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North Korea Joins China's Nuclear Club: 'Nuke-free' Scheme Impossible in Imperialist World

Under the profit system, competing capitalists, either as individuals or nations, pursue advantage ruthlessly. Today, the ability to wipe out rivals' military bases, factories and cities by touching a button is an increasingly available advantage. While Obama rode into the White House on an "anti-war" platform and has now touted "a world free of nuclear weapons," even the Pentagon says weaker U.S. foes would be fools not to produce atomic bombs, making a nuclear-free world impossible under capitalism.

The latest issue of the U.S. Army War College's journal "Parameters" says, "our current conventional superiority obliges our enemies to seek asymmetrical offsets [see footnote*]. The more effective are NATO's (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) conventional arms, the more likely it is that regional great powers would choose to emphasize a nuclear-based deterrent and defense. If you do not believe this, you are in effect claiming that, say, China or Iran would choose to be defeated in conventional war, rather than raise the stakes through nuclear escalation."

The war-makers' article admits that "anti-nuke" Obama is lying: "Nuclear proliferation [the spread of atomic weapons] is here to stay. We say that we endorse the abolition of nuclear weapons. We do not mean it...A world of zero nuclear arms could not be monitored or verified, at least not by our side...."

On May 19, with Vietnam-era mass murderer Henry Kissinger at his side at the White House, Obama tried to hide the above admission, saying,

"It is absolutely imperative that America takes leadership....to reduce and ultimately eliminate the dangers that are posed by nuclear weapons." (Voice of America broadcast)

A week later North Korea exploded a Hiroshima-sized A-bomb and launched a series of ballistic missile tests. Obama & Co. push other nations not to manufacture nuclear arms ("non-proliferation") in order to maintain the U.S. as the capitalist nation with the largest, most powerful nuclear arsenal. But North Korea's actions point to a Chinese-led effort stretching from the Far East to the Middle East to counter Washington's arms supremacy.

China Calls North Korea's Dictator 'Our Loose Cannon'

For U.S. rulers, the current economic crisis makes criticizing China's effort to gather together a bloc of nuclear-armed nations a touchy matter. Obama just sent Treasury-Secretary Geithner to beg Beijing's bankers to buy more Treasury-bills (in effect, loans from the Chinese to enable the U.S. to pay for its wars and to save its financial system). But meanwhile, the U.S. bosses' media calls North Korea an "isolated, rogue" nation. However, North Korea, in fact, functions as a war-threatening client state for China.

China's \$2 billion in yearly exports to North Korea — quadrupled since 2004 — effectively amounts to outright aid, because China seldom demands payment. The bulk of these "sales," mostly food and fuel, go to the military, North Korea's biggest employer. In return, perpetually-mobilized North Korea serves China as a buffer against U.S.-occupied South Korea, and soon will threaten U.S. ally Japan.

North Korean dictator Kim Jong-Il has a reputation as a self-obsessed madman in the West. Chinese rulers' opinion differs significantly. Zhang Wantian, vice-chairman of China's Central Military Commission, described Kim as a loose cannon "but our [China's] loose cannon." (Asia Times, 9/12/03)

China's Rulers Expanding Their 'Nuclear Club'

North Korea lies at the heart of China's sponsorship of the new members of the nuclear club among present and potential U.S. enemies who China hopes will oppose the U.S. in a crisis. Thomas Reed, Air Force Secretary under liberals Ford and Carter, has written a book, "Nuclear Express," dedicated largely to exposing this goal.

Reed told U.S. News and World Report (1/2/2009), "China has been using North Korea as the re-transfer point for the sale of nuclear and

missile technology to Iran, Syria, Pakistan, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen." U.S. foe Russia provided North Korea nuclear material-handling technology essential to its recent blast. And Iran's burgeoning nuke program depends entirely on Chinese and Russian fuel and expertise.

Control of nuclear-armed Pakistan totters between an unstable government rooted in the army and Islamist militants. U.S. strategy relies on billion-dollar bribes to the military, which doesn't seem to be paying off. China on the other hand, courts both sides. It contracted a deal with the current Pakistani regime to run an oil pipeline carrying Mid-East crude from Pakistan's Gwadar port (where China is building a naval base) to eastern China.

But if Pakistan's generals should fall from power and lose their grip on the nuclear trigger, China's bosses have a plan B, which U.S. rulers lack. A surprising number of sophisticated Chinese weapons have been found in Taliban hands in Obama's newly-enlarged Afghanistan-Pakistan war theater.

The U.S. quagmires in Iraq and Afghanistan also help China's rulers gain a nuclear leg up. Any U.S. bombing of nuclear facilities in North Korea or Iran would entail massive ground wars — no wars have ever been won without an invading, occupying army. This would mean restoring a military draft in the U.S., quite inconvenient right now for Obama's Pentagon.

'World's Only Superpower' Spurs Nuclear Upstarts

In the last century, capitalists carving up the globe killed well over 100 million workers in their imperialist wars. And after all, the U.S. ruling class is the only one that ever used atomic bombs, mass-murdering over 250,000 civilians in two Japanese cities in a few minutes. They did this mainly as a warning to the Soviet Union not to challenge U.S. post-World War II supremacy (Japanese rulers were already ready to surrender). With all the important profit-seekers, great and not so great, now or soon wielding nuclear arms, the likely death toll for our class stands infinitely higher in this century. The broadening threat of capitalists' nuclear, profit-inspired holocaust makes the need to build a revolutionary workers' party all the more urgent.

PLP's efforts to build a massive base for communist revolution to take on these imperialist butchers are crucial to workers' ability to challenge and wipe out this hellish system. As a class, the working class will never die. No amount of capitalist nuclear arsenals can destroy our class, which produces all value. Dare to struggle; dare to win. ☸

* Non-traditional, technologically-based and biological warfare

OUR FIGHT

★ **Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to smash capitalism — wage slavery. While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions all over the world.**

★ **Capitalism returned to the Soviet Union and China because socialism failed to wipe out many aspects of the profit system, like wages and division of labor.**

★ **Capitalism inevitably leads to wars. PLP organizes workers, students and soldiers to turn these wars into a revolution for communism — the dictatorship of the proletariat. This fight requires a mass Red Army led by the communist PLP.**

★ **Communism means working collectively to build a society where sharing is based on need. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. Everyone will share in society's benefits and burdens.**

★ **Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of race.**

★ **Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women — sexism — and traditional gender roles created by class society.**

★ **Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One International working class, one world, one Party.**

★ **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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'What's good for Obama's GM is death for workers...'

