



CHALLENGE

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11-month Stella D'Oro Strike Ends: Battle Against Bosses Continues

BRONX, NY, July 13 — After an 11-month struggle, the Stella D'Oro strikers won a decision from a state National Labor Relations (NLRB) judge that temporarily restored their jobs under the old contract with back pay to May 9. The scene at the plant gate was typified by the "Sweet Victory" hand-lettered sign held up for passing workers, who blared their horns in congratulation. Workers hugged and cried and laughed as it sank in that the slow drag of the strike had led to a result.

When the strikers returned to work "happy for battle," supporters cheered and called out their varied, multinational names as they passed through the gate and gave a victory sign. Many waved CHALLENGE in the air. One veteran comrade told the workers near him, "There'll be a million small victories and defeats between this and state power, and we should learn from them all."

They were united, persevered and prevailed, a beacon for all workers. "Now we'll support the next group that goes on strike," said one worker. "Fight on!" cheered the supporters. Despite all, the working class will never die.

Under the joy there is also great bit-

terness. "I don't get too excited. Those criminals won't stop here," said one woman packer. The Brynwood bosses are appealing the decision. They're also cruelly saying they'll close the plant and move in October.

Attack and Counter-attack

The strike has been an endless series of attacks and counter-attacks. The bosses attacked with concession demands to bust the union; the workers countered by striking. The bosses attacked with police harassment and scabs; the workers countered by expanding strike support. The workers won the first legal decision; the boss countered by appealing it. The workers won a court-ordered return to work; the boss countered by saying they'll close the shop. Many workers understand that the struggle is not over, that it's just moving to another stage. "What's the next step?" they ask.

Back at work they had to clean up after the scabs. The place was filthy, broken toilets, broken machines. The sanitation crew went through the plant until it shone. One proud cleaner was outraged at the dust and grime on the loading dock he used to keep spotless. It is a food plant, after all. Mechan-

ics fixed the machines. The operators threw out the first run of cookies below their standards. Machines that used to make 24 pallets of cookies daily could only do five, and the workers weren't hurrying.

Then the line began to run properly on one machine, and a manager said it was the first time since the strike, as though this was a mystery. The operator explained that it's not only training one worker that counts, it's the long experience of a skilled team working together.

In No Mood for Concessions

Feeling their power, workers are in no mood for concessions, something the bosses' flunky professors like the New York Times's Joshua Freeman say is inevitable; they feel a raw anger at the managers. One woman leader couldn't talk to them at all. An older woman was exhausted after standing all day at the packing table, back to wage slavery.

Some workers think the company is bluffing about closing the plant to win big concessions, but they recognize that capitalist property laws mean this could be their end as Stella workers, just as some lost their jobs at other runaway plants like Farberware. When managers talked of restoring the "best" scabs to fill missing numbers, a shop steward thundered, "Scabs working alongside us? That means war!" They dropped that bright idea.

It's becoming clearer to the workers that they're in a long class war in which the past eleven months are just one battle. While some commented about the court decision saying, "I knew we would get justice," others, especially those close to PLP, realize that the capitalist class owns not only the factory but the state apparatus: the courts, the laws, the politicians and most union officials. The local judge's decision still must be upheld by the full NLRB in Washington, hardly something for workers to depend on.

To defend ourselves, workers must pursue the more important po-

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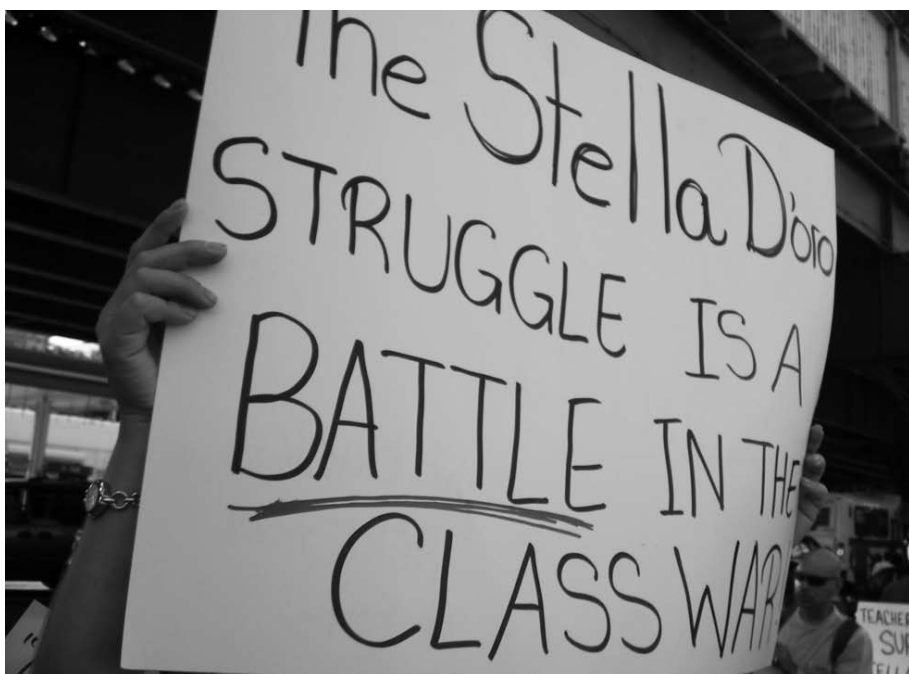
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Obama's Trip Fizzles, U.S. Rulers' Rivals Gain

