



CHALLENGE

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RED POLITICS AT HOME IN FLATBUSH



Brooklyn, September 15—Communist politics featured prominently in the lead-up to a vigorous and multiracial march against racism, gentrification, and police violence. Organized by two neighborhood organizations, the Brooklyn Anti-Gentrification Network and Equality for Flatbush, the march was guided by a wishful liberal slogan: “Brooklyn is not for sale.” But a more militant note was struck by one of the event’s featured speakers, a Black woman who lost her sister to police violence. After experiencing capitalist state terror

in this horrific fashion, she has developed into an important leader in anti-racist struggles.

When this leader was invited to speak at the pre-march rally, she shared the microphone with a member of Progressive Labor Party. As CHALLENGE found its way into the hands of dozens of passersby, our comrade reminded the crowd that Brooklyn will always be for sale as long as we live under a system driven by profit. The capitalist world degrades any chance for meaningful neighborhood integration with racist gentrification. But

we can create a better world!

The Tuesday before the march was election day, and many marchers likely had voted for progressive challengers to local Democratic Party incumbents. Their presence was a sign that the bosses’ charade of electoral “democracy” has not completely crowded out dedication to class struggle. In coming weeks, as liberal misleaders head into overdrive to divert righteous anger against capitalism into voting against Trump-backed Republicans, our number-one job is to keep the flame of struggle alive

Don’t Vote; Revolt!

The organizers of today’s march are seeking to mobilize the masses on a multiracial basis against the rulers’ racist attacks. They are serious about Black leadership. They are careful not to feature elected leaders or candidates for office, and they work to attract workers who are frustrated by the raging inequalities of this system. Their endgame, however, is to kill any momentum they build for change at the dead end of the voting booth.

Our communist message, delivered by Black workers, drew nods of appreciation and agreement from many people there. Over decades of political work in Flatbush, our multiracial comrades have maintained a focus on winning Black workers and youth to communism and PLP. Patient base-building has been punctuated by moments of sharp anti-racist class struggle in the schools and on the streets.

The cumulative effect of this history is that our politics and our newspaper are an expected and welcome part of the political life of the neighborhood. At today’s march, 250 CHALLENGEs were distributed. Our comrades fell a bit short, however, in bringing out our Party’s base. It would have been good for more of our friends to see us in action.

Even in the current period of rising fascism, where the attacks of capitalism are constant and mass movements are politically weak, opportunities for fightback are all around us. Each one is pregnant with potential to win more workers and youth to communism. Dare to struggle, dare to win ☺

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

The Uighurs of Xinjiang Pawns in a Deadly Imperialist Game



Xinjiang, the largest region of China, is bordered by eight countries, including Russia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India. The region is critical to the Chinese bosses' Belt and Road Initiative, their blueprint for dominating trade throughout Asia and into Europe and Africa.

Why Xinjiang Matters

Four times the size of California, Xinjiang is a strategically situated “autonomous” region in northwest China that borders Russia, Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, and four other countries. Of late, Xinjiang has seen an economic boom, with major development projects bringing prosperity to cities like Kashgar. The region accounts for more than 20 percent of China’s natural gas, oil, and coal reserves (powermag.com, 1/1/16), along with significant cotton production, technology and textiles manufacturing, and gold and uranium. Xinjiang is critical to the Chinese bosses’ Belt and Road Initiative, their blueprint for dominating trade throughout Asia and into Europe and Africa. The region has 16 Class A “land ports,” where foreign vehicles can deliver goods directly (china.org.cn). In addition, Xinjiang contains a dense network of natural gas pipelines, railways, highways, and air routes linking China with Eurasia. The Uighurs are predominantly Sunni Muslims who speak a Turkic language and are ethnically distinct from the Chinese rulers who have controlled the region since the 19th century Qing Dynasty. Over the last 20 years, as economic opportunities have soared, the region has seen a mass influx of Han Chinese, the main ethnic group in China, to the point where they nearly match the Uighurs’ numbers in Xinjiang.

The best jobs have gone mostly to the Han Chinese. Uighurs lucky enough to find jobs often end up doing manual labor—toiling in coal mines, cement plants and at construction sites. Unemployment among young Uighurs is widespread....There's little wonder that discontent has become so widespread.

Chinese bosses: opiate dealers for the masses

The stark inequality in Xinjiang has led inevitably to a spike in anti-Uighur racism, a resurgence of Uighur separatism, scattered incidents of violence, and a Beijing attack against the Uighurs' practice of Islam—or what it calls “religious extremism.” Two years ago, President Xi Jinping sent former Tibet boss Chen Quanguo to set up “internment camps that hold Muslims without trial and force them to renounce their faith and swear

Continued on page 4

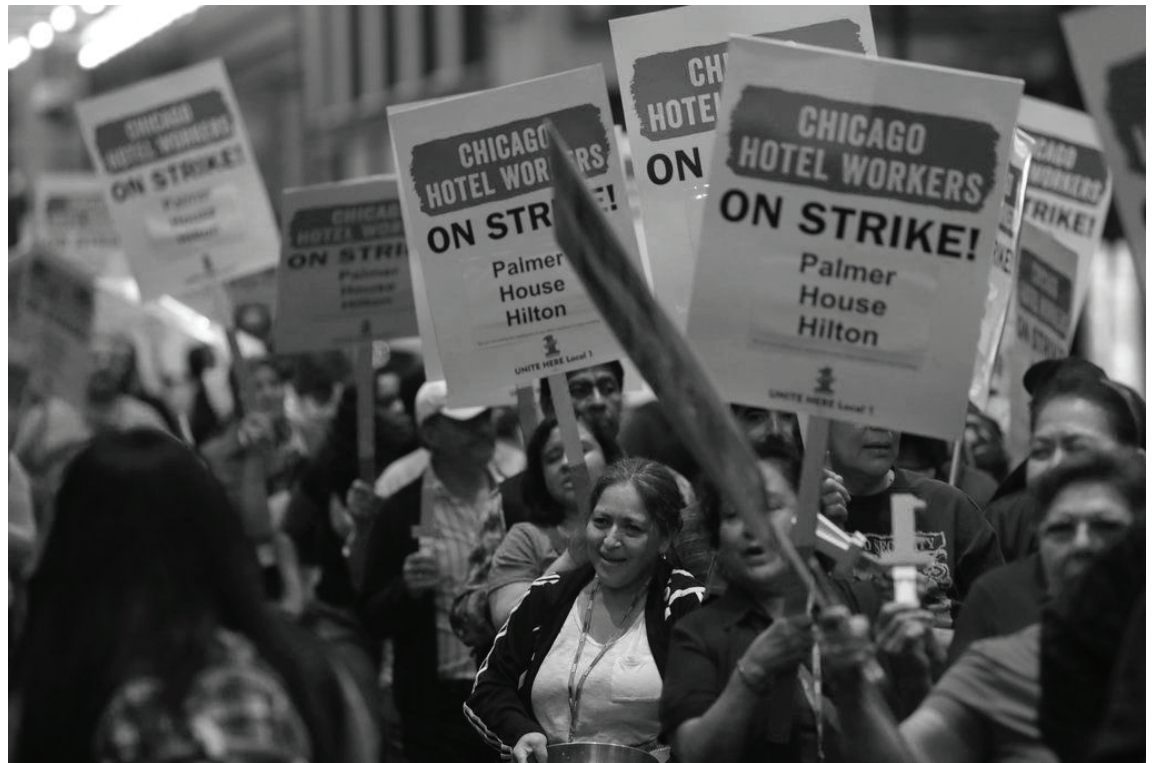
Chicago: hotel workers strike against sexist conditions

