angry about.

But, schools are also a place where thousands of working class students come to study in the hopes of improving their lives and learning about the world. It has a tradition of fight-back, including the huge student movement for equal access to education for Black and Latin students. CUNY has attracted many progressive workers who want to serve and fight with the working class.

Ultimately, CUNY is not “ours” to take back. The University does not belong to the working class. Like all institutions under capitalism, it belongs to the capitalist rulers. But it is a battleground for communist ideas. Let's fight the good fight!

Who does Andrew Cuomo Serve?

Like all politicians, New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo serves the ruling class, never working people and students. The following facts show how Cuomo attacks the working class and takes his marching orders from the bankers and bosses:

- Cuomo earned \$2.5 million in a three-year period after he left the Clinton Administration working for Andrew Farkas, a wealthy real estate developer.
- Farkas and his associates contributed over \$800,000 to Cuomo's election campaign, with billionaire David Koch also contributing a large sum.
- As soon as Cuomo took office, he promised to cut taxes on the wealthy and reduce benefits to public employees, promises he made good on.
- Cuomo coerced two state unions (CSEA and PEF) to accept contracts that included a three-year salary freeze, nine unpaid furlough days, and higher payments for health care premiums.
- In March 2012, Cuomo pushed through a state pension plan that provides lower pension benefits and raises the minimum retirement age.
- In his first budget, Cuomo reduced state spending on education by \$1.3 billion, forcing statewide layoffs of teachers and larger class sizes. What a racist attack on these already under-financed schools!
- Cuomo allowed the “Millionaire's Tax,” a tax on households earning over \$500,000 a year, to expire. This tax had provided hundreds of millions of in-state revenue.
- Cuomo has been the most powerful New York cheerleader for hyper-segregated charter schools. It's no coincidence that he collected \$800,000 in campaign contributions from bankers and businesses that back these schools.

OBITUARIES

Judy Catchpole: Fierce Fighter, Fierce Lover of the Working Class

On October 9th, Comrade Judy Catchpole died at age 78. A proud daughter of the working class, she fought through every stage of her life. Judy joined PL forty-five years ago while working for the NYC welfare department. For years she sold Challenge, took part in street rallies, and built our Party. Though she could be rough around the edges, no one could doubt her commitment to the fight for communist revolution!

Although short in stature, Judy's heart and fearlessness made her a force to behold. Several comrades tell of demonstrations where she shielded them with her body from police and/or union goons. During a demonstration against the opening of a slave labor workfare office, Judy managed to get past the welfare patrolmen and into the building. No other demonstrator got that far. She certainly didn't just talk the talk; she walked the walk.

Judy was fearless not only in the streets, but also on the job. She fought back against speed up and low pay, fought to build a worker-client alliance to unite welfare workers and welfare recipients, and fought for an egalitarian future through communist revolution. She was fired for a time while working at a Brooklyn child welfare office, but fought alongside other PL welfare workers to reverse her firing. We were able to collect money to support Judy for the three months she was off the job by visiting welfare offices around the city. We demonstrated at the hearings held about her case and she won her job back.

Judy came from a large white working-class family from upstate New York and spoke about them often. She built a multi-racial family. She loved her daughter, grandchildren and great granddaughter. She worried about the ways that racism would affect their lives and always wanted them to take part in the fight that in many ways defined her life. In the last years of her life, she was disabled by serious illness but always kept up with world events and wanted to discuss what the Party was doing about problems faced by workers around the world. She would have been happy that her family was represented three days after her funeral at the rally for Justice for Kyam Livingston. ☺

Gene Zbikowski A True Working-Class Journalist

Members and friends of our Party have been hurt to learn of the death of comrade Gene Zbikowski on October 31 from a sudden heart attack at age 62. Our heartfelt condolences go out to his wife Noémie and their three children. Gene had been our correspondent in France for well over a decade, writing articles about workers' struggles there and throughout Europe. He also translated editorials and articles into French for Le Defi (the French edition of CHALLENGE) which were very useful for the Party in Haiti. He also sent us a stream of translations of exposés appearing in the French press.

