

CHALLENGE



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#RISEUPTOWN FOR 11 DAYS

DEMOLISH FOR-PROFIT HOUSING



Under communism housing will be distributed equally to all workers.

CHICAGO, September 7—When real estate gentrifiers at Lincoln Property Company bought out the parking lot of Weiss Memorial Hospital in the Uptown neighborhood with plans to turn it into a luxury high rise development, a coalition of workers and organizers fought back and the international communist Progressive Labor Party (PLP) was there providing supplies and communist leadership to the struggle.

Organizers quickly formed an encampment out of tents, tarps, and tables, collectivizing the resources provided by the coalition, formally called #RiseUptown. Motivated by the belief that housing should be affordable, if not free, this anti-gentrification coalition camped out in the former parking lot and Covid testing center for 11 days.

Comrades have joined marches and led chants, gave speeches, and participated in workshops. The Party's contributions were very much appreciated. One worker even said, "Had it not been for [PL'ers]

it would have been much harder for this encampment to run smoothly these past few days."

When workers celebrate the presence of communists and offer praise to our contributions to struggle, it is important to remember that our most important contribution is our revolutionary politics. While the reform struggle may provide temporary relief from capitalist-caused displacement, ultimately it will take the worker-run society of communism to end production for profit and meet our collective housing needs.

Workers resolve dispute, no kkkops needed

Actively participating within #RiseUptown has provided many opportunities to oppose the bosses, such as pro-gentrification liberal Alderman James Cappleman, as well as grow ties with the historically immigrant worker population of the neighborhood. But it also has provided opportunities to

understand how to struggle with one another in a principled way within the mass movement.

On the night of the eighth day of the encampment, a local walked into the space with a six-pack of beer in hand and an agenda to be disruptive. He picked fights with several people and was eventually removed. However his presence compromised the safety of the camp and because the organizers in Uptown had been faced with a new challenge of keeping people safe without calling the police, many people were demoralized and unsure how to move forward.

The following day a meeting was held where we offered a solution to the group's safety concerns which relied on collective action and discipline within the community. The plan was that the next time there was a local disruptor

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JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

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OUR FIGHT

- ✧Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.
- ✧The dictatorship of the working class — communism—can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today’s world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.
- ✧Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world’s workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.
- ✧While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim “communism is dead,” capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.
- ✧Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society’s benefits and burdens.
- ✧Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of “race.” Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit Black, Latin, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.
- ✧Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women— sexism—and divisive gender roles created by the class society.
- ✧Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.
- ✧Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion’s false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.
- ✧Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

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

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

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Editorial

Student debt

Smash the bosses’ banks and state!

Amid a deepening recession, a sharp decline in U.S. dominance, a ruling class in turmoil, and an accelerating trend toward fascism and global war, President Joe Biden has finally unveiled his college loan forgiveness plan. Designed to erase \$10,000 to \$20,000 of student debt, the plan is being hailed as a big win for the working class. In reality, it’s a desperate effort to paper over the capitalist bosses’ broken college model.

In previous generations, a college education provided some workers with more financial security. Today, it both fails to deliver the elusive American middle-class dream and traps millions of students in capitalist debt slavery. Given Biden’s track record of opposing reforms to reduce debt or to make college free, the new plan is designed to buy young workers’ loyalty, encourage them to vote in dead-end elections, and hold them hostage to this miserable profit system. Though even partial debt forgiveness may be a temporary lifeline for many, the truth is that for young workers, capitalist education is a lifelong burden with a diminishing return.

We urge young workers to reject the Democratic Party’s liberal fascists and their bribes and to keep fighting back on the campuses and in the streets. Join Progressive Labor Party (PLP) and fight for communism, where education will be used to build the world our class deserves.

U.S. college crisis: symbol of capitalist disarray

The college crisis is a snapshot of the crisis of capitalism in the U.S. More than 45 million former students together owe \$1.6 trillion, more than all other debts or private loans combined,excluding mortgages (cfr.org, 04/13/21). In 2020, the average debt for private college students was \$32,029; for those who went to public colleges, \$26,627 (U.S. News, 6/8). Even worse off were graduates of often fraudulent for-profit colleges, who borrowed an average of nearly \$40,000 (studentloan-hero.com).

All in all, this is a big problem for Biden and the liberal Big Fascists, the imperialist main wing of the U.S. ruling class that controls global finance capital. Young workers shackled by student debt are unable to buy homes or start their own small businesses, a further drag on the bosses’ economy. Without more meaningful government interventions, ex-students will stay caught indefinitely in a spiral of debt. Moreover, Biden’s plan does nothing to slow the out-of-control escalation of college sticker prices. Nor does it compensate for the anti-worker, anti-student laws he pushed for during his long career as a U.S. senator. Jim Crow Joe was more than the architect of racist mass incarceration. He wrote legislation to block students from seeking bankruptcy protections after graduation, and championed a bill that made it impossible for student borrowers to reduce their debt burden (The Intercept, 1/7/2020).

In the heyday of U.S. imperialism, when the capitalists could afford to hand a few crumbs to the working class, the liberal rulers passed reforms like the racist G.I. Bill, the National Defense Education Act, and the Higher Education Act of 1965, which expanded college access for young workers at low cost. The bosses’ goal was to build U.S. patriotism by marketing the “American Dream.” By contrast, Biden’s forgiveness plan is a weak attempt to restore faith in a floundering system and win workers to sacrifice themselves to save a flailing empire.

Of course, if they so choose, the rulers could wipe out all college debt, a move that might prop up their struggling economy at least a little while longer. But to do so they’d have to raise taxes on corporations and the super-rich. The Big Fascists are too weak and divided to make that happen, an ominous sign for expensive war preparations against China and Russia.

The racist debt trap of higher ed

Though many students living below the poverty line will see their student loans vanish, Biden’s plan is a drop in the bucket for millions of Black students who on average owe \$52,726 four years after graduation—almost double the amount owed on average by white students (Guardian, 2/19/21).

Compounding this racist disaster is the fact that Black and Latin students are more likely to get diminishing returns on their education, spending more time to complete a degree and earning less in wages or salaries after they graduate. They also are more likely to attend chronically underfunded schools with weak support services and poor living conditions, and to be taught by grossly underpaid and overworked adjuncts (Center for American Progress, 1/23/20). The enduring racist legacy of the capitalist education system is another major obstacle for the Big Fascists, who are desperately trying to pacify Black and Latin workers and buy their allegiance in the run-up to WWII.