CHICAGO, September 13—A hotel workers' strike here reached the seven-day mark today, with some 6,000 workers from over 20 major hotels represented in the struggle. Hundreds of these workers are actively participating on at least two dozen pickets.

Their contract with the bosses expired on August 30, and the demands of the strikers include year-round health benefits (workers have been made to go without when many are laid-off during the winter months) and higher wages. Comrades from Progressive Labor Party have joined in the picket, distributed CHALLENGE, supported chants, and talked with strikers.

Considering the make-up of the hotel workers in the industry, the working conditions created by the hotel bosses need to be seen for the sexist and racist attacks that they are. Many of the hotel workers are women and immigrant workers. Many face sexual harassment, assault, and other degrading conditions from their bosses and hotel clients alike. To see these same women workers pouring energy and leadership to the picket line and strike is an inspiring example of fightback against sexist capitalism.

Progressive Labor Party holds tight to the political line that strikes can be powerful schools for communism. When workers shut down the bosses' industries, and drastically damage their ability to make profits off our labor, the working class learns a profound lesson about our class power and our capacity to create revolutionary change.



What is key to such revolutionary development, however, is revolutionary leadership and a mass international PLP. Our task is to continue to immerse ourselves deep within inspiring working-class struggles, such as this strike, wherever we are. In only this way, we can win more workers to the

struggle of overthrowing bosses and capitalism all over the world and creating our own communist society that we collectively organize to meet our needs ☺

Student Resistance to Campus Goons: Bastion of the Fight Against Fascism



MEXICO, September 13—On September 3, a group of thugs on campus violently attacked students from CCH Azcapotzalco (a campus of the Autonomous University of Mexico—UNAM) in a cowardly and cunning manner. The students and supporters from other UNAM campuses, were rallying in the courtyard of the campus rectory demanding: that more groups be allowed on campus, for improved security conditions, and the resignation of the president. The school president Enrique Graue admitted days later that he had witnessed the attack from the rectory's tower, along with various other school authorities who were present. No one did a thing while the students were attacked with rocks, sticks, pipes, Molotov cocktails, fireworks, and sharpened objects. Two students were hospitalized with serious injuries and various others were wounded.

University authorities have historically toler-

ated, and quietly organized and financed various groups of goons at UNAM. They are part of the repressive measures used by UNAM officials against students, faculty, and workers who fight back.

Federal and local Mexico City officials have also protected and sheltered these groups. A good example is Hector Carranza—nicknamed The Scorpion—who was identified as one of the attack leaders. He got his start inside the PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) and has recently been identified as a functionary of the PRD (Democratic Revolutionary Party) government.

University and government officials have hypocritically distanced themselves from repression and from the campus hooligan groups, but they have all responded before and after the attack in an erratic and lukewarm manner. Both groups have accused each other for the release of two of the students' attackers, clearly showing their complicity

in the attack and their protection of the violent groups that operate at UNAM.

Students and faculty from the majority of UNAM campuses responded to the September 3rd attack by staging a strike. More than 30,000 marched on the main campus against the repression, supported by students from other institutions like Poli and ENAH.

The students remain brave in the face of this terror and responded with solidarity and collectivity to the attack on their fellow schoolmates. The groups behind the attack by these campus goons—with the objective of destabilizing the incoming nationalist capitalist Lopez Obrador government—underestimated the ability of the students to organize and fight against the repression and injustices of the capitalist system.

Unlike other periods of history when violent groups were used to slow down university protests, the current terror and violence is set-up as the main way to control groups that are rebelling against the system's attacks. Along with the legal methods used like the Internal Security Law, these attacks also represent methods used to control social protests nationwide. These attacks have not intimidated the college students. They have also not frightened the thousands in communities that are resisting the interests of mining concerns, the students resisting school closures (one of the results of the murder of the student teachers from Ayotzinapa), nor the farmworkers of Atenco who still resist the building of the new Mexico City airport.

The communist Progressive Labor Party (PLP) rejects the repression by these campus goons as a mark of the violent fascist attacks by the capitalists against the working class. We call on all workers to show solidarity with the students. Principally though, we must organize a party that doesn't rely on electoral politics, but one that seeks to change this repressive capitalist system for an equal communist society. the answer to fascist repression is the organized struggle of the working class ☺

Haiti: PLP leads fight against capitalist corruption



HAITI, Sept. 7 The last several weeks have seen mass demonstrations throughout Haiti and the Haitian diaspora (e.g., in Brooklyn, NY during the massive Labor Day Carnival) against massive corruption in the PetroCaribe program. Workers have denounced the local bosses and their politicians, demanding an account of reports that between 1.7 to 3.8 billion dollars was stolen by previous regimes from funds destined for the development of the country. The actions follow up mass uprising in early July (Challenge 7/25).

