

CHALLENGE



THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

volume 50 no. 9

May 2, 2018

suggested donation \$1

MAY DAY—WORKERS' DAY FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM



MAY DAY is a celebration of the revolutionary potential of the working class. It is a celebration of our long march towards a world without racism, sexism, and exploitation. And we need YOU to join the fight.

Happy May Day to the international working class! May Day is the working class's international holiday celebrated by tens of millions of workers worldwide. It's a day when workers around the globe march for their common demands, signifying international working-class solidarity. It was born out of — and honors — the Chicago workers' historic struggle for the eight-hour day on May 1, 1886. Many of those labor leaders not only fought

for better working conditions, but also to end the capitalist system. The Progressive Labor Party (PLP) marches on May Day to celebrate workers everywhere who fought back and continue to fight back against the bosses' exploitation.

We also celebrate May Day to not only remember that we are the products of a long history of class struggle, but to keep the red flag flying as we carry on that struggle for a better world - a com-

munist world. There is plenty of reason to celebrate this May Day. Under the clouds of increasing war and fascism, our international revolutionary communist party continues grow and fight back against the bosses. This year's theme - "One World, One Class, One Party" reaffirms our commitment to smash all borders and fight for a communist world.

Continued on page 3

JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

★**EDITORIAL** *Volatile imperialist order fosters fascism worldwide...p 2*

★**TRANSIT** *MTA worker St. Clair killed by profit system...p 4*

★**CHINA** *Communist soldiers, key to destroying imperialism...p 6*

★**COLLEGE** *Fight for jobs and communism...p 4*

★**RACISM** *Antiracists mark 1968 sanitation Strike...p 5*

★**POLICE MURDERS** *Protest murder of Black youth Kemonte and Saheed...p 8*

OUR FIGHT

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

★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
Twitter: @PLPchallenge
Facebook: Challenge Desafio

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.

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, May 2, 2018. Volume 50, No. 9

Editorial

Volatile imperialist order fosters fascism worldwide

As Progressive Labor Party mobilizes and marches for communism in over 20 countries across the globe on May Day, capitalism is moving headlong into crisis. In a time of global economic turbulence, extreme inequality, and intensifying inter-imperialist conflict, the international system that established U.S. dominance and governing norms after the Second World War is beginning to implode. Richard Haass, president of the main-wing U.S. bosses' leading think tank, the Council on Foreign Relations, is lamenting “the fading liberal world order” (cfr.org, 3/21).

Liberal institutions, from “free” media to an “independent” judiciary, are under attack in one-time “democratic” strongholds in Central Europe, Asia, and Latin America. Writing in the New York Times to promote her new book, *Fascism: A Warning*, Madeleine Albright, the bloodthirsty U.S. Secretary of State under arch-racist President Bill Clinton, declared that “fascism—and the tendencies that lead to fascism—pose a more serious threat now than at any time since the end of World War II” (NYT, 4/6). Two days later, the ruling coalition led by Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban and his racist, anti-immigrant, hyper-nationalist Fidesz party swept their national elections to a two-thirds supermajority in Parliament. They are poised to tighten state control over “the media, central bank, constitutional court and nongovernment organizations. European Union leaders have warned those laws would undermine the country's democracy” (cnn.com, 4/8).

Two faces of capitalist dictatorship

Capitalism is by definition an absolute dictatorship of the capitalists, the ruling class that holds state power—for now—in every country in the world. The bosses control every institution, from the schools to the unions to the cops to cable TV news. When they have a choice, they prefer to rule through liberal “democracy,” which conceals the true nature of their system: ruthless exploitation, murderous racism and sexism, genocidal wars for profit. (Albright is most infamous for asserting it was “worth it” to kill half a million children in Iraq with U.N. sanctions after the first Gulf War.) Phony elections and fake “freedoms” veil the rulers' daily atrocities. Liberal democracy fosters the illusion that workers have a say in how things are run, and that capitalism can be reformed to serve workers' needs. It is designed to mislead and pacify our class.

Fascism is a form of capitalism in crisis, when the capitalists can no longer rule in the old way. It typically gains sway when the balance of power among the top imperialists grows unstable—in this case, as a declining U.S. desperately tries to hold onto its shrinking empire against its authoritarian, state capitalist rivals, an aggressive Russia and a rapidly rising China. With ever-wider wars in store, the big powers' bosses need to impose greater discipline on their own class (see CHALLENGE editorial on Facebook, 4/18). At the same time, they must squeeze workers to fund their war efforts—and to enlist the foot soldiers they'll need for the coming global conflict. Seeing their vital interests at stake, the dominant imperialist bosses seek to crush resistance by both rogue capitalists and their most dangerous enemy—the working class. Meanwhile, smaller-capitalist bosses do the same as they scramble to find new alignments and protect their tenuous toeholds.

In such a period, the capitalists cast off their liberal mask and reveal the naked brutality of their system. “Democratic” institutions are discarded. The “rule of law” no longer applies. Racism and sexism—always essential to capitalism—become more codified and extreme, and yoked to the poisonous ideologies of nationalism and patriotism.

But while rising fascism and inevitable global war have devastating implications for the workers of the world, they also present our class—and our revolutionary communist Party—with a historic opportunity. They reflect the unsolvable contradictions of capitalism and the essential weakness of the old order. They set the stage for the possibility of a new world. Out of the fascist onslaught of the 1930s and 1940s, the communist revolution in China—one of the two greatest political advances in history—was born.

Communist ideas triggered a wave of anti-colonial rebellions in Africa and Asia; a mass communist movement flourished in the United States. Though these advances were eventually compromised and lost in a reversal to capitalism, they point the way to a communist future, when the world will be run by and for the working class. This May Day, we will march to symbolize our commitment to and our confidence in that future. We have a world to win!

Central Europe: return of the Eastern Bloc?