Gene joined the Party in Minnesota in the early 1970s. He later settled in Nantes, married and raised a family while teaching at a community college from which he recently retired. At one point he discovered CHALLENGE on the Internet and contacted our then-editor, comrade Luis Castro, who suggested he write for the paper. Gene said he had always wanted to be a journalist and told us, "Now I have my chance!"

Over the years Gene covered the many strikes and rebellions raging in France, sent us pictures of the workers' fight-backs and their May Day marches, exposed the phony French "communist" party, the pro-capitalist Socialists, and the ruling class's spread of anti-Muslim and anti-Black racism. He especially stripped bare the sellout nature of the pro-boss trade union misleaders. He would often intersperse the writings of Marx and Lenin where applicable in his reports on the class struggles in France.

During one nation-wide strike, he invited a Party comrade to Nantes where he was warmly greeted as he brought solidarity greetings to sanitation workers on the picket lines there.

Comrade Gene's contribution to the international communist movement being built by PLP will be deeply missed. His legacy will be everlasting in all his reports of workers' class struggles that will become stepping stones in the march towards communist revolution. ☺

Families Fight Racist Homelessness

SILICONE VALLEY, October 26—In a large Bay Area city, more than 30 women, men, and children protested high rents, racist evictions, and homelessness—all products of the profit-mad capitalist system. Evictions are increasing in this high-tech region and disproportionately affect Black and Latin workers; the city's Black population has dropped by half in the past twenty-five years, with 35,000 people displaced. Although Black workers now represent only 6 percent of the city's population, they make up 25 percent of the homeless.

Fightbacks are growing. At one busy intersection, there are spirited weekly demonstrations by Residents for Renters Protection. People chant, sing, and bring posters in English and Spanish to publicize the fight, with members and friends of Progressive Labor Party protesting in solidarity. There were upraised fists, honking horns, and high fives from pedestrians and people in passing cars and buses. Most of the protesters work in low-wage food, retail and service industries. They are systematically being evicted out of this city.

Residents for Renters Protection plans to present the City Council with demands for rent stabilization on older units and against arbitrary evictions. One member lamented, "We only have one supporter on the City Council—all the others don't want to confront the real estate cabal." This led to discussions about bringing more workers from local unions and other organizations to the rallies in an effort to pressure the capitalist politicians to institute

rent controls.

Housing for Shelter, Not for Profit

PLers brought the CHALLENGE article, "Homelessness Part and Parcel of Capitalism." It explained that the root cause of homelessness is the capitalist crisis of overproduction. As real estate developers build new condominiums and evict tenants to attract higher-paid tech workers, there is an epidemic of homelessness. Workers have no friends on the City Council or any branch of government. We can rely on only our class.

PLP captured this contradiction with a poster: "Housing for Shelter, Not for Profit." Spanish-speaking protesters helped us translate: "Vivienda Para Vivir, Sin Fines de Lucro." This idea spurred deeper conversations at the protest and at dinner afterward about the possibility of a communist society that would serve workers' basic needs: decent housing, nutritious food, and meaningful work.

When we abolish money, wages and profit, the motivation of shared responsibility to provide for the health and nutrition of neighborhood families could grow. Perhaps yesterday's small restaurants could be tomorrow's neighborhood cafeteria for families returning from school and work, a place where neighbors could enjoy a delicious, healthy meal. Nobody will be homeless or have to live in small, decrepit apartments. Under communism, we can truly build a world where everyone's needs are met. ☺

Antiracists Occupy Baltimore City Hall

Continued from page 8

an expansion of gentrification, instead of safe and healthy low-income housing.

- Twenty million dollars invested in grassroots organizations that work with educating youth, like Leaders of a Beautiful Struggle, Baltimore Bloc, City Bloc, and the Baltimore Algebra Project.

This fight is important in flexing our working-class muscles, and exposing the limits of a capitalist government. However, no amount of guidelines, firings or funding can weaken or halt this system built on exploitation.

The Cops, Politicians And The State

Governments under capitalism are not neutral, but liberal politicians mislead the working class with the illusion that the government can be pushed to serve our class. In reality, the entire capitalist state always serves the capitalists. "The state" refers not to Maryland, or Oaxaca, or Gujarat, but to the main elements of power: the government, police, military and jails.