Communist education for true liberation

In the profit system rat race, education is a sorting machine for the capitalist hierarchy. Elite private institutions train the bosses of the future to exploit the working class. Other students are groomed to oppress our class as executives, lawyers, and politicians. Meanwhile, public institutions train middle managers, bureaucrats, teachers, and social workers—if they get the support they need to graduate. College degrees are held up as a prerequisite for escaping low-wage, dead-end jobs. But capitalist education will always be a racist failure, a lottery where young workers must make enormous financial sacrifices for a shot at a decent life. And if they default on their loans or fail to land a good job, the bosses tell them they have only themselves to blame.

At the same time, colleges have been an arena for generations of international, working-class fightbacks, putting young workers on the front lines of militant class struggle. From the 1968 student rebellions in Mexico and France to the ‘70s-era strikes against the Vietnam War to the 2020 fightbacks against racist murders by the kkkops, young people have repeatedly taken to the streets while turning their campuses into schools for antiracism and anti-imperialism. In many cases, young people across the U.S. and globally have taken leadership from Black and Latin workers.

Under communism, education will be accessible to all, based on the needs of the international working class. Learning will not be confined to classrooms, nor will it pit students against one another in competition. Collectively we will study dialectical materialism, science, and medicine. Together we’ll learn the manual skills we need to build the communist world we wish to live in.

Contrary to the miseducation at capitalist colleges, history shows us what workers achieved under communist leadership. Early on, the Soviet Union made education free and accessible to all. Its universities waged struggles against racism and sexism and accomplished remarkable technological and scientific feats. The Chinese Cultural Revolution opened opportunities for higher education to the poorest families, and sent young urban workers to the countryside to teach and to learn from rural workers.

Progressive Labor Party’s message to Arab, Asian, Black, Indigenous, Latin, and white students is to unite with fellow workers of all trades and generations. Together we can apply the valuable lessons we learn from each fightback to ultimately smash this racist capitalist system, and to build a communist world where education will be free and liberating for all. ☸

Strikers fought, must steer towards revolution

Landover, MD, August 23—The two-week strike of mainly Black Metro Access workers at Hubbard Road ended with major concessions from the Metro transit system's contractor, the infamous global exploiter of transit workers, Transdev. Their boldness and determination forced Transdev to come up with a 37 percent wage increase over three years, up from the previous paltry starting wage of \$17/hour. It is the shameful racist capitalist system that forces such essential paratransit workers, who ensure that disabled and ill people can make their appointments, to fight for a barely living wage.

Under capitalism, workers will never receive pay equal to the value of their work. Wages reflect this exploitation: workers will produce billions in profits for the bosses, and often don't see a fraction of the value they produce. Progressive Labor Party (PLP) members actively helped lead and support the strike, bringing the message of the need for communist revolution against these exploiters while building class-conscious solidarity across thousands of transit workers system-wide.

Workers felt their power, limited by reform

Though the strike ended the struggle continues. The next struggle for workers in the union is to struggle for improved health insurance, an increase



Transit workers win strike, still need communism

over the 1 percent 401(k) contribution to pensions, and increased inflation protection in the second and third years of the contract. The strike could have been more powerful if the the workers at MV Call Center, the hub of the entire paratransit system, had hit the bricks with Hubbard Road. Its contract expired at the same time as Hubbard Road and these workers voted to strike, but the International ATU leaders blocked the strike. Had the MV Call Center decided to strike with Hubbard Road, a better contract would have been won for both groups

of workers. All the more reason to build an uncompromising, class-struggle oriented, communist leadership of the entire union!

The Party played a major role in organizing the strike and fighting for a good contract. Throughout the campaign, the Party pushed for a better deal than was realized. As negotiations continued, we had to decide whether to support the agreement with its deficiencies or oppose the deal and push for more. The workers had been out on strike for two weeks, did not have the MV Call Center workers on strike with them, had received the strike benefits from the union, but were beginning to feel the pain of lost wages, and would most likely vote for the latest offer. PLP members told the workers we had their backs if they wanted to continue the fight. As expected, they voted 161 to 16 to accept the deal. The workers felt their power and won some gains, but more struggle lies ahead.

Workers need party for communism

As in any reform struggle, the main question for us is convincing more workers of the PLP vision of a communist egalitarian future and the need for a revolutionary party to lead the class struggle.

The fact that the reformist international ATU leaders undermined the power of the workers was an important lesson for our base. We ensured that over 150 CHALLENGES were in the hands of the workers during the strike, and the communist Metro club brought several more workers closer to our understanding of the need for a revolutionary party to advance the interests of the working class.✪

#Riseuptown resists racist gentrification

Continued from page 1

causing a commotion in the encampment, everyone who was available at the time but no less than five people, would escort the person to the exit and close the gate behind them. Thanks to the community working together and standing in solidarity, one external threat was kept to a minimum. This was a small glimpse of how workers would handle such conflicts under communism.

Developers, politicians, nonprofits, capitalist partners

Capitalist housing is a hydra of trusts, hedge funds, banks, corporations, and even non-profits with interlocking personal and professional relationships between the key players. A holding company, Pipeline Health, purchased Weiss Hospital and two suburban hospitals in 2019. They immediately shuttered one of the suburban hospitals in nearby Melrose Park as soon as they purchased it causing the town to sue the corporation.

After holding onto their land deal for two years, Pipeline sold Weiss this May to a non-profit called Resilience Healthcare. However the same buyer, Lincoln Property, still retains the rights to the parking lot, even though they purchased this lot from an entirely different capitalist ostensibly in the healthcare business. Resilience was paid a \$12 million rebate to deliver the lot to Lincoln Property. Pipeline paid Resilience for the already sold parking lot in order to ensure their bedfellow real estate developers' bread stayed buttered.

The Big Fascists (see glossary on page 6) in the Chicago city government ensure the continuity of capitalist domination of the housing (and all other) market(s) as well. Cappleman hid behind the opaque and unelected city "Department of Plans" in a statement released in response to demands that he block construction, claiming "No elected official can deny building permits."

Meanwhile, local non-profit Sarah's Circle received a \$14 million "anonymous grant" and \$3.1 million direct donation from Lincoln Property to build 34 units of "affordable" housing. This "in-lieu" fee allows Lincoln Property to avoid putting affordable units in the same building as their luxury development. While non-profits like these are pushed as "solutions" to offset the crises of capitalism, we see that they only end up reinforcing the profit system at the end of the day.

