

CHALLENGE



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PROTEST TAX CUTS FOR RICH

WORKERS RISE UP AGAINST RACIST TRUMP

NEW YORK CITY—About 500 hundred City University of New York faculty, staff and students rallied by the New York Stock Exchange, joined by faculty from Rutgers, nurses from the New York State Nurses' Association, and members from community and religious groups.

The demonstration was called by the CUNY faculty and staff union, the Professional Staff Congress (PSC), against the recent brazenly anti-working class tax bill signed into law by U.S. president Trump over Christmas. The PSC claimed this "emergency demonstration" would send a message in the "heart of corporate profiteering" on the day of Congressional voting for the tax bill.

Progressive Labor Party salutes workers who protested the latest attack from Racist-in-Chief Trump. The tax bill will cut social services for the working class and reflects deep splits in the ruling class. As opposed to the domestic wing of the U.S. ruling class, the imperialist wing needs financial and ideological backing for their coming wars. These tax cuts are a hinderance to that long-term agenda(see more next issue). In this period of relatively low class struggle, more people need to stand up against all the bosses' attacks.

Symbolic militancy

Chants like "Kill the Bill" and "7K or Strike" were frequently chanted by the multiracial and young crowd of women and men, with the second chant referring to the demands of adjunct faculty to receive a pay increase from \$3500 to \$7000 per class taught in the current round of PSC contract negotiations with CUNY. Unfortunately for the energetic hundreds who came looking for leadership, they didn't get any from the PSC!

As a part of the demonstration, fifteen PSC officers and pre-selected faculty coordinated with the NYPD to be voluntarily arrested (*see letter from an arrestee, page 6*). The cops allowed them to gather and sit near the Stock Exchange entrance, and then allowed journalists from the bosses' media to take pictures. In a symbolic effort to demonstrate their supposed militancy — despite not actually blocking the Stock Exchange entrance — the NYPD cheerfully obliged the PSC misleadership's symbolism by arresting them for blocking the Stock Exchange entrance.

For workers and students present who live in neighborhoods under constant racist police terror, the sight of these "militant" union so-called leaders coordinating and staging an arrest with the full cooperation of the NYPD must have been a strange



one.

Following liberal leaders is a dangerous trap that will only hurt the working class.

Rise up or die-in?

Members of the Progressive Labor Party and friends among the students and faculty attended, and at one point, the PSC officers had a section of the march lie down in the middle of Broad Street. They called this a "die-in," where people passively lie down and pretend that they're dead, while journalists working for capitalist-owned newspapers step on them and trip over them trying to take their pictures (*see letter, page 3*).

This level of "emergency" mobilization against the tax bill seems convenient given the Supreme Court is imminently ruling against the agency fee, forcing unions to scramble to keep members loyal and dues paying.

Away from the "die-in" and the artificial bravery of the PSC misleaders, PLers and rank-and-file members of the PSC and allied unions led militant chants. While selling CHALLENGE, several conversations were held with friends and demonstrators comparing the media saviness of today's publicity stunt with the PSC misleaders' claims to fight for the interests of the adjunct faculty. How can education workers, especially adjuncts, tell when the

PSC officers are actually fighting for power, or just "symbolically"? Just look at how the PSC officers relied on the NYPD to stage the demonstration.

Real working class leaders like the Black youth of Ferguson, Baltimore, Baton Rouge and elsewhere relied on the working class, because police are exactly the last people workers can ever trust. And as the PSC misleaders' strange behavior again and again demonstrates, liberals literally lead workers right into the police's arms.

Unions and capitalism

The behavior of these PSC misleaders is less strange when one considers their role under capitalism. Early on in capitalist history, workers learned that their strength multiplied when they organized trade unions to collectively negotiate for important reforms, like higher pay and better working conditions.

In the U.S., historical twentieth century unions like the old Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) organized militant mass strikes led by women, immigrant, Black, and white workers. Radical organizers like Helen Keller, "The Rebel Girl" Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, "Mother" Jones, Eugene Debs, "Big Bill" Haywood, William Z. Foster and masses of others led militant, earth-shaking strikes in nearly

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JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL 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!

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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

CHALLENGE is for the working class, produced by the working class. 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

Rulers worry Trump is unfit to lead war

As Donald Trump proves increasingly incapable of defending U.S. finance capital’s interests in the next global war, these main-wing bosses are intensifying their efforts to discipline the unreliable president—or, if necessary, to prepare to move him out of office.

January 5 saw the publication of Michael Wolff’s *Fire and Fury*, which painted Trump as ignorant, unfocused, an “idiot,” and a “dope”—in the words of his own senior Republican advisers. The book quoted white supremacist Steven Bannon, Trump’s former top henchman, as accusing Donald Trump Jr. of “treasonous” behavior for meeting with Russians connected to Vladimir Putin during the 2016 campaign. Two days earlier, after Trump boasted that his “nuclear button” was larger than North Korea President Kim Jong Un’s, an NBC news reporter openly questioned Trump’s “mental fitness” (thehill.com, 1/3).

Meanwhile, former FBI chief Robert Mueller was expanding his Justice Department probe of Russian collusion and obstruction of justice. After already indicting four Trump associates, Mueller indicated he was looking to interrogate the president himself (New York Daily News, 1/10). “The end game,” according to the right-wing National Review, “is the removal of Trump, either by impeachment or by publicly discrediting him and making his reelection politically impossible” (12/2/17).