Through the PetroCaribe contract signed in 2006, Venezuela sells gasoline and diesel fuel to Haiti and other countries in the region; 60% of the cost of the oil is due within 90 days and the balance is to be paid over 25 years at 1 percent interest. As of 2016, Haiti owes Venezuela over \$80 billion (Haïti Liberté, 1/2). The money saved is supposed to be used for development projects. In Haiti, that turned it was misused by the bosses politicians. Examples of this corruption include a 10-mile road that was only 6.5 miles and unfinished housing for workers, etc., while bankers and politicians lined their own pockets (Miami Herald, 8/23).

Hundreds protest Petrocaribe theft

But, in a small town here today, there was more than a simple demand for accountability as hundreds of demonstrators marched through the streets under the leadership of Progresive Labor Party (PLP). What was on view was the class character of mass hatred of corrupt politicians. Messages on handwritten signs carried by marchers were clear: “The ruling class and their state and politicians are always reactionary and against the interests of the masses” and “theft of Petrocaribe funds part of bosses’ plan against the workers.” The slogans pointed the finger not only towards the particular thieves in the Petrocaribe scandal, but also to the real victims of the crime—workers and their children. Other, more threatening, messages called workers to class struggle: “It’s the masses who will judge the guilty!”

Mobilizing workers under red leadership

In order to transform this march into a mass demonstration, Party comrades went through the streets of the town, to the market and neighborhoods, explaining why the residents should par-

ticipate — it is in their class interest to fight back against the bosses in an organized way under revolutionary communist leadership.

Friends of the Party did their part: an artist made a stencil to write our demands on walls and a young videographer made a short video to raise the class consciousness of the people. Others advertised the action on social media networks. All of this helped people understand the true nature of the theft from Petrocaribe—a direct attack on the working class. Through this struggle many individuals gained a greater awareness of the class nature of events that are shaping their lives.

Pawns in a Deadly Imperialist Game

loyalty to the [so-called] Communist Party....Former detainees say one can be thrown into a camp for praying regularly, reading the Quran...” (Associated Press, 9/21).

Capitalism needs nationalism and religion to divide workers and deflect their class hatred against the capitalist system, the real source of workers’ misery. As Marx wrote, “Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the masses.” After the Chinese Communist Revolution of 1949, and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution that followed in the late 1960s, workers freed themselves from the chains of religion that had strangled class struggle in favor of the old ruling class.

But the fake “communists” who rule China today have no problem with religion—as long as they’re the ones pushing the opium. In August, China’s famous Buddhist Shaolin monastery “raised the national flag for the first time in its 1,500-year history” (NYT, 9/24). And on September 22, Beijing and the Vatican reached a compromise deal to recognize seven bishops appointed by the Chinese government and fully legitimize the Catholic Church in China (NYT, 9/22).

U.S. bosses: world leaders in anti-Muslim racism

The turbulence in Xinjiang gives the capitalists yet another opportunity to bash the Cultural Revolution, a historic working-class victory—however temporary—to uphold communist ideas and practice among hundreds of millions of work-

ers. The bosses are using the Uighurs once again to push their poisonous, anti-communist mythology: “As in Stalin’s Russia, children are encouraged to inform on their parents” (Guardian, 9/15). As a trade and tariff battle pushes the U.S. and China into “a new economic Cold War” (NYT, 9/19),

17 U.S. senators and congresspeople have called for sanctions against Chinese officials responsible for the reported detention camps.

Now consider the U.S. record of anti-Muslim racism since 9/11: the torture and rendition of terrorism “suspects” to murderous regimes, the indefinite detention of uncharged individuals at Guantanamo Bay, the indiscriminate drone killings expanded by President Barack Obama, the proposed “Muslim ban” by President Donald Trump.

And consider, too, the more than 2 million workers imprisoned in the United States, the nation with the world’s highest incarceration rate—more than four times the rate in China (World Prison Brief, prisonstudies.org). Even by the standards of the U.S. ruling class, the hypocrisy is overwhelming.

A better alternative

Neither ethnic nationalism nor religion can solve the problems of Uighur workers. Only the international working class, united against racism and sexism and led by a revolutionary communist party, can smash capitalism and its oppression of workers everywhere. Join us!🇺🇸

Money in the pockets of the bosses, misery in the stomachs of the workers

At the beginning, we were just a few members and friends of the Party, but we were very motivated. Despite our weak numbers, we began chanting and started marching through town. As we marched down a single street, people began joining us: first the young, children and adolescents, then the adults joined us, all members of the working class. Pots and pans in hand, they animated the chants. One worker commented that “money in the pockets of the bosses comes from the misery in the stomachs of the workers!”

“We crisscrossed the streets of our small town, stopping in front of the tax collection office and the courthouse, where we chanted our demands for justice against the criminals and for the demands of workers for a better life. One of our comrades called for the construction of a mass force to put an end, once and for all, to the reign of the capitalist class, their state and politicians.

The struggle to demand an accounting of the stolen Petrocaribe funds and punishment of the criminals is also a struggle against the corruption of the capitalist system. We in PLP are committed to developing class consciousness and class struggle here—and everywhere—enlarging the base of the Party and organizing the working class into a revolutionary force.

Our Party is becoming stronger as the struggle continues. Fight for communism! Power to the working class! 🇺🇸

Report from China

A new wave of student-worker movement

After a few years of relative political tranquility, China is starting to see a new wave of student movement and worker militancy. When several workers got fired and arrested in July as they tried to organize a local union in Jiashi Tech, a listed company based in Shenzhen, Guangdong, activists launched a small protest against the company and the local police. The tension quickly escalated when the local police again arrested dozens of the protesters and charged several of them with criminal offenses.

The struggle was well publicized and the protest organizers called for support from the leftists and other sympathizers. Soon the protesters in Shenzhen were soon joined by college students from all over the country as well as influential leftist organizations. More than a thousand people signed on a petition to the Ministry of Public Safety, demanding the release of arrested workers. Students and leading leftist scholars also wrote several widely circulated support letters.

The protest was forcefully ended after a month when fully armed police squad stormed into an apartment in Huizhou, Guangdong and arrested more than 50 activists sleeping in the room at around 5 am Aug 24th. At the same time, the police also arrested several activists in Beijing and other cities that might have been involved in the movement. To this moment, it seems that the college students among these activists have been sent back to their home and are under house arrest. After some interrogations and “education”, they are expected to return to college. As for the workers and those who have already graduated from colleges, their statuses are not clear. The impression, however, is that the authority will prosecute many of them with some serious charges.