Although #RiseUptown has been ultimately displaced and forced to retreat into the nearby park by the capitalist bosses' henchmen -- the racist Chicago Police Department -- the encampment regrouped and is currently holding space while continuing the struggle against gentrification. Workers from many different backgrounds noted that the struggle in Chicago to resist gentrification was a

problem that workers are facing globally.

Community members expressed frustration that #RiseUptown did not have the numbers to resist police occupation; however, even if the Coalition had 1,000 people, it would still not be enough to effectively combat the bosses' hold on state power. In order for workers to challenge the capitalist bosses and their lackeys, it will take an organized mass Party of millions armed with communist ideology and motivated to end the capitalist plague on humanity.

The Uptown struggle is yet another front in which we must fight to build a communist future where housing, food, clothing, and dignity are guaranteed. Embrace the struggle to secure this future. Join PLP! Metro Access Transit Workers Win Improvements but the Struggle Continues!✪

Justice for Raymond: continued injustice in the capitalist courts

See our next issue



BRONX, NY, September 7—On August 22 the bosses' courts once again denied the working class justice by letting racist murderer and KKKop

Dion Middleton out on bail for the racist murder of 18-year-old Latin teen Raymond Chalusant. Middleton had shot Raymond in the face for playing with a toy water gun. The murderer then fled the scene, leaving Raymond dead in a pool of his blood.

Members of Progressive Labor Party (PLP) visited Raymond's family and friends shortly after the murder. We brought CHALLENGE to show support and draw a connection between what the family has endured and the experiences of other families terrorized by the criminal injustice system. Raymond is another example of a senseless murder at the hands of a brutally racist system.

Join us as we unite with Raymond's family on Saturday, September 10 and begin our fightback against this racist murder.

Pakistan: capitalism floods working class

PAKISTAN, September 6—Workers in southern and north-western Pakistan have been devastated by severe flooding over the last several weeks. Thirty-three million people are affected, mainly being displaced, by what may be the worst flooding in the history of Pakistan. The official death count from the floods is at about 1,400 people; unofficially, the estimate is over 4,000 people killed by the floods. There is nothing natural about the scope of this disaster. The blame is squarely on capitalism. Namely, climate change, mass poverty and neglect of developing infrastructure, all caused by the drive for ever increasing profit at the expense of the working class. Many reforms, like decent housing and new sewers, would save many lives and spare many workers the loss of their homes, but those reforms seem like a distant impossible dream as capitalism goes from bad to worse and they won't change the fact that the situation keeps repeating and will continue until the working class takes power with communist revolution.

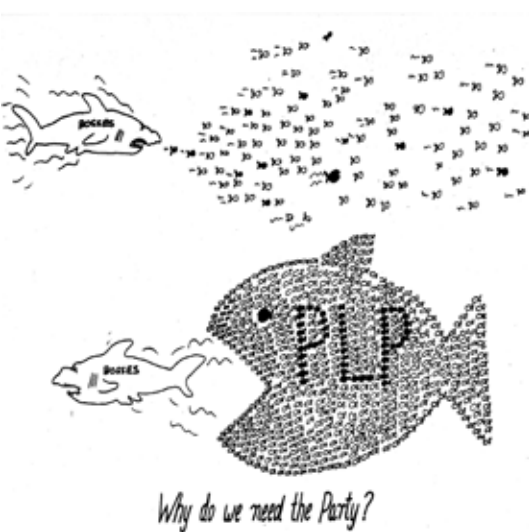
Boss-made climate crisis

Capitalism has been unable to check the emission of pollutants across the globe into the atmosphere and the worsening climate change brought heavier rains than usual into this region which destroyed the homes and belongings of the working class. The capitalist media is focusing on the climate change aspect because it takes the heat off of the basic nature of capitalism as a system that sees the working class as expendable.

Many of the workers displaced and killed in the recent floods were among the millions of workers in Pakistan who were forced out of the countryside by the abject poverty of the agricultural system under capitalism that leaves small farmers on their own. Recent droughts, also worsened by climate change, left family farmers in the impossible position of staying on their barren land to starve or heading into the cities to find work at poverty wages (ARY News, 9/2). These workers were forced by the conditions to settle on the banks of rivers, among the riskiest places to live but one of the few ways in the cities for the working class to have access to water.

Infrastructure in the poor areas of the cities has not been invested in at all. Karachi, a city of 25 million people, which was severely affected, is relying on sewer pipes laid 100 years ago when the population was 200,000 (ARY News, 9/2). The death and displacement of the floods became an inevitability caused by the inherent brutality of capitalism.

Add to this deadly mix the bribery and nepotism that are part and parcel of a system based on accumulating wealth. For instance, a government program to ostensibly plant one billion trees along



river banks as a flood prevention tool became a handout to government cronies who ransacked the program to put money in their pockets while planting only a small fraction of the promised trees (Business Standard, 9/3).

Disater response: only the working class can protect itself

The bosses are inspecting the situation from the sky by using sophisticated helicopters. The only time they come down is for big photo ops. They are spending millions but have nothing to support the displaced population. Food and non-food items are thrown from the air and aren't packed properly which causes half of the items to be ruined; most of the food items are not edible because of improper storage and handling. Most of the rich people donated cheap and damaged items. It seems that they just cleared their warehouses!

Now the international community has started to send their help for the displaced population, but, past experience is being repeated this time as well. The officials who are responsible for distributing the items to the needy are keeping the good stuff for themselves to sell in the open market or to gift to their relatives who are not affected by the floods.

We in the Progressive Labor Party are reaching out to the workers in greatest need; we organized some medical camps with the assistance of our friends in a paramedical association, we collected food and non-food items, tents and provided some logistical support to bring people out of water and mud with our limited resources. We are building a base among these displaced workers. This disaster along with our activity is helping people to under-

From Jackson to Karachi: workers of the world, unite!

Like many others, I've been following with disgust and anger the two deadly climate disasters occurring simultaneously in the southern US state of Mississippi and across much of Pakistan. Both disasters are drenched in the naked racism and anti-worker realities of capitalism. Both are the direct consequence of racist legacies of the capitalist state that go back decades, if not centuries.

In Jackson, Mississippi, the majority Black worker population has been left without clean water safe to drink or bathe with after heavy flooding knocked out the city's main water treatment facility. Shipments of potable water into the state can't keep up with demand, in a crisis that many are likening to the racist devastation inflicted on workers in Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

Across Pakistan, an especially heavy monsoon season has flooded an estimated one-third of the country, murdering over 1,000 workers to date and displacing millions more. Overflowing waters have destroyed bridges almost instantly. The slum housing where workers are forced to live hardly stands a chance when confronted with these ecological events exacerbated by industrial capitalism.