Trump: unstable imperialist

But the bosses’ real concerns about Trump’s “fitness” have little to do with West Wing gossip or Russian operative intrigues. As inter-imperialist rivalries sharpen, the rulers’ fundamental worry is that Trump is unable and willing to prepare the U.S. for an inevitable World War III. As the U.S. sinks into a state of relative decline versus an ascendant China and a belligerent Russia, the bosses fear that the U.S.-dominated liberal order, a fact of life since the end of World War II, may be on its last legs.

A leading mouthpiece for the U.S. ruling class is Richard Haass, president of the Council on Foreign Relations, the finance capitalists’ top think tank. In a new afterword for the recently published paperback edition of his cautionary book, *A World in Disarray: American Foreign Policy and the Crisis of the Old Order*, Haass sums up the rulers’ anxieties in the Age of Trump:

[T]he United States is no longer taking the lead in maintaining alliances, or in building regional and global institutions that set the rules of how international relations are conducted. It is abdication from what has been a position of leadership in developing the rules and arrangements at the heart of any world order....

Trump is the first post-World War II American president to view the burdens of world leadership as outweighing the benefits. As a result, the United States has changed from the principal preserver of order to a principal disrupter.

Haass proceeds to tick off Trump’s many retreats from world leadership. The president withdrew from the Paris climate pact and the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which the main-wing Brookings Institute called “not just a trade agreement but also a crucial signal of U.S. commitment to the region in general” (Brookings, 9/16/17). He weakened the U.S. commitment to NATO, which represents the allies the U.S. will need in the next global war. He has threatened to



pull out of the North America Free Trade Agreement and the nuclear accord with Iran while gutting of the State Department’s diplomatic corps. As the New York Times (12/28/17) put it,

Mr. Trump has transformed the world’s view of the United States from a reliable anchor of the liberal, rules-based international order into something more inward-looking and unpredictable. That is a seminal change from the role the country has played for 70 years, under presidents from both parties, and it has lasting implications for how other countries chart their futures.

Can the ruling class control Trump?

At the same time, there are signs that Trump is being brought to heel. He has stepped back from his initial attack on NATO and even convinced other NATO members to contribute more to the organization (Washington Post, 6/17/17). For all of Trump’s bluster, he has yet to actually decertify the Iran deal. Longer-term thinkers in the ruling class have successfully inserted their voices into the Trump administration. National Security Advisor H.R. McMaster was a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson was formerly the CEO of Exxon-Mobil, perhaps the company most reliant on U.S. imperialism’s long-term commitment to control over Middle East oil.

Capitalism offers workers war and fascism

At this point, it is hard to say for sure what will happen as the dogfight within the U.S. ruling class plays out. Trump may endure or he may be removed and replaced. The impact on the international working class is less difficult to predict, however. Whether Trump is impeached or finishes his term; whether Democrats win big in the 2018 mid-term elections or Republicans keep their majorities; whether a Democrat wins the 2020 election or Trump gets re-elected—none of these things will change the fundamental shape of the future. None will alter the racist, sexist, imperialist nature of capitalism, or the increasingly fascist conditions that workers face around the world. None will prevent the carnage of world war, where the rulers will be eager to sacrifice millions to preserve their filthy profit system.

For the workers of the world, no capitalist boss can ever be “fit” to lead society. It’s the task of Progressive Labor Party to put all of these war-mongering mass murderers out of business—to turn the guns around and turn imperialist war into a war for revolutionary communism.☸

Free Keith Davis Jr.

System guilty of racist injustice

BALTIMORE—For the fourth time, the capitalist courts will put Keith Davis Jr. on trail after being framed for two crimes. In 2015, he was the target of a brutal police shooting, the first since Freddie Gray earlier that year.

What has followed in the over two-year wake of that shooting has been nothing short of a racist judicial and prosecutorial circus. Keith is a target of police terror, a fact the cops are trying to justify by making up murder chargers against an innocent member of our class.

Criminal system prosecutes the victim

What began as a case of mistaken identity has evolved into a framing and cover-up of significant scale. A short recap:

At around 10 a.m. that morning, a hack driver reported an armed robbery in progress in his vehicle. The suspect fled. Police already on scene for another incident proceeded to chase. Neighborhood folks witnessing the chase, Davis included, scattered. Police lost sight of the suspect and began to chase Davis mistakenly.

The cops hased fired at Davis 44 times, struck 3 times, including once on his face, and rendered unconscious. Another lodged in his neck, not far from his spine.

Davis survived, only to be subsequently charged as that armed robbery suspect. He sat trial



Rally to free Davis the night before his trial hearing

in late February of 2016 and was acquitted.

Baltimore City State's Attorney Marilyn Mosby announced charges of first-degree homicide regarding the murder of Kevin Jones, a security guard at Pimlico Racetrack shot hours before in the early morning on June 7, 2015.

On what grounds? A heavily-disputed partial palm print on a gun found near Davis in the garage. The gun was planted. There are no other connections at the murder scene. No motive. No personal

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Workers rise up against Racist Trump

Continued from page 1

every major U.S. industry from the mines to the mills prior to World War I. Inspired by revolutionary ideas, these workers didn't do it with passive "die-ins." Their massive "sit-down" strikes were organized occupations that mobilized entire industries and cities.

Following the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, these same organizers supported the Bolsheviks and formed what became the Communist Party USA. But even after decades of stunning organizing successes, when the old international communist movement decided to put revolutionary politics secondary to union organizing, its defeat was a certainty long before it happened.