The landslide re-election of Hungary's Viktor Orban—the champion of “illiberal democracy” and an open admirer of strongmen like Russia's Vladimir Putin and Turkey's Recep Erdogan—signals the rise of fascist policies in this front-line state between Russia and Western Europe. Orban's program includes the destruction of liberal institutions, an executive-controlled judiciary, and the scapegoating of immigrants and refugees. Similar policies are being embraced by the Czech Republic, Poland, and some of the Balkan states (Washington Post, 4/12)—all members of the Soviet bloc during the Cold War. No less ominous to the U.S. bosses are pro-fascist opposition mass movements in Western Europe, notably Alternative for Germany, Golden Dawn (Greece), the National Front (France), and the League (Italy).

U.S. politicians are concerned that Central European allies are abandoning both liberal democracy and the orbit of U.S. imperialism as they seek better deals with U.S. rivals: “Hungary sits right on the edge of a declining European Union and a resurgent Russia....Centralizing power will improve Budapest's negotiating position for what Orban sees as an inevitable opening to the East” (Stratfor, 10/11/13). The Russian state-owned company Rosatom, chosen without competitive bidding, has been engaged by Orban to expand Hungary's Paks nuclear power plant, with Putin extending a \$10 billion loan to facilitate the project (Politico, 2/1/2017).

In January, after President Milos Zeman was re-elected in the Czech Republic, Putin “praised Zeman's ‘authority,’ and Chinese President Xi Jinping emphasized the [two countries'] ‘strategic partnership’....[In] the coming years Zeman will concentrate on sealing strategic business deals with Russian and Chinese state-owned entities” (dw.com, 1/31).

In Asia, U.S. bosses losing ground to Russia, China

The U.S. has dominated the Philippines' economy and political system since granting independence to the Pacific regional power after World War II. Now, with Chinese and Russian imperialists seeking leverage in the South China Sea, President Rodrigo Duterte is welcoming Russian hardware to shore up his repressive regime. In October 2017, during the first-ever visit by a Russian defense minister, the two countries signed a military logistics deal. A leading military figure noted, “We still prefer U.S. and Western equipment but they are very expensive. If the Russians and Chinese equipment can be comparable in quality, then they can be excellent alternatives” (Reuters, 11/10/17). China has been even more assertive in wooing the Filipino ruling class. When Duterte visited Beijing in October 2016, he was gifted with a \$24 billion business deal (ASEAN Briefing, 4/10/2017).

Turkey, poised on the edge of the Middle East conflagration, is also pivoting toward Moscow. Despite its strong trade ties to the U.S. and European Union, half of Turkey's gas resources come through the Blue Stream pipeline from Russia across the Black Sea, with a second pipeline already approved. Meanwhile, Russia's State Atomic Energy Corporation (Rosatom) is set to build a \$20 billion nuclear power plant in southern Turkey, to be operational by 2023 (Brookings, 10/4/2017). Despite threatened penalties, Erdogan has flouted U.S. sanctions by purchasing Russia's S-400 surface-to-air missile defense system. Since the S-400 cannot be integrated into NATO's common defense system, it represents a potential fracture of NATO's military coordination (Reuters, 4/4).

Continued on page 4

FASCISM & WAR IS COMING

DEFEAT IT WITH COMMUNIST REVOLUTION



liberals attempt to win a larger, more multi racial portion of the working class to war and fascism by coming off as anti-racist or anti-sexist. Their policies, however, will inevitably leads to the deaths of millions around the world. We march on May Day to expose these liberal politicians and win workers to fight for communism.

Fight Back

Our Party started as a small group of revolutionaries who came out of the Communist Party USA over 50 years ago. Since then, our Party has not only grown in size, but our line has changed to reflect the lessons learned from the old communist movement. One of the biggest advances we have made as a party is our fight against nationalism. While it drew a lot of criticism when we first fought for this line (and still does today), history has proven it correct.

Today PLP spans five continents and 27 countries. Members and friends from all over the world are fighting and struggling over the same line. It is this communist leadership that allows PLP to continue to give communist leadership to workers around the world even in these tough times. Under the right conditions, the ability of the working class to fight back, even if they seem like small steps, can turn into giant leaps towards communist revolution. Here are some examples of class struggle happening around the world.

In the **United States** workers and students are fighting back against police murders. The recent murder of Stephon Clark by Sacramento police set off a new wave of protests.

Workers in **Haiti** led by mainly women workers, are fighting back against low wages and terrible working conditions.

Construction workers in **Colombia** have gone on strike and shut down production over back pay.

Healthcare workers in **Mexico** have shut down hospitals as the bosses continue to layoff workers and lower wages in healthcare.

Students in **Tanzania** continue to fight back against deadly housing in their dormitories on campus.

Workers and students in **Israel** have organized multi-racial fight back against the racist deportation of Black workers in Israel.

In **China**, Marxist study groups are organized to win workers and students to expose the current capitalist government and win workers to fighting for a communist world

In **Pakistan**, workers continue to organize strikes and other forms of class struggle even if that means being imprisoned under their "anti terrorism" laws.

Members of the Progressive Labor Party are involved in some of these struggles and attempt to give communist leadership while also learning from the workers and students in these struggles. History has shown us that the past two world wars have lead to communist revolutions (Soviet Union and China). This happened because communists in these areas organized for communism, even under the most oppressive conditions.

As the bosses prepare for World War III, we must also do our best to win workers and students to see the need to turn these struggles into communist schools. We march on May Day to highlight these struggles spread our communist message "**One World, One Class, One Party.**"

Continued from page 1

Stalingrad shows what's possible

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Stalingrad—the turning point of World War II (see CHALLENGE 2/8). Forced to face the Nazi army alone, the Soviet Union's chances of winning looked slim to many around the world. However, the communist leadership in the Soviet Union and the working class around the world didn't have a choice. Millions bravely fought to defeat the Nazis in Stalingrad and eventually win the war. It showed us that the political ideas of communism, when realized by millions, can help defeat any capitalist army.

