

# CHALLENGE



THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

volume 49 no.3

February 8, 2017

suggested donation \$1

# THIS CAPITALIST SYSTEM SHUT IT DOWN



From Washington, DC to Antarctica, millions protested the capitalist crisis that is Donald Trump and U.S. fascism. Communists have an opportunity to turn these marches into a mass armed movement for communist revolution.

A better world is possible. See page 3, 4, and 6.

## JOIN THE FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

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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.
- ★ 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!

## CONTACT US

Email  
desafio.challenge@gmail.com  
Mail  
Box 808 GPO, Brooklyn, NY 11202  
Internet  
www.plp.org  
challengenewspaper.wordpress.com

## WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

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

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

CHALLENGE/DESAFIO (ISSN 0009-1049) published bi-weekly by Challenge Periodicals. 1 issue \$1. One Year: \$20. Six months: \$15. Send address changes to CHALLENGE Periodicals, GPO Box 808 Brooklyn, NY 11202, February 8, 2017. Volume 49, No. 3

# Editorial

# Imperialist Trump Inherits Crises

The United States presidential election circus has moved to the White House, where the volatile Donald Trump has become the face of the U.S. ruling class. While Trump tweets his “alternative facts” (also known as “lies”), he is inheriting a weakening U.S. empire under threat from inter-imperialist rivals Russia and China. The growing instability of the worldwide capitalist order points the way to the next world war.

Trump is assuming the presidency as U.S. bosses’ world dominance faces its greatest challenge since World War II. The old global order—where a far superior U.S. military held sway over the Atlantic and Pacific, dominated the Middle East and Latin America, and controlled every oil route—is under attack from all sides.

U.S. losses in Iraq and Afghanistan, on top of internal divisions within the U.S. ruling class, have emboldened Russian and Chinese bosses to expand their spheres of influence. Seeing a power vacuum, smaller capitalists are seizing any opportunity to assert their autonomy. As the U.S. bosses scramble to put their own house in order, fend off their challengers, and hold on to their faltering empire, they are stuck for now with the undisciplined, unreliable Trump.

The rulers hope to keep the new president in line by surrounding him with loyalists to finance capital, the dominant wing of U.S. Imperialism: ExxonMobil’s Rex Tillerson, Trump’s nominee for secretary of state; Secretary of Defense James Mattis and Secretary of Homeland Security John Kelly, a pair of retired generals who know how to take orders; a slew of Goldman-Sachs bankers; and disciplined capitalist servants like Vice President Mike Pence and Jefferson Beauregard Sessions, the Alabama arch-racist nominated for attorney general. But if events of last week are any indication, with Trump flailing out at whim, the president’s handlers have a lot of work to do.

As they grow relatively weaker, U.S. bosses will lash out even more lethally. Only an international working class, organized for revolution by Progressive Labor Party, can end this murderous system. More than 500,000 have died in Syria since the Barack Obama-Hillary Clinton team instigated and financed that country’s civil war. Trump is a horror show, but he follows in the footsteps of the racist, imperialist, criminal misleaders who preceded him. All bosses, liberals and right-wingers alike, are the sworn enemies of our class.

While the path forward will not be an easy one, there is a way out of this capitalist quagmire. It is up to us to have the

courage and confidence in the working class to create and run a new world. To get there will demand patient yet urgent collective struggle against the bosses’ oppression and ideology. The path to freeing ourselves starts by building a mass Progressive Labor Party and a communist movement for workers’ power.

### U.S.-Russia Battle Widens

For the last 70 years, the big U.S. oil bosses and Wall Street capitalists have profited from their position as top-dog imperialists. But Russian capitalists are threatening the old order in both the Middle East and Europe.

Trump’s flirtation with President Vladimir Putin is secondary to the divisions in the FBI and CIA over how the U.S. ruling class should deal with Russia. Lacking working-class commitment to fight and die for the U.S. empire, the bosses know they cannot confront the Chinese and Russian bosses at the same time. In one of his last acts as president, Obama signaled the main wing’s top priority by sending 4,000 combat troops, tanks, trucks, and heavy artillery into Russia’s backyard in Poland, Romania, and the three Baltic states: Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania (CNN 1/14). Additionally, more than 300 Marines were deployed to Norway, which borders Russia for more than 120 miles on the Scandinavian Peninsula—the first foreign military posting in Norway since World War II (New York Times, 1/16). To this point, neither Tillerson nor Mattis have objected to the previous administration’s provocative display of power.

The U.S. bosses are straining to hold together NATO, the historic Cold War military alliance, in the wake of Russia’s annexation of Crimea and destabilization of Ukraine. Russia has undermined NATO by cutting a gas pipeline deal with Turkey, the second largest NATO military power, and by subsidizing nationalist movements to break away from the European Union. Meanwhile, Putin has outflanked the U.S. rulers by forming a coalition with Turkey, Iran, and the Syria’s Bashar al-Assad regime: “Russia signed a long-term agreement on Friday to greatly enlarge its military presence in Syria, more than doubling the space for warships in Russia’s only Mediterranean port and securing rights to an air base that may already be adding a second runway” (New York Times, 1/20).

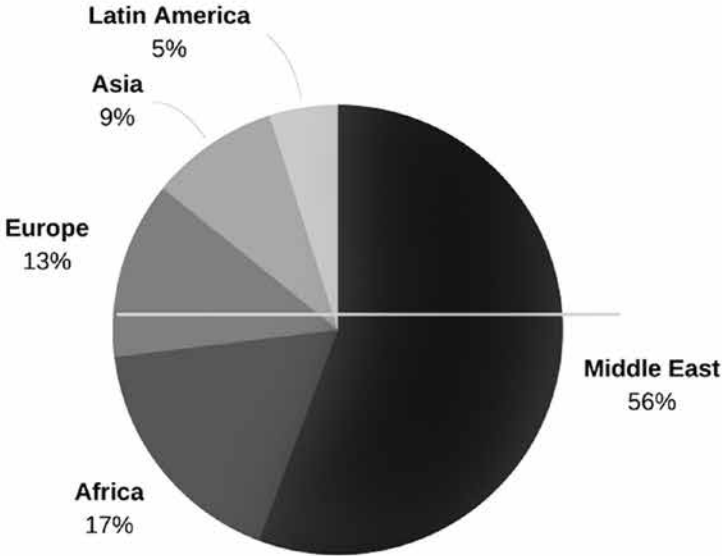
Continued on page 4

# U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS

WORLDWIDE



138 countries in 2016



On any given day, around 8,000 U.S. commandos can be found in more than 90 countries worldwide.