Revolution, not reform

Even the relatively few militant unions left today cannot and do not lead the way forward. That's up to the communists, who must organize within their unions to spread communist ideas. Unions exist within the legal boundaries set by capitalists and do not fundamentally threaten capitalism, but millions of workers who believe in revolutionary communist ideas do!

Today's unions form an important part of the bosses' state, colluding with the Democratic Party in exerting political control over the working class. While certain factions of the ruling class clearly want them destroyed, this does not automatically mean that unions and their misleaders are our friends!

The PSC misleaders are trying to convince us to join them on the hamster wheel of liberalism and reform. They are utterly unwilling to confront the cage of capitalism, and meanwhile they build the illusions that capitalism can be reformed and that the NYPD can play nice.

And thus, the PSC misleadership's behavior is not so strange after all! Their symbolic actions do not represent real working class power, unlike the multiracial rank-and-file mass communist movement of campus faculty, students, and workers that PLP is building on campuses across CUNY. PLP's growth means the days of this "symbolic" nonsense are numbered. For the masses of workers looking for a way out of capitalism, joining PLP means true resistance to the growing fascist attacks by fighting for communism, and giving the bosses and their capitalist system a new meaning to the term "die-in"!☘

Letter

My first die-in experience

I was at the PSC rally, and participated in my very first "die-in" with a coworker and friend. I've participated in PLP-led projects during the Ferguson and Baltimore rebellions, and still I felt safer then among my comrades and friends than during this die-in.

A die-in is a tactic used by liberal pacifist and nonviolent groups, where a mass of people simply lie down in the street and block traffic. The PSC leaders thought this would be a great idea to try out in front of the Stock Exchange, and about 60 of us did it.

Physically lying down and voluntarily surrendering your body to whoever or whatever's coming at you was the most uncomfortable part.



Media takes photos of us laying down. The PSC leadership does not have our backs. They literally want us on our backs.

Then journalists swarmed over the mass of "dead" bodies. I was stepped on a whole lot more than I had my picture taken, although most of them did at least apologize. And that was pretty much it; the whole die-in consisted of photojournalists stepping over us and examining us with quizzical looks, I guess looking for that perfect "dead" body shot.

For their part, the police mostly stood around making small talk with each other or whoever was around to stave off their obvious boredom.

Definitely not Ferguson or Baltimore.

Liberals and pacifist-types who push passive publicity stunts like die-ins assume that the police aren't going to attack them. These liberals usually have the cooperation of the police ahead of time- an active cooperation that goes far beyond getting march permits approved. How much of a threat to capitalism can you be if you're calling up the police to stage-manage your protest?

Following Heather Heyer's murder by the neo-Nazi who ran over her with a car in Charlottesville, these liberal and pacifist assumptions about capitalist state power need to be called out for the danger that they are.

In Ferguson, it was heavily armed police who rioted against the unarmed Black workers and youth. The bosses understand threats to their system when they see them, and relying on the bosses' state apparatus for protection is suicidal.

Our plans for spreading communist ideas don't depend on staging a show for the capitalist media with help from the NYPD. They're made together in our Party collectives among members and friends using dialectical materialism and revolutionary theory. That's because we have ultimate confidence in the working class to solve these challenges, and one day take power and run society. We glimpsed that confidence and power in Ferguson. Even though it was the first time most of us faced lines of riot police, we were surrounded by comrades, friends, and the Black workers we came to support. We knew we had each other's backs.

The PSC leadership does not have our backs. They literally want us on our backs. Hundreds of people at that PSC demonstration were looking for the kind of leadership we offer. If we continue leading by example at our campuses while exposing the political bankruptcy of the PSC misleaders, it won't be long before we'll have more opportunities to give it.

Women contract workers combat sexist mall bosses

TEL AVIV—Progressive Labor Party here is working within the Coalition for Direct Employment. This is a reformist mass organization that fights against the horrors of contract labor.

Super-exploited contract labor

Contract bosses are essentially wage-slave traders. They hire workers, and then lend them to various businesses. Thus, a large business employs the worker in practice, but the legal employer, who pays the wage, is the contract boss hired by that business. This allows all sorts of abuse without holding the actual boss—the one hiring the contractor to provide workers—accountable. Contract bosses often pay very low wages and ignore benefit laws. The actual employer usually treats the contract workers, at best, as second-class workers, and at worst—as slave labor.

The Coalition, an open democratic organization, aims to get rid of contract work and get all workers direct employment. Everyone has a voice, leadership and membership. Even if this is your first day in the Coalition, you can speak up and be heard in it. The leadership team is mostly composed of women; most of the team members are working-class and only a few are “activists.”

The current coordinator (chair-person) is a working-class Black Ethiopian woman. The Coalition replaces its coordinator every five or so years; it has no “Leader for Life” as is common on the Revisionist Left. In short, it is a

working-class organization open to everyone.

One coalition member, who is also a PLP communist, is a contract worker at a mall belonging to Azrieli Malls, Israel’s largest mall chain. The super-rich Azrieli family, one of Israel’s 19 richest families, owns this chain. They hire contract workers for housekeeping and security, pay minimum wage and sometimes do not pay for the lunch breaks. They even avoid paying legal benefits.

Sexism in the workplace

The Azrieli Malls employ women to clean toilets, including men’s bathrooms. They of-

ten do not allow the workers to lock the bathroom while cleaning. This means that men come and go, and sometimes go to the urinal right in front of them.

When asked to go to the stalls and close the door, some react to the women in a demeaning, sexist manner, sometimes to the level of sexual harassment. The bosses insist that women clean these bathrooms and continue to suffer constant harassment.