There certainly are differences between now and 1945. For example, nowhere in the world does the working class hold state power. Communist consciousness is relatively low compared to that period. And while there were errors made by the old communist movement that caused the full restoration of capitalism around the world, examples like Stalingrad show us that even when the odds may seem to be against us, the working class - under communist leadership - can win. We march on May Day for the fighters of Stalingrad and other battles of World War II who heroically gave their lives to smash fascism.

Fascism and war

For many workers the idea of an egalitarian society seems like a far off vision. In the world today over 40 million people were forced to leave their home due to war. While the major powers like the United States, China, and Russia are not fighting each other directly, the world is at war. From Syria to Somalia, North Korea to Venezuela, the imperialist powers are putting their pieces in place in anticipation for another world war and the working class has been paying the price.

This rivalry continues to move the world today, affecting all aspects of life. The U.S. capitalist class fights with each other over individual interests while millions of workers continue to drink unsafe water, undocumented workers and students live in fear of deportation, and police murder continues to take the lives of Black, Latin, and all workers. One thing they do agree on, however, is that they must continue to push racism to divide and conquer the working class.

As the bosses march towards war, fascism is the order of the day. The ruling classes of China and Russia shed the cloak of liberal "democracy" by jailing, torturing, or killing capitalists that put their own interest before those of their class. In Saudi Arabia, we are also seeing this out in

the open under the new Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. Many of our comrades, from Pakistan to El Salvador, have been living under these conditions for decades. However, this is becoming more obvious amongst the major capitalist countries. We march on May Day for the millions of workers and students who continue to live under war and fascism, knowing one day that millions will join us in raising the red flag in the Middle East, Africa, and all over the world.

Liberal politicians lead the way to fascism

The U.S. imperialist rulers are still attempting to solve their problems without open murder or torture. They are using the Robert Mueller investigation and elections to discipline Trump and the domestic capitalists behind him. Whether it is gun violence or sexism, the liberal rulers are trying to position themselves as the champions of the working class.

It is no different for workers in countries like Mexico or France. In Mexico, liberal politicians try to trick the working class by creating alliances with China rather than the U.S. In France, politicians like Emmanuel Macron win workers by not being as openly racist as his opponents. This is one reason why PLP says that liberals are the main danger (see editorial, page 2). Trump may win white workers to the gutter racism portrayed by the Nazis, but

Find out more about PLP's theory and struggle. Get your free copy of the latest PL Magazine at <https://bit.ly/2J7t4k6>

KCC: Fight for jobs and communism

BROOKLYN, March 29—“What do we want? JOB RETENTION! When do we want it? NOW!” Chants echoed through Kingsborough Community College’s (KCC) cafeteria as a multiracial group of almost two dozen women and men students, faculty, and campus workers, paraded to the cash registers.

The rally was held in defense of about 50 mostly Black, Latin and women cafeteria workers facing mass terminations at the end of the day. Their privately contracted employer, Metropolitan Food Services (MFS), had announced earlier in the week that their contract was terminated by KCC.

Hundreds of international and multiracial students listened as a speaker greeted them in Russian, Haitian Creole, Spanish, Arabic, and English. We are here “standing alongside students and custodial workers, united against Metropolitan’s racist and sexist treatment of our working class sisters and brothers in the Kingsborough cafeteria.” Three demands were announced: guaranteed employment for all cafeteria workers with the next food vendor; recognition of the cafeteria workers’ union; and hiring double the custodial staff.

KCC’s pattern of racist behavior also extends to the mostly Black custodial workers. They are overworked with half the necessary staffing, and endure racist treatment by their white supervisors. One Black worker, who had a heart attack on campus last month, attributes it to the toxic racism at KCC.

But it’s the same capitalist system that attacks workers all over the world. All over the City University of New York (CUNY) students pay high tuition while course sections are cut and the KCC campus falls apart. There are a half-dozen military recruiters standing just outside of the cafeteria. The U.S.

bosses want every one of these students fighting their next imperialist war with Russia or China. And if you aren’t shipped off to fight a bosses’ war, this system offers you unemployment, deportation, or murder by racist cops, just like Stephon Clark!

Dare to struggle

Quickly, a large number of CUNY Public Safety and NYPD cops arrived. Defying this attempt to intimidate them, the protesters marched to the president’s office, militantly chanting “Shut this racist system down! Shut this sexist system down!” A Black student delivered our demands to the president’s chief of staff. Guarded by police, she stated the president was out and “would issue a formal response.”

Under heavy police watch, a small group returned to the cafeteria. The workers began clapping and cheering. As some tearful hugs were exchanged, workers excitedly related how mad their supervisors were, how hard they tried to get their coworkers to walk off the job, and how to organize better next time! One Black worker, a young mother, said: “When we came in today we were all depressed and sad. But after that demonstration, our heads are held high.”

Progressive Labor Party fights for her to become a mass leader for our class because it’s capitalism that destroys workers’ lives, far beyond just KCC. Racist and sexist exploitation will only be ended when capitalism is burned to the ground by millions of workers, led by workers just like her in PLP. We invite this young woman, her coworkers, and the students and faculty of KCC to join this year’s May Day march in Brooklyn and help lead our movement. Join us, and dare to struggle with heads

held high.

Workers need a revolutionary communist party

This demonstration was a step in breaking down the barriers of segregation by skin color and job title. And this multiracial unity of campus workers, students and faculty shows the potential for the growth of a revolutionary communist movement. Communists in the Progressive Labor Party have been supporting the struggles of the cafeteria workers (see CHALLENGE, 10/10/17). Our study groups show potential for new membership, while our regular CHALLENGE distributions at the college entrance have helped communist ideas spread into the KCC community. Hundreds of leaflets entitled “Fight for KCC Cafeteria Workers’ Rights; Unite to Smash Wage Slavery!” were distributed by members, friends and CHALLENGE readers. In this struggle, the need for our class to have a revolutionary Party has become clear.