As workers, we need to connect these acts of state violence against our class to the need to build more internationalism. This is exactly what we mean in Progressive Labor Party (PLP) when we say the workers in North America have everything more in common with workers in South Asia, Africa, or South America than we ever will with a boss in "our" own region. Bosses everywhere are ready at any moment to send us workers to our death.

The only way to reverse this reality is to continue to build the Party and fight for global communist revolution. From Jackson to Karachi – Workers of the world, unite!

stand that the capitalist system cannot help them out of this catastrophe.

Our friends are also seeing that only the working class can help them. We are trying to establish a permanent group among the affected people to bring them into the Party. Where we helped organize aid and assistance along with our political ideas of building a revolutionary communist movement, people praised the efforts by saying these people were the only ones who came to help and not just to promote themselves.☺



kreyol sign reads Abolish the high cost of living. To do this, we must abolish the profit system!

Haiti: Cadre school fights to learn communist ideas

HAITI, September 8—Ignorance of the history and modes of capitalist culture and ideology constitutes one of the greatest obstacles to the engagement of young people in the revolutionary struggle. Moreover, young people know little or nothing about communism, communist-led struggles and movements, and what they may know are often laced with the bosses' lies. To combat this ignorance and shed light on the differences between communist and capitalist ideologies, the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) in Haiti organized a political cadre (training) school for twenty young people.

From August 19 to 21, in a small hotel in a small provincial town, Party comrades and young students studied and discussed Party and other texts on historical materialism, capitalism, communism, revolutionary

struggles and on the relationship between reform and revolution.

There was spirited discussion and debate about social class and the need to engage students and their parents in the struggle against the racist and sexist capitalist system, and to build an egalitarian communist society where the international working class and its communist party rule in its own interest. The participants wrote short letters, some of which are in this issue (with more to follow for next issue). The school ended on a high note, with two students joining PLP, eager to grow their commitment for revolutionary struggle, and at least three others are seriously considering making this commitment. We welcome them warmly. La lutte continue! (The struggle continues)!☺

Part 13: Black communists in the Spanish Civil War

Albert Chisholm, a communist serving 'best interest of the human race'

This is part 13 of a series about Black communists in the Spanish Civil War. In the early 1930s the urban bourgeoisie (capitalists) of Spain, supported by most workers and many peasants, overthrew the violent, repressive monarchy to form a republic. In July 1936 the Spanish army, eventually commanded by Francisco Franco, later the fascist dictator, rebelled to reestablish the repressive monarchy. Hitler's Germany and Mussolini's Italy gave Franco massive military aid.

In 1936 the International Communist Movement, called the Comintern, headquartered in the Soviet Union and led by Joseph Stalin, organized volunteers, mainly workers from more than 60 countries into the International Brigades (IBs) to go to Spain to defend the Republic. Black workers, especially Black communists, emphasized the importance of fighting racism to win anything for the working class. And they brought this antiracist fightback with them when they returned to the United States. They were building a movement they hoped would lead to communist revolution around the world. They succeeded in organizing millions around communist ideas and practices. But the movement believed that uniting with liberal bosses to defend the Republic in Spain would further the fight for communism. This was part of the united front against fascism, which resulted in only fortifying the bosses system and laid the basis for the corruption of the old communist movement.

In the Progressive Labor Party, we are against any unity with capitalists. They all have to go and the working class must rule: that's communism.

If the working class is to seize and hold state power throughout the world, Black workers' leadership is essential. That is the only way our class can destroy racism, the lifeblood of capitalism. The following is a story of one such leader, Albert Chisholm.

Birth of a life-long communist

Albert Chisholm was born in Spokane, Washington, in 1913 while his father was serving in the U.S. Army. The family later moved to Seattle. He told an interviewer:

Racism makes money. My parents had the attitude of "This is the situation, just do the best you can. Take what they give you, go to church, and so on." But that never rubbed off on me.

In the meantime the Communists were fighting like hell in the unions to permit Black people to join. They fought until I had a chance to join the Marine Cooks and Stewards Union and to get a job.

The communist Party coached me better than my parents did. They were the ones that had an understanding ... The Communists told me I couldn't fight the battle alone.

Interviewed late in life, Chisholm had this to say about communism:

When you're a communist, that's the greatest type the human race can have. You think of the best interest of the human race. If you can't do that, you're no Communist. You don't have to have a degree and all that stuff, because your mind is conditioned to want to know what's best for the interest of the human



Albert Chisholm: antiracist soldier for the working class

race. You don't give a damn about anything else. That's what makes communism so potent. I joined the Communist Party when I was a kid, when I was on the ship and the Communists were out picketing for better conditions.

And the communists won many "better conditions." They were involved in achieving Social Security and unemployment benefits during the Great Depression. They fought evictions and put workers back in their homes. But they did not fight for communism where workers run everything. That task is left to us. Join us in the Progressive Labor Party as we fight to get rid of the whole damn capitalist system.

As a teenager Chisholm became one of the first Black members of the Marine Cooks and Stewards Union, thanks largely to the anti-racist struggle led by the Communist Party. He joined the Young Communist League in 1933 and the Communist Party a year later.

Chisholm drew the connection between Mussolini's invasion of Ethiopia and his own subsequent participation in the antifascist fight in Spain.

I signed up to go to Spain because in that era, fascism was on the march. Italy attacked the country of Ethiopia ... It was sort of a primitive society, but nevertheless it was something that Black people throughout the world could look up to because it was governed by a Black administration I was asked if I would like to go to Spain and fight against fascism. I told them, 'Sure, I'd be glad to go.' I wouldn't be in Ethiopia, but I'd be fighting the Italians in Spain, striking a blow against fascism.

Chisholm left New York in August 1937. In Spain, after a brief training period, he was sent to Belchite to join the Lincoln-Washington

Battalion.

When we got to Belchite there was nothing standing except for a bell tower. It was a bloody battle - bodies all over the place. We had to go and help bury the bodies. They were bloated, swelling up. We put them in bags. Anyway, that's where I joined the Abraham Lincoln Brigade.

While in Spain, Chisholm met Langston Hughes, Paul Robeson, and Ernest Hemingway on their visits to the front.

They all came down to wish us well and gave us encouragement. You bet it helped our morale.

During the first day of the Ebro Offensive, Chisholm and fellow volunteer, Sam Zakman, took shelter in the hills during an air attack on the bridgehead. Both men were picked up as stragglers by a Spanish unit and spent the rest of the campaign attached to it.