Now that the UAW union leaders helped elect their "friend in the White House," who has also become the workers' boss at GM, the sell-outs have sunk to the following:

- A ban on strikes until 2015;
- A wage freeze (after having cut wages in half for new hires);
- Allowing GM to close 14 more factories and lay off another 21,000 workers without a fight.

With friends like Obama, who needs enemies?



Auto workers marching in Lansing, Michigan, June 1

Shining Example for Working Class: Mass March Backs Stella D'Oro Strikers, Defies Cops



BRONX, NY, May 30 — "Shut it down and shut it tight, the bosses can't profit when the workers unite" chanted over 1,000 workers, students and teachers, who rallied and marched in support of the courageous Stella D'Oro strikers. The Stella workers, who have been fighting for nearly 10 months against the vulture capitalist bosses of Brynwood Co., have set a shining example for workers nation-wide by refusing to accept cuts in benefits and wages.

A group of demonstrators seized the moment as the march approached the Stella D'Oro factory, and surged through and around police barricades blocking the street between the marchers and the Stella D'Oro plant. Pumping fists and chanting, they stormed right up to the factory gate, catching the cops completely off guard.

PLP organizers have won the respect and confidence of many of the strikers based on our consistent strike support and our involvement in preparing what was a very successful rally. Hundreds of CHALLENGES were sold throughout the day. Besides bringing our friends to the march, PLP'ers in the New York City UFT (United Federation of Teachers) have brought strikers to its Delegate Assembly to raise support, and into their schools to speak to teachers and parents.

The strikers' determination has inspired people throughout the area, and contrasts sharply to the sellout nature of the labor bosses. At the opening rally, union members from the Professional Staff Congress of the City University (PSC) and the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) spoke of the importance of the Stella struggle to the entire labor movement and vowed their continued support. A PSC member read a poem "The Great Tablecloth" by the Chilean poet Pablo Neruda. (See sidebar) A NYSUT activist gave the workers an envelope with more than \$2,000 that she had personally raised from rank-and-file members on Long Island.

Except for the PSC contingent of 60 and the two busloads of NYSUT teachers that came from Long Island and Westchester, "organized labor" is not supporting the Stella strike. The leadership of the Stella D'Oro workers union, the Bakery, Confectionary, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Union (BCTGM) did not make a big effort to turn workers out for this rally. Instead it has encouraged the workers to rely mainly on a court case the union has filed against the company.

Marchers Stand Up to Scabs in Blue

As we began to march through the neighborhood, we were enthusiastically received by the community and our numbers swelled. Transit workers on the elevated train line above sounded their horns and waved at the march-

ers in solidarity.

When we reached a Stop & Shop supermarket which sells scab cookies, the organizers attempted to have a brief rally on the sidewalk. The cops ordered the marchers to keep marching. One of the security leaders, a NYC transit worker, who has recently been on strike, raised his arms and exclaimed, "This is our march. We'll

move when we're ready!" When it became apparent that the cops were going to arrest the transit worker, others came to his defense and the cops backed off.

Since the strike began, the cops have been busy protecting the scabs and bosses, and hassling the workers. The cops tore down an awning the strikers had erected to protect themselves from the rain. For months the precinct stalled before granting the strikers a permit to park a "warming bus" on 237th St. At an April rally, the police told organizers they could have a sound permit but then changed their minds. PSC leaders were threatened with arrest for using even a small hand-held bullhorn. So much for "free speech."

March leaders were looking for an opportunity to go more on the offensive against the company and the cops. As we approached the factory site, the cops had erected metal barricades to block off the street to the plant gate. The cops expected we'd go right into the pens they had set up. Instead, organizers in the march seized the moment and moved past the barricades, surprising the cops. Over 100 chanting marchers ignored their pleas to turn around and return to the pen.

The raised fists and shouts electrified the major part of the crowd on the main street and a woman striker got up on a platform with her bullhorn to lead a chant of "boycott Stella." The cops found themselves surrounded by two groups of angry workers.

Only Communist Revolution Can Destroy Capitalism

After making our point, the demonstrators moved back into the street, assembled in the panned area and began the second rally where rank-and-file members from several unions spoke. A PLP member, a UFT teacher, warned not to rely on Obama or union misleaders. Instead, he declared that this strike is the "real 'stimulus package,' representing what workers must do worldwide. Eventually, black, Latino, Asian and white workers will recognize their true potential and bring the capitalist system down."

Raising a copy of CHALLENGE in the air, he called on every demonstrator present to support the strike by "...organizing on their jobs, in their churches and mass organizations with CHALLENGE in your hands!"

PLP members are discussing with the strikers the limits of relying on the union strategy of mainly working through the courts. It's an ongoing struggle for the strikers to maintain their morale. This rally helped invigorate them and their supporters, and showed the importance of building mass support for workers' struggles.

We call on all CHALLENGE readers to raise money, organize people to demonstrate at local grocery stores selling scab cookies, and support the next battle in the Stella struggle, which is indeed a fight for all workers. ☼

"El Gran Mantel"/"The Great Tablecloth"

Pablo Neruda

Hunger is a cold fire.
Let's sit down soon
with all those who haven't eaten,
spread the great tablecloths,
shake salt on the lakes of the world,
planetary bakeries,
tables with strawberries in snow,
and a plate like the moon
from which we all will eat.

For now I ask no more
than the justice of eating.



LA Students, Workers Fight Capitalist Storm Hitting Calif. Colleges

LOS ANGELES, May 30 — Community college students were angered over the Board of Trustees' cancellation of summer classes district-wide starting July 1, as part of state budget cuts that could slash nearly \$100 million from its nine colleges through 2010. In the fall, fees will rise while the CalGrants financial aid system may shut down completely. Veterans and CalWorks (welfare) recipients may lose their sole source of income if they can't find classes. Others depend on campus-based childcare and might be unable to hold onto their jobs.