Last year, when the boss wanted to fire a worker who protested about this, the coalition bombarded the Azrieli Malls management with e-mails and text messages, and the worker was able to keep her job. The organization is now campaigning for direct employment at the Azrieli Malls.

We organized youth and workers from other work places to form a flash mob in front of the largest Azrieli mall in Tel-Aviv. We produced several videos and shared them on social media. We also leafleted in the malls. Progressive Labor Party will continue this fight with the coalition while exposing the exploitative nature of the capitalist system in the process. Wage labor, in its most basic essence, means being exploited economically and being robbed of our basic human dignity. The conditions are both racist and sexist.

The exploitative, sexist mall and contract bosses will not get away with their crimes!✳



Free Keith Davis Jr., system guilty of racist injustice

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connection to Jones. No DNA. No CCTV footage. Finally, he was cleared by eyewitness testimony.

Regardless, the first homicide trial was heard in May 2017. It ended in an 11-1 hung jury. That’s 11 not-guilty votes to 1 abstained vote. Rather than poll the jury, the now-disgraced Judge Alfred Nance declared a mistrial.

The second trail this past October was under Judge Lynn Stewart Mays. With the eleventh hour discovery (read: manufacturing) of a jailhouse witness, the capitalist state declared a second degree felony murder.

But the details of that witness soon would unraveled, leading Davis’ legal team, led by Latoya Francis-Williams, to win an appeal on the grounds of an ill-informed jury and perjured witness testimony.

In a few months, Davis will sit for his fourth trial. It begs the question: what is the State’s Attorney’s goal? How is the community being served by repeatedly prosecuting a man for whom there seems to be no case? What began as a mass acquittal of 15 charges relating to the initial robbery incident, evolved into a heavily defense-favored 11 to 1 hung jury mistrial, and ultimately ended up in an overturned conviction.

Servants of capitalist govt

This case exposes the role of this capitalist state that will go above and beyond to frame, convict, and lock up Black and Latin workers. The police, the courts, and politicians all work together to preserve this racist system. The criminal injustice system originates from slave patrols and slave laws. The modern capitalist legal system is born out of the law enforcement system that existed for the purpose of controlling the slave population and protecting the interests of slave owners.



Multiracial protest inside the State Attorney’s office.

We can only deduce that Mosby is not operating under the guise of being a public servant, as she claims. In fact, she is not a public servant. She is the capitalist state’s servant. She is the State’s Attorney, not the workers’ attorney. The Baltimore Police Department is an arm of the state and Mosby is fighting to preserve that arm. After all, Davis was mistakenly shot just one month after the Baltimore Uprising—the city was in no condition to handle another incident and Mosby’s career could not withstand a second round of cop indictments. Davis thus became the fall man.

Take the streets

Some argued for a new State’s Attorney come election time later this year. Voting is getting to choose which criminal will rob our dignity and livelihood next.

What is undeniable is the power of organized multiracial fightback. There has been mass organizing. In additions to bold protests in the streets, we protested in the lobby of the office building of the City State Attorney. We wrote letter to all the other judges, and held fundraising events. We also filled the courtrooms. The judge told everyone to sit back down, and lectured us about how it’s illegal to attempt to influence a judge. She also said she didn’t read the letters sent to the judges. But, she was seemed to be clearly responding to the *was* strength, content, and quantity of those letters. The judge lied. Clearly, our mass actions had an effect.

And so, as 2018 begins, we must remain the streets. It is incumbent that we create new leaders and foster new relationships. Free Keith Davis, Jr. and all political prisoners! Here’s to a louder 2018.✳

Racist police terror: a year of struggle

HARLEM—The Washington Post has documented that 903 of our brothers and sisters were killed by kkkops in 2016. That's more than two times the number reported by the FBI. This furious statistic compares with a Berea College study that estimates that an average of 54 lynchings a year were committed between 1882 and 1968. The U.S. bosses now arm and train a much deadlier "Klan in Blue" under the cover of white sheets. This racist practice is designed to intimidate all from fighting with multiracial unity. But where they have failed, we will succeed as the working class join in mass struggle against this racist capitalist system.

According to the same Washington Post survey, 418 of those killed by cops were white; 205 Black; 163 Latin: A total of 368 were Black and Latin! These figures prove that no worker is safe under this system. Seventy percent of the U.S. population is white, while 30 percent is Black and Latin. This huge display of racial disproportion, as because Black and Latin workers are killed at

903 murdered by police in 2016

a rate three times higher than their white counterpart.

The Post evaluated that one out of four of these killings involved people undergoing mental



protest following murder of Deborah Danner

crisis. Typically, family, friends, or neighbors become aware of a person suffering an acute, psychotic episode. They call for help and too often the only number available is 911. Police arrive in uniform with visible weapons and command the person in crisis to surrender. A conflict ensues, and the person in need of help ultimately is shot dead, instead.

Deborah Danner

Over the past year, PLP comrades and friends in our congregation joined in many struggles for justice, first, on behalf of Deborah Danner who was killed in the Bronx on October 18, 2016 under

the same circumstances. We rallied with many others in front of her building, and then marched to the precinct to demand prosecution of Sgt. Hugh Barry who claimed he feared for his life because this elderly woman approached him with a baseball bat.

Barry didn't even thin of less violent tactics. Instead, with two shots to her torso, he murdered her life. After seven months delay Sgt. Barry was finally indicted for murder. Still, no trial date has been set: No doubt Police Benevolent Association

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Brooklyn forum: environmental racism is part and parcel of capitalist system

BROOKLYN—On a chilly winter night a Brooklyn church held a forum on the issue of environmental justice.