Source: The Nation (01/15/17)

# UC Davis Students, Workers Shut Down Fascist Rally

**DAVIS, CA, January 13**—Several hundred students and workers at the University of California at Davis shut down a planned fascist rally featuring Breitbart's Milo Yiannopoulos and drug price-gouger Martin Shkreli. This sharp confrontation was a small lesson on the role of the state (the government) in protecting fascists, their capitalist masters, and the whole capitalist system. The Progressive Labor Party wants to destroy this bosses' government and put the working class in power. That's communism!

Fascist Yiannopoulos was kicked off Twitter when he led the vile, racist harassment of "Ghostbusters" actress Leslie Jones. He also made a vicious, sexist attack on a transgender student at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, leading to the student's withdrawal from college. Shkreli raised the price of an anti-protozoal medication often used by HIV patients from \$13.50 to \$750, making money by killing people. Davis College Republicans, the sponsors of this event, claim the rally was about free speech. But there was no interest in debating serious issues, only in racist, sexist, anti-gay, anti-transgender harassment. This fascist event needed to be shut down—and it was.

The role of the bosses' state in defending fascism was clear as a line of campus police separated the anti-fascist demonstrators from the building and auditorium where the rally was to be held. The cops were met with chants of "Who do you serve? Who do you protect?" and "From here to Mexico, tear down walls!" Other chants targeted the fascism of Milo and Trump (but let off the hook the equally but less blatantly fascist Democrats). The strength of our action was the fierce chanting and militancy against these open fascists.



At 7 PM the administration announced that the event was cancelled. We didn't believe them and continued our protest for more than 30 minutes—protesting for more than an hour and a half!

A Students for a Democratic Society chapter on campus had been organizing against the event for weeks. A local Black Lives Matter group, Students and Workers Ending Racist Violence (SWERV) brought large contingents to the action. SDS and SWERV members planned to stage some disruptions inside the auditorium where the rally was to be held and passed out whistles, finger puppets, signs, and banners.

At one point some protesters grabbed large plastic barricades that had been placed in front of the police line, pulling them into the demonstration. This had the effect of empowering others to be bolder in approaching and confronting the cops. Our PLP study group is reading Lenin's *The State and Revolution*. Now we can combine theory with practice. We learn not just by reading and discussing, but also by doing. We invite workers and students everywhere to join the Progressive Labor Party in study groups, in fights against this sexist and racist system, and in the long struggle for a communist revolution!☺

## Oakland March: New Reds Politicize Crowd



**OAKLAND, January 21**—Progressive Labor Party and friends energized a passive crowd at the National Women's March with our militant anti-capitalist chants and speeches. The turnout was 60,000 people marching without speeches or chants. We decided we had to turn it up. We chanted, "Hey Trump, you fascist, we'll burn your house to ashes."

While some appeared confused and apprehensive to join us, many joined in and asked for multiple copies of our 800 leaflets and copies of CHALLENGE. It is our job as communists to expose the whole system, not just trump (see more on page 6).

### Learning in the Streets

Our PLP contingent was a visual representation of worker unity across gender, race, and age. Two young women gave political leadership for the first time. Part of their apprehension to lead stemmed from the passive tone of the march. There were no apparent political demands or calls to action. When we tried to lead

chants at first, only a few joined in. Some seemed upset that we were saying anything political because they said, "We were asked not to do that."

The other PL comrades pushed the younger women to lead with confidence. What began as hesitation gave way to leading dozens of people with speeches and chants. When one young woman gave a speech that profits are the problem, and sexist and racist divisions only hurt us, many people cheered in agreement!

Friends helped distribute hundreds of CHALLENGES and leaflets and lead discussions about police murders in the Bay Area. The antiracist, antisexist militancy of our communist contingent had a visible impact on the engagement and morale of the workers around us.

### Democrats, Republics All the Same

It was clear the march brought out many for whom it was their first time in the streets, and who were devastated that Barack Obama would no longer be their

Share your stories and photos of the Women's March with PLP on Facebook: Challenge Desafío

Bomber-in-Chief. That's why it's important that PLP was struggling with people to understand that Obama and the Democrats have never been friends of the working class, and that the only way to defeat global fascism is by smashing capitalism.

While workers taking to the streets en masse for the first time provides the possibility for us to push their politics further to the left, it does not necessarily mean that this movement will spontaneously lead to workers fighting to smash capitalism. It is vital that PLP continues to build a Party and movement to take power and build the communist world that all workers deserve.

Marching in the streets demanding reproductive rights is important, but these demands are limited and will continue to lead us to the hamster wheel of reform unless we are building a worker led Progressive Labor Party to fight for state power.

### Women & Men, Unite!

Capitalism needs sexism to divide and blind workers from the reality that we are all being exploited and oppressed by the same ruling class. The role of identity politics has been to exacerbate these divisions and to perpetuate the suppression of class-consciousness by making identity primary.

During the march a woman told a comrade, "The male race as always looked out for itself, so the female race needs to do the same and stick together." Aside from historical and logical error in that statement, a fight that shuns half of our force is one we are guaranteed to lose. When we view ourselves as inherently different or opposed to an entire group of workers, we are doing the bosses' work. Many of our friends were able to see how conflicting these politics were to our fight for a worker-led society.

As we continue to navigate our way through this dark night, the work of the Progressive Labor Party is essential to building worker's confidence in their class brothers and sisters.☺

# Los Angeles March: Expose Capitalism's Sexist Nature



Were you at a Million Women's March? Share your thoughts with PLP on Twitter @PLPchallenge

unclear how big our contingent was since we were unable to converge our groups.