"What's going to happen to us?" some students wondered. A teacher replied, I don't know what will happen to each of you individually. But many like you who came to college hoping for a better life will wind up in exactly the jobs they wanted to escape. Some people in CalWorks will be forced into slave-labor jobs. Some will end up in the military. Bottom line, wherever you end up, it's important to organize the people around you to fight back. And that fight has to be for revolution."

The students nodded slowly. Then someone brought out CHALLENGES. One student hadn't read it before. Another student told her, "This paper shows us how to fight!"

Someone else said her teacher had dismissed communism as "a nice idea that didn't work." That sparked a discussion about why the bosses push lies about communism even harder as it becomes clear that capitalism doesn't work — not for the working class!

Disasters Are 'Natural' Under Capitalism

The Chancellor compared the budget crisis to Hurricane Katrina. "It's a natural disaster," he said, "all we can do is pull together and plan to rebuild." But even Katrina was mainly a capitalist disaster. After 2001, money allocated for flood control was diverted into "Homeland Security" and the Iraq war.

Like Katrina, the California budget cuts are racist attacks hitting black and Latino workers hardest. For example, the college with the largest percentage of black students, and the one that's growing fastest, was reported to be the ONLY one with no summer school at all.

The budget cuts are a 100% capitalist disaster. The bosses are forcing workers to pay for the steep decline in tax revenue resulting from the general crisis of their racist profit system. Meanwhile, state interest payments to large financial institutions have more than doubled as a percentage of the state budget. And the \$100 million LA community colleges will lose is only 1% of LA's share of the cost of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars!

Students, Teachers: Unite With Industrial Workers

Comparing the district to General Motors, the Chancellor said that wages and benefits for teachers and other campus workers are "too high." Like auto workers, we'd better not count on our union leaders to fight for us. The annual faculty union meeting was all about how (not whether) medical benefits would be cut. One union member drew both jeers and cheers when she called for a general strike against the cutbacks. The Chancellor's reference to GM opens the door to struggle with college teachers about the need to unite with industrial workers.



One way is to support the PLP Summer Projects in Seattle and LA.

Since February, community college student activists have collected signatures, rallied and marched against budget cuts. They've become bolder and more confident in their ability to lead, while beginning to understand that reforms are difficult, if not impossible, to win in the present period.

"The rally in Pasadena turned out to be bogus," a student leader explained to another student who is just getting involved, "but we started chanting 'They Say Cut Back, We Say Fight Back' and students from other campuses joined in. We took it to the streets. Then when we went to Sacramento, it was the main chant for the whole march."

Someone suggested a new chant: "Budget cuts are no solution, workers need a revolution!" Others liked this. Several took extra copies of CHALLENGE. We invite these students and their friends to join our communist "summer school" of struggle. ☺

Derail CTA Racist Health-Care Rip-Off!

CHICAGO, IL, June 1 — If the bosses prevail, the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) will stop paying retiree health care on July 1. Almost 7,000 retired workers and their families will pay as much as \$1,300/month for medical coverage, deducted from their pension checks. They will also pay large deductibles, \$100 for office visits and as much as \$50 per prescription. Many will join the over one million uninsured workers in Cook County, just when the County health system is being severely cut back. A system that can't provide health care should be destroyed!

This deadly racist plot was hatched in the winter of '07-'08, during the "doomsday budget" hysteria. The plotters included ATU (Amalgamated Transit Union) leaders Darrell Jefferson (Local 241-bus) and Rick Harris (Local 308-Rail), Democratic Party Mayor Daley, the Democratic Governor (on his way to prison) and State Legislators, who together have collected untold millions in campaign contributions from transit workers for decades.

The unions and CTA agreed to sacrifice retiree health care in an arbitration settlement, bypassing a membership vote that would have rejected the deal. Then, with the blessings of the ATU and the Chicago Federation of Labor, the

State Legislature passed a law to "guarantee permanent funding for mass transit." This law states that as of July 1, 2009, CTA is no longer responsible for retiree health care.

CTA claims it has no money for retirees, but it has plenty for the racist bankers that are forcing millions of us from our homes. CTA cut its pension contribution from \$58 million to \$18 million-a-year, but is paying Goldman Sachs, JPMorgan Chase and Morgan Stanley \$132 million-a-year in interest ("debt service") on bonds they hold to finance mass transit. The "debt service" far exceeds the money raised from the bonds in the first place.

CTA is the second largest mass transit system in the U.S. Our labor creates \$2 billion in value-added-wealth by bringing 1.6 million riders-a-day to work, school, shopping and events. But that \$2 billion goes into the vaults of the bosses and bankers. Now they want to steal the "guaranteed" health care from retired workers who sacrificed their health to keep this system running.

The rulers are trying to dig their way out of their global financial crisis with racist cutbacks and layoffs that hit black and Latino workers first and hardest. That's how the racist profit

system works. It's no coincidence that this attack affects mostly black workers who entered the workforce in the 1960's and '70's. From Obama to Daley, the Democratic Party and the union leaders are doing the dirty work. Ultimately, these capitalist crises lead to fascism and world war.

Workers have instituted a federal lawsuit and are seeking an injunction to stop the July 1 cut-off. They're reaching out to both retired and active workers for support. The best way to get the court's attention would be to shut the city down with a wildcat strike, surrounding CTA headquarters or City Hall with tens of thousands of workers and riders.

As we wage this life-and-death struggle, PLP will organize support from transit workers in NYC, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, Oakland and San Francisco. In the process we can show thousands of transit workers that only communist revolution can end capitalist crises and racist terror. A communist society will exist to meet the needs of the international working class. Mass transit will be the main form of transportation and health care will be universal and free for all. ☺

France: Anti-Racist Unity, Red Leadership Could Sack Sellouts

PARIS, FRANCE, May 28 — If you blinked, you probably missed the French labor movement's national day of mobilization two days ago. Its showcase was the strike called by four rail unions, involving only 25% of the rail workers, down from 41% in the last big walkout on March 19. On May 26, from 50% to 75% of regional, Paris commuter and high-speed trains were running normally.

The unions issued no national strike call in other sectors, calling only a few regional ones, accompanied by a half-hearted call for workers to demonstrate without striking, so the protests were small. The biggest, 15,000 in Marseilles, compares with 300,000 there on March 19.