On balance, Obama's Russia-Italy-Africa trip proved a diplomatic setback for U.S. imperialism:

- In Moscow, Russia's Putin bluntly opposed Obama over areas of longer-term strategic conflict;
- In Italy, at the G-8 meeting of eight leading economic powers, Russia's and China's influence pushed Iran sanctions off the table;
- Obama didn't even succeed in raising global warming as a U.S.-led international cause, with China and its allies specifically opposing U.S. attempts to stifle their burgeoning economies through fuel regulations;
- During a Vatican stop-off, former Hitler-youth Pope Benedict reminded Obama that he and his institution still mainly represent a strong anti-U.S. wing of European bosses;
- Anti-U.S. instability in sub-Saharan Africa shaped Obama's subsequent overnight in Ghana, the only nation his Pentagon handlers deemed safe enough for him to visit.

Meanwhile, in the Iraq and Afghanistan-Pakistan killing fields, decisive success continues to elude Obama and the capitalists he serves, while the death toll mounts. At the bargaining table, it's the rise of rivals China and Russia and their allies that weakens U.S. rulers' supremacy. In the war zones, it's the current inability of the U.S. — population 306,000,000 — to field much more than 200,000 troops. These two worsening problems will ultimately drive U.S. bosses to a single, drastic solution. As the 20th Century mass slaughters show, global war involving full militarization of industry and society is the last hope of threatened imperialists.

Ultimately, Global War Only Way Out for U.S. Bosses

Obama & Co. face a tough time building a consensus among factions of U.S. capitalists who can't even agree on the tax hikes and health care reform

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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the bigger bosses require to ease the economic crisis. Public sentiment on the Iraq and Afghan wars ranges from organized pockets of both resistance and support to far more general apathy. Keeping or finding a job and saving homes from foreclosure have become the chief concerns of millions of U.S. workers, as sharpening worldwide competition heightens the rulers' war needs. Obama's sketchy summit scorecard makes imposing wartime discipline on U.S. imperialists and taking steps towards restoring the draft all the more urgent.

Obama in Moscow: Wins a Little, Loses a Lot

Before Obama's visit, Russia had agreed to allow U.S. forces to use its airspace for their Afghan campaign. And Russian-dominated Kyrgyzstan reopened its Manas air base to the U.S. But, at the Moscow meeting, Putin said "No" to Obama's request for Russian sanctions on Iran, to U.S. missiles in Poland and to NATO membership for ex-Soviet states Georgia and Ukraine.

Stratfor, a ruling-class supported think-tank that provides often-reliable policy analysis to U.S. business, media, and academia, summed up the proceedings: "The geopolitical divide between the United States and Russia is as deep as ever, even if some of the sharper edges have been rounded. Ultimately, little progress was made in finding ways to bridge the two countries' divergent interests. And the burning issues — particularly Poland and Iran — continue to burn." (Stratfor, 7/7/09)

Obama Takes it Out on Africa

Obama, touted as the "son of Africa," gave a racist, lying, blame-the-victim speech, essentially calling most of Africa dysfunctional, and thus by implication worthy of occupation by a "superior power." He told Africans, "The legacy of colonialism was not an excuse for failing to build prosperous, democratic societies." (NY Times, 7/11/09) And, "'poorer countries have an obligation' to reform themselves." (NYT)

What hypocrisy! Centuries of enslavement, economic domination and invasions by Western powers — still occurring through troop deployments and the draining of the continent's resources by the likes of Big Oil — and the crippling of home-grown agriculture leading to famines by European demands for profitable single-crop exports, all combined to exploit Africa's workers and farmers unmercifully. Now Obama has the nerve to blame Africans for the hell the colonialists created and continue!