We were stuck for hours like sardines. Many people were mostly enjoying humorous signs, taking selfies or photos of signs and the multiple performance artists. Most of the chants were the same as usual, but a few stood out like, "No Trump, no KKK, no fascist USA." The rest included, "Not my president." We were unable to see speakers. The only speakers we heard were giving directions on how to detour to get to City Hall.

A fellow church member held a poster of "No Racism", which had the names of women and men that lost their lives to police violence. The names show how women and men mostly of color are seen as disposable objects. It would have been nice to see more signs that pointed out racism or immigration.

A member of our contingent said, "We should have been marching while Obama was deporting 2.5 million people and while Hilary was supporting wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Yemen." Most members of our contingent, however, still think the problem is Trump, not the capitalist system. We have a lot of work to do.

Of all the signs we saw throughout the march, there was no doubt that capitalism was not on the side of the workers. We must be sharper and oppose the illusion that this is what democracy looks like. So we asked, "who benefits from sexism, racism and capitalism?" In order to defeat this system, women and men must struggle together to see one another as equals. Our answer is to unite against sexism and racism and dismantle capitalism and fight for communism.✊

**LOS ANGELES, January 21**—The word went out to all working-class sisters and brothers that Donald Trump was here to stay. Workers are still in shock how a gutter racist is now holding the highest position as president. Progressive Labor Party has been optimistic for our class, as we've been engaged in anti-racist and anti-sexist class struggles.

We showed how capitalism must be shut down and how we need multiracial unity, not identity politics, to fight racism. We've seen how capitalism treats sexist like rapist Brock Turner who got an early release by only serving three months

instead of the bogus six! Racist police murders that have had zero convictions and just recently the cops that murdered Ezell Ford walked. We've continued to see how capitalism protects racists like the KKK and other fascist groups. These are all prime examples of the sexist and racist oppression that working class sisters and brothers deal with under capitalism.

People of all races took the streets. The fact that masses were out there showed that workers are listening. Through our mass work in a church, we helped organize over 100 congregants from numerous churches around Los Angeles. It's still

# Imperialist Trump Inherits Crises

Continued from page 2

## China Moves in on U.S. Turf

Sensing the U.S. bosses' reluctance to take them on, at least in the short term, Chinese rulers are expanding their own empire across the globe. The recent World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, featured Chinese President Xi Jinping calling for a new world order, with China playing the leading role. In introducing Ji, the Forum's founder, Klaus Schwab, showed which way the winds are blowing: "In a world marked by great uncertainty and volatility, the world is looking to China" (Al Jazeera, 1/17).

Under Xi's proposed new alignment, China would guarantee that imperialist trade kept flowing: "It is Xi's China that is promising to expand the One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative to link Asia to Europe and Africa using land, air, and sea" (Newsweek, 1/18). According to this vision, China would dominate the Pacific Rim, weakening U.S. influence there. Countries previously subordinate to the U.S., including the Philippines, Malaysia, and Thailand, are being both enticed and threatened to join this new China-led club.

While the U.S. bosses are keeping their powder dry for now, they will not surrender their imperialist spoils without a fight. At some point, Chinese expansion beyond Asia will trigger a response. The U.S. will strike back with all the power the rulers can muster. Workers in the U.S. and China will be caught in the middle.

## Bosses Desperate to Build Pro-War Movement

Despite Trump's promises to put "America First" (a phrase invoked by isolationists and anti-Jewish racists



The nine flashpoints Trump will need to tackle as Chief of U.S. imperialism

in the 1940s), U.S. foreign policy can be counted on to pursue the interests of U.S. capitalism at the expense of the international working class. U.S. businesses amassed vast fortunes in rebuilding Europe after World War II. According to the Los Angeles Times, the U.S. has attempted to influence 81 elections around the world since 1946—not including military coups or regime change efforts after the elections (12/21/16). As the world's balance of power shifts, and old postwar alliances weaken, defense of "America First" will inevitably mean more and broader war.

In the November election, the biggest U.S. capitalists, including Goldman Sachs, ExxonMobil, and JPMorgan Chase, lined up behind Hillary Clinton. These mainwing bosses are now heavily represented in Trump's cabinet. To hold onto their empire, they will not blink at killing millions of workers around the world. If Trump fails to deliver the pro-war movement they need, some other politician will take his place. Only communist revolution, led by PLP, can smash this carousel of exploitation and mass murder for all time.✊



# Solidarity Soup: Celebrating Workers’ Power

**DÉPARTEMENT DU SUD, HAITI**—January 1 is an important date on the Haitian calendar; it not only marked the beginning of a new year, but also liberation from chattel slavery and the formation of the world’s first Black republic. Traditionally, workers in Haiti mark the day by eating pumpkin soup—soup joumou, a thick stew with meat and lots of vegetables—recalling that under slavery, they were prohibited from enjoying this soup (it was reserved only for the slave masters and other exploiters).

This year, however, because of the ravages of Hurricane Matthew last October, not only did over 1,000 Haitian workers die, but the pumpkin crop was virtually destroyed in the three southern departments affected. Thus pumpkins were rare, expensive, and unaffordable for most workers in the region.

So another tradition was born. In one provincial town, the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) organized a collective “solidarity soup.” “Solidarity” because we know

from our international history that the unity of our class is fundamental to our liberation and emancipation. The slaves of the French colony of Saint-Domingue gave humanity an example of unity in the 18th century by battling one of the greatest armies of imperialism to gain their liberty from slavery. In fact, before mobilizing armed fighters, solidarity of purpose was the cement that bound them in common struggle.

Fightback takes many forms. For our first “solidarity soup,” we solicited financial and other support from our base, both locally and internationally, bought pumpkins where available, and served soup to hundreds of workers and their children. Along with the soup, we used the opportunity to discuss why Haitian workers face the conditions they do: rampant poverty and disease, unclean water, 83 percent unemployment, occupation by a United Nations military force, death and destruction by “unnatural” disasters. Capitalism, a system of profit for the few and misery for the masses, is

squarely to blame.