After the recent wave of wildcat seizures of bosses by angry workers, one might expect bigger actions. There's certainly plenty of reason to protest:

- Skyrocketing unemployment could lead to 4.4 million officially jobless by year's end, plus another 2.8 million who want to work but have given up trying to find jobs. In a potential workforce of 31.1 million, the current 20% real unemployment rate could hit 23% by New Year's.

- Racism doubles those rates for black and Arab workers. A 2007 French government study reported unemployment is twice as high among immigrants, many of African or Arab origin. (France has 4.9 million first-generation and 2.3 million second-generation immigrants.)

- Six million people survive on RMI (welfare pay-

ments). At least 1.5 million have no home, living with family or friends, in loaned accommodations, in shanties or on the streets. On May 26, Frédéric Lefebvre, ruling right-wing UMP party spokesman, insulted all workers by floating a proposal to "give workers the right to work from home" while on sick leave or maternity leave!

But workers here are no longer willing to lose a day's wages in symbolic one-day strikes that don't frighten either the bosses or their government. Yesterday, the eight union confederations met with representatives of the bosses' organization. Instead of serious discussions, the bosses called two recesses totaling 3½ hours and finally agreed to discuss "the social management of the consequences of the economic crisis on employment" in two weeks.

That's far less than the unions' May 25 platform demanding higher wages, easier access to unemployment benefits, "a new deal" on the distribution of the wealth created by labor, stable jobs for youth and greater union rights. Today's CGT union claim that "the extent and unity of the workers' mobilization has shaken the bosses," rings hollow.

The CGT said successful mobilizations are not "a numbers game," citing the many different protest forms — leafleting, protests targeting prefectures and chambers of commerce, barbecues and picnics — as "proof" that the protest movement is broadening. It said hundreds of thousands of workers — who would not have joined traditional protests and strikes — participated in these actions.

Thus, May 26 is supposedly a springboard for a bigger national day of mobilization on Saturday, June 13. But once again no national strike — only "protests."

A strategic retreat is O.K. if it makes future advance possible. The unions claim that layoffs announced for the summer and the massive entrance of high school graduates on the job market this fall will create "a critical mass" of worker anger. But dragging out the struggle for five months risks disheartening and demobilizing the working class.

It's likely union misleaders will call more symbolic one-day strikes in the fall. On March 27, 2007, François Chérèque, the CFDT union sellout leader, asked about subcontracting by the bosses' circle ETHIC, replied: "Take Airbus [as an example]. To you, I say: the government doesn't need to invest a penny. We've got to do to Airbus what was done to Boeing! Increase and develop subcontracting, and then let them all compete." (From "Riches et presque décomplexés," by Jacques Cotta, p 125.)

As long as these traitors are running things, demonstrations and strikes will be schools for cynicism and discouragement. These union misleaders restrict things to harmless symbolic actions, letting workers blow off steam.

Workers here and worldwide need to develop communist leadership and organize hard-hitting actions that unite all workers black, Arab and white, native-born and immigrant. That will help transform the class struggle into a school for communism. ☛

MORE LETTERS

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trafficking government to break unions, detain protestors in a mass way, and assassinate workers. Some of these capitalists own Chiquita Banana, Postobon, Drumon, Bavaria, Coca Cola, Nestle etc. Today because of the lack of an organized working class, we have lost reforms that cost rivers of blood to gain. The bosses have called this historic day Labor Day to hide its true name, The International Working Class Day. It is not in their interests to have workers recognize our bloody history.

On May 1st, along with the numerous worker and student groups, we mobilized in support of the more than four million displaced workers in Colombia, the millions who rot in the dungeons of the Uribe regime, in commemoration of the thousands who have been disappeared at the hands of the terrorist state, in memory of the more than four thousand unionists murdered, the hundreds of workers threatened with death, and in support of the more than one billion unemployed worldwide.

At the march, the PLP contingent raised our voices. We chanted for the destruction of capitalism with a communist revolution so that we could rebuild the revolutionary class-consciousness to end pacifism that the union leaders misguide workers with. With euphoria and courage some youth confronted the brutality of the state. They were beaten and arrested. We must double our efforts in helping our youth in their everyday struggles, teaching them our science of understanding the world, dialectical materialism, while at the same time getting them CHALLENGE newspaper. We must discuss the paper with them and find the best way to get involved in mass organizations. That is the only road to communist revolution and to rebuild a society that will put an end to all vestiges of racism, sexism and this imperialist system.

Comrade in Colombia

Need Revolutionary Communist Politics

During our May Day dinner a comrade

gave a speech on how the Bolsheviks took Russia out of the imperialist conflict of World War I and how Soviet and Chinese communists defeated fascist Germany and Japan in World War II. The question arose, what made the Russians and Chinese different from others?

Prior to World War I workers had class-consciousness in Germany and France, but only the Russians had a revolution. Also, prior to the rise of the fascist powers there were powerful workers' movements in Germany, France, Britain and the US, but how come only the Soviets and Chinese fought against fascism and not for empire?

The answer is that class-consciousness is not enough. Workers need revolutionary politics in order to escape the horrors of capitalism. In the U.S. during the 1930s the Communist Party stopped advocating communist revolution and fell in behind Roosevelt's New Deal fascism. As the CPU-SA became more involved with the reform struggles they moved further away from revolution until finally sellout leader Earl Browder declared in the 1940s that "communism was 20th century Americanism."

Today, too, workers find themselves struggling for their very survival. But it is not enough that we bring them class-consciousness; we must also bring revolutionary communist politics. Union misleaders push the slogan, "American jobs for American workers" and the Obama Administration tells us, "It is a time for shared sacrifice." Each claim to be for workers and against greedy bankers, all the while wrapping themselves in the flag of U.S. capitalism. Class anger can just as easily be turned into fascist nationalism unless there are revolutionary politics to guide it.

At the immigrants rights march on May 1 here in Seattle, many groups came out to support workers' "interests," but only one proclaimed that communist revolution was the only solution — PLP. As members of PLP and readers of CHALLENGE we need to push these revolutionary politics on the campuses, on the shop floor and in the military barracks.