Until it is smashed with communist revolution, and until we then build a new state that will serve the working class — the capitalist state will uphold whatever businesses it wants, including police terror, and wars to secure blood-soaked profits for U.S. bosses worldwide.

This doesn't mean fighting for the three demands isn't a priority in this struggle! Communists in the Progressive Labor Party stand shoulder to shoulder with these fellow antiracists in fighting back. Note the bosses take back whatever demands or reforms the working class wins, when it's convenient or necessary.

In the 1890s, a Black person was lynched in the U.S. approximately once every 40 hours. Struggles by the civil rights movement put a stop to most lynchings, but the rope and the open gutter racism has been replaced by police bullets, with Black cops, politicians, and even president. One hundred and twenty years later,

nonwhites are killed once every 28 hours or less. This is because under capitalism, racism is a tool for:

- 1) making large profits from low-paid labor, and
- 2) oppressing the whole working class of all "races" by dividing and conquering us. That's why white workers make less money in the U.S. South than they do in the rest of the country. A history of the most intense racism has made it especially hard to unite workers, organize unions, and fight for better pay in the South.

The State and Revolution

The capitalists have developed many tools to maintain their bloodthirsty racist rule. One of their divisive tactics is to promote Black nationalism, including encouraging Black workers to buy only at Black-owned businesses.

One of the main supporters of this is Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan. In his book, *Torchlight for America*, he argues that members and supporters of the Nation of Islam can live on lower wages than other workers because they are taught to reject smoking, drinking and drugs. Based on those low wages, Farrakhan argues that large Black-owned businesses in U.S. cities can compete internationally, and profit. That's no solution. The only difference between that plan, and life today, is that a few faces at the top would be of a different complexion. For the masses of people, poverty and racism would remain just as bad as they are now!

Communism, on the other hand, includes the whole working class. It will mean the death of racism and all forms of exploitation. Courage like the antiracists at City Hall opens the door for revolution. However, in order to make significant gains in the class struggle against racism, and for communism, a bigger multiracial communist party is needed.

PLP calls upon today's fighters to stay on the road to revolution by forming communist study groups, joining the PLP, and continuing — for the long haul — to engage in sharp struggle, finally toppling capitalism and replacing it with an antiracist, communist world. ☺

Bolshevik Revolution: Workers Took Power, and Will Again

Ninety eight years ago, November 7, 1917, marked the beginning of the single most important event of the 20th century, the Bolshevik revolution, which directly inspired the Chinese revolution and anti-imperialist struggles around the world from Vietnam to Africa to Latin America.

Russia's working class, headed by the revolutionary communists of the Bolshevik Party and its leader, Vladimir Lenin, freed one-sixth of the world's surface from capitalism. They proved once and for all that it was possible to strive for a world without exploitation, where those who produce all value, the working class, can enjoy the fruits of their labor and not have it stolen by a few parasitical bosses and their lackeys.

The Russian revolution was the first serious attempt by workers and peasants to seize, hold and consolidate state power. Even though capitalism has returned to the former Soviet Union, workers will not forget that the Soviet working class defeated capitalism in 1917; smashed the imperialist armies of 17 countries (including Japan, the U.S., Britain, France, among others) which invaded Russia in 1918 to try to crush the revolution; freed the masses, especially women, from the yoke of capitalist, feudal and religious oppression; and then in 1945 defeated the mightiest and most barbaric army the capitalists had ever organized: the Nazi Wehrmacht.

The revolution frightened the world's bosses, who immediately sent armies from 17 countries to try — in Churchill's words — to “strangle it in the cradle.” From 1918 to 1923, millions of workers led by the Red Army defeated the imperialists' counter-revolution. Nearly five million died in that battle, many of whom were the most committed workers the revolution had produced. Lenin himself died because of injuries inflicted by a hired killer.

The masses showed great courage and determination to defend and build their revolution, under the leadership of their revolutionary party. They proved that the revolutionary violence on the part of the working class and peasantry were vital to the seizure of state power.