Overall this protest has been highly influential in China and has several new features that separate it from previous similar conflicts.

First of all, it was a Maoist-led struggle among the younger workers. China's socialist legacy is strongest among the older generation workers who had experiences under both socialism and capitalism. Many old workers are Maoists and fight for socialism in their struggles. The young workers who work in those export zones like Shenzhen, however, often lack class consciousness and political experiences. They are used to wildcat strikes instead of a planned political action. This time, the young worker activists were clearly self-trained Marxists and familiar with the language and tactics of Marx, Lenin, and Mao.

Second, there was a deep involvement of students in the struggle. Many students joined in the struggle as mentioned above. They came from different backgrounds: some from rich families and elite colleges and other from working class and without a college degree. Most of them were in their late teens and early twenties and they were radicalized in the last ten years. Over the last decade or so, the Chinese radicals built numerous leftist organizations on campus. These organizations have successfully trained a generation of Maoist activists. The student-worker alliance we saw in this movement was but a natural consequence from the last decade's radicalization of students.

Last but not least, it has been a coordinated action among the Chinese leftists. China's contemporary left emerged during the 1990s and many of them were communists from Mao's era. This generation of "old" left gave rise to the major leftist organizations in China today. Starting from the late 2000s, however, a new generation of leftists started

to form. They were mostly young and middle-aged activists who gradually got attracted to Marxism. The recent struggle provided a unique opportunity for several generations of Marxists to meet and work together. These new features have some important implications for the future class struggles. With more radicalized students and young workers, and a coalition between old and young leftists, a more mature revolutionary tide is always in formation. Capitalism, after all, always produces its own grave-diggers. It will only be a matter of time before the class struggles in China will shake the entire bourgeois world ★

CHALLENGE response:

The PLP hails these bold developments in China. Young workers fighting back while uniting with older revolutionaries, and young students joining them in solidarity are great steps in the rebuilding of the communist movement in China and globally. Such a movement will ultimately crush “red” capitalists in China, who seized power after the defeat of the Shanghai Commune in 1968, took China off the road to communism, and systematically restored vast inequalities and deep class divisions throughout China. Learning the lessons from that defeat is critical. These lessons include winning the masses to a communist vision, constructing a mass communist party despite the capitalists’ repressive apparatus, abolishing material incentives and the wage system, overcoming ethnic divisions, and refusing to compromise with capitalist roaders. We hope that many of these rising revolutionaries described in the Report from China join the PLP to spread these lessons globally!

Turkish airport strike

Workers cause turbulence in bosses imperial ambitions



ISTANBUL, Turkey September 19 “In the last couple of days, two of our friends fell from the roof. One of them is in surgery right now. Our working conditions are horrible!” That’s how one worker described the strike of 2,000 workers at Istanbul’s third airport. The strike began on September 14, after two shuttle buses crashed, injuring 17 workers.

Turkey is a key player in the rival U.S. and Russian imperialist ambitions in the Middle East. As this imperialist rivalry sharpens, workers in Turkey are being squeezed and exploited harder and harder. The striking workers are demanding greater workplace safety, fair and timely payment, and clean living conditions. While the striking workers are not, in this moment, calling for communist revolution, Turkey's bosses clearly recognize the danger of a rebellious and militant working class.

POLICE ARREST 600 WORKERS

Days into the strike, Turkey's bosses responded by sending their police to raid the workers' barracks in the middle of the night to look for the strike leaders. They fired tear gas and arrested about 600 people. Today, a judge ordered 28 workers and union activists held in jail on multiple criminal charges. The bosses are calling the strikers "terrorists" and are trying to hire strike-breakers to replace those who have been detained.

One newly hired worker said, "They told me that the protestors were provocateurs, traitors and

terrorists. The person on the phone told me that people like me deserve to work at the airport and make a living...I've been unemployed for eight months." Workers' conditions at the airport work site are murderous. According to Ahval News, 400 workers have been killed as the bosses rush the 30,000 total workers there to open the airport by October 29, Turkey's Republic Day. Turkey's bosses screw workers, play both imperialist sides The new airport will be the largest in Europe and a showcase for Turkey's president Erdoğan. Turkey's bosses are cracking down on the working class as they flirt with the two big rival U.S. and Russian imperialist bosses competing for control over the Middle East.

On the one hand, Turkey is a member of the U.S. imperialist NATO alliance, is a key base for U.S. air strikes into Syria, and has sent ground troops to attack Kurdish forces fighting there. On the other hand, Turkey's recent agreement to purchase Russia's advanced S-400 ground-to-air missile defense system is not only a breach of U.S. imperialism's sanctions against Russia, but a potential security threat. As Turkey's military also possesses the U.S.' new F-35 stealth fighter, the U.S. fears that mixing the Russian air defense system with the U.S. jets could expose the vulnerabilities of the F-35.

This fear recently prompted U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Wess Mitchell to warn Turkey's bosses that relations could be damaged "in a way that would be very difficult to repair" should they complete the S-400 deal (The Defense Post, 6/27/18).

Sharpening imperialism, growing fascism

After a failed coup attempt in 2016, President Erdoğan issued a State of Emergency, sending hundreds of workers, soldiers, journalists and activists to jail. Since then there has been a dramatic rise in workplace injuries and deaths, and an increase in child labor. Workers' protests are often met with police violence. The airport is being built by a consortium of Turkish companies with close links to the government and contracts worth hundreds of millions of dollars.

However, many sub-contractors have gone bankrupt as a result of the ongoing economic crisis

and the Turkish lira dropping by 40 percent, leaving many workers unpaid or not paid on time. A typical day for the workers means having to wait for hours in the rain for shuttle buses to take them to and from the worksite. Meanwhile, their dormitories are full of bedbugs and fleas. "Those working for the main contractors are being paid, but most of those working for sub-contractors cannot get their salaries," one worker said. "[They] call this a world project, but then fail to feed the workers [while] earning millions of dollars." Another worker said that workers for sub-contractors are not allowed to eat at the on-site cafeterias. "[We] are not even allowed to go to the toilet. We do not have refrigerators. We are taking showers by using the water coming from ponds near the constructions site."