Obama and U.S. rulers really seek in Africa not democracy but access to the continent's strategic resources and supply routes, which would be critical in a world war. They're trying to combat China's capitalists who have blanketed the continent with huge investments, building projects to gobble up oil reserves and vital minerals. This inter-imperialist rivalry can only lead to war.

Dismal Diplomatically and on the Battlefield

The absence of millions of deployable troops underlies the U.S. Iraq fiasco. Iraq remains fruitless for the Exxon Mobil cabal that planned the invasion dreaming of six to eight million barrels of crude per day. Iraq's recent auction of oil projects, for which neither it nor its U.S. puppet-masters can provide security, went bust. Exxon, Chevron, Shell & Co. walked out. And anti-U.S. Iraqi insurgents greeted Obama's promised "withdrawal" (actually a retreat from cities to megabases) with terror bombings that have killed 123 civilians since July 5.

Ground Wars Need Ground Troops — and a Draft

In Afghanistan, Obama's new emphasis on ground war will mean nothing without real numbers of ground troops. The Pentagon's surge will put fewer than 100,000 total soldiers into a country of over 35,000,000. A half-million U.S. troops failed to subdue similarly-sized Vietnam. Despite an earnest desire for land war, futile air strikes will continue.

The same goes for Obama's extension of the fighting into Pakistan. A new U.S.-backed air offensive by Pakistan into its Taliban-dominated Waziristan region is "unlikely to destroy the enemy...and will leave in place Taliban warlords whom the United States and its NATO allies in Afghanistan regard as a significant cross-border threat," warned the Dallas Morning News (7/12/09), citing Javed Husain, a retired Pakistani general. He said, "If it's not going to be a ground forces operation, then the foot soldiers of the Taliban will remain....It's a ridiculous thought that air power can win it."

Obama and his banker-bosses are taking significant steps that will aid mobilization. Nationalizing General Motors, for example, sends a powerful message to all industrialists: Further takeovers "in the national interest" are coming. Obama & Co. are working quietly but deliberately to restore the draft. On June 23, Michelle Obama and Maria Kennedy Shriver launched a "new" initiative called "United We Serve," encouraging young people to "public service." There's nothing new about it. A 2003 Brookings Institution report of the same name, written by Bill Clinton among others, and couched in patriotic jargon, boiled down to a plea for mandatory national — including military — service.

The rulers' present relative weakness does not necessarily help our class. In fact, the more endangered that capitalists are, the more harshly they attack workers. But we can use the bosses' assaults to organize militant, class-conscious fight-back, turning the class struggles into schools for communism, which can win workers, soldiers and youth to join and build PLP. This can sow the seeds of communist revolution, the only solution for the working class to the hell of capitalism. ☸

S. Africa: 70,000 Strike, Battle Cops



SOUTH AFRICA, July 8 — In the largest strike since 1992, over 70,000 construction workers from the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) walked out demanding a 13% pay increase. Employers — represented by the Federation of Civil Engineers Contractors — are offering only 10.4%, while reaping huge profits from a \$3 billion investment in the 2010 World Cup soccer tournament. Strikers have militantly battled the cops in the streets.

The strike has stopped work on five of the ten stadiums being used for the tournament. It has also halted work on the railroad linking Pretoria and Johannesburg. "We are building the stadiums but we don't have the money to buy a ticket," declared Owen Vele, an assistant surveyor, who said he was paid Rand2,200 (\$268, £167, 193 euros) for a 50-hour week.

The strike follows a string of smaller work stoppages, including wildcat actions in the health and emergency services. Strike action is also expected by teachers and other public-sector workers before wage re-negotiations are due to start in several weeks. ☸

Battle Against Bosses Continues

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litical struggle. The courts invariably support the capitalist class because for 400 years the bosses have shaped laws and courts in their own interests. "Right — it's their laws; the owners make the laws," one packer agreed.

There's no lasting working-class justice to be found there. But they keep us running from court to court to encourage belief in the court system. It's like the electoral shell game, where we're supposed to run from one politician to another, one party to another, while government policy continues to serve the capitalist class. A legal strategy is only good if it's to buttress the main political strategy, strengthening class unity and the hard, militant fight of workers' direct action. But Local 50 union leaders are now visibly slowing down that main aspect of the struggle.

The bakers' union leadership is not the worst around. (Just compare them to the UAW sellouts who "crafted" a 50% wage cut for new workers!) They pushed sincerely for the strike, did not sell it out, and welcomed support, including from communists. But sincere or not, they're stuck in the usual union belief that you must play by capitalism's rules, which ultimately hold the workers back because they, too, have been filled with the same ideology.