Achievements of the Revolution

The Bolshevik Revolution brought Russia to heights of productive development that capitalism, given a similar time period and circumstances, could never have dreamed of. Bringing the working class to power, the Revolution coordinated their social-economic efforts for the production and exchange of the necessities, the comforts and even some luxuries of life, making them available to all. The Soviet system of production was for use, not for profit. This can only be accomplished by abolishing capitalist profits and the private ownership of property, with its exploitation, poverty, unemployment, racism, fascism and imperialist wars.

In the 1930s, when the entire capitalist world sank into depression, and tens of millions worldwide were left jobless and starving (much like today), the Soviet Union was forging ahead building a new society without unemployment and hunger. They created some measure of a decent life for workers in an incredibly short time, transforming a 90% illiteracy rate into one in which nearly everyone was literate.

Around 1938, without any official declaration, the USSR had achieved the era of free bread. One could enter a cafeteria, order little or nothing, and receive all the bread one wanted. You needed, you received — at least to that extent. Even during a drive for heavy industry, living standards rose strikingly when the rest of the world was mired in the Great Depression.<

The Soviet Union not only freed workers but also fought against racism and sexism. The battle against racism was particularly significant. As pro-communist Paul Robeson said about his trips to the Soviet Union, he “felt like a human being for the first time since I grew up. Here I am not a Negro but a human being. Before I came I could hardly believe that such a thing could be.... Here, for the first time in my life, I walk in full human dignity.”

Heroic Fight Against the Nazis

In 1941, the bosses again tried to destroy the revolution. Hitler, using all of Europe's resources and the largest military machine ever assembled, invaded the Soviet Union with four million troops. They discovered the Soviets were no pushover as occurred in Western Europe. Hitler's prediction — endorsed by western military “experts” — of capturing Moscow in six weeks went up in smoke.

Nazi troops found total destruction and desolation in every captured city or town — the “scorched earth” policy. Soviet defenders burned everything to the ground that they could not take with them and then organized armed resistance behind enemy lines: the Partisans.

Over 6,000 factories were dismantled and moved east of the Ural Mountains, re-assembled to produce weapons again, a feat requiring total unity and support of Soviet workers, unmatched by any country, before or since. Soviet soldiers and workers fought for Stalingrad block-by-block, house-by-house and room-by-room to halt the “unbeatable” Nazi invaders. Workers in arms factories produced weapons 24 hours a day for the Red Army, working 12-hour shifts. When Nazi troops captured factories, heroic Soviet workers and soldiers would re-take them.

The entire German Sixth Army and 24 of Hitler's generals were surrounded and killed or captured in the battle of Stalingrad. Never again would the Nazis mount a successful offensive against the Red Army.

Stalingrad was truly the turning point of the Second World War. Not until the Nazis were on the run following their defeats at Stalingrad and in the Battle of the Kursk — the biggest armored battle in world history, involving millions of soldiers and 6,000 tanks — did the U.S.-U.K. forces invade Western Europe. It was the communist-led Soviet Union that smashed the Nazis, the largest and most powerful army ever mounted by a capitalist power.

All this was accomplished under the leadership of Josef Stalin. No wonder he is reviled to this day by world capitalism.

Lessons to Be Learned

Unfortunately, the Bolsheviks suffered from many political weaknesses which led to the return of capitalism to the USSR. From the beginning they believed that to achieve communism, first socialism had to be established, a belief Karl Marx had advanced. We have learned from that experience that socialism retained capitalism's wage system and therefore failed to wipe out many aspects of the profit system. Socialism put forward material incentives to the working class rather than political ones as the way to win workers to communism. We must win masses of workers to abolish capitalism's wage system and its division of labor and fight directly for communism.

Today no country is led by revolutionary communists, but this is a temporary historical setback. While this era of widening imperialist wars, fascist attacks on the working class, mass unemployment, diseases like AIDS killing millions in Africa and other areas, is upon us, every dark night has its end.

PLP is a product of both the old International Communist Movement and the struggle against its revisionism. Pseudo-leftist groups have not learned history's lessons and continue to fight for nationalist “sharing of power” with capitalists, a la Venezuela's Chavez, not for the working-class seizure of power and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Our movement is daily fighting to learn from the Soviet Union's great battles and achievements as well as its deadly errors that led to its collapse, mainly that reformism, racism, nationalism and all forms of concessions to capitalism only lead workers to defeat. Give the ruling class an inch and they'll grab a mile.