About 40 people debated the merits of a capitalist system which only cares about the working class for the cheap labor it provides. Can capitalism be reformed or does the whole rotten system have to go?

Three clergy and a reform activist described some of the problems and proposed policy changes while members of the Progressive Labor Party injected some communist consciousness into the conversation.

Environmental racism = capitalism as usual

The home minister explained how environmental racism uses "redlining" to confine poor Black workers to less desirable areas of a city that don't have resources such as hospitals and fresh grocery stores. The majority of waste disposal sites are located in mostly Black and Latin working-class areas.

It was quite clear that working class people have little or no say in what ills are brought to their neighborhoods and are denied the opportunity to escape due to racist housing practices.

A Baptist minister spoke clearly and passionately about how a decaying capitalist system uses racism and sexism to oppress workers. It is environmental racism that allows people to live in an area without access to clean-lead free water. Working class people are at the whims of the developers and bankers as to what goes into their neighborhoods.

In Greenpoint, influx of new residents has caused rents to rise and is pushing out longtime residents with no concern to where they can afford to live. This is racist displacement. Environmental racism is pervasive destroying all working class communities with toxic waste placement,



lousy services, high food prices, leaded water, etc.

Puerto Rico

Another minister spoke about the debacle in Puerto Rico, and how the working class people are struggling to maintain their dignity in the face of devastation and humiliation by U.S. imperialism.

The minister also spoke passionately about the beautiful bays filled with bioluminescent life that is getting dimmer as the restrictions on

dumping waste have been lifted in the wake of the hurricanes. The "logic" of capitalism was called out as the \$300 million contract to rebuild the electric grid was awarded to a small company with three employees in the home state of the Interior Secretary.

The last panelist proposed a reform strategy to get businesses to pledge to lower their carbon footprint through cleaner energy, by installing green roofs and solar panels.

After hearing how environmental racism destroys worker's lives and seeing how workers face even more devastating conditions around the world, green roofs and solar panels seem like a capitalist pipe dream.

We need to address the root cause, rather than just the symptoms. A world run by the working class, communism, is the only solution. The profit motive for environmental racism will be eliminated. Our value for working-class safety and health will guide our collective decision-making and work. It will require countless years of profound unity, creative thinking and actions of the world's working class to make our environment safe again.

Call for mass actions

During the floor discussion some of the panelists promoted voting and advocating public officials for change. Others questioned what kind of system would allow people to live in such terrible conditions.

Several people, including one of the ministers, proposed mass actions by a united working class. Although this forum was very reform oriented, we were able to bring the idea of struggle into the room. We raised the issue of fighting racism with multiracial unity.

Now we must win more friends to fight against the whole damn capitalist system.✪

LETTERS

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

Cuba today, an eyewitness account

I recently traveled to Cuba to participate in a program sponsored by MEDICC, Medical Education in Cooperation with Cuba. They were celebrating the 20th anniversary of the organization that promotes communication between healthcare workers in Cuba and the United States.

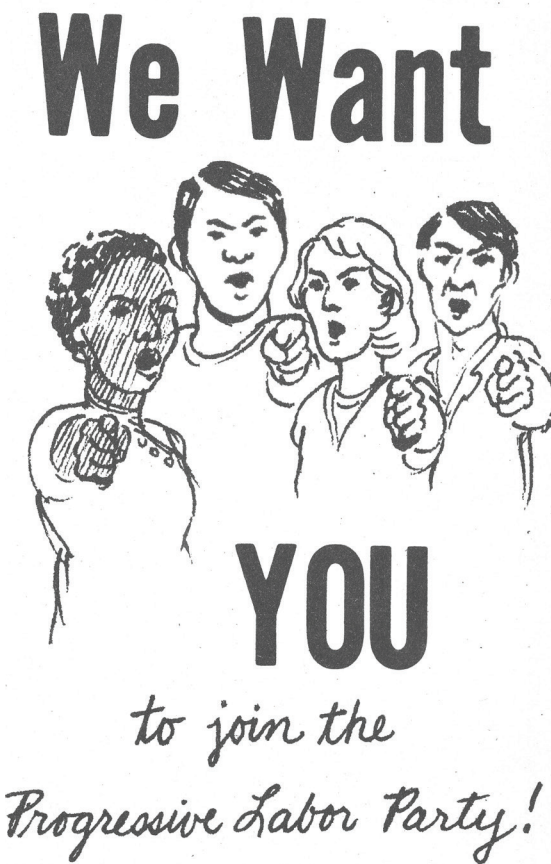
As a communist myself, I thought of what it means to be in a country that claims to be communist. It would be easy to dismiss Cuba as the product of a revisionist false ideology of Castro and Che Guevara. However, something can be learned from the Cuban experience, starting with the 1959 revolution to the present.

Initially Cuba did not claim to have had a revolution. But shortly after the overthrow of the brutal capitalist gangster regime of Fulgencio Batista (who was backed by the U.S.), Cuba allied with the Soviet Union, which under Khrushchev turned state capitalist. That said, Cuba under Castro went about building a country with new management. Property of the rich, including industry, was confiscated. Most Cubans were suffering badly without any healthcare to speak of under Batista. Cubans with money who had something to lose left for Miami if they could.

Given this background, here are some positive observations about Cuba. Cuba has built a health system that is the envy of Latin America and much of the world, with health outcomes comparable to much larger industrialized nations. Maternal/infant mortality is better than the U.S. average. Doctors and other staff take care of patients in primary care neighborhood clinics. They either live above or within walking distance of the clinic. They know their patients because they too are part of the community. There is health care for all and the focus is prevention. Pregnant women often live in group homes where close monitoring of the pregnancy is provided and good nutrition is guaranteed.