“Solidarity soup” was a successful event. The participants remarked that they were served with dignity and respect. We served the people both literally and figuratively, feeding their bodies and arming them with communist consciousness about the source of their problems and how to escape the hell of capitalism and imperialism with communist revolution.

For the working class, internal solidarity and solidarity with our communist party is key. Capitalism pushes individualism, which is the negation of solidarity. Yet, while the bosses compete with one another for markets and power, they are united as a class to defend their own interests. They unite to sow divisions inside the working class, using a three-pronged weapon of racism, sexism and nationalism. Our task is to defeat those ideas ideologically and in action, build our mutual confidence, and put the working class in the driver’s seat of humanity.✊

# Class Struggle Rages on in China

Donald Trump, the big-mouthed business tycoon, got elected U.S. president, running on the tide of discontent of the U.S. working class. He claimed during his campaign that the U.S. has been declining because China stole U.S. jobs. He promised that he would force U.S. companies to bring the jobs back. The first day in office, he claimed, he would label China as a manipulator of currency and threaten to put a 45 percent tariff on goods from China. Many workers in the U.S. were led to vote for him because of his tough words on China, trade and job issues.

In response to Donald Trump’s exclamations, David Barboza wrote an article in the New York Times (12/29/16): “How China Built ‘iPhone City’ with Billions in Perks for Apple’s Partner”, accusing China’s government of subsidizing Foxconn to locate its manufacturing facilities in Zhengzhou City, the capital of Henan Province. Journalists like Barboza appear to be preparing public opinion for Trump’s planned policy of getting tough with China.

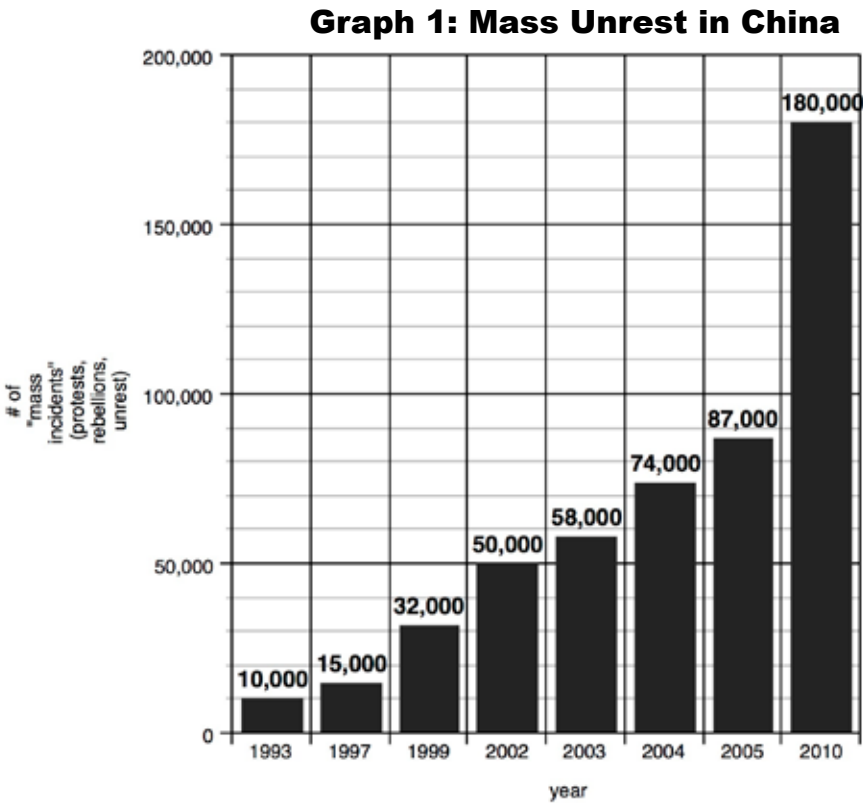
But, in fact, the Chinese did not steal the jobs from the U.S. It was the U.S. multinational companies that moved jobs to China to avoid paying workers the fair wages and benefits they deserved. Fueled by their racist drive for profit, they came to China to exploit the labor force there, paying a fraction of what they would have to pay workers in the U.S..

What is missing from mainstream media reports is any acknowledgement of how it happens that Foxconn can find 350,000 well educated, healthy and disciplined workers to produce the smartphones that make Apple one of the world’s richest companies. Research in neighboring Shandong Province documented the increase in high schools in Jimu County from 1 to 87 (for a mostly rural population of 900,000) between 1966 and 1976. Without similar developments in Hunan Province during that 10 year period – the so-called “lost decade” of the Cultural Revolution – investors would never have found this huge population of trained workers now producing 350 cell phones per minute in “iPhone City.”

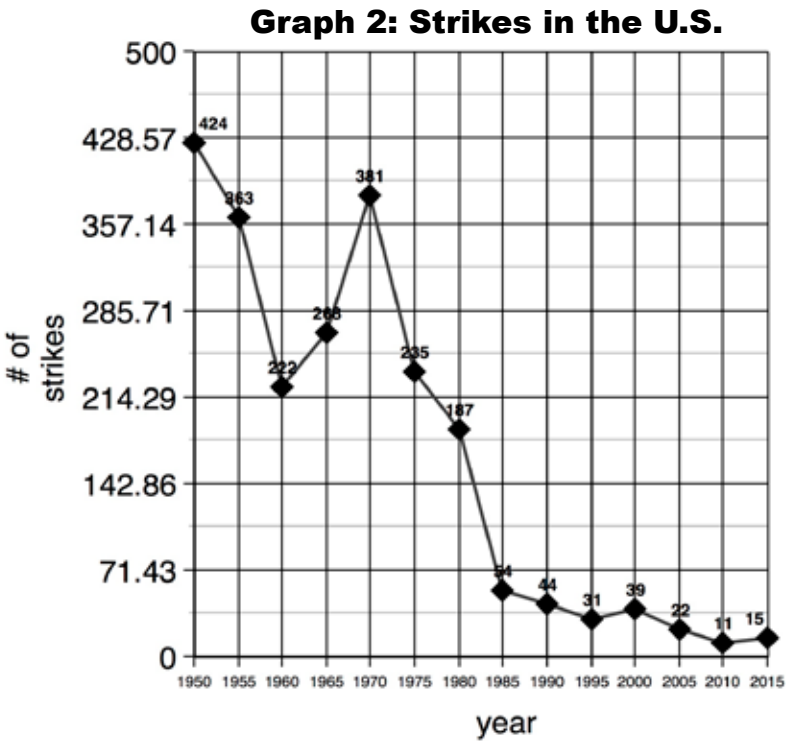
The willingness of new industrial workers from agrarian backgrounds to be overworked and underpaid (a “disciplined workforce”) largely rests on the residual prestige the Chinese Communist Party won during its socialist period prior to market reforms. But there have been increasing numbers of labor disturbances in China. The annual number of “mass incidents” increased from 10,000 in 1993 to 180,000 in 2010 (see graph 1), suggesting that this source of multinational profits may have its limits. Chinese workers more and more recognize that a capitalist exploiter is a capitalist exploiter, no matter what they call themselves.