The struggle continues

Many cafeteria workers received termination letters as they clocked out at the end of the day. But very quickly some have been transferred to other locations and others rehired by the new vendor. We will continue the struggle until all the workers have their jobs back. And a few days later a group of staff and students joined a multiracial march, 2,000 strong, to protest the racist killing of a Black man in Brooklyn. We took the struggle from the job to the streets in anti racist solidarity.

Many workers are developing confidence in our class and in the Party’s ideas. The fight goes on – for jobs and for communist revolution! Join us!✪

Editorial

Continued from page 2

Liberal fascists the greatest danger

While the likes of Putin and Viktor Orban—or Racist-in-Chief Donald Trump—are obvious harbingers of fascism, the greatest danger to the working class has historically come from the liberal fascists who mislead our class to slaughter. In France, for example, Prime Minister Emmanuel Macron has vowed to tighten state control over the internet “to protect [our] democratic life” (rt.com, 1/4). His regime has decimated the country’s labor protections. In the name of anti-terrorism, it has installed a surveillance state with expanded police powers that would be the envy of the National Front (Financial Times, 10/2/17).

In the U.S., such “friendly faces” as Bernie Sanders, Joe Biden, Kamala Harris, and Elizabeth Warren are capitalizing on Trump’s unpopularity to usher disaffected workers back into the Democratic Party. But beware: These are the same figures who will strive to unify and mobilize the population for war and fascism in the interests of imperialism. As revolutionary communists, we have a different job. Our task is to expose the liberal misleaders and prepare our sisters and brothers to turn the guns around. As world war draws closer, our challenge is to prepare for class war against racism, imperialism, and the bosses’ fascist crimes.

R. Palme Dutt, a prominent communist theoretician in the 1930s, argued that as a global capitalist crisis destabilizes society, there can only be one of two outcomes: socialism (communism) or a descent into barbarism. Around the world, that descent is well underway. This May Day, join PLP to fight for workers’ power instead!✪

MTA worker St. Clair killed by profit system

Capitalism kills off workers with racism, sexism and war. We are reminded of this when we discuss the destruction going on in Yemen, Haiti or Puerto Rico. However, capitalism also kills workers without the open viciousness of war, racism or sexism. Day after day it also kills workers based on class.

This sometimes goes unnoticed. We can explain how Shantel Davis was killed by a Black cop in the name of racism. We can say that the lack of a response or fight-back for any woman killed by the racist police system is a product of sexism. We can describe the deaths that are happening in Yemen, supported by U. S. money and military equipment. But sometimes it’s just the bottom line taking over and killing. The need for bigger profits ultimately leads to the death of many workers.

Track worker murdered by MTA

That’s exactly what killed 23-year-old St Clair Zaire Richards Stephens of Transit Workers Union (TWU) local 100. Profit margins killed him.

He was a track worker of the NYC subway system, run by the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) and held together by band-aids. On March 20, he fell to his death because of lousy management and a subway system where the MTA bosses place profit over safety. They make rules for the workers that produce death on the job. The bosses know what’s safe and what’s not safe but if it doesn’t make sense, they let it ride until a worker gets killed. It’s a reactionary system. Nothing changes until someone gets hurt.

Bosses blame the dead for dying

The union bosses are also in bed with this plan. One mouthpiece of the bosses, also known as the New York Post, pointed out the weight of St. Clair, as if his death was his own fault, and the union leadership pushed the same line. “He was a big worker,” said Union President Utano. No one asked about the working conditions that led to the death of St. Clair.

The management organizes stand-downs to discuss what happened when track workers die. They use these to cover up the underfunded transit system and blame the workers. At the stand-downs these bosses pushed the same line. “He was a big worker” was the phrase of the day. They also reminded all track workers that there’s a rule against leaning on the handrails. There was no mention of why wood handrails were still in use. They did nothing to stop St. Clair from falling to his death. Wood handrails were supposed to be phased out decades ago.

NYC TRANSIT BY THE NUMBERS

largest transit system in the U.S.

73,348 workers transports population of 15.3 mil

73 percent male

41 percent Black, 20 percent Latin

Subway delays

The subway delays are also the product of capitalism. The bosses don’t care how the wage slaves get to work; they better just get there. The workers pay when the rich decide it’s time for cutbacks. They will pay with fare hikes. The Governor of New York took \$60 million from the MTA’s budget. That budget does more than pay the union workers. It takes care of repairs. The riding public are second-class citizens. Many believe the workers are the reasons for the delays but the MTA bosses hide the real truth. The MTA bosses pay their loan payments to the banks before they make repairs or pay workers. The banks milk the system in the name of profit. The union leadership doesn’t point this out and this puts it’s union dues paying members on the wrong side of the ridership’s anger. The New York Daily News recently reported about the MTA bosses fudging data for over 10,000 subway delays (3/27).

Ask anyone who works for the MTA and they will explain the delays. The bosses don’t care about moving the poor working class around the city. They only react after a delay. The system has been left to rot for decades and now we are seeing the results.

Worker-rider unity needed

Basically rank and file transit workers and riding workers have to pull together and fight for any improvements in the transit system. Both suffer the effects of a capitalist profit-driven system. United the two groups could fight against the billionaire bosses and their management stooges. We should fight to improve both the working conditions and the riding conditions for the entire working class. However, like every reform the bosses will eventually push back and so we would have to organize and fight again.

We need a system run by the workers for the workers. The ultimate response to these poor conditions is communism. Only then will workers have good working conditions and be able to help improve our society while getting to their location on time.✪

50-yr anniversary of 'I AM A MAN' March:

Antiracists Mark Sanitation Strike & MLK assassination

MEMPHIS, TN, April 4—Fifty years ago, 1,300 mostly Black sanitation workers fought an important and bold battle here. Today, Memphis is still ravaged by capitalism. All voting has done is promote some Black politicians. More than ever, we need a militant anti-racist, anti-sexist movement with workers' power, communism, as our goal.