We honor the bold fight by the workers of the Bolshevik Revolution against capitalism and for a working-class communist world. Today, we must organize workers, students and soldiers to build a mass worldwide working class Party that will turn this era of imperialist wars into a new, international communist revolution.✊

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

U.S. Anti-Muslim racism intensifies

GW, 10/23/15 — The crude, anti-Muslim demagoguery filling the stump speeches of Ben Carson and Donald Trump has been reinforced by a similar toxic current of Islamophobia...in the liberal mainstream....

These views are reinforced by public talking-heads who...help to cultivate a climate that allows it. The anti-Muslim zealotry of Bill Maher...provides slick intellectual rationalizations for the conflation of all Islam with the actions...of a fanatical fringe....

Maher recently defended the arrest of 14-year-old Ahmed Mohamed for bringing a clock to school, saying the police suspicion was justified....

...Hostile protestors in several American cities — some armed with AK-47 assault rifles — gathered outside mosques and listened to hate speeches while worshipers were praying inside. The organizers...include a group of armed militia, called Oath Keepers, who...urge the protestors to bring weapons....

Retirement Math:

100 CEOs = 116 million workers

Bloomberg Business, 10/28 —The retirement sav-

ings accumulated by just 100 chief executives are equal to the entire retirement accounts of 41 percent of U.S. families — or more than 116 million people, a new study finds. the 100 largest chief executive retirement funds are worth... a combined \$4.9 billion...(with) David C. Novak...of Yum! Brands Inc... at the top of the list, with total retirement savings of \$234.2 million.

Some of the chief executives with the biggest retirement stashes are at companies that have cut retirement benefits for new employees...Yum! Brands, which owns KFC, Taco Bell and Pizza Hut, used to offer pensions to most workers but eliminated that option for employees who joined after 2002...At Yum, for example, employees with a 401(k) have an average balance of \$70,167. ...(while) Novak's retirement savings is about 3,300 times higher than that average.

Bangladesh: Sexist hellhole for girls

El País (Spain), 11/8 — Bangladesh is at the head of countries worldwide with child brides...(according to a study)...73% of girls in the country will marry before the age of 18...while only 3% of boys will...this can lead to the death of girls, especially in cases of premature childbirth, and for 90% of people interviewed (in the study) is justified as a solution to poverty and for “cultural practices.”

Causes include the lack of legal protections for girls... the existence of an environment of strict sexual roles, and often the result of sexual violence that girls suffer

in the street or even at school. The way in which sexual abuse is socially legitimate is illustrated by responses given by 12 and 13 year olds to the decision by families to force these victims of sexual abuse to marry their abusers: “It is not her fault, but no one will believe that”; “It is better to marry than to carry the burden”; “It is better to marry than to be unappealing to any other man”.

Israeli rulers force deportation of African asylum-seekers

NYT, 11/1 — ...A graduation party in Tel Aviv for... a 28-year-old asylum-seeker from Sudan...was interrupted by the Israeli police, who burst into the room, scattering the crowd....The party-goers spilled onto the street to find it barricaded and surrounded by horses. Seven people were arrested...for not having their visas with them.

Israeli's policy toward African asylum-seekers is to pressure them to self-deport...“to make their lives miserable” until they give up and the government deport them. About 60,000...have entered Israel since 2005, most of them Muslims from...Darfur....

...A law...requires male African asylum-seekers... to be detained automatically and indefinitely in the open detention center, Holot, in the Negev desert....If they miss a check-in, they can be transferred to a nearby prison.

MORE ITEMS AVAILABLE AT WWW.PLP.ORG

ANTIRACISTS OCCUPY BALTIMORE CITY HALL



BALTIMORE, OCTOBER 15 — Antiracist struggle continues to heat up in Baltimore, from weekly West Wednesday rallies against the police murder of Tyrone West, to the powerful Freddie Gray rebellion, to this week's occupation of City Hall!