Cuba has monuments to the leaders, with an obvious reverence for Fidel and Che. There are other monuments too. We visited a museum and large monument with statues commemorating the 1843 rebellion led by an enslaved woman named Carlota Lucumí. Carlota led a slave rebellion that started in her sugar cane plantation and then moved onto several others. Unfortunately the army crushed the revolt. It struck me that monuments like this should replace the ones in the U.S. South that commemorate the slave-owning Confederacy. The Carlota monument should be emulated in the U.S. with one to Nat Turner or John Brown. In fact, the Cuban army under Castro intervened in support of the rebels in Angola and named their mission Operation Carlota.

The Cuban health system exports itself to other countries in terms of providing healthcare, including Venezuela and Brazil. We heard from a woman physician that led a relief mission in Pakistan after



the earthquake several years ago. Another doctor described leading a mission to assist in the Ebola epidemic in Sierra Leone. There is a medical school in Cuba that trains doctors from dozens of countries, including the U.S. Some students pay tuition. Others, including the 20 U.S. students, do not. Castro agreed to train students from the U.S. in a six- to seven-year program tuition free in exchange for the promise of returning to the U.S. to practice in underserved areas. One speaker stated, “we are a communist country.” It is rare to hear that word used.

Wages are very low in healthcare (including for doctors). Often those working in service or tourism industries make more money. However, healthcare and housing is virtually guaranteed. The condition of housing varies, from the beautifully maintained home (helped by remittances from relatives sending back money from the U.S.) to the broken down. There is a false claim that racism does not exist in Cuba; more lucrative jobs go to lighter-skinned individuals. Many LGBTQ rights are not recognized in Cuba.

There is much more that could be said, but the Cuban experience regarding basic needs such as housing, food, and health care is positive. Interestingly, areas of Cuba lost power with some major damage in the recent hurricane season, but it was restored within a few

days (unlike Puerto Rico).

There is a certain level of cooperation and solidarity within the population that enabled the Cuban people to somewhat overcome the long-standing embargo with very limited resources. I recommend a visit there. It is humbling to witness the residue left from workers’ fightback. Although not a communist country, much can be learned from the workers in Cuba and their 60-year struggle for a better life.

★★★★★

Workers fight tax cuts for the rich

Along with 14 others, I was voluntarily arrested as part of a larger demonstration of hundreds of people who are furious over a tax give-away to the huge corporations and the ultra-wealthy. The union I am part of, Professional Staff Congress, played a major role in organizing the protest. Chants of “Tax the Rich, Not the Poor, We Won’t Take It Anymore!” and “Kill the Bill!” filled the plaza.

The richest 1 percent of the U.S. population already has \$33 trillion in wealth, and they will receive 83 percent of the bill’s tax benefits. By raising the deficit, tax cuts for the rich will trigger automatic cuts in Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security and other social programs. The capitalists couldn’t care less about the elderly who rely on their social security checks to pay their rent and eat, or the sick poor who will be cut off Medicaid.

We talked politics for five hours while waiting to be released:

- Although the Democrats opposed this particular tax bill, they do not oppose tax cuts for the big corporations. Obama had wanted to cut the corporate tax rate from 35 to 28 percent. He established the bi-partisan Simpson-Bowles commission, with nine Democrats and nine Republicans. The commission proposed cutting \$341 billion in Medicare spending and \$268b in spending for Social Security by raising the retirement age to 69 and lowering benefits. Obama was ready to accept the recommendations, but the GOP killed the deal.

- More significantly, the Democrats protect capitalism, which allows a sliver of the population—.01 percent (one out of ten thousand people)—to own \$6 trillion in wealth. This is the U. S. ruling class. The Democrats are every bit as guilty as the Republicans in propping up a system that inevitably produces racist and sexist inequality and countless imperialist wars to expand their profits.

- There is no way to reform the system so that working people have a secure, decent life free of exploitation, racism and sexism and other ills. We have a ways to go before we can smash capitalism, but struggles like these and conversations with our friends take us one step closer.

★★★★★

New book: Leon Trotsky’s Collaboration with Germany & Japan



It’s \$25, plus \$5 for shipping and handling. Send your order and a check to Challenge Periodicals, PO Box 808, Brooklyn NY 11202.

The latest book on Leon Trotsky’s collaboration with fascists.

At the Moscow Trials of 1937 and 1938, some of Leon Trotsky’s followers accused Trotsky of secretly conspiring with Nazi Germany and fascist Japan.

Since Nikita Khrushchev’s “Secret Speech” of 1956 attacking Stalin, these charges have been routinely dismissed as false by Soviet, Russian, and Western historians. But we know now that Khrushchev was lying!

Grover Furr asks the question: What is the evidence that Trotsky conspired with the Germans and Japanese? How should this evidence be analyzed and interpreted? In this book, Furr conducts an objective study of the evidence. He concludes that Trotsky did indeed collaborate with the Germans and Japanese.

The proof that Trotsky was guilty of collaboration with the Nazis and Japanese dramatically changes our understanding of Soviet history of the 1930s and of Joseph Stalin’s role.

USSR history: the anti-communist myth of Holodomor

Continued from page 8

famine. ... The harvest of 1932 essentially made a famine inevitable.