The sanitation workers' fight was both an economic and antiracist struggle. They began a strike in February 1968 against the city of Memphis after two workers, Echol Cole and Robert Walker, were crushed in the faulty mechanism of the truck they were using to pick up trash, while on the same day, 22 Black workers had been sent home with no pay, while their white supervisors were kept on. Their courageous strike was for economic demands (they earned poverty wages) and also against plantation-like working conditions. The Mayor of Memphis refused to even talk to local 1733, the workers' union. The workers' iconic slogan became: I AM A MAN. The Memphis strike occurred as militancy against racism in the U.S. and around the world was increasing and the Vietnam War was raging. Mass movements addressing these issues were shaking the foundations of the U.S. capitalist system.

Today, the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) and the Church of God in Christ (COGIC) have called for a commemoration of the strike and of the assassination of Dr Martin Luther King Jr., which occurred the morning after his speech to the strikers and community supporters at the Mason Temple.

Fifty years after the 1968 strike, AFSCME's local 1733 had finally won a modest pension plan so that sanitation workers might be able to afford to retire. The city of Memphis is the poorest city of its size in the U.S. Racism and poverty still grip the Black population there, who make up 63 percent of the city.

Don't vote; organize!

In the workshops and remarks by union and church leaders, we were urged to register to vote. Speaker after speaker trotted out that worn-out, failed strategy. Reverend Blake of COGIC made the misleading argument that divisive militants had weakened the civil rights movement. One speaker, however, let the truth get out. He recalled that Dr. King had been rebuffed by President Lyndon Johnson in 1965 about passing a voting rights bill. It was reported that Johnson said he didn't have the power to pass such a bill. King said then we'll give him



Striking sanitation workers march past the National Guard troops and army tanks in Memphis in March 1968

the power. How was that done? Millions of people marching in the streets. Millions of people questioning the nature of capitalist society and inequality. Millions of people questioning the imperialist war machine.

The real truth, however, is that voting never has and never will give workers real "choice" and never will free us from the war and misery of capitalism. Time and again, these misleaders work to convince masses of workers to rely on the very system that is built on racist lies and designed to exploit. The real truth is that only overthrowing capitalism and building a worker-run communist system can create the conditions that we need and deserve.

Today, what AFSCME and other unions are re-

ally concerned with is the Supreme Court ruling on the Janus v. AFSCME case, which would put right-to-work laws into effect for public employee unions in 23 states, in effect making them nationwide. Right-to-work means that workers do not have to pay union dues. This would dramatically weaken the remaining union sectors and disproportionately penalize Black and women workers who hold many public sector jobs.

The lessons of 50 years ago are that masses of workers can make history but without a revolutionary communist outlook, they will remain on a capitalist treadmill fighting for crumbs off the bosses' table. Join PLP and keep the fight moving forward!✊

NYC: Sharpen the fight against racist terror

NEW YORK CITY, April 19—Recently, our church justice and peace community met to review our past several months' work and to plan for our "spring offensive." Those of us involved in the Sanctuary movement attended a city-wide meeting to continue planning and organizing movements against racist ICE raids in our neighborhoods.

This month, Fascist-in-Chief Donald Trump Tweeted his opposition to a deal for DACA—Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. The program shields certain undocumented workers from deportation for two years, allowing them to get work permits.

While DACA itself was essentially a ploy by U.S. bosses for undocumented workers to serve their imperialist needs, even with the "protections" it offered, ICE officials have arrested DACA recipients before. The bosses will always break their own laws to keep workers in line and intimidated.

We are reaching out to houses of faith, community groups, workers, and small businesses (bodegas, barber shops, salons, and others that are part of the community). In order to fight back against ICE and growing fascism we must win workers to understand that all of us have the same needs and interests.

We must organize more and more workers to band together so that when ICE shows up in our

neighborhoods, it will be clear that racism and fascism are not welcome! We are also celebrating the victory of one of our church members for whom we mobilized widely in and beyond church membership.

But more importantly, we must bring working-class people to understand that the only way to permanently end this terror is through communist revolution. Nothing less!

The other focus of our study-action group is the scourge of racist police terror—particularly against those who are suffering mental crises. Our main campaign in this regard is for Deborah Danner, a 66-year-old Black worker from the Bronx who coped with chronic schizophrenia most of her life. On October 18, 2016 a neighbor called the local precinct, asking that Danner be brought to a hospital after an acute psychotic episode. The Fire Department EMT's who responded first were beginning to calm her sufficiently. Then Sergeant Hugh Barry came on the scene, confronted her, and within five minutes, claiming that she was threatening him with a bat, killed her with his service revolver, never even attempting to use the taser he had at hand.

This killing was so incredibly egregious even the mayor and police commissioner had to denounce it and suspended Sgt. Barry immediately.

The Bronx DA dragged his feet for months, but finally got the pig indicted and he stood trial before

a judge last month. No surprise that Barry was acquitted! They brought in a judge from Westchester County who would face no political pressure from any Bronx constituents outraged by racist police. The judge also had worked for the same District Attorney's office that had declined to prosecute the White Plains cop who had killed Kenneth Chamberlain a few years before under similar circumstances as Ms. Danner's. The fix was obviously in from the start.

Several congregations mobilized to have a presence each day in court - we managed to bring fifteen over the course of the trial. Three of us joined in a militant action with several Black Lives Matter members outside the court house and the chief court cop ripped literature out of our hands. But the most important result is that we are now part of building a city-wide, anti racist movement to fight back against police killings, particularly of the mentally ill.

This ordeal shows that in "liberal" NYC, racist police terror is just as potent as any so-called "conservative" cities out there.

At our Thursday meeting we listed 18 congregations, community groups, professional associations and labor unions where we have ties. Our goal is to help lead hundreds, then thousands against this racist system, and to shut it down!!✊

Communist soldiers, key to destroying imperialism

General Your Tank is A Powerful Vehicle

General, Your Tank is a Powerful Vehicle
It smashes down forests and crushes a hundred men.
But it has one defect:
It needs a driver.

General, your bomber is powerful.
It flies faster than a storm and carries more than an elephant.
But it has one defect:
It needs a mechanic.