Comrades from Seattle

Immigrant Airport Workers Resist 'Homeland Security' Attack

Naked fascism has finally come to the airport where we work. The racist bosses have declared open war against airport workers who dared to believe they had a right to defend their jobs from the boss-created global economic crisis. The bosses started their terror campaign when night-shift janitors, members of SEIU, met to discuss over-work and firings for petty offenses. They met in a public area before their shift started.

The bosses instructed our supervisors to call the Airport Police if workers have "unauthorized" union meetings. The cops raided the meeting of mostly immigrant workers and declared it "an illegal gathering in violation of airport and Homeland Security rules." The workers were briefly detained, identified, and cited. When the cops let them go, they warned that next time they would be subject to arrest and having their airport security ID confiscated. News quickly spread to other workers and other shifts. For many workers from Africa and El Salvador, these fascist raids are nothing new.

This fascism is occurring with a black U.S. president and his Homeland Security laws. Changing the appearance of capitalism does absolutely nothing to change its racist essence. There is no such thing as a "good boss." All bosses expect workers to accept capitalism's global crisis without fighting back.

SEIU officials came to the airport for an emergency meeting. Before the meeting started, a racist supervisor warned that we had three minutes to get back to work after the meeting, and failure to do so could result in a suspension. Some workers whose work areas were further away from the meeting did not go. Others did. Workers discussed how this treatment is a fascist and racist attack on all of us, like what was done in Apartheid South Africa or civil war-era El Salvador. We have a right to organize and no one is going to stop us!

After the meeting, a worker was accused of taking more than three minutes to return to work; his work area is on the far side of the terminal. The entire staff of managers and supervisors came to deliver his write-up in a clumsy attempt at intimidation. The worker was not intimidated and refused to sign!

This whole episode was a set-up from start to finish. These fascists want to make an example out of this worker because they feel threatened. Some airport workers are afraid, but others, including regular CHALLENGE readers, are organizing against these fascist attacks. Workers under the political leadership of PLP are committed to fighting racism. Together we can resist fascist attacks and build even more CHALLENGE networks. Only a PLP of millions can lead the international working class to communist revolution to put our fascist oppressors where they belong. Then we can build a new world without poverty, racism, sexism, and oil wars.

Airport Red

LETTERS



Haiti May Day: Cops' Tear Gas Fails to Stop Workers' Protest

POTOPRENS, HAITI, May 1 — Unlike previous years when May Day was celebrated as a kind of fair, thousands of workers here took to the streets with slogans like "Down with the Capitalist System, Down with Exploitation!"; "A Worker Is Not a Slave"; "500 Gourdes [\$12.66] Minimum Wage"; "No to Corruption"; "No to MINUSTAH" (the UN occupation force in Haiti); "No to the Occupation." All along the route the demonstrators sang the Internationale, the anthem of the working class: "Debout! Les damnés de la terre!" ("Arise, ye wretched of the earth!"). Bands from the poor districts enlivened the march.

A whole string of mass organizations returned to the origin of May Day and held high the demands of the vulnerable workers crammed into the filth and destitution of the bidonvilles (shack towns), the peasantry, and the working-class districts of Haiti. Trade unions, peasant, university, and other movement groups took to the streets of Port-au-Prince, the Haitian capital, around the theme "Yon lòt premye me pou yon lòt sosyete": "Another May Day for Another Society."

The mass organizations included the Confederation of Public and Private Sector Workers (CTSP), Tèt Kole ti peyizan ayisyen (Joint Leadership of Haitian Small Farmers, 500 of whose members were massacred in 1988 by the military and right-wing vigilantes for demanding land), the Union of University Workers and Teachers (STAIA), and the Association of Dessalinean Students (ASID).

In spite of agreements with the police, the government used the same weapons as the authoritarian regimes of the past to try to wreck our movement. Although we know this country is not a country of laws but a police state, we thought things might go well, given the government propaganda claiming crazily that the regime is following a path to democracy. Our "right-thinking" turned out dead wrong.

In the past, especially under the authoritarian regime of the Duvaliers (1957-1986), historic days like May Day, May 18th, July 22nd, and September 22nd had been celebrated in style: the state used to bring thousands of poor, trusting peasants into the capital, giving them red scarves, shirts and jeans like the uniform of the Tontons Macoutes (fascist government militia). This year we should have started the demonstration in front of the Parliament, but to everyone's surprise the government had brought the peasants there again, blocking us with lots of agricultural machinery given Haiti by Venezuela in its politics of solidarity.

Even when the police burst in to disperse the crowd, claiming they had received an order not to let us go further, workers continued to struggle on. Several marchers were beaten, including a woman in her sixties who had to be taken to the hospital bleeding from her ears.

After the march was broken up by tear gas from the police, some demonstrators decided to go over to the Presidential Palace in the Champ de Mars, where a fair was going on. In spite of more police, we all — students, feminists, teachers, unionists, the unemployed — kept pounding the pavement. And so we celebrated this May Day in Port-au-Prince not as a fair but as a day of protest.

Trade Unionist in Haiti

Editorial Note: The mood of revolt among workers and students in Haiti is inspiring. We're sure many at their militant May Day marches will be looking now to carry out that great slogan "Down with the Capitalist System! Down with Exploitation!" But to do so, we in PLP believe workers, students and soldiers need to join and build the international communist PLP. We commit ourselves to working with our friends in Haiti to achieve this end.

We note the fact that tractors given by the Venezuelan state to the Haitian state were used to block a workers' and students' May Day march. Whether government propaganda proclaims democracy, solidarity, or even socialism, only one class at a time can hold state power: in Venezuela and Haiti it is the capitalist class which holds that power and uses it to maintain their system of wage slavery. But not forever, if workers in every country keep marching on the road to revolution.

Resistance Rising in Guadeloupe vs. Capitalism's Misery

For about two months recently workers' kinetic energy in Guadeloupe — notably the workers' unions and other organizations — exploded in a fury like that raised by the slaves of Saint-Domingue [now Haiti] in August 1791. Then the colonized denounced the inhuman, unjust, and cruel slave-owning colonial system and pressed on at all costs and at great danger to their lives to win freedom. Now their Guadeloupean cousins were demanding a substantial lowering of the cost of living, especially necessities like sugar, oil, milk, bread, gas, beans, etc., as well as a wage hike of 200 Euros.