The Soviet government used these procurements to feed 40 million people in the cities and industrial sites who were also starving, further evidence that the harvest was small. About 10 percent of the population of Ukraine died from the famine or associated diseases. But 90 percent survived, the vast majority of whom were peasants, army men of peasant background or workers of peasant origin. The surviving peasants had to work very hard, under conditions of insufficient food, to sow and bring in the 1933 harvest. They did so with significant aid from the Soviet government.

The Soviet government's large-

scale relief campaign which, together with their own hard work under the most difficult conditions, enabled the peasants to produce a large harvest in 1933. In Tauger's judgment:

[T]he general point [is that] the famine was caused by natural factors and that the government helped the peasants produce a larger harvest the next year and end the famine.

The so-called "Holodomor" or "deliberate" and "man-made" famine interpretation is not simply mistaken on some important points. Its proponents misrepresent history by omitting evidence that would undermine their interpretation. It is not history but political propaganda disguised as history.☼

Racist police terror: a year of struggle

Continued from page 5

lawyers are working around the clock to get the indictment thrown out, as was Richard Haste's for the killing of Ramarley Graham in February of 2012."Justice delayed is justice denied"!

The multiracial Justice and Peace Committee scoured the internet to find whatever response the cops' officialdom had made to this telling evaluation. For months, nothing! Finally, we brought this travesty to the attention of our church's governing board which, in July 2017, issued a firm request to the Police Commissioner and the Mayor asking for documentation of a response to the Inspector General's report.

PLP understands this system depends on racism to thrive. Which is why we must continue to fight back. Erickson Brito, James Owens, Arieel Galarza, Dwayne Jeune, Alexander Bonds, and Miguel Richards: All brothers in mental distress (Black or Latin) shot to death by NYPD from November 2016 in Brooklyn to September 2017 in the Bronx. And all killings were pronounced "justified" according to NYPD protocol. A police body camera chillingly

documents Mr. Richard's death on YouTube- a classic psychotic "suicide by cop" case where the psychotic victim is goaded to expose his toy gun by belligerent military police orders before the fatal shots were fired. These racist killings will continue until the workers raise up and defeat the racist capitalist of the world!

PLP have repeatedly organized and demonstrated in solidarity with several victims, their families and friends. And, most importantly, we have reached out to a wide number of community organizations and congregations to develop a fighting platform to struggle to take away resources from the NYPD in order to fund civilian mental health-trained personnel who should be the first responders in all cases involving people in mental distress.

As members of PLP we understand that no reform is premiant and the only true way to free the working class from the horrors of this system is to overthrow it with communist revolution! As the fighters against apartheid in South Africa powerfully sang "We have just begun to FIGHT, we have only started!"☼



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

Pope honors archbishop protector of pedophile priests

NYT, 12/21 — ...For decades the [Catholic] church enable pedophile priests to sexually assault thousands of children. Paying secret settlements, transferring these priests, coaxing silence from victims and families,...then shamefully...cover[ing] its crimes....

...Pope Francis will participate in a funeral Mass for Cardinal Bernard Law, the former archbishop of Boston who...is the institutional face of the scandal. Pope Francis...[instead] of hold[ing] men like Cardinal Law to full account, will...continue to honor him in death.

The victims were as young as 4 years old. Many came from poor families, led by single parents or immigrants....Priests like Boston's John Geoghan....preyed on and raped children like these for the duration of is priesthood. But Mr. Geoghan was one of the many pedophile priests whom Cardinal Law spent decades shielding and shifting from one parish to the next, supplying them with ever more victims, building a temple of lies....

"Cardinal Law knew about Geoghan...yet approved his transfer.... Since 1997, the archdiocese has settled about 50 lawsuits against Geoghan....The archdiocese has moved aggressively to keep information about its supervision of Geoghan out of public view....Law was named a defendant in 25 of the lawsuits....

Cardinal Law "put child molesters over children...." Law later retreated

to the splendor of the Vatican. There, unpunished, he had multiple leadership roles....

"...Cardinal Law...is identified with one overwhelming reality, the sexual abuse by priests...."

...His funeral should be occasion for profound apology, not celebration.

U.S. rulers destroy Black families

NYT, 1/3 — Erica Garner, the civil rights activist and a daughter of Eric Garner, died...two days before New Year's Eve....Her death...[and] her father's death...[are] the ways that black families have been destroyed throughout history....Erica suffered a heart attack...and spent...[a] week in a coma. She died at 27....after her dad had died...at 43 when officer Daniel Pantaleo of the...[NYPD] placed him in a banned chokehold....

Since the country's founding, black families have had to struggle to thrive. Slavery broke them apart by allowing family members to be sold at auction to different owners, and by prohibiting slaves from legally marrying since slaves were classified as property, not people. Millions of black family members were killed during slavery and the lynching era, from 1877 to 1950. The modern legal system separates black families at higher rates than other families through many methods, including disparate sentencing schemes. Black defendants often receive far longer sentences than similarly charged white defendants....

...Prisons increasingly ...force families to pay...to call incarcerated family members....[who] are disproportionately poor and black...instead of allowing free visits...in



person,...a blatant to weaken the bonds that tie those families together.

Black families are also destroyed by police brutality: Michael Brown,... Tamir Rice,...Philando Castile.... Erica Garner's last few years [were]... spent...fighting against police brutality...[and] the forced separation and destruction of black families by the state. And that fight may have killed her....

"They do these things for you to give up," Erica Garner said...last month...."Kalief Browder's mother died of a broken heart because she kept fighting for her son. I'm struggling right now with the stress and everything." "The system...beats you down to where you can't win."