General, man is very useful.
He can fly and he can kill.
But he has one defect:
He can think.

Bertolt Brecht
Published in German, 1939
("Der Mensch hat einen Fehler: Er kann denken")

A friend from China had an interesting reaction when he saw the 2005 documentary *Sir! No Sir!* This friend sometimes gets upset when I talk about China as a rising imperialist power. I'm trying to make the point that when imperialists start wars with each other over control of the world's riches, we "don't have a dog in that fight." But my friend is painfully aware of the history of racist humiliation the Chinese experienced from the middle of the 19th century until the communist-led revolution in 1949. This colors his thinking. Clearly, if we are to have Chinese workers and youth as friends and eventually comrades, we must know a little history (see box).

We Want



YOU

to join the

Progressive Labor Party!

Learning from the Vietnam Rebellion

So what impacted my friend profoundly about that film? *Sir! No Sir!* presents original footage from the Vietnam war period in the 1960s and 1970s, interspersed with interviews with former soldiers, several of whom are shown in the archival footage as young women and men. As the war went on, they began to see with their own eyes what it was really about—as opposed to the official U.S. propaganda their officers told them.

In the Tet offensive of 1968, the communists of the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) and their South Vietnamese comrades in the National Liberation Front overran most of the country with the support of the civilian population. This made it clear that the Vietnamese people did not view the U.S. as the "liberators". U.S. soldiers started to publish underground anti-war newspapers—a dangerous undertaking inside the military.



Soldiers began disobeying orders, organized rebellions and even killed their gung-ho officers who wanted to force them into battle against the workers of Vietnam. One Black soldier explained it this way:

I seen Charlie ... NVA ..., right there laying down as I walked by, I looked at him, he looked at me. Keep on goin' about my business. This man didn't do me nothin', he ain't hurt me in no type of way, he ain't hurt none of my Black people, none of my families, so why should I shoot him?

Over 500,000 soldiers, according to the Army's own statistics, deserted the military. Soldiers were beaten, shot and imprisoned but the rebellions grew. By 1971, according to Marine Colonel Robert Heinl, Jr., the military was no longer under the officers' control.

By every conceivable indicator, our army that remains in Vietnam is in a state approaching collapse, with individual units avoiding or having refused combat, murdering their officers and non-commissioned officers, drug-ridden, and dispirited where not near mutinous. (Originally published in Armed Forces Journal, 6/7/1971)

On an intellectual level, my friend understands that millions of U.S. workers have organized and struggled against U.S. imperialism for decades, including thousands in Progressive Labor Party. But it was not until he saw that documentary did the truth sink in. An imperialist army can have such anti-imperialist soldiers that it turns into something else. Wars are won or lost more by political understanding and commitment than by technological advantage. Smart bombs can be neutralized by thinking soldiers (see Bertolt Brecht poem).

This is a useful film to show friends. It was produced and directed by David Zeiger, who worked at an anti-war coffee house near Fort Hood during the Vietnam war. Find it on Netflix and YouTube. It would be even more useful if it had subtitles in Spanish, Chinese, Russian and other languages so that workers on other lands could have the same insight my friend had.

Win hearts and minds

The rulers of the U.S., China and other imperialist countries recognize the need to "win the hearts and minds" of potential soldiers. Witness the hugely popular series of "Rambo" movies (1982 to 2008) in the U.S. and their Chinese parallel, "Wolf Warrior" and "Wolf Warrior 2" (2015 to 2017). Communists must intensify our work in opposing the poisonous nationalist ideas of the ruling class. The role of revolutionaries is to equip soldiers, workers, and youth—present and future—with understanding that will make it possible for them to do what is in their class interests, as those brave young soldiers did during Vietnam.

The enemy is the generals on both sides, not your brother or sister wearing the other uniform. This understanding must be spread far and wide if we are to turn the coming inter-imperialist war into an international revolutionary war for communism. ☸

Century & a half of history, in brief

In 1839 The British attacked China in the first of the "Opium Wars." They won several concessions from the Chinese, but, 17 years later, pushing for deeper commercial penetration of China, they invaded the country and marched on Beijing, destroying the Summer Palace and forcing the Chinese to sign a degrading treaty. Under that agreement China had to let Europeans and Americans occupy parts of the major seaports, foist their products on the Chinese (including legalizing opium imported from the British colony of India), and extract riches from the country. Westerners were not subject to Chinese law in their "concessions," large areas in several port cities, so Chinese workers employed there could be beaten or even killed and their Western bosses were not liable to any sanction from a Chinese court. To an American, it sounds a lot like the inhuman, racist treatment of Black people abducted from Africa into North American slavery.

This humiliation was not reversed for over 80 years. During and after World War II, the Chinese Communist Party, at the time under leadership of Mao Zedong and others trying to build socialism in China, mobilized millions of farmers and workers into a Red Army and drove Chiang Kai-shek and his capitalist ruling class off the Chinese mainland, despite Chiang's strong backing by the United States. Mao Zedong then declared the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. After a generation of socialist development, the CCP took a decisive turn toward capitalism. This choice of the "capitalist road" is associated in the thinking of most Chinese today with the death of Mao in 1976. After Mao's death, Deng Xiaoping, who had been disgraced during the Cultural Revolution as a capitalist roader, became "paramount leader" and led China's return to a capitalist market economy.

China's current rulers are thoroughly capitalist, presiding over huge inequality, massive sweatshops and, since 2001, admitting capitalists into full membership in the CCP. Still, they make a point of presenting themselves as carrying forward the banner of Mao. To the extent that Mao was a Chinese nationalist, there is some truth to that. But around the world workers admire Mao Zedong as a revolutionary and an internationalist. The problem is that the CCP "owns the brand." In China president Xi Jinping's main speech to the Party at their October, 2017, congress, he invoked the name of Mao repeatedly and cast himself as modern China's third great leader, after Mao and Deng. The ruling Chinese capitalists in the CCP recognize the power of Mao's image over the political feelings of the Chinese people. They cynically build up the nationalist side and negate the communist side of Mao Zedong as a way of winning the people's loyalty for the coming war.