Progressive Labor Party applauds the Chinese working class for its huge and growing fightback in the face of intense exploitation. Ruthless capitalist exploitation of Chinese workers enriches both U.S.-based multinational capitalists and Chinese capitalists, some of whom are members of the so-called “Communist” party of China. In 2015, the number of billionaires in China—now over 600—surpassed the number in the United States (Forbes, 2016). Meanwhile, class struggle in the U.S., at least in the form of major strikes, has been on the decline for decades, having dropped most dramatically in the early 1980s (see graph 2).

Workers all over the world want to live a decent life, free from abuse by a boss. We want to be able to raise



Sources: Lee CK: Against the Law: Labor Protests in China's Rustbelt and Sunbelt, 2007; and Chinese edition of the Wall Street Journal, Sept 26, 2011



our children and see them healthy, well cared for and well educated, not enslaved by debt or by a sweatshop boss. We want a world without racism and sexism. We don’t want to fight and die in the bosses’ profit wars. Capitalism—either the declining U.S. version or the rising Chinese version—is driven by the iron laws of the marketplace: make more profit than your competitor or die. Control markets and resources – at gunpoint where needed – or go down. Profit margins are directly tied to the rate of exploitation of the workers in whatever coun-

try they live.

These facts underlie the PLP’s strategy of one working class, one party, worldwide. Workers of the world need communist revolution to take power and run the world for our class, not for capitalist profit. Our party needs to grow explosively in every country of the world, including China, the world’s workshop and home of the greatest number of strikes today. Workers of the world, unite!✊

LETTERS

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

Israel: I Won't Let Mall Bosses Get Away with Wage Slavery

I am a contract worker in Israel who earns minimum wage of 24.88 shekels (6.48 US\$) an hour, which is less than 1,300 US\$ a month. This is not enough even for basic living expenses like rent and food despite hard work as a housekeeper at a shopping mall. The mall bosses prefer to hire manpower contractors, who receive a large sum per work-hour and pocket most of it, paying only a starvation wage to the workers.

For each dollar I earn, the contractor pockets another dollar, earned by my work, without him doing anything at all. In our mall, this is how they employ the housekeeping and security workers. The contractor gets rich at our expense, and the mall bosses gets "flexible employment"—that is, workers they can fire at a moment's notice.

The contractor also skims our pay, sometimes refusing to pay us for our lunch breaks or for overtime.

I am a member of the Coalition for Direct Employment, a group of workers fighting back against contractors and their clients (such as the mall bosses). As part of my coalition activity, I underwent a leadership training program. Part of the program involved learning how to organize actual struggle.

Through the coalition, I organized a contract workers' block at the Tel-Aviv Mayday march last year. This year, we are taking on the mall bosses. I prepared a video showing how contract work is exploitative and even economically expensive for the boss (a price the bosses are willing to pay for "flexible employment"). We sent it with a letter to the mall chain's management with a letter demanding a transition to direct employment with rights and job security.

As expected, the bosses ignored our letter and video. We are now moving to the second stage—organizing picketing and leafleting at the malls to tell the public they are shopping at a place employing contract-slaves. The bosses will not get away with their blatant exploitation of housekeeping and security workers.

Winning this struggle will allow us, the contract workers, to breathe more easily and earn a living wage. However, even with direct employment, we will still remain wage slaves. Wage labor, in its most basic essence, means being exploited economically and being robbed of our basic human dignity. To change that, we will need to do far more than our current struggle—we will have to fight further towards revolution.

★★★★★

Fightback on Campus: March, Sit-In

On my usually conservative college campus in California, people had a rally of several hundreds on Inauguration day to protest the racist, sexist, nationalist Donald Trump. I was energized to see this multiracial crowd and some speeches that talked about class and profits as the source for our problems.

Other speeches were limited by divisive identity politics that urged white people to look inside themselves and reject "white supremacy." The problem is not white people but our racist system that turns workers against each other. In fact, white workers were not the only ones to vote for Trump. More Latin workers voted for Trump than for Romney, the presidential candidate four years ago. Three times more Muslim workers voted for Trump than for Romney, too. Nobody is immune from racism. The real problem is not the working class but the capitalist system that feeds us racism instead of food when workers go hungry.

As we marched, people chanted fairly liberal chants like, "No justice, no peace!" and "What do we want? Justice! When do we want it? Now!" When there was a break in the chants, I started chanting, "Racism means we got to fight back!" The crowd picked it up enthusiastically and soon, many people were chanting these chants louder than the liberal chants. I started sharing the bullhorn with one of the march leaders to lead more chants. It was so energizing and I was able to meet some cool people this way.

After the march, a multiracial group of students invited me to have a sit-in in front of the Wells Fargo Bank on campus. They are calling for my school to divest from Wells Fargo because it supports private prisons and the Dakota Access Pipeline. During the sit in, many students talked about capitalism as the source of our problems. We successfully challenged administration (one of whom had the nerve to tell us, "I'm a fighter from the 60s! I know how it is!") right after telling us that

protesting is not the way to get what we want). We are excited to plan more direct actions, and I am excited to build better relationships with these students and fight back with them.