Guadeloupe, an Overseas Department of France, has something approaching the rule of law, while the Republic of Haiti, the first independent black republic in the world, sinks into the authoritarian mud from which a police state is emerging. One thing is certain; in Guadeloupe there is an organized working class with leaders capable of backing mass demands, drawing on their political commitment to avoid any kind of compromise with the bosses (carriers of capitalism) and the government (attack dogs of imperialism). But here the shoe pinches: a large part of the "unions" in Haiti are in the pay of the pro-capitalist, pro-imperialist government instead of working to create class consciousness and to stand alongside the weakest, the poorest, those in the worst misery and distress.

These so-called "unions" set themselves up as spokespeople for a corrupt government blind and deaf to the distress of a destitute population. Last January the Guadeloupeans revolted against the high cost of living and demanded a wage hike, and in Haiti in April 2008 riots broke out pretty much all over to say no to famine. In Guadeloupe, however, there is some buying-power, while in Haiti buying-power is almost non-existent and the watchword is famine, destitution.

Spartacus didn't win, but the slaves of Saint-Domingue brought off the only victorious slave revolt anywhere in the world. At that time the slave-owners knew they had to provide their subjects with the *primum vivere*, that is, the minimum: housing, clothing, food...while the modern capitalist slave receives nothing, for the only aim of the capitalist is to impoverish the worker. In spite of the persecution and threats of the French colonizers in Guadeloupe, the LKP [Guadeloupean union] has resisted capitalist corruption. Similarly, in Haiti the CTSP (Confederation of Private and Public Sector Workers) is resisting the perversions of the capitalist system. The Guadeloupean experience is an experience to follow.

Friend in Haiti

Editor's Note: The sharp class struggle in Guadeloupe is an inspiration to workers everywhere. But while trade union leaders in Guadeloupe may have been more militant in fighting for wage-hike reforms, they did not challenge capitalism as a system, leaving workers in Guadeloupe just as deeply mired in wage-slavery as workers in Haiti. To break free of our chains, we need to bring communist ideas of revolution to these struggles so that the "workers' kinetic energy" can create a lasting workers' power.

'Liberalism 101' Masks Class Exploitation

Currently I'm completing my first year of graduate school at a local research university. This university plays an important role in developing liberal capitalist perspectives on issues such as race, immigration and education. It also ideologically trains many future labor organizers and teachers through its labor center and related programs, and its school of education. Thus, the university generates liberal reformist ideas and organizers utilized by the ruling class to put a caring smile on the continued exploitation of the working class.

Without a communist alternative, many well-intentioned students are won to these ideas, such as the student-led campus campaign for the Dream Act. However, recently I had the opportunity to help organize a May Day forum on campus where several comrades helped me advance the Party's communist analysis on capitalism's current crisis.

Speaking from the panel, a comrade teacher explained that the cutbacks to education represent the type of attack on workers the capitalist ruling class uses to "solve" its crisis. He also explained that the current meltdown results from the historic crisis of overproduction U.S. capitalism has experienced since the early 1970s. He concluded that capitalism's only "solution" is intensified fascist attacks on workers and imperialist war against its competitors.

During the ensuing discussion, a comrade in the audience explained that the Dream Act was an example of liberal fascism, used to win immigrant youth to buy into the illusion that capitalism can work for them. Another participant attacked Marxism as an antiquated idea. A comrade responded that Marxism is based on a scientific outlook of the world and has evolved over time to reflect the changes in capitalism and the need to fight for communism. Many received CHALLENGE.

Following this event several students have asked how they can learn more about our ideas. Currently, a couple of students and I are reading "Marx for Beginners." This is a good start which will surely lead to more struggle over communist ideas.

A Campus Comrade

As Bosses Push Us, Airport Workers Must Push Back

Conditions for workers at LaGuardia airport are deteriorating, just like on many jobs around the world. As our company here wages a publicity war against the union and its competitors, workers on the ramp and at the ticket counter know that it's really just the same old bull. With the economy in crisis, the bosses are looking for even more ways to cut costs at the expense of us workers.

Essentially the company is trying to get 8 hours worth of work for 6 hours pay by cramming more flights into a single workday and providing fewer work crews. Work once performed by full-timers is being forced onto part-time and reserve workers.

In recent months local bosses have fired a number of workers for petty offenses. The most notable firing was of an older worker who had over four years with the company, on the bogus charge of "damaging airport equipment." His real offense? Challenging supervisors' decisions during briefings and openly supporting the union.

Other workers have been threatened, put on probation and forced to take sick leave at lower pay. Those still on the job work in an environment of fear and have to perform extra work to make up for those missing. All workers get screwed. Meanwhile the bosses have no plans to fix this by bringing anyone back or hiring more people.

In spite of the union's nationalism and telling us to be hopeful about Obama, it is important to be involved in the union in which we can raise political ideas on the road to revolution. In the end the union will not be able to solve these problems because unions originate with capitalism and its inherently unstable economy; but as the bosses push workers more and more, workers have to push back.

Union or no union, PLP members and friends must join class struggles of the workers against the bosses. Fear gets us nowhere. We need to organize!

Airport Worker

Colombia May Day Marchers Mark Workers' Bloody History

May 1st marked the 123rd anniversary of the Chicago massacre where courageous workers offered their lives so millions worldwide would have better working conditions. We remember the Chicago martyrs who symbolized the fight for the eight-hour work day. Today those reforms have been criminally taken away by the capitalists who enslave, exploit, and layoff workers. The police, military and paramilitary are used like private security by the drug-

continued on p. 5

Karl Marx Scores Again...

In the NY Times Book Review section (5/17) there is a revealing review of a book entitled, "A FAILURE OF CAPITALISM — The Crisis of '08 and the Descent into Depression," by Richard Posner, a federal judge and a champion of the "market-oriented law-and-economics" movement. The reviewer says Posner doesn't blame any of the usual suspects. Rather, he says, "blame capitalism."

Posner maintains "the current crisis is a depression....The typical post-war recession is a partly self-correcting disinflationary contraction that soon subsides....The present downturn is a self-sustaining... contraction whose costly aftereffects will linger for years. The Great Depression led to World War II. Today's depression...may cause a huge loss of output, an immense increase in the national debt...a decline in America's economic and geopolitical power and increased instability abroad."