Protest vs. Racist Murder of Kemonte

Continued from page 8

mation to find her son's alleged partners in the robbery.

Three local police departments were on the scene of the incident, and they withheld their detailed reports from Tasheena and the public. Three months after his death, his mother had to take the police departments to court because she still hadn't received the reports and video from the killing.

Finally, Tasheena was given three different police reports. One stated that he was running while shot, another saying he was "lying in wait" to ambush police, and the last claiming he charged at officers with his gun drawn. At first they told her no weapon was recovered near Kemonte. A week later, they called her back to inform her that "a weapon was recovered near his body."

Despite the police story's incoherence and lack of evidence, the county prosecutor, Bernard Carter ruled the murder justified. This is the same Black prosecutor who is notorious for locking up Black and Latin youth. Most infamously, Carter fought to get legislation passed to fine and possibly arrest youth for "sagging pants," a racist law that would be used disproportionately to profile and criminalize Black youth.

Taking the fight back to the kkkops

The first stop of the rally was the Gary Police Department, home base for racist kkkop and proud #BlueLivesMatter thug Justin Hedrick. We formed a picket line and chanted for them to stop hiding Hedrick and other racists like him. Fired up in spite of the freezing Midwest weather, we next marched on to Kemonte's school.



At the school his friends spoke up for him. The story they told contradicted the vile racist image the police and media have tried to present, that of a hardened criminal at age 15. His friends spoke about how much of a generous person Kemonte was, and how he would go without so his friends and family would be okay. Upon leaving the school, we marched to our final destination: Gary City Hall.

At this time, a PL'er called out the profit system of capitalism as the real culprit that emboldened Hedrick to murder Kemonte. She stated capitalism has enabled countless racist killer cops and vigilantes alike to murder and maim working-class people around the world.

At City Hall, a member of Black Lives Matter read the press release and demands, culminating with the demand to fire Justin Hedrick. The rally was finalized with a heartfelt speech from Tasheena, a fighter who, in spite of police intimidation, a county prosecutor who justified her son's death,

and a stalling lawyer, has chosen to stand up and fight.

Black workers are key in the struggle for revolution, and Tasheena's courage further highlights that Black women workers are an essential aspect of that force.

Reform must build toward communist revolution

The capitalist bosses are more than ready to unleash their police attack dogs on workers, because their system can only be profitable when the majority of workers are so weakened through intimidation, division, and violence that they can't organize to fight back.

And alongside this developing fightback here, we can't be content with just getting Hedrick fired. Building an electoral campaign to oust county prosecutor Bernard Carter cannot be the end of the tunnel either. Until we destroy capitalism, someone else will replace these two fascists in the role of suppressing Black and Latin working class youth. No matter what face capitalism uses—Obama's or Trump's—the result is exploitation of our labor, unemployment, racism and war for our class.

Deepening our ties with workers everywhere, sharing leadership and experience as we challenge our enemies, provides our class and its Party with the skill and confidence that we can and will win. Together through constant struggle we will crush this racist, sexist profit system and build an egalitarian communist world that meets the needs of all workers and youth.✊



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

Gov't-enforced slavery of immigrants nets millions for detention companies

NYT, 4/5 (op-ed J. Stevens) — ...Black-shirted federal agents barging into apartment complexes, convenience stores and school pick-up sites... round up...immigrants [promotes]...forced labor — some call it slavery — inside detention facilities....Yes, detention is a business. In 2010, private prisons and their lenders and investors lobbied Congress to pass a law ordering Immigration and Customs Enforcement to maintain contracts for no fewer than 34,000 beds per night. This means that when detention counts are low, people would otherwise be released because they pose no danger... remain locked up, at a cost...of \$125 s a day.

The people detained at these facilities do almost all of the work that keeps them running.... That includes cooking, serving and cleaning up food, janitorial services, hair-cutting, painting, floor buffing and even vehicle maintenance.

Workers in immigration custody have suffered injuries and even died....Cesar Gonzalez was killed...when his jackhammer hit an electrical cable, sending 10,000 volts of direct current through his body....

Two...detention companies — GEO and Core-Civic...are...violating state minimum wage laws, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act and laws prohibiting unjust enrichment...GEO may be paying just 1.25 percent to 6 percent of minimum wage.... That's tens of millions of dollars GEO...[owes] in back wages to up to 62,000 people....And that's just at one facility....18 Republican members of the House....asked that those who work while locked up are "not employees" and that federal minimum wage laws do not apply to them.

U.S. rulers' racist laws confined Black families to ghettos for 100 years

NYT, 4/5 — ...The...housing and urban development...agency [HUD]...has prolonged segrega-

tion in housing since the 1960s under both Democratic and Republican administrations....allowing cities to confine families to federally financed ghettos that offer little or no access to jobs, transportation or viable schools....

...A lawsuit...accuses HUD of illegally funneling federal money to the city of Houston, despite a 2017 finding by HUD itself that the city was...allowing racially motivated opposition to stop affordable housing projects in white neighborhoods. In a detail reminiscent of the Jim Crow South,...Houston discriminates even at the level of flood relief, maintaining "entirely different (and markedly inferior) drainage systems in predominantly minority neighborhoods, exposing...[them] to increased risk from storms...."

...The residential segregation that is pervasive in the United States today was partly created by explicit federal policies that date back at least to World War I....The federal insistence on segregated housing introduced Jim Crow separation in areas of the country outside the South where it had previously been unknown....Government...housing for defense workers near military installations and factories during World War I was founded on the premise that African-American families would be excluded "even from projects in northern and western industrial centers where they worked in significant numbers."

The same toxic pattern prevailed under Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, when the government created the first public housing projects for nondefense workers, building separate projects for black people, segregating buildings by race or excluding African-Americans entirely....Racially integrated communities were razed to make way for Jim Crow housing....In 1934...the government typically denied mortgages to African-Americans, shutting out even affluent black people from the suburban homeownership boom...during the middle decades of the 20th century....The vast wealth gap that exists today between whites and African-Americans has its roots in this era.