Airport shut down has potential worldwide impact Turkey's bosses play their deadly games playing the U.S. and Russian imperialist sides off of each other, while workers in Turkey are in the cross hairs of growing war in the Middle East, economic crises, and the sharpening divide between US and Russian imperialism that will lead to even wider imperialist wars and racist and sexist attacks. Meanwhile, these airport workers are daring to shut down production at a major imperialist cross-roads- giving this strike an international impact, whether the workers realize it or not. A strike movement here could confound the Turkish, U.S. and Russian bosses' regional power ambitions in the Middle East. That potential gives this strike an anti-imperialist aspect that ALL workers have a stake in supporting! Ultimately, what the striking workers are up against is this entire capitalist system and its imperialist rivalries- rivalries that cannot ever meet theirs or any workers' needs. Ultimately, only communist revolution can resolve these sharpening imperialist wars in favor of the airport workers, and the entire international working class.

The Progressive Labor Party fights for an international anti-imperialist communist movement for all workers around the world. We call on all workers to support the Istanbul construction workers strike, and to build the movement to end imperialism and wage slavery!✱

LETTERS

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

Public health: making political friends for life

Over the last two years I have been getting to know a student at a university that neighbors my clinic. We both took a “leadership and social justice” class together. After we both started raising more radical concepts and giving examples of leaders more social-justice oriented than the corporate leaders our professor pushed, we found ourselves quickly gravitating toward each other. He and I and a couple others started a social justice campus group and participated in the demonstrations following the Trump travel ban. He’s joined us at various marches from the Women’s March to rallies against police murder. We also just became friends. We’ve frequently gone out for drinks to just rap and vent. He’s a veteran like me and we were amused to find out that we were both stationed at the same base overlapping by a year. He’s got a ton of life experience; in addition being a veteran from both the Marines and the Army, he was a city bus driver, and later a mailman. He’s a worker and knows racism and the horrors of capitalism all too well. We frequently talk about the racist gentrification, police murders and disparities in health care. There’s also another student who he and I are both close to (him more than me) and the three of us often hang out together. They’ve come over for my kids’ birthday parties, game nights to our monthly political movie nights. They also both participated in our recent Summer Project.

This past month he started back at school pursuing a Master’s in public health. He sent me a message saying, “Man I’m reading this article in Public Health. It is a treatise on American history and how capitalism and government have formed and how we as a people are regarded as surplus in society. It forced me to do some more in depth reading to gain understanding of its principles. In short, I gained a greater appreciation for communism and the intellectual work of Marx, Engels and Lenin...The things you’ve exposed us to I never really understood the depth of.”

So, I’m writing this letter because what we do matters. Both he and our mutual friend and fellow student now come to our regular study group. We are meeting for the third time this weekend and are leading the next discussion on Kapital for Beginners. It’s a long process and whether he officially joins our Party or not in the short-term, I know that I have a friend and comrade for life.

★★★★★

Dinner and The Young Karl Marx

My wife and I recently hosted a potluck dinner and film showing with five friends. We’re in a study group discussing Crisis and Change, a book that’s helping us learn more about the basic political, economic and philosophical ideas of Marxism. After dinner and conversation, we watched The Young Karl Marx, a new film by Haitian director Raoul Peck that portrays six years in the lives of Karl Marx, and his wife Jenny Von Westphalen who devoted their lives to helping the working class overthrow capitalism and build communism, a society without exploitation.

The film’s dramatic opening scene shows the Prussian army clubbing and killing peasants who are collecting wood in the forest. The year is 1842, and Germany has passed a law prohibiting the gathering of wood in the lord’s forests. Marx, who was 24 years old, wrote a series of scathing newspaper articles condemning the government for its brutal treatment of the peasants.

In the same year, Frederick Engels began writing a powerful expose of working conditions. Even though Engels was the son of a textile manufacturer with factories in Germany and Manchester, England, he hated the exploitation of the workers and committed himself to the anti-capitalist struggle. In 1843, Engels fell in love with an Irish factory worker, Mary Burns, whose deep knowledge of factory life, squalid living conditions and discrimination against Irish workers she shared with Frederick. He then used that knowledge to write his book, The Condition of the Working Class in England. The film moves on to the 1844 meeting between Marx and Engels that began a 39-year collaboration of writing and organizing.



The movie ends in 1848, with Karl, Frederick, Jenny and Mary sitting around a table working on drafts of The Communist Manifesto, which declared, “The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.”

★★★★★

The Soviet Union did not “collapse”

The world’s capitalists developed a false description of the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991, when the 15 republics, including Russia, dissolved their former union and formed 15 separate countries. They call this dissolution of the union a “collapse.” We should avoid using this term.

When the capitalists and their supporters call the Soviet break-up a “collapse” they imply that “the horror of communism” suddenly had the air taken out of it and returned to capitalism, the system that existed before the 1917 Bolshevik-led mass working-class revolution. They imply that communism was nothing more than a distorted bubble waiting to revert to the only decent and natural economic, political, and social form of society, namely capitalism.

The Soviet Union was already a capitalist country by 1991 with the capitalists bound to one another in a single corporation-like state entity properly termed “state capitalism.” The different form after 1991 was still a system of two classes – a relatively small exploiting class who had gradually emerged and come to dominate the government (capitalists) and the massive exploited working class. In 1991, what changed was the breakdown into 15 different states with each assuming the same private-enterprise form as other capitalist countries in the world, except for China, which is still a hybrid of state and private capitalism.

The transition from a working-class-run state was a process that took place dating back to post World War II after Stalin’s death when Khrushchev seized the leadership of the developing state capitalism. There was no sudden “collapse,” but rather a long process of reversion to capitalism, with its vicious exploitation and new shiny outer garments. The gradual loss by the working class of the tremendous leftover benefits of socialism from the earlier era, from 1917 to World War II, was finally cemented in 1991.

★★★★★

Spike Lee’s movie glorifies police

Spike Lee’s Blackkklansman was a very uneven film. It glorified the Colorado police while embracing Donald Trump’s bad people on both sides rhetoric. Going so far as to add his clip in at the end of the film. Trump profoundly inspired spike lee to add in his talking points in the Klans months. It felt like a 2 hour prank call disguised as serious cinema. The true story of a Black FBI agent Ron Stallworth infiltrating the Klan wasn’t enough, he became an undercover detective in the racist Colorado Police

department. After successfully recording a speech by Black Panther Kwame Ture (formerly Stokley Carmichael) and befriending Patrice, the woman president of the black student union who organized the speech, Stallworth is assigned to investigative work. He finds an ad for the Klan and calls with his “white” voice to see how far he can go.