★★★★★

PL Studygroup Generates Debate, Fightback

As members of our PLP club participate in a mass organization, one of the many things we do is persistently build our PLP study group. Following is a report of the study group we had after the election of Donald Trump.

We have been having study groups for the past ten years throughout the time of our work in the mass organization, with lots of ups and downs and ongoing debate within the club. Twenty-three workers attended our last study group, most of whom were friends. The response was a bit greater than usual because our base wanted to discuss Trump, the Party's analysis and fight back. We covered a range of topics: fear, imperialism and the inevitability of war, the power of the working class, religion, fascism and capitalism versus communism.

We spoke about Fidel Castro's death, the history of Cuba and while acknowledging the advances in health-care and education, we emphasized that the Party and the working class need to learn from the errors of the old movement. We must destroy the profit and wage system, money and the difference of so-called "value" of different kinds of work.

One comrade said we jumped around too much while others said it was good because everyone participated. In the club meeting that followed, we debated how and if to work with religious people, whether we are being "opportunistic" or in fact are putting forward the Party's ideas and confronting anti-communism.

A couple of new people at the study group said they're in PLP, so our club will welcome them and begin the process of consolidating them to the Party.

At our next study group, we will talk about the history of building the international PLP in a couple of areas in Latin America.

★★★★★

Women's March: Our CHALLENGE Selling Experience

Two of us distributed CHALLENGE at the Women's March on NYC. We were short of papers from the current issue. I brought along 50 English and 10 Spanish from the current issue and 30 from the previous. We discussed the front-page headline "President Trump Will Carry On Obama's Racist Legacy" before we started distributing. I said the headline correctly described Obama's racist policies. My friend did not disagree, but thought that people might misread the headline. I talked about Obama's racist policies, including deportations and the targets of imperialist war. She said she would distribute the older issue.

We both got a good response from the marchers. But a few people did not take the current issue because of the headline. I decided to open up two other papers, one to the second page which said, "It's not just Trump, it's Capitalism" and another to the page that had an article about the women's march, while still holding up the front page headline. By this time, my friend was also distributing the current issue.

As people walked by, I said in a loud voice that the Obama administration had dropped over 26,000 bombs last year alone, and had deported 2.4 million immigrants between 2009 and 2014. Not one person disagreed or said anything negative during the half hour or so that I kept it up. Quite a few enthusiastically agreed. My friend got into good conversations with several people. We also encountered a woman who told us her father used to work on CHALLENGE 30 years ago, and another friendly former comrade with a sign attacking racism and sexism.

Going into the sale, I thought anticipated a lukewarm response because of the headline. But I decided before the distribution that I had to be aggressive and creative in order to combat my doubts. In retrospect, however, I think we should have asked for donations from the marchers. I think we would have collected a good amount of money.

In conclusion, comrades and friends, be bold when we sell the paper, give the working class and others a chance to hear us out, and ask people for money for our common cause. We have a world to win!

★★★★★

Chicago March: Masses Ripe for Leadership



**CHICAGO, January 20**—Progressive Labor Party and friends joined the anti-Trump inauguration protest in downtown Chicago, with the plan of broadcasting communist politics among the thousands of workers and students in attendance. We were able to engage in some sharp conversations and distribute a few hundred CHALLENGE and leaflets.

The rally was called for by a handful of various reform groups and its character reflected a loose liberal line. The action had called for rallying in Federal Plaza for two hours and then marching on Trump Tower. Bike kkkops quickly blocked off access to the bridge, preventing the crowd from getting close to the tower. From there, no contingent seemed willing or able to enforce an alternative plan. A large portion of the crowd milled around the bridge, with another contingent marching west and yet another marching east.

The rally reflected some of the glaring weaknesses of the protest movement. The spontaneity, numbers, and ability to shut down major city intersections may seem exhilarating in the moment, but without more specific goals, these actions create no

real threat to the bosses.

In fact, the ruling class sanctioned the national marches against Trump. It was a way of letting us release some frustration at the system without presenting any real threat to the system.

Despite the disorganization, what was encouraging as always is the enthusiasm of thousands of workers and students willing to take to the streets to demand a better world. It's on us as communists to not only be more organized at these marches, but to continue to build a base among more folks to win them to the idea that the fight goes beyond marching in the streets, or backing another dead-end reform or politician.

To effectively build for revolution, we need to be immersed in struggle at our workplaces, schools and universities, and in the military to really learn to hit the capitalists where it counts. Through commitment and struggle day by day, we can win more of our class away from reformist illusions and closer to the fight for communism.✊



# Racist Killer Cops and World War III

*The following is the text from a speech at a January West Wednesday rally in Baltimore, given by a member of Progressive Labor Party. Tyrone, 44, was murdered by Baltimore kkkops on July 18, 2013. The family and the West Coalition have been protesting every Wednesday since.*

Tyrone West was an early casualty of World War III. Now, why do I say that?

Let's take a human relationship, a loving relationship between two people. There are always difficulties that arise. And if you can put your finger on the main difficulty, and solve that, everything else kind of falls in line.

Now, in the world, there's one conflict that is the main conflict at the moment, and it influences every other development in the world. The main conflict in the world today is the rivalry between the major world powers, to see who's gonna be top dog. The U.S., China, Russia—the major powers all want the same three things. They want cheap labor. After all, Nike spends about two dollars and fifty cents a day for their workers in Indonesia to put the shoes together. They want cheap labor. They want markets to sell their stuff. And they want raw materials like oil and everything else.

And sooner or later, as the U.S. declines as a world power, and other powers rise—due to the law of uneven development—sooner or later another power is gonna challenge the U.S. You know how China, in the South China Sea, have taken over these coral reefs that were under water, dumped sand on them, and created seven islands. And on each island now they have a military-grade airport, anti-aircraft missiles. And they're not messing around. The U.S. keeps sending warships through there, challenging their control of the South China Sea. Thirty percent of the maritime trade in the world goes through the South China Sea.