U.S.-backed Saudis' Yemen airstrike 'cut civilians into pieces'

NYT, 4/3 — The heat was stifling, the power out. So the transients, mostly women and children dis-

placed from nearby towns, ventured outside their temporary housing...for some air....Then the Saudi warplanes struck.

...Medics and residents...described...an instant midmorning slaughter in a residential housing area; the warplanes fired missiles at the civilians, cutting them to pieces as they sought relief from the 92-degree temperature. At least 14 were killed and nine wounded....The airstrike was a reminder of the lethal hazards facing unarmed Yemenis from the firepower wielded by the Saudi-led coalition....

"The ambulances could not cross into the targeted areas due to intensity of the jets..."the director of the city health bureau...said....He said there had been no military presence nearby. Medics...said...only two bodies could be identified. Most of the dead were in pieces.The targeted people were in the open to cool themselves as there was not electricity in the complex....

The United Nations...said that the coalition is responsible for a majority of the roughly 10,000 civilians killed since the Saudis began bombing in March 2015....The United States...has been providing military support to the Saudi coalition...including refueling, intelligence and targeting guidance....

India's 'democracy' exploits 8- to 14-year-olds in 'inhuman conditions'

GW, 4/13-19 — [Rajkot is] one of the country's hubs for cheap artificial jewelry sold in the U.S., UK and European markets....

...Two children were spotted wandering near a train station...in Rajkot after escaping a workshop in the city. There they had worked "day and night" assembling imitation jewelry...often sleeping in the same room with up to a dozen other children and being subjected to frequent beatings.

"They were kept in inhuman conditions and forced to do work that is not suitable to...a child," said...a deputy commissioner....

So far 73 children — most aged between eight and 14 — have been found in the city, where about 700 imitation jewelry firms are based....Most of the children....had been receiving about (\$46) per month....in the \$150 million industry in Rajkot.

THE KLAN IN BLUE KILLS OUR CLASS; ABOLISH THE POLICE AND RACISM

Saheed Vassell



BROOKLYN, NY—Saheed Vassell was a 34 year old Black man widely known on the block where he was gunned down on April 4th by a New York Police Department (NYPD) hitsquad with no questions asked. This racist killing shows “community policing” as a liberal farce meant to cover up the true nature of the cops. Community policing is portrayed as helpful, friendly and in tune with the needs of the residents. In reality the cops shot and killed Saheed within seconds of arriving on the scene.

The bosses’ racist media presented Saheed to the world as “crazy” and “homeless” in the days since this racist murder. But neighborhood residents described him as “a friendly man who was mentally ill.” He was helpful and did odd jobs for neighborhood businesses.

A man who knew him for years said, “He’s harmless. A very willing guy, a very nice guy, a good guy.” (New York Times, 4/4).

The local cops knew him. That’s how community policing is supposed to work. But witnesses at the scene said that the kkkops fired immediately with no warning. Just that quickly community policing is exposed as a liberal cover to hide the true role of the police. Their job is to terrorize the working class to protect the profits and property of the capitalists. “These officers are trained to kill Black and brown people” explained a speaker at the rally the next day.

Close to 50 people gathered at the scene of the killing just hours after it happened. The next day a multiracial crowd of several thousand rallied and marched to the 71st precinct. Speakers at the rally suggested “Stop calling 911.” The Progressive Labor Party maintained a vigorous zone of chanting in this integrated march. We interspersed familiar chants to “Shut it Down!” and tagging the NYPD as the KKK. We also called for “the only solution is communist revolution” and “liberal misleaders you can’t hide, we charge you with genocide!”

Meanwhile Mayor Bill de Blasio apologized for and defended his kkkops by repeating the excuse that they were responding to 911 calls of a man with a gun. This was a setback for the model of community policing that he promotes. The bosses want to direct the multi-racial anger this case has sparked into a renewed push for community policing.

Our connections with other families in the fight for justice against police murder position us to take the politics of this latest outrage beyond the fake ‘solutions’ of elections and ‘better’ community policing. “Stop calling 911” is a slogan pregnant with revolutionary implications. It means workers have to rely on ourselves to solve our problems. We can’t be calling on the cops to help.

Relying on ourselves means building a mass, multiracial movement against racism and sexism, and also for communism. We don’t need the bosses murderous system or the cops who prop it up. May Day is the opportunity for us to redouble our efforts to win anti-racist fighters to this understanding that only communist revolution can bring and end to racist police murder.✳



Kemonte Cobbs

GARY, INDIANA—Over 30 multiracial and multi-generational women and men gathered today in downtown Gary, Indiana, to protest racist police terror and the capitalist injustice system that protects it.

A local Black Lives Matter (BLM) group, with Progressive Labor Party members and friends organized the action to support the family of Kemonte Cobbs, a 15-year-old Black student killed by police on August 1, 2017. We marched through the city’s downtown area, calling for an end to racist police terror, and for the

murderous cop in question, Justin Hedrick, to be fired and arrested.

KKKops and courts work hand-in-hand

Kemonte was allegedly involved in the robbery of a cellphone store earlier in the day that he was murdered, but instead of allowing him “due process” and to be tried by a “jury of his peers,” he was executed, shot in the top of his head.

Immediately following the murder, cops and hospital officials began the process of withholding information from Kemonte’s mother, Tasheena Brooks, while also pressuring her for infor-

Continued on page 7



Brooklyn: April 28 at 11:30 AM. intersection of Hillel Pl & Flatbush Ave
Chicago: April 28 at 1:30 PM. intersection of 47 St & Cottage Grove Ave

SUBSCRIBE or RENEW!

All the communist politics, news, and struggle from around the world!
•••one-year subscription: \$20 individual \$45 for institution

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Make check or money order to: Challenge Periodicals,
PO Box 808, Brooklyn, NY 11202