The review states that, "A depression is a *market failure* (his emphasis — Ed.)...that the market is powerless to prevent." The "market" is a synonym for capitalism.

As Karl Marx proved in his analysis of capitalism, depressions are built into the boom-and-bust profit system. And Posner appears to agree, although using different wording. "Decisions that were individually rational" [that is, each capitalist striving for maximum profit] become "collectively irrational" — meaning capitalists collectively striving for that goal produce far more capacity (overproduction) than the market can sustain, leading to a pull-back: laying off workers to try to maintain profits, which leads to a decreasing ability to buy what's been produced, leading to more capitalists' pulling back, more layoffs, and on and on.

Posner says that Obama, by attributing the crisis to "irresponsibility" of the banking and real estate interests, ends up "blaming capitalists for a failure of capitalism." (As PLP's slogan said, "It's not Bush [now Obama], it's capitalism.")

From this review, it does not appear that Posner deals with the inevitable suffering that this boom-and-bust cycle heaps on the working class, in a Depression that Posner says "will linger for years." Yes, mass, racist unemployment means sickness, malnutrition, millions of children in poverty, homelessness, and death.

To make society "rational," we must — as Marx said — eliminate a system that creates "social production" but appropriates the fruits of that production privately (profit). It allocates the vast majority of the value the working class produces to a small number of the owners of the means of production, who also control the State (the government) which, in turn, protects the "right" of the capitalist class to exploit the working class.

No wonder PLP says "communist revolution [abolition of the profit system] is the only solution" to this massive contradiction.

Old-time Comrade

Exploited Subcontractor Workers Need Sharper Class Struggle

LOS ANGELES, June 1 — The growing U.S. unemployment rate isn't just a number. At factories in southern California, fellow workers are leaving shops jobless while others live in constant fear of losing their jobs. "There have been weeks when I've gone to work every day thinking it could be my last," said one aerospace machinist.

The bosses are utilizing layoffs and cutting hours to maintain or regain profit. International competition and inter-imperialist rivalry are forcing them to rearrange and chip away at their workforce to stay afloat in the economic crisis. The latter means fewer orders for durable goods, causing unemployment in mining and quarrying as well as in manufacturing. From April 2008 to April 2009, the unemployment rate in mining rose from 3.6% to 16.1%. For manufacturing of durable goods, it went from 4.8% rate to 12.8% in that period.

Throughout our shops rumors abound about layoffs. Often workers hear of mass layoffs and complete shutdowns in other shops in the area. Many fear the same fate, and still others feel lucky to still have a job. Layoffs mean more work and speed-up for those still working. Workers go from grumbling to resisting speed-up with slowdowns.

Mainly the bosses tell workers we must sacrifice to maintain the company's health. Recently hours were being cut in several departments in an aerospace factory. After explaining that management had been doing all it could to obtain more orders, a supervisor remarked that, "Now we must really learn how to budget our money."

Of course, management works on salary and isn't adversely affected by working fewer hours, but the "sacrifice" ideology coincides with Obama's national service, "serve-your-country" talk. Additionally, the "We" talk tries to put bosses and workers on the same side, "working together for everyone's benefit." In this crisis, the aerospace bosses are grabbing profits by attacking us workers.

In the short term, many workers feel they must do anything to hold their jobs, their main means of survival. Although capitalism cannot and will never provide security, it's a process to understand that our real danger is in not acting in our class interests. The loss of jobs and homes for many families shatters illusions about capitalism, but in and of itself that does not build confidence that another world is possible and that workers like us are critical to the revolutionary fight.

Sharpening the class struggle makes it clear that the workers and the bosses have clashing interests. This requires a concentrated dialectical discussion of the system's contradictions on a "one-on-one" scale between communists and co-workers, and between PLP and workers, students and soldiers on a mass scale.

Our Summer Project here can demonstrate the need and potential for workers' unity and struggle for communism with masses of workers, students, and soldiers. With the crisis showing no signs of letting up, and the dominant capitalist ideas splattered all over the shop floor, TV and press, we must fight these lies, and organize the class struggle to further develop our understanding of how to make the vision of communism a real thing for workers here and worldwide. ☺

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

Big biz tax dodge: phony offices

NYT, 5/20 — North Orange, a ho-hum thoroughfare in Wilmington, Del., is, on paper, home to more than 6,500 companies. Many of them are empty shells. They make nothing and sometimes employ just a lone clerk. But all are there for the same reason: to help corporations avoid paying taxes.... Delaware...has created its own onshore Cayman Islands.... Nearly two-thirds of the Fortune 500, have tax-exempt subsidiaries at [a single] address....

Many ways to rob immigrants

NYT, 5/29 — Immigration fraud...has proliferated across the country, victimizing people desperate to gain legal residency or citizenship.... The businesses...masquerade as legitimate providers of immigrant services, many offering legal aid they are not authorized or able to provide.... Some immigrants told investigators that they were falsely promised permanent residency or American citizenship....

One client, a 29-year-old taxi driver from Ecuador, said.... I gave her all the money I earned in nine months of work...."

Such schemes are particularly difficult to uncover and prosecute because many victims are in the country 'illegally' and are hesitant to seek help from the authorities for fear of deportation.

Less wages mean homes are lost

NYT, 5/29 — Housing specialists said the number of foreclosures would probably keep rising as more people lose jobs or are forced to trade full-time work for part time.... "We're still caught in this vicious cycle."

80% of 612 grads prefer greed

NYT, 5/30 — When a new crop of future business leaders graduates from the Harvard Business School next week, many of them will be taking a new oath that says, in effect, greed is not good.

Nearly 20 percent of the graduating class have signed "The M.B.A. Oath," a voluntary student-led pledge that the goal of a business manager is to "serve the greater good." It promises that Harvard M.B.A.'s [sic] will...refrain from advancing their "own narrow ambitions" at the expense of others.

What happened to making money?

That, of course, is still at the heart of the Harvard curriculum.

'Illegal' union-busting goes right on

NYT, 5/20 — A new study by a Cornell University professor of 1,004 union organizing drives has found that employers threatened to close plants in 57 percent of the campaigns and threatened to cut wages and benefits in 47 percent.

The study, to be released Wednesday, also found that employers fired pro-union workers in 34 percent of the campaigns....