Obama is now sending the Third Fleet to Asia to join the Seventh Fleet, which means sixty percent of the U.S. military is gonna be in Asia for the first time, 'cause the ruling class knows that's the likely place where the ma-

## JUSTICE FOR TYRONE WEST



jor challenges are gonna come to the U.S. empire.

Now let me take us back to World War I. In the U.S. there were a lot of people opposed to that war. They said, just like the upcoming war, it was a war between gangsters who want to control the world for their own profit. And what did the U.S. ruling class do? They had the Ku Klux Klan knock on your door if you didn't want

to join the military and agree to conscription. They terrorized people.

In the U.S., hundreds of thousands of police, and hundreds of thousands of troops have been used time and again to break strikes, to put down prison rebellions, to put down uprisings like the one from Freddie Gray. And so we've seen again and again how organized violence has been used against us.

But on a day-to-day level, they have a need to try to intimidate the working class. And the leading section of the working class, the most bold, the strongest, is the Black working class in the U.S. And that's why, in this country, if you're Black, you're five or six times more likely than a white person, to be unarmed and killed by a cop. Because the ruling class knows who the main leaders are gonna be in the upcoming struggles, and they want to put fear in the hearts of people, and try to stop that.

As they gear up for war, they're gonna do that more and more. And that's why I say that Tyrone was an early victim of World War III, and the preparations for that war, and that direction that the world is moving.

Now we can do something about this! When that period arises, and we see a major conflict developing, we have to take the nuclear trigger out of the hands of the ruling class, and minimize the casualties to humanity. That's our responsibility. It's not an easy task, but that's our responsibility.

And in order to do that, we're gonna need a much larger communist movement. We need more people to seriously read Challenge, to join the Progressive Labor Party and think about dedicating their lives to destroying this system, and building a sisterly, brotherly world where there will be no more people treated like Tyrone West!

And in the new Challenge there's an article on West Wednesday on page three. I'd like to encourage everybody to read that. And in the long run, we have to win this struggle, but even more important, we have to prepare to win bigger and bigger struggles in the future!✊



## RED EYE ON THE NEWS . . .

Below are excerpts from mainstream newspapers that may be of use for our readers. Abbreviations: NYT=New York Times, GW=Guardian Weekly, LAT=Los Angeles Times

### Obama sets up deportations of Haitians for Trump

NYT, 1/12 — ...It's important for the Haitian voice to be heard....Not just for the incoming government, where we have so many reasons to be worried, but for the current government because of the actions they've taken on Haitian immigrants" [said the director of Haitian women for Haitian Refugees]....

...In September, the Obama administration detained Haitians at the United States-Mexican border... and ordered deportations. Some pregnant women and mothers with children were given temporary...reprieve...but their husbands were deported.

After Hurricane Matthew struck in early October, the administration...resumed deportations in November.

### Chicago kkkops: rampant torture and killings

NYT, 1/14 — A blistering report...described...the Chicago Police Department...[as] saying excessive force was rampant, rarely challenged and chiefly aimed at African-Americans and Latinos....

...The investigation laid out in chilling detail unchecked aggressions: an officer pointing a gun at teenagers on bicycles...; officers using a taser on an unarmed, naked 65-year-old woman with mental illness....

...After officers used excessive force, their actions were practically condoned by supervisors, who rarely question their behavior....

Officers used force such as punching...to restrain... suspects but videos showed officers' use of force was unnecessary....

..."Officers engaged in...unnecessary foot pur-

suits...and too often ended with officers unreasonably shooting someone — including unarmed individuals"...shooting at vehicles without justification....

Several activists said the findings were unsurprising....but expressed little confidence... [Change] would take place....

..."The system is corrupt," said Dorothy Holmes, whose son was killed by a Chicago police officer in 2014....We want these officers charged as criminals...."

...A chilling video...showed a white police officer shooting a young black man, Laquan McDonald, 16 times. For months, the city fought to keep the...camera footage from being made public....

...Two years ago...black men...said they had been tortured and abused in the 1970s and 1980s at the hands of a "Midnight Crew" of officers overseen by a notorious police commander....A task force...concluded that racism had contributed to a long pattern of institutional failures by the police....

Just weeks after the...investigation, an officer shot and killed...a teenager said to be wielding a bat, and an elderly neighbor it by stray bullet....Last summer, another officer fatally shot an unarmed teenager in the back as he was running away.

### Myanmar: new ruler, same old capitalism

GW, 1/13 — For decades, the punishment for speaking out against Myanmar's rulers was...a very long stretch behind bars. The new democratic government led by Aung San Suu Kyi, which took power last April, insisted that era was over....

Myo Yan Naung Thein...has been on trial for criminal defamation, accused of insulting the commander-in-chief of the armed forces....detained without bail since early November....

He is one of dozens of people arrested on similar charges under the rule of Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy. Many expected the party...to bring an end to prosecutions brought under broad and repressive laws. Instead, they have skyrocketed.

### Eight billionaires' wealth = 3.6 billion people's

GW, 1/20 — The world's eight richest billionaires control the same wealth between them as the poorest half of the globe's population....Oxfam said it was "beyond grotesque" that a handful of rich men are worth \$426 billion, equivalent to the wealth of 3.6 billion people.

### Private prison corporations lock away the profits

GW, 6/24/16 — Getting locked up is unlikely to be good for your health but it's terrific business for the booming private industry supplying...jails and prisons....

...Companies...market everything from jumpsuits and meal trays to masks to stop prisoners from spitting, straitjackets and other full-body restraints....

Donald Trump...has called for increased outsourcing of prisons. "I do think...private prisons...work a lot better."

The U.S. has the highest incarceration rate in the world...2.2 million [70 percent of inmates are black and Latino]. State prisons and county jails are adding healthcare to...services that are outsourced to for-profit companies....The industry is worth more than \$3 billion a year....

...About 200 inmates died under the care of California Forensic Medical Group...between 2004 and 2014....The company is facing a class-action lawsuit in Monterey county over medical and mental healthcare failures....

Lawsuits haven't stopped...Corizon Health, the largest private prison healthcare provider in the U.S. from steadily increasing earnings. Corizon's revenue has grown...to \$1.55 billion in 2015....