Stallworth seems to have little motivation other than he always wanted to be a cop. When he is confronted and called out by Patrice, wanting to be a cop is all he can offer in the face of her radical takedown of capitalist society. She rightfully claims that you cannot change the system by being a part of it since those in power will not give it up without a fight. A Jewish detective Flip Zimmerman is assigned to work with with Stallworth to be the white face to his voice. It isn’t until the official Klan membership card comes in that Flip expresses that he was not religious growing up but now cant stop thinking about it due to his palling around with racists. Spike lee seems to have woken up to the dangers of Trump but falls into the trap thinking that radical change can happen from working within corrupt institutions. At the end of the film Lee shows scenes from Charlottesville 2017, to hammer home the message that the Klan has not left.

He covers the eyes of the racists marching with tiki torches and attacking the anti fascists while exploiting the death of Heather Heyer and the injuries of the other protesters. After and during the movie the only conclusion i could reach was cops aren’t so bad, they even caught a racist one! This both sides bull only serves to keep workers away from the radical truth which can set us all free. Workers together hold the power to communist revolution.

Our congregational work is celebrating one more nail in the bosses’ coffin! A practical nurse in his mid-thirties eagerly accepted the challenge to march on the KKK on August 12. He is a graduate of our Sunday school work and because of this—and deep influence from family and friends—has grown to be an ardent anti-racist. On the way to DC he reminded me that he had been on a number of May Day marches and helped attack fascists in Lower Manhattan twenty years ago. We had dinner with comrades in Maryland. Next morning we had breakfast with a young friend from my home church and bought a copy of “Punching Nazi’s and Other Good Ideas.” Then we moved on to the planning meeting for the day’s struggles which our young Washington leadership superbly led.

★★★★★

A nurse joins the fight for communism

Our militant fighters then headed to Lafayette Park. Supportive DC transit workers provided them with free transportation. We linked up with a cohort of transit workers at the AFL-CIO headquarters for a rally, then, led by them, marched on to confront the Klan with thousands of other anti-racists. Weirdly, a handful of brain dead Trump supporters were also in the protesting crowd and our nurse helped lead the vigorous shout down that “encouraged” them to beat it! He also volunteered to join the group of fighters ready to pummel the fascist filth when they appeared. But the ruling-class totally guaranteed the “freedom” of speech for Jason Kessler’s pitiful twenty-four lizards with high metal fencing and a platoon of kkkops surrounding and escorting them.

Shortly afterward at a debriefing over our qualified success, our young leader asked, “And who is ready to join the Party out of this struggle?” I nudged our nurse gently in the ribs and he firmly replied, “I am!”

And on the four hour ride home he talked at length with the politically best recent college grad we’ve worked with, with good effect. The main challenge as always now is to work on consolidating him. He is a full time (hard) worker, dedicated husband and parent of three, a deer hunter, and is usually starring in a community theater production. That said, he is deeply engaged in discussing the paper with his lifelong best friend, has just raised our work with a (young!) Brazilian friend from the theater world, and stays in touch with two other anti-fascist friends who get CHALLENGE. Stay tuned!

★★★★★

Brown & Tubman:models for multiracial unity & action

Continued from page 8

one lives. Among the black and militant white abolitionists, multi-racial unity developed over years of working together, getting to know each other while struggling over their differences. Today, U.S. capitalism has created its own contradiction. Workers still often live in neighborhoods separated by “race” but many are integrated within their workplaces and schools. The bosses try to divide us there as well, with racist job classifications and different types of bourgeois culture to keep workers apart (e.g., soul “versus” country music). Nevertheless, workers rub shoulders every day. Class-conscious workers in PLP must develop these acquaintances into friendships and unbreakable bonds in struggle.

Class struggle trumps racism

As in Tubman and Brown’s time, racism permeates society. But rebellions and strikes reveal multi-racial unity and struggle against the bosses. At the Smithfield Ham Factory in Tarheel, NC, for example, a 15-year unionization fight witnessed intense intimidation from the bosses to scare workers from signing union cards. But by organizing support from grocery workers from far and wide, Smithfield workers felt part of a larger community. When the bosses got immigration agents to raid the plant, targeting Latino workers for deportation, the workers saw through this divisive trick and, in November 2006, 500 marched out in a two-day strike protesting this raid, forcing the com

pany to re-hire all the fired immigrant workers! In 2008 in the Bronx, NY, the Stella D’Oro workers



struck for 11 months. These immigrant workers from across the world, men and women, overcame differences and stuck together. Not one worker crossed the picket line! PLP had organized friends, comrades, teachers and students onto the picket lines, bringing solidarity and communist leadership. PLP members steadfastly stood in solidarity with the strikers via donations, rallies and marches, and supported their fight against plant closure. John Brown’s raid and Harriet Tubman’s courage in freeing 300 slaves along the Underground Railroad teach us many lessons. Militancy was foremost in their thinking. Tubman declared she would never return to being a slave, that she would rather die fighting. Brown, after fighting in Kansas, realized that only bloodshed could end slavery. Many workers agreed with them, especially after the 1857 Dred Scott decision legalizing slavery nation-wide. Multi-racial unity is essential in any fight. Black workers escaping from enslavement received need-

ed help from whiabotionists to reach the North. Thousands of workers, black and white, helped escaping slaves along their journeys and defended them when attacked by slave-catchers. These workers attended public meetings, donated money, passed word to their friends and helpe harbor fugitive slaves.PLP does similar things today.

Join PLP

We discuss political struggles and the vital need for multi-racial unity against the racist system with friends, coworkers and neighbors. We urge them to join in militant anti-racist demonstrations, build a multi-racial base with fellow workers or donate to CHALLENGE.Every time someone we know does one of these simple acts, they’re making a political commitment in the fight against racism, capitalism and imperialism, just as thousands of anti-slavery supporters did against slavery — taking small steps to serve and defend those who had escaped slavery as well as those who fought it directly.We invite all workers, soldiers and students who participate in these struggles to join Progressive Labor Party.