About the defeat of the Spanish Republic by the Fascists, Chisholm said:

Our main problem was not having enough ammunition. The Soviet Union sent us as many men as they could to train us. They sent us their planes, with the star on the tail; they were damn good planes. They sent us their artillery, machine guns, and rifles ...

Chisholm returned to the U.S. on December 20, 1938. After a brief rest, he returned to sea. During World War II, he served in the Merchant Marine and made numerous dangerous runs. On one trip to Murmansk, his ship was torpedoed and sunk in the North Sea.

Today profiteering wars cover the world and an imperialist World War III is ever closer. Join us in turning the guns on the bosses and turning the imperialist war into a class war for workers power-communism.

During the 1960s Chisholm's ship docked in Vietnam, where he contacted the Vietnamese communists - "Viet Cong" -- who were fighting the United States imperialist army.

When we sailed to Vietnam ... I was able to get into the Viet Cong restaurants. They would send someone down with a motorcycle to the docks at night to get me, and we'd go all over the city. They're wonderful people. They didn't want capitalism; they wanted socialism.

Chisholm continued this work until 1971, when his union membership was revoked because he was a communist. He died in Seattle on March 25, 1998. We can learn a great deal from his example in our daily struggles against capitalism and imperialism, and we can also learn about his limits. While Chisholm was a brave soldier and leader for the working-class internationally he, along with communists of his time, stopped short of making the bosses' reforms more class conscious. Now more than ever workers need to go beyond, taking these lessons from each antiracist, internationalist, class consciousness fightback and build on them a foundation for communist revolution.✪

Sources: Collum and Berch, eds, African-Americans in the Spanish Civil War; ALBA-VALB volunteer database.

LETTERS

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



Gutter racist school dismisses child for mutism

I am writing as a New York City school teacher on the eugenics and class warfare against students at my school. I teach a summer program that acts as admissions to our city’s “elite” public high schools. The program is only for students who are low income, non-English speakers, and/or live in the city’s shelter system. The Big Fascists (see glossary, page 6) use summer programs like this to produce the illusion that “elite” public schools are inclusive, diverse, and meant for working class students. I am here to attest to the fact that this is a lie! The school system uses the petty language and gesture of inclusion to continue genocidal practices aimed at our most vulnerable students.

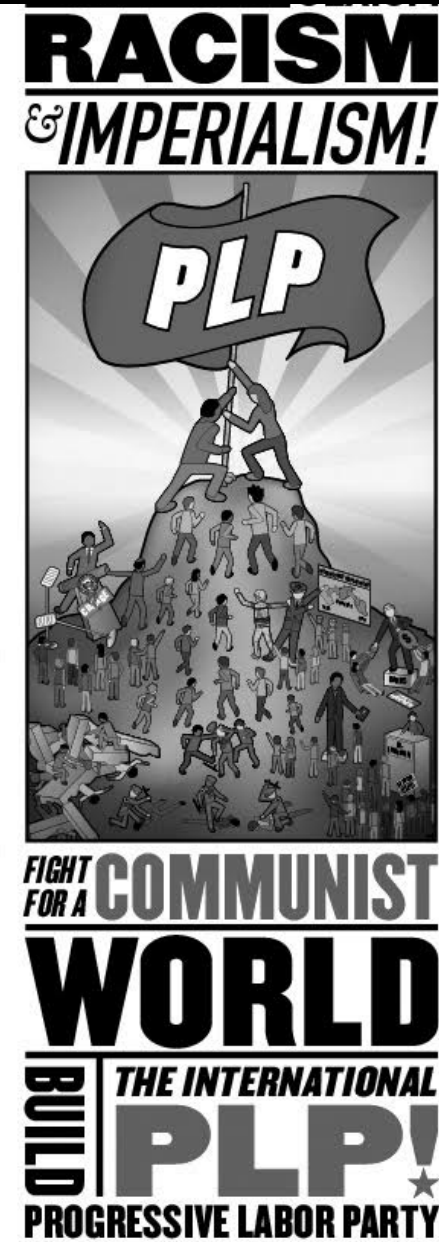
I saw first-hand the bosses pushing out special education students and other students who do not conform to capitalist “productivity,” “meritocracy,”

and “excellence.” In particular, I developed a close relationship with a student ‘E’ who was thrown out by my school for being selectively mute. E stopped speaking to anyone but his mother as a result of a traumatizing pandemic year. Because he did not speak, I would write notes to E in order to communicate with him. I also routinely kept in contact with E’s mother who did not speak English and struggled to advocate for her son in school.

My school administration was not just entirely unhelpful to E, but actively worked to kick E out of school as soon as they learned that a student with disabilities was in my classroom. The justifications for kicking E out of school consisted of pure eugenics with one administrator shouting that “special needs students do not belong at our school.” Other administrators used patronizing liberal language to insist that E would be better served at any school but ours. No one attempted to accommodate or find resources to support E in his learning. If I were not able to translate, there was not even a translator around to speak with E’s mother.

Sadly, I failed in the end and was unable to reverse the decision to kick E out of school. But in the struggle, I learned a valuable lesson: teachers and students must come together to fight back against Big Fascists hypocrites. The Big Fascists use “inclusive” programs and language as cover for their crimes against children and our class—they are never to be trusted.

★★★★★



GLOSSARY COMMUNIST TERMS Fascism

Capitalism’s response to a crisis of their system, when the bosses can no longer sustain the charade of liberal democracy and resort to more direct control and state terror instead. Fascism is marked by the ruling capitalists disciplining their own ranks to serve the urgent needs of the capitalist state and weather the crisis. To defend their system from internal and external threats, they use all the means available in their state apparatus, including violence. To build unity within their class and loyalty from workers, they rely on nationalist politics and calls for sacrifice. Their strategy is to mislead the working class to kill our working class sisters and brothers in the next inter-imperialist war.

Big Fascists
The Big Fascists are the dominant finance capitalist faction of the U.S. ruling class. They represent the wealthiest and most powerful bosses in the U.S., including multinational banks like Chase and Citibank, multinational oil companies like ExxonMobil, the big automakers, Boeing, Amazon, and the major media companies. As the dominant grouping since World War II, the Big Fascists were the architects of the liberal world order with the U.S. bosses on top. Their dominance rests on U.S. financial and military power and its strategic control of the Middle East and the flow of oil to Europe, Asia, and Africa. To sustain this dominance, they need to rebuild a huge, multiracial military for inter-imperialist war, most likely with China.