In 63 percent of the elections, the study found, supervisors used one-on-one meetings to interro-



gate workers about whether they or co-workers supported a union. (It is illegal under federal law to interrogate workers about such matters.)

Debt-freedom ads are cruel lies

NYT, 5/20 — For consumers on the verge of default, debt settlement companies promise relief. In voluminous radio and late-night television advertisements, the companies say they can shrink those onerous balances by striking deals with creditors....

Credit Solutions enrolled 18,000 customers in New York State in the last five years, earning \$17 million in fees, but settled the debts of fewer than 2,000 of them....

Nationwide [Co.] signed up 1,981 New York residents in three years, the suit against it says, but only 64 completed the program. Twenty-seven of those ended up paying more than they originally owed because of Nationwide's fees.

MORE ITEMS AVAILABLE ONLINE:
challengenewspaper.wordpress.com

Mandela's Nationalism Fronts for South African Capitalism

PLP has long exposed nationalist movements as essentially a capitalist tool to maintain the exploitation of the working class. When the Party did just that about Mandela and his government, we were severely condemned for daring to criticize those forces that had defeated the apartheid system. But a NY Times Sept. 12, 1994 interview with Mandela reveals the truth of the fruits of nationalism:

"Mr. Mandela recalled the paternal scolding he had delivered the night before to the Congress of South African Trade Unions....

[He] told the unionists....Ease up on the strikes; you are scaring foreign investors. Prepare to 'tighten your belts' and accept low wages....

"When he upbraided the labor leaders...he did not mention an additional reason that their militancy has worried him. Some employers who have been the target of strikes have been secret benefactors of the African National Congress.

"Before the election campaign, Mr. Mandela went to 20 titans of corporate S. Africa and asked for at least a million rand — about \$275,000 — to build up the party and finance his campaign.

"All but one, he said, complied. A few, like Raymond D. Ackerman, the head of the Pick 'n Pay grocery chain, gave double the minimum request....So it rankled him that Mr. Ackerman's stores had just borne the brunt of a raucous strike by store clerks.

"For them to target people who have been assisting us creates difficulties. Without funds we could not have built the organization, we could not have won the election....' When Mr. Ackerman, his benefactor..., phones with a problem, Mr. Mandela instantly takes his call....

"Others in his government have not been...proletarian, prompting...indignant articles about lavish salaries, Concorde trips and free-spending bodyguards.

"We have this problem,' Mr. Mandela said. 'We have high salaries and we are living in luxury. That destroys your capacity to speak up in a forthright manner and tell people to tighten their belts....'" [No kidding!] ☺



PLP is holding its **National Summer Projects**

N.Y. & Seattle July 5 - July 12, L.A. July 13 - July 28

to mobilize workers, students, and soldiers to fight back against imperialist war and fascism, and to build and support our political work among hundreds of thousands of workers in key sectors vital to U.S. imperialism

Help us make this year's Summer Project a successful one. Make checks or money orders payable to: Challenge Periodicals
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PL'er Helen Jones Dies; Led 'Rolling Thunder' Through Boeing Plants



In 1995 Helen Marie Barron Jones and her close friend led 500 mostly white workers banging their tools loudly on metal drums in the first march through a Boeing factory during a contract struggle. It became known as rolling thunder, which brings out thousands of marchers through the plants every contract.

A comrade from Chicago asked how she got the courage to lead all these workers. "Well, somebody had to do it!" she told her. That is how we in Seattle will remember Helen: when somebody had to stand up for the working class, Helen stood up!

Helen, a retired 22-year Boeing worker and comrade, died on May 16th from cancer. She was 68. Born in Monroe, Louisiana, she later moved to Seattle, Washington, raising three children (two surviving). She provided invaluable love and support to her ten grandchildren, three of whom, and their mother, lived with her. Last year, even as Helen's disease progressed, she and her family attended a BBQ in support of our Party's work during the Boeing strike.

Helen first came around the Progressive Labor Party as the O.J. Simpson trial hit the news. They had just released the notorious tapes of the racist cop [Mark] Furman. She and her close friend approached one of our members in the shop, asking him what he thought.

"Oh, you don't have to ask that," her friend in-

terrupted. "You know what he thinks."

"No, I want to hear it from him," Helen insisted. They talked about how the tapes had made it perfectly clear racism was the biggest issue in the trial, particularly the vicious racism of the Los Angeles cops.

At the memorial service, the comrade recalled how he thought at the time, "Man, this woman is tough. She just won't let you off the hook!"

Discipline and an unsurpassed sense of responsibility — to her family, her friends, her co-workers and the international working class — marked her time in the Party. Until her illness made it impossible, she would faithfully attend every national and local meeting. She was often the first to hand in CHALLENGE sales money and reveled in seeing a stadium full of Boeing workers reading our CHALLENGE extras during strike-sanction votes. She struggled with us to seriously study Dialectical Materialism. Coming from a religious background, she felt it imperative we have a world view that pointed toward communism.

Helen had the discipline to wait patiently at lunchtime factory meetings until everyone had spoken. Only then would she insist we pay attention to what she would call the big three: the fight against racism, nationalism, and capitalism.

When the engineers went on strike for the first time, the IAM refused to organize any real support. Our blue-collar members and friends on 1st shift debated what to do. Helen, a 2nd shifter, caught us in the aisle as we left the building. She laid down the

law: we weren't going to leave until we organized support for those workers on the picket line. ...And that's exactly what happened!

Many commented, often with bittersweet humor, how Helen had struggled with them. Her sister called her, "that woman who could convince anybody to think what she thinks, to do as she did, because she knew the deal." When Helen's health forced her to retire, she helped organize breakfast and lunch strike meetings and brought groups of retirees to the picket lines. The salon where she got her hair done saw hours-long debates about "the evils of capitalism and the need for communist revolution."

Helen's first Party writing was a farewell poem to 1999 Boeing Summer Project volunteers. It read in part:

Whenever you're in doubt
Of what PLP's about
Look around
What have you found?
Cop's brutality
School Fallacies
Friends are in distress
Lift your voice
The Party is on the way
The summer of 1999
You stood out on the line
Is now part of history
Etched in your memory...

Helen, you are etched in our memory. We are better for having known you. We dedicate this year's Summer Project to you. ☺

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