Today’s supporters of anti-racist struggle understand — just as did the thousands backing Brown and Tubman 159 years ago — that revolutionaries like the raiders then and PLP now are the honest, reliable leaders in struggle. When direct action is required, they know to whom to turn. CHALLENGE constantly reports workers being won to militancy and multi-racial unity in struggles against the racist bosses, hailing those joining our ranks. Step by step, the communist movement will grow and lead the working class to revolution and a new world based on members of our class mutually meeting each other’s needs, without racist bosses and their profit system ☸

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

Marx called the shot on fascism

NYT, 9/21—If Trump is a fascist, Marx was right. History repeats itself, first as tragedy, then as farce.

Hurricane Florence exposes racist robbery of Black workers’ land

NYT 9/14 — The places are most threatened by Hurricane Florence were almost entirely populated and owned by [Black families] a century ago.... [They] have been driven from their homes in the region for decades, but the decision to leave has not...been theirs to make.... ...Union Army forces captured [the Sea Islands and Hilton Head] early in the Civil War and white planters fled the area.... ... [They] flocked there to seek freedom from Jim Crow and from the plantation economy....An explosion in coastal development in the 1950s target[ed] African-American landowners for displacement.... Local governments worked alongside private developers to steal land from black folks through various legal mechanisms.

Today it is a playground for mostly white and wealthy people. ...That’s really the story of postwar America:...real-estate growth and development... at the expense of [Black workers].... In the 20th century, many decisions being made were similar to the decisions...made in the cities with urban renewal, where black neighborhoods were the ones being demolished and cleared out. ...Decisions were...made by the Army Corps of Engineers and local officials that would literally eat away at black-owned land

This effort...destroyed the foundations of black communities.... The very types of environmental engineering practices...to build up the coastal real estate markets...were damaging to the environment and unsustainable. They were the very same measures that worked to displace and dispossess black people of their land a century ago.

Red Ruby had discovered radio astronomy

NYT, 9/17 (obituary) — ...Ruby Payne-Scott.... helped lay the foundation for a new field of science called radio-astronomy. Her work led to the discovery of deep-spaced phenomena like black holes and pulsars and later helped astronauts understand how solar storms disrupt weather in space and electrical grids on Earth.Yet as a married woman she was denied equal employment status and compensation. She challenged the scientific establishment in her native Australia and fought for the rights of women in the workplace....

She married William Hall in 1944. They shared political views: they were...environmental conservationists, atheists and communists. Some...colleagues called her “Red Ruby.”

But her marriage would present a problem: Women in public service were expected to resign when they wed. Her colleagues...considered her so integral to their work that they helped keep her marriage a secret.She helped discover Type 1 solar bursts....[which] demonstrated that electromagnetic waves were spewing from the sun....

Payne-Scott would later discover two more types of solar bursts and help create a device... which panned the sky dozen of times per second, allowing radio astronomers to identify and zoom in on single wave formations.Her final contribution “predicted the whole future of radio astronomy” Her method gave radio astronomers a more complete picture of the frequency and shape of waves emanating from space....Then, in 1950,...Payne-Scott’s marriage was uncovered by regulators.... [She] challenged the rule...in a series of contentious letters....But she was forced to resign and

Where’s capitalism’s ‘boom’? 45 million are below poverty level

NYT, 9/14 — In July,...Trump’s Council of Economic Advisors declared that the country’s...war on poverty was largely over and called it a success.

[But]...the Census Bureau’s[...2017 annual report on the poor suggest[ed] that...40 to 45 million Americans [are] living below the federal poverty

level....People...are working several jobs, taking jobs without benefits, kids who are growing up in poverty....

...Poverty rates among African-Americans and Hispanics...both remain above 20 percent, far outpacing the poverty rate of 9.8 percent for the white, non-Hispanic population.

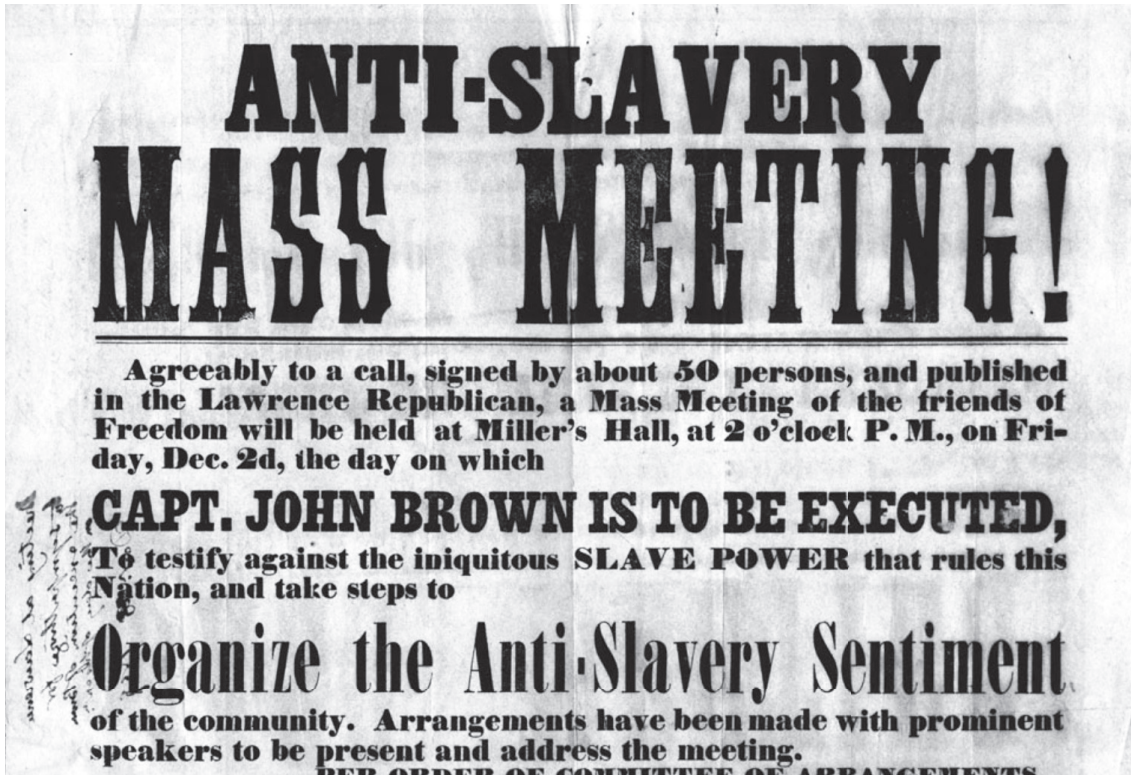
And the poor are getting poorer. The poverty threshold in 2017 was \$24,858 for a family of four. The percentage of families living on half that income...has nearly doubled since 1975....