Small Fascists
The Small Fascists are a group of domestically oriented U.S. capitalists who are challenging the Big Fascists over the direction of U.S. imperialism. Since their interests are less tied to controlling the flow of oil, they are against heavy taxation to keep troops in the Middle East and in general oppose costly military bases and invasions. They’re willing to rely on a smaller, whiter army, backed by nuclear weapons and the Air Force. They use open racism to build a political following.

From Haiti cadre school: ‘a tremendous experience’

The following letters are from participants at a Progressive Labor Party (PLP) cadre school in Haiti. (See page 4)

★
The PLP cadre school was designed to strengthen our ideas about communism and the struggle against the capitalist system. Through this weekend school and the topics we debated, I came to understand that world history has always been a “lutte de classe” (class struggle), that no matter what type of person you are, you belong to a class. And that we have to struggle in the interests of our class.

Consequently, I am a future communist whose goal is to unite people from the disadvantaged classes, to help them recognize their class and the roots of the situation they live in, and to join in the struggle to eradicate the corrupt system based on “exploitation of man by man.” We must plan a revolution to change society and replace it with a proletarian dictatorship. In this sense, workers and students will live the life that they have always hoped for and deserve, based on their contributions to the growth and development of a just society.

★
I was happy to participate in the workshop with PLP. I liked the way it worked, with sessions that we all prepared for, with some of us leading the discussions, and all of us learning from them. It helped us understand our own reality, especially the debates we had. It helped us understand better the source of the misery that we and our parents live day to day. I thank PLP for this work that will help us move forward, in our understanding and in our struggle.

★
The three-day cadre school was a

tremendous experience. It allowed us to better understand many things that we sometimes minimize but that play a big role in the decadent situation we are in.

We live under an unequal (and inadequate for most people) system that exploits all the resources, human and otherwise. In the school, we debated many different ideas, leading to an understanding that anything that we want to achieve must be thought out first, and must have a basis in the real world. We understand that the brain is the engine of all thought, but these thoughts are not created automatically; the conditions we live under are responsible for how we think.

We talked about the development of classes, how the first human society was not based on class but on coexistence, learning how to tame nature. There were individual and collective interests, but the individual was not prioritized. That was the primitive form of communism. We discussed what it means to have class struggle, where we fight for the ideas necessary to make our class rule in our own interests. When we don’t fight for our class, if anything is “won” at all, it is merely reforms. And if all we fight for is to reform a corrupt, exploitative system, we still end up with a bourgeoisie exploiting the proletarians. But there are some people who understand this, and say no. I hope to become a committed fighter for the working class and to share what I have learned.

★
The PLP cadre school was really important for me, it helped me acquire new knowledge, it helped me understand the functioning of society, and it allowed me to think in a different way. It taught me how to fight to change this system today.

The school taught me how to live collectively and how to support others in struggle. I think the school made me a new person with a new outlook on life.

★
During the PLP cadre school workshops, we had an opportunity to read and discuss with our colleagues all or parts of Historical Materialism, Road to Revolution III and IV, and Reform and Revolution. The readings allowed us to do a lot of reflection so that we could know how the world functions and why, how it was not always like this, and how it became like this.

It is essential that we know what we need to do and know how to arm ourselves, ideologically and materially. We learned that we need to prepare relentlessly, together, to fight the capitalist system that every day increases the misery of the working masses of people, here in Haiti and around the world, through poverty, racism, sexism, and war.

We spent a memorable weekend together, not only studying, but also sharing food, sports, and discussing many ideas of interest to us. I would like to thank the PLP comrades in Haiti and abroad who contributed their efforts to make this cadre school successful.

★
The cadre school session is a space where we learn to debate and to understand/respect everyone’s opinion. It was extremely important for us to participate in this workshop, it taught us to have confidence in ourselves when we read texts that contain new ideas. It taught us how to organize ourselves. I suggest that in the next cadre school, perhaps we can watch a film together and discuss its ideas. Overall it was a good experience.

CHALLENGE readers in conversation

Joining Progressive Labor Party (PLP) is voluntary. There aren't applications, tests, interviews or mandatory dues, all of which the capitalists use to intimidate and control the working class and its allies. Workers' experience leads the way to understand how capitalism works and destroys our class. We come to believe in communism, place our confidence completely in the working class and in PLP and learn how members and friends can contribute to the class struggle. In this process it's important to listen to workers' experiences, questions and doubts and conduct sharp, but comradely struggles. After reading the article in CHALLENGE titled, "Capitalism kills, workers have no nations," we began the following conversation:

Our conversation with Questions (Q) and Responses (R)

Q: Do you agree with the title of the article?

R: Yes, workers don't need nations and borders. The capitalists use these things to get cheap labor and to control the working class.

Q: Why can't we trust the Democratic Party politicians?

R: The politicians are the same with their false promises and useless reforms. I'm so angry about their abuse at the border, the separation of children from their families. These children are damaged and the press doesn't explain how bad it is.

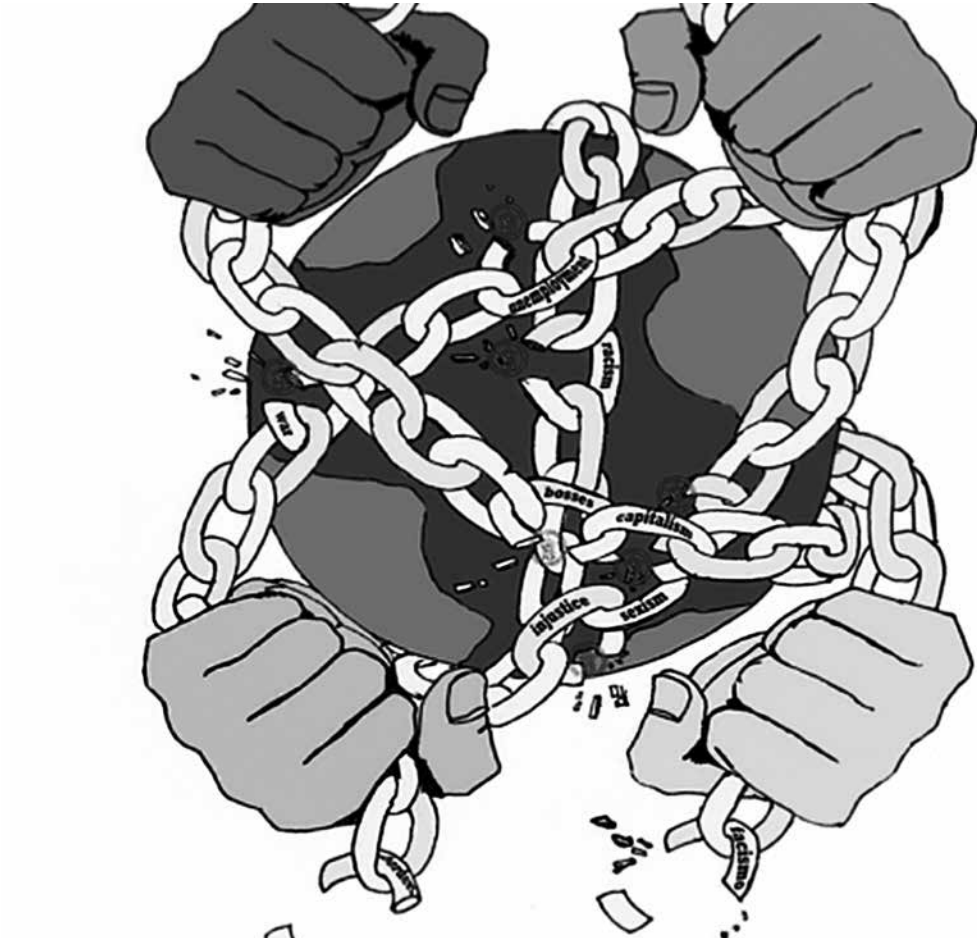
R: [Joe] Biden said it was the smugglers fault that so many people died in the back of that truck. Yes, the smugglers knew what they were doing.