Antiracists stunned the center of political power here by disrupting a City Council hearing on Oct. 14 over whether to make Kevin Davis Baltimore's a permanent police commissioner. After listening to politicians supporting Davis, and testimonies from people, young people began the protest. They decided to occupy City Hall until Davis and Mayor Rawlings-Blake came to meet with them and hear their demands. Cops flooded the building. Council President Jack Young removed a majority of the public seating in the council chamber, saying it was "unsafe." Nevertheless, these fighters

staged a second protest. This persistence made it possible for the sit-in to then take place, a tense face-off that lasted almost ten hours. Davis finally answered the antiracists' request to meet him at 4 AM, not by meeting with the group, but by ordering their arrest!

The previous police chief, Anthony Batts, had been fired by Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake for not attacking the April rebellion rapidly or decisively enough. A new, more aggressive police strategy has already become apparent at recent rallies against police terror. It's more like Ferguson, with rapid, aggressive arrests of antiracist leaders, and then further arrests based on identification from helicopter video footage.

The protest and sit-in at City Hall was organized because, although "proper" channels had been used, young people's voices had been ignored. On the previ-

ous Monday, October 12, the members of a local anti-racist group called City Bloc, released three demands and a statement with nineteen rules of engagement for the police to follow during protests. The three demands are:

- Davis agree to the Bloc's proposed guidelines for police at demonstrations.
- Fire Housing Commissioner Paul Graziano. In Gilmore Homes, where Freddie Gray lived before the police killed him, and in other public housing, some maintenance officials demand sexual favors before making needed repairs. At Lakeview Towers, there has been a lack of water and heat. On top of that there has been

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BURY THE BOSSES WORKERS MURDERED IN PAKISTAN

On November 4, an estimated 250 workers were producing plastic bags inside Rajput Polyester Factory when the building collapsed near Lahore, Pakistan. The official death toll is 45 workers. The rest are wounded or still trapped under the debris.

Majority of these workers are teenage or young adult men from farther districts who work for about \$120 a month. Many live or sleep in the factory. The factory continued to function after it took a hit from last month's earthquake.

The politicians and bureaucrats are running slow rescue missions and phony investigations. The working class doesn't need a verdict to know who's guilty: these factory bosses and the imperialists they serve.

Whenever a disaster hits, be it blatantly capitalist like a factory collapse or caused by capitalism like Hurricane Katrina, the working-class never recovers from those conditions. Years after the garment factory collapse at Bangladesh's Rana Plaza that murdered over 1,133 people, the conditions are still death traps. Months after the chemical explosion in Tianjin, China, many are still searching for jobs and homes.

Imperialist Rivalry in Pakistan Intensifies

The workers in Lahore, like workers everywhere, suffer one capitalist attack after another. Last year, a mosque collapsed, killing over 200. The year before that, massive floods forced masses to flee their homes. The second attack on workers in Pakistan comes in the form of im-

perialist rivalry. There is no excuse but capitalism for a country that can accept a \$46 billion investment deal with China to build the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor but can't invest in infrastructure?

For the bosses, be it in China, Pakistan, or the United States, their top priority is oil profits, not workers' blood. On November 11, Pakistan handing over 2,300 acres of land in its poorest province, Baluchistan, in a 43-year tax-exempt lease to China. This move will build a network of transportation for oil and gas, connecting China directly to the Arabian Sea. As Challenge goes to press, China has taken official control of Pakistan's Gwadar port, which, lying next to the Strait of Hormuz, is a key gateway to oil-exporting Gulf countries. This means a challenge to imperialist rival, United States.

For the working class in Pakistan, it means ratcheting up exploitation, displacement if their homes are "in the way" of the economic corridor, and war.

Bury the Bosses

What should our response be to this factory collapse and economic corridor? Bury the bosses and their killer profit wars. Progressive Labor Party must respond to this attack on the working class with mass fightback. From Pakistan to Colombia to Haiti, PLP fights with and serves the working class. Comrades everywhere must raise this attack on workers in Pakistan at their local unions, jobs, hospitals, schools, and unemployment offices. Be it in the Professional Staff Congress, the Unitarian Church, or in the streets during a Challenge sale, raise international solidarity with workers in Pakistan!✊

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