Wages for low-income workers have not kept pace with the cost of living in high-expense states, including California, where rising housing costs have contributed to a 20 percent poverty rate that ranks the highest in the nation.

Billionaire Bloomberg: Another open-racist & sexist for prez?

NYT, 9/20 (Mara Gay) — Bloomberg, testing the waters for a Democratic presidential bid, stubbornly doubled down on...the aggressive use of the policing strategy known as stop-and-frisk that resulted in millions of innocent Black and Latino people being stopped on the streets....Mr. Bloomberg, a billionaire who ran New York City for a dozen years....could also be oblivious to the needs of people without his money and privilege, often brushing aside concerns about the crisis of affordable housing....Bloomberg and his police commissioner Raymond Kelley, had long argued that crime would rise without stop-and-frisk. But they were wrong. Nearly five years after Mr. Blomberg left office, pedestrian stops are down sharply...and overall crime has continued to fall....Bloomberg...is fond of the phrase: “In God we trust. Everyone else brings data.” Yet when it comes to stop-and-frisk, the facts don’t seem to matter to himBloomberg... also questioned the movement against sexual assault and harassment.... “I don’t know how true all of it is,” he said, before casting doubt on the allegations of sexual harassment against Charlie Rose.... His remarks disparage the experience of racial minorities and women in America.

John Brown & Harriet Tubman: Models for multi-racial unity and action



Rebellions like Harpers Ferry struck fear into the hearts of the slave-owners and inspired more rebellions from the enslaved people. This anti-slavery meeting was held on the day of John Brown's execution.

On October 17 marks 159th anniversary of the raid on Harper's Ferry. It was a revolutionary revolt showing the need for militant, anti-racist, multi-racial, revolutionary struggle! The southern slaveholders were terrified by the Harper's Ferry raiders' militant, multi-racial unity, a real-life rebuke of their racist stereotyping. One of the raiders' five black freedom fighters, Osborne Anderson, described the atmosphere before-hand:

"I have been permitted to realize to its furthest, fullest extent, the moral, mental, physical, social harmony of an Anti-Slavery family, carrying out to the letter the principle of the Anti-slavery cause. In John Brown's house, and in John Brown's presence, men from widely different parts of the continent met and united into one company, wherein no hateful prejudice dared intrude its ugly self — no ghost of a distinction found space to enter."

From childhood Brown vowed to fight slavery

This trust among whites and blacks did not happen overnight. John Brown's father was a conductor on the Underground Railroad in Ohio. At 12, Brown met a fugitive slave boy and saw the suffering slavery had inflicted on him, influencing Brown forever. He believed blacks and whites were completely equal. He put this knowledge into action daily. As an adult, Brown moved his family to a farm in North Elba, N.Y. near a black community of former slaves. Blacks were regularly invited to the house for dinner with Brown's family. He addressed them as "Mr." or "Mrs.," sharply contrasting with the era's racist mores (true even among many slavery opponents). Preparing for the raid, Brown turned to both black and white abolitionists.

In April 1858, while gathering money, arms and volunteers in Canada, he visited Harriet Tubman. She was well-known to the black fugitive slave community there, having personally guided many to freedom. Tubman supported his plans, urging him

to set July 4, 1858, for the raid and promising to bring volunteers. They agreed to communicate through their mutual friend Frederick Douglass, black abolitionist and former slave.

Tubman single-handedly freed 300 slaves

Tubman's own experiences made her and Brown allies. Born around 1820 of enslaved parents on a Maryland plantation, Tubman performed house and field work, was subjected to physical abuse and tearfully saw many of her nine siblings sold away from the family. In her teens, Tubman suffered a broken skull from brutal plantation life. Her "owner" tried selling her as "damaged goods." Instead she fled, walking for several weeks, mostly at night, the 90 miles to Philadelphia via the Underground Railroad. She returned shortly afterwards, guiding her family out of slavery to Canada. And that was just the beginning. Over the following 11 years, with a bounty on her head, Tubman made approximately 13 trips south and guided an estimated 300 slaves to freedom in Canada.

This resolute, daring revolutionary declared, "I never ran my train off the tracks and I never lost a passenger." Tubman warmly endorsed Brown's armed struggles in Kansas against the pro-slavery gangs. Brown, in turn, knew Tubman's courage, militancy, and knowledge of the land and Underground Railroad network, and felt Tubman would be invaluable in executing their plans to free the enslaved by any means necessary. He always addressed her as "General Tubman."

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PART OF STRUGGLES ON CAMPUS AND IN THE WORKPLACE?

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10TH
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Both believed in direct action and armed violence to end slavery. Tubman became ill and could not bring her forces to Harper's Ferry, but her work inspired the rest of the raiders. Tubman's example, like that of Osborne Anderson and the other black raiders, discredited the image of black people as passive victims, terrifying the southern slave-owners and politicians, and inspired the abolitionist movement.

To those today who say workers won't fight oppression, the stubborn facts of history show struggle is universal. The slave-owners, although talking of "docile" blacks, knew this well. They were petrified of potential black rebels and of "outside agitators." They patrolled all night with dogs and guns to intimidate their enslaved workers and to keep Yankees and abolitionist literature away from them. Today the "outside agitators" are PLP communists, fighting to abolish racist capitalism.

The bosses assure us that the impoverished working class is too ground down, too alienated to fight back collectively, saying workers hate communism. Yet they organize cops, plant security, the Minutemen, black nationalists and sellout union "leaders" to try to keep communists out, and instantly fire them when they're discovered in a factory. Why are they afraid if the working class is supposed to be so passive?

Today, uniting to fight the mutual class enemy is one of the main ways people of different backgrounds are able to overcome the "natural" segregation capitalist society promotes. Brown and Tubman demonstrated that racist and nationalist ideas cannot be overcome primarily inside one's head. It requires material change in the way

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