R: Yes, but the capitalists blame anyone but themselves. Murder by small capitalists like the smugglers is connected to the goals of big capitalists and can't compare to genocidal profit wars between imperialists, the U.S., China and Russia, that slaughter millions of workers and their families every year.

Q: Why do so many immigrants risk everything to cross the U.S./Mexico border?

R: I agree with the article. We are forced to flee our homes, because of poverty, homelessness, no jobs, racist repression and terror, war. Yes, but we make a choice to migrate for money, good jobs and a better life. If I had known what I know now about living in the U.S., I would have stayed in my "country." We shouldn't blame ourselves for migrating. We come not by choice but from necessity.

R: The capitalists' plan is to spread the illusion that if we migrate we will get ahead. Not true. What the capitalists want is to fill jobs with cheap labor. They are selective. When they need technology experts, doctors, researchers, etc. or people from



countries they want to control, like Venezuelans, they put out the welcome mat. Without class conscious fightback, the international working class are slaves to the bosses' wishes.

R: We need a mass PLP worldwide to completely destroy capitalism.

Q: When the working class wins power, we will destroy borders and nations. We will be one united working class. Under communism workers will be able to move anywhere in the world. For what reasons will we move?

R: It won't be necessary, because the working class will be building communism where all workers will share what we need and contribute according to commitment, with struggle, of course. For international solidarity, for example, for healthcare or to support revolutionary struggle. To know other places in the world

R: After a communist revolution, PLP and the international working class will be left with a world the imperialists have destroyed by racism, war, and climate disaster. It will be necessary for the Party

and the working class to relocate for survival and to meet the necessities of our class.

Q: [Vladimir] Lenin called imperialism the highest stage of capitalism. Why?

R: I agree with the article. When capitalists accumulate so much wealth they move to expand their power beyond their borders. Then the giant imperialists, now the U.S., China and Russia fight each other, over our dead bodies, to eliminate the competition.

R: The problem is that socialism didn't lead to communism. There's a lot of confusion and anti-communism.

Q: Why did that happen? All comments, questions and doubts are welcome.

R: Too much external and internal pressure. Half socialism and half communism didn't work. The socialist economic and political system has collapsed. I don't know

OK. This is an important question. Let's continue it at our next study group. Now, let's eat! 🍌

RED EYE ON THE NEWS . . .

Capitalist stooges argue over why there's no clean water

Bloomberg, 9/2—The water crisis unfolding in Jackson, Mississippi, was decades in the making: the culmination of crumbling infrastructure, systemic racism and more extreme weather. It's also a stark warning of trouble to come as climate change piles new stress onto the essential services...In addition to warming up the planet by nearly 1.2 degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial times, climate change is making precipitation events more intense, and therefore more likely to overwhelm strained systems. Lower-income and minority communities such as Jackson — which is 82 percent Black and where a quarter of residents live in poverty — bear the brunt of the impacts. "It's a consequence of many, many decades of disinvestment in water infrastructure, in general infrastructure in the city of Jackson."

Pink wave in Latin America requires U.S. imperialists to adapt

Foreign Affairs, 8/31—Over the past five years, left-of-center politicians have won the presidencies in Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru. Their rise prompted talk of a "pink wave" on the continent. That shorthand, however, is too facile: these leaders do not represent so much a wholesale ideological shift as a wave of anti-incumbency and the rejection of the elite Latin American political

class...Western governments are struggling to constructively engage these new political actors, who almost uniformly are not members of the elite and were not educated abroad. That means diplomats will need to expand beyond their traditional networks to forge new connections...In order to preserve Western influence and steer the region away from China and Russia, Western diplomats must figure out how to engage this new crop of leaders...Ministries in Canada, the United States, and Europe...will also need to make inroads into non-traditional networks, such as unions, youth movements, informal sector workers' associations, and indigenous groups.

War in Ukraine requires a grand strategy for U.S. imperialists

Foreign Policy, 2/2—The war also points to some problems for Washington's strategists...While the collective West has condemned and sanctioned Russia and backed Ukraine, almost the entire global south has refused to choose sides. India is a U.S. partner in the Quad but has neither criticized nor sanctioned Russia—and has increased its imports of Russian oil since the war began. China has neither backed nor condemned the Russian invasion but has supported Russia's claims that its attack was provoked by threats to its security from NATO. Many other countries in the global south view Russia as a large authoritarian country with which

they can do business and accuse the United States of hypocrisy, given Washington's own past wars in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan...If preventing the emergence of a rival hegemon in a vital strategic region remains a cardinal principle of U.S. grand strategy, then pivoting to Asia is essential, regardless of what happens in Ukraine.

Who pays for all those rich beach homes?