Trump's son-in-law a Mid-East 'mediator' makes millions from Israeli CEOs

NYT, 1/8 — Jared Kushner's... White House assignment [is] to achieve peace in the Middle East....

[while] his family real estate company received a roughly \$30 million investment from Menora Mivtachim,... one of Israel's largest financial institutions....The deal...pumped significant new equity into 10 Maryland apartment complexes controlled by Mr. Kushner's firm....

The Baltimore-area buildings in which Menora invested...documents the poor living conditions and aggressive tactics used by Kushner Companies, including garnishing the bank accounts of low-income tenants and turning off heat and hot water.... The Kushners...teamed up with... Israeli's wealthy Steinmetz family to buy nearly \$200 million of Manhattan apartment buildings as well as to build a luxury rental tower in New Jersey....Mr. Kushner's company has also taken out at least four loans from Israel's largest bank....

And the Kushner family's foundation continues to donate money to a settlement group in the West Bank.

BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION CENTENNIAL SERIES

THE ANTI-COMMUNIST MYTH OF HOLODOMOR



Poster reads, “Lend a helping hand to the fraternal people of Western Ukraine and Western Belarus—our sacred duty!”

This is part of an extensive series about the Bolshevik Revolution and the triumphs, as well as the defeats, of the world communist movement of the 20th century. We welcome your comments and criticisms, and encourage all readers to discuss this period of history with their friends, classmates, co-workers, family, and comrades.

There are many anti-communist lies spread by bosses everywhere, including about Ukraine. The far right-wing is strong in Ukraine in part because it is backed by the Ukrainian government, which masquerades as “not far right.” Fascist lies are accepted as the official truth, taught in Ukrainian schools and promoted by Ukrainian academics. The two basic lies involve the “Holodomor” of the 1930s and Ukraine’s “freedom fighters” — really, Nazi collaborators and mass murderers — during World War II.

The facts

The Holodomor, derived from “to kill by starvation,” refers to the phony genocide by famine in the Soviet Ukraine. There never was any “Holodomor” or deliberate starvation of Ukrainians, or of anybody else in the Soviet Union (USSR). It’s a lie disseminated by Ukrainian nationalists and fascists, with no historical evidence. The “Holodomor” myth was politically motivated from the start. It originated in the Ukrainian diaspora (Ukrainians living outside Ukraine), a population led by veterans of Ukrainian Nazi forces.

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

The Soviet leadership, Joseph Stalin included, did not understand the extent of these famines for some time. No one did. When they finally realized it, they sent millions of tons of food and grain aid to Ukraine and to other regions of the USSR. They

also sent tractors and “political departments” to organize agriculture. The result was a good harvest in 1933, which ended the famine.

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

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

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

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

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

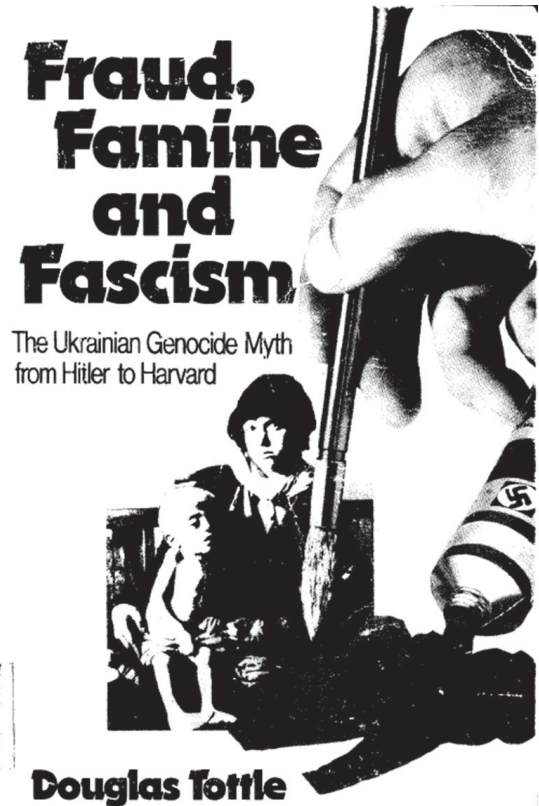
Lies and damned lies

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

Russian-speaking workers in eastern Ukraine are affected by these lies as well. But they also question them, and many reject them. As they should do. Now the open fascists are becoming prominent in the new Ukrainian government in Kiev. This isn’t surprising, since fascist lies have been officially propagated and taught in Ukraine for the past 15 to 20 years.

The question of grain exports

Like the pre-revolutionary Czarist regimes, the Soviet government exported grain. While the USSR



Fraud, Famine and Fascism: The Ukrainian Genocide Myth from Hitler to Harvard by Douglas Tottle (1987).

This book documents how and why fraudulent stories about the Ukrainian famine of the 1930s made the presses worldwide and have become accepted as fact by almost everyone, despite the fact that they are provably false.

For a PDF copy of this out-of-print and rare book, go to plp.org

was exporting it was also allocating much more grain to seed and famine relief. The government accumulated some three million tons in reserves during this period and then allocated two million tons from that to famine relief. Soviet archival sources indicate that the regime returned five million tons of grain from procurements back to villages throughout the USSR in the first half of 1933. This greatly exceeded the amount exported.

However, there was simply not enough food to feed the whole population, even if all exports had been stopped instead of just drastically curtailed, as they were. According to Professor Mark Tauger, the world expert on Russian and Soviet famines:

...[E]ven a complete cessation of exports would not have been enough to prevent

Continued on page 7

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