The companies making the most money from prisons in America are Geo Group and Corrections Corporation of America which, combined, run more than 170 prisons and [immigrant] detention centers. CCA made revenues of \$1.79 billion in 2015.

# MEXICO WORKERS FIGHT FOR ENERGY, ORGANIZE FOR POWER

**VALLE DE CHALCO, MEXICO, January 25—**Occupations, demonstrations, marches and road blockades throughout Mexico greeted the government’s twenty percent price increase on gasoline and diesel. On January 1, as the new price increase went into effect, the government said that if they didn’t increase gasoline prices, they would have to make more cuts in healthcare, education and other social programs.

No matter what, increasing the price of gasoline is unsustainable for the working class, which increases the cost of transportation and the most basic products nationwide.

For workers in Valle de Chalco, this is another chapter in a long battle over securing energy sources like gasoline and electricity for the working class. For members and friends of the Progressive Labor Party, it is an important battle in the struggle for workers’ power.

## Capitalist “Gasolinazo,” Electricity Prices = Robbery

The taxes on gasoline and diesel, nicknamed the “gasolinazo” (in Spanish, meaning “gasoline price surge”) are occurring alongside increased prices for electricity for many workers. In Valle de Chalco, the Federal Electricity Commission (Spanish acronym CFE) has been increasing prices for the past seven years, and these new gasoline and diesel taxes find a working class already organizing to fight back.

Here, many workers are marginalized from basic services, including connection to an electrical grid due to the high costs. To get around this, workers built their own improvised bypasses into the electrical grid, called “diablitos” in local Spanish slang (“little devils”). While technically against the law, the diablitos were the only way masses of workers could obtain electricity.

Under the pretense of “modernizing” the electrical grid, the CFE has been slowly implementing new technology to dismantle the networks of diablitos. These changes, which will benefit private interests and not the working class, are being done in complicity with federal, state, and municipal governments in exchange for crumbs received from the wealthy business of production, distribution, and commercialization of the electrical power. Today, the price per kilowatt-hour for the workers is \$4.5 pesos, marked up from its real cost of .40 cents per kilowatt-hour.

The working class in Valle has not taken these attacks lying down! On December 14, the residents of Valle organized and formed a group called ANUES (National Assembly of Electric En-

ergy Consumers) and opposed the dismantling of the electricity networks on their streets. This has temporarily forced the retreat of the utility companies and contractors from installing this technology.

A group of workers in ANUES and residents of Valle are CHALLENGE readers, and have been helping organize among the workers of Valle to build a mass fightback. PLP has a history of fighting back, as well as connecting these price increases and attacks to global capitalism in crisis. This is the same capitalist system which is destroying our youth with violence and drugs, that pushes insecurity, unemployment, and poverty. This struggle against CFE is connected to these problems, as well as the recent gasoline price increases.

PLP has been involved in fighting back in the reform struggle, while organizing a party for communist revolution. Four months ago, some workers formed a cooperative and associated themselves with a Portuguese company, called Mota-Engil, with 49 percent of the capital from the workers and 51 percent from the company, to sell the kilowatt-hour at 0.60 cents. Due to the capitalist government’s interference and protection of CFE and its favored companies, they have not been able to obtain the permits needed for the commercialization of electricity.

We in PLP have been struggling to gain support and awareness of the workers in the cooperative, whose efforts to build this cooperative may be absorbed into the private electricity companies, and lose everything. At the same time, we fight to organize and build a revolutionary communist PLP.

## Workers Face Down Capitalist Crises

The struggles for electricity in Valle de Chalco are directly connected to the “gasolinazo” price gouging of petroleum by the capitalist government. While workers in Mexico recently saw a salary increase of 3.9 percent in 2017, it’s a mockery, compared to the increase of twenty per cent to the gasoline price. Our living conditions will worsen, poverty will increase, and all of it will benefit the big capitalists and the parasitic capitalist state. In general terms, oil-rich countries tend to have lower overall gas prices. Yet, in Mexico, gas was already expensive, and has a tax of up to 40 percent per liter. For the bosses, that is \$300 million pesos per year. This money is used by the government to cover the budget gap caused by the price of oil production, and a current drop in value of the peso.

The working class in Mexico also has one of the lowest minimum salaries in the world, which reflects the need for the bosses to super-exploit the working class of Mexico to extract super-profits. For example, today, a worker in Mexico, with a minimum salary, will have to work a whole week to fill an automobile tank with 41 liters of gasoline. In Brazil, it takes a worker less than two days to fill up the same gas tank, while in Norway, less than one. The capitalist system extracts profits from all workers worldwide, which makes these differences between workers from one place to another ultimately irrelevant. In countries like Mexico, the exploitation and oppression can be much sharper, however, that is why we have to organize and fight in mass to face the attacks against our class that much harder. These price increases are just one of these attacks.

As with the government’s complicity with the disappeared students in Ayotzinapa, the bosses always look to deflect the blame for capitalism’s problems back on the working class. During the demonstrations against the “gasolinazo,” the capitalist media highlighted only the looting that occurred during the demonstrations. The workers knew the government hired groups to do this looting. The bosses wanted to discredit those who legitimately stand up against the abuses of the capitalist system.

Other working class leaders who refused to be bought and controlled by the government were threatened with beatings, creating terror among the population. This threat prevented many from joining the protests and gave the government a green light to use their military and police presence to try and instill even more fear. The state apparatus is trying to terrorize the population so we will not recognize the power we have as a class, and the power we have to take control of the means of production when organized in the revolutionary PLP.

Capitalism’s crises cannot be reformed, they must be destroyed with revolution. The bosses’ fear tactics cannot control the working class forever, and CHALLENGE is helping the workers expose them. Capitalism’s crisis will grow as the U.S., Russian and Chinese bosses gear up for bigger wars, and we can only fight it organized in the communist PLP. We’re a party that fights for a communist society and will end exploitation and capitalist inequality. PLP calls on all workers in Valle de Chalco to organize and fight to stop the network change and the high costs of electricity. We call on workers of the world to organize and fight against the capitalist system. Fight back!✊

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