New York Times, 8/8—As sea level rises and storm surges grow more intense, beach towns on every coast of the United States will soon be sacrificing more real estate to Poseidon. A 2018 study by the Union of Concerned Scientists found that more than 300,000 coastal homes, currently worth well over \$100 billion, are at risk of "chronic inundation" by 2045... Some \$7 billion worth of beach replenishment programs, most under the auspices of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, have added sand and bolstered property values in some of the most exclusive havens in the United States. Federal taxpayers typically pick up two-thirds of the tab... The lords of the beachfront were late to the coastal real estate game. The beach was initially deemed the most useless, undesirable space on the North American continent...The wealthy eventually realized their error. It's hard to see how, exactly, they will hold on to much of this sea-level paradise in the face of rising waters and carbon-charged superstorms. But it's not hard to guess who will end up covering their losses.

75th anniversary of Peekskill

Paul Robeson: Communist hero of the working class



Robeson, surrounded by a crowd of Black and white workers in Peekskill, singing and bravely protecting each other in face of fascist terror.

The career of Paul Robeson, in both life and death, is an inspiring story of antiracist struggle and revolutionary communist class-consciousness and fightback: his life remains a model for the entire international working class. It's also a story that makes crystal clear the racist hypocrisy of the U.S. ruling class, and the treachery of the bourgeois Black misleaders. They attempted to appropriate his memory after his death—while during his life, did everything they could to repress and tarnish him.

Scholar, athlete, singer, actor, antiracist, communist

Robeson won an academic scholarship to Rutgers University in 1915. He was only the third Black person ever to have attended Rutgers, and one of only two Black youth at Rutgers during his entire four years on campus. At college he was both an academic and athletic leader, making Phi Beta Kappa (an academic honorary society), as well as being an All-American football player, and starring in several other sports. And even though Robeson had a beautiful and powerful singing voice, he was barred from the Rutgers Glee Club because of racism at the school's social functions.

Robeson developed a career as a concert singing artist. He had appeared in a singing role in the Broadway musical, "Show Boat" in 1928, and would repeat the role in a film version seven years later. But he was cast in a racist stereotype, and Robeson hoped that through concerts he could side-step the racist pressures involved in dramatic productions and films.

Throughout this period his political consciousness was being developed in the Communist Party. Their influence began to give him the insight that racism was not an isolated phenomenon, but was an intrinsic and necessary part of capitalism, and would never be defeated until the capitalist system itself was destroyed.

CHALLENGE strives to be the communist paper for and by the international working class. We call on all readers, supporters, and comrades to submit class struggle articles, analytical pieces, original photos and graphics, letters, and political cartoons. The next deadline is the **Friday evening of September 16**. Send to desafio.challenge@gmail.com. For some guidance and house style rules, please go to www.bit.ly/338ZJow

All submissions are open to collective discussion, struggle, and change. See box on page 2 about fighting for collectivity and against a cult of the individual.

'In Soviet Union, I am not a Negro, but a human being'

Robeson's trips to the then-communist-led Soviet Union in 1934 and 1936 had an enormous effect on him, where he stated for the first time in his life, he felt like a human being, walking in full human dignity. During the Spanish Civil War, moved by the energy, selflessness, and antiracist struggle, he appeared at rallies and concerts to raise money. He also visited Spain to give concerts for the communist-led International Brigades fighting the Spanish, German, and Italian fascists, including a performance on the front lines.

Robeson also supported the anti-lynching efforts of the militant National Negro Congress. Being outside the control of the bourgeois leadership of the NAACP and the Urban League, Robeson became a loathed target of bourgeois Black misleaders, especially the NAACP.

During World War II, Robeson crisscrossed the U.S. appearing at rallies, concerts and other causes in support of the anti-fascist war effort. He drew enormous crowds, raising enthusiasm and hundreds of thousands of dollars from Black and white working class audiences.

Unapologetic amidst capitalist attacks, liberal betrayal

In 1943, he appeared in another very successful production of Othello on Broadway. He was at the peak of his popularity as an antiracist, an actor, a singer, and a fighter against fascism. By 1943, J. Edgar Hoover, head of the F.B.I., already had him tagged for "preventive detention" in the event of some "crisis."

The end of World War II saw a great increase in racist lynchings throughout the U.S. South, and a rise in racist oppression in the rest of the country. Robeson connected sharpening racist attacks with U.S. imperialism in the post-World War II Cold War era. In April 1949, he attended a Paris meeting of the World Partisans of Peace, where he attacked imperialist plans for a new war against the Soviet

Union and the emerging communist-led China. As anticommunism ran rampant, he was denounced by the entire Black bourgeois misleadership—Walter White, Roy Wilkins, Bayard Rustin, A. Philip Randolph, et al., the AFL, and bosses in the entertainment industry.

Peekskill: kkkops and racists riot

The bosses' hatred of Robeson culminated in a fascist attack which succeeded in breaking up a scheduled concert where Robeson was to sing near Peekskill, NY on Saturday, August 27, 1949. The concert was rescheduled for Sunday, September 4. Several thousand guards of Black and white workers and veterans, communists, and supporters protected Robeson and the 20,000 concert-goers, while Robeson sang in the face of rifles aimed at him (Duberman, *Paul Robeson* 1988).

After the concert, state troopers forced departing vehicles with families with small children to pass through a gauntlet of rock-throwing fascists. One hundred and fifty concertgoers were injured but overall, the day remained a victory for Robeson and the antiracists, showing that determination, organization, and courage could defeat racism even in the face of brutal attacks.

Blacklisted, interrogated for being a communist

In the aftermath, Robeson was blacklisted. Bookings in the U.S. disappeared, and the government revoked his passport in 1950, thus depriving him of the ability to tour abroad. Nevertheless, during this period, he remained politically active, singing and marching to support the Rosenbergs as they were sentenced to death by the U.S. government for fighting against capitalism, speaking at May Day rallies, appearing at benefit concerts for the Labor Youth League and the World Youth Festivals, speaking out against racism and imperialism.

In 1956, he was called before the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC), where he was an unrelentingly hostile witness. Throughout this entire period the bourgeois Black misleaders didn't lift a finger to support him. This exposes how Black nationalism is a pro-ruling class idea and a dead end for Black workers.

With the restoration of his passport and the upsurge in the Black civil-rights movement in the late 1950s, Robeson's career saw a mild resurgence. He was able to tour both in the U.S. and abroad until illness overtook him in the mid-1960s. He died on January 23 in 1976.

After his death, the bourgeoisie, both Black and white, engaged in a hypocritical orgy of adulation, naming schools, college centers, and libraries after a man they hated, despised, and feared. All the while hiding and distorting what he really stood for: multiracial unity and a world run by and for working people—a communist world.

A person's life is a process and there was only one Paul Robeson. He was a communist, he belonged to the international working class and the international communist movement. He was a militant supporter of both.✱

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