Rank and File Built the Strike

All along the local's leaders made the legal strategy the main thing, even as they approved the rallies and boycott. But the punishing months dragged on, and the Local and international did not vigorously build support, even from other area union locals. Counseling "patience," they viewed other workers' support as secondary. They left it to the rank and file and their supporters.

But this impelled the workers to build the strike themselves; they proved as skilled at that as they are at baking. But the union — all the unions — did not support this effort. The court decision, therefore, leaves the workers less strong than with a communist-led working class building more mass political support. The workers' eloquent testimony in court didn't hurt, but the main achievement is the progress made in building strike solidarity — still the basis for more class unity, a strong challenge to Brynwood's runaway shop, and (as workers join the Party) the strategic leap ahead to fighting the

whole system.

So what's the next step? The union's new go-slow attitude is wrong — they have vetoed another rally until late August and want to feature politicians. Many workers recognize the union's weaknesses, but feel they must go along with the leadership for the sake of unity. Yet they also see the need to continue strengthening their own leadership and organization as it emerged during the strike.

The best way to do that is building PLP in the plant. A dozen get CHALLENGE regularly and are spreading it around. They said the whole plant was buzzing last Friday about the small rally by some young PLP'ers that afternoon. "Don't these folks ever give up? Don't they ever take a break?"

They love the interest of the young communists in their struggle, the spirit of chants like, "Stella workers lead the way, Make the Brynwood bosses pay" and "Kick the bosses in the ass, Power to the working class." One worker drinking coffee across the street after his shift could no longer stand there, grabbed a sign and joined them. Some of the most militant and thoughtful strikers are thinking seriously about joining the PLP.

Communist Ideas Strengthen Workers

The key force remains the workers themselves. Can they step it up one more notch? PLP will help 100%. Our strike role has been to serve the whole working class, to serve these workers by bringing other workers to join and support and learn from them, to spread their spirit and news of their strike to our international readership with story after story in CHALLENGE.

We also rely on the workers. We try to strength-



Stella D'Oro Strikers Attend a PLP Summer Project Forum

en them materially and politically with the ideas the communist movement has learned the hard way over a century and a half. We bring them the Party as their weapon, tested for 45 years: take it, use it, join it, build it, for this fight — to the max and to the end — but also for the fight after this and the one after that. Make the PLP your own, it's for you and your children.

When your children go to school and to CUNY, communist teachers and professors will teach them the truth about capitalism. Here's the Party of the working class that will never "go slow," that does not believe in playing by the bosses' rules.

As Stella workers bring the art and craft of their strike into active membership and leadership in PLP, we will see a sweet victory indeed. And if the plant closes? The workers pick themselves up and go on, to life under the dictatorship of capital, but with the red flag and CHALLENGE in our lives that can transcend that system.

Our day will come, and the Stella D'Oro strikers of 2008-09 will have played their part. As the recession bites deeper and deeper and October looms, there's a new mood on the shop floor. ☺

Stella Strike Proves Workers Have No Future Under Capitalism

Dear Stella D'Oro workers:

Your brave action, unbreakable unity and steadfast determination have been an inspiration to workers far and near in this time of capitalist economic crisis. Over eleven months of this struggle, news of your heroism has spread slowly but surely across the city, the region and even the nation. Through some newspapers, but especially through CHALLENGE, your story has spread across the globe.

Despite a long court battle and police harassment on the picket line the Brynwood Partners have been unable to break your union or your strike. So now they want to close the Bronx bakery.

Your sharp struggle has softened but not defeated the Brynwood bosses' attacks. Only communist revolution can do that. Even the most determined and militant reform struggle can only bring incomplete gains for workers.

Hartmax, a maker of men's suits backed by bailed-out Wells Fargo bank, moved to close its operations in Illinois and fire its 4,000 SEIU employees. The Hartmax workers, inspired by workers who had occupied the Republic Windows and Doors factory in Chicago, threatened to occupy their plant if it was closed.

Hartmax relented and instead of closing its plants sold the operations to another investor who kept them open. The new owners will surely demand concessions from workers in order to keep the plants open. Even when workers fight

hard for a victory today, the capitalist system leaves bosses in power to attack us tomorrow.

Our fights against the bosses hold value not mainly in terms of reforms we win or lose but in lessons we learn. Learning to defeat racism and sexism with working-class unity is a lesson we can build a new world on. When we see the bosses take away gains in the blink of an eye that workers have fought over many years to achieve we understand that in the long run we have to take this bosses' power away from them once and for all.

We have seen that bosses fear militant struggle most of all because in these actions we are feeling our way toward the workers' power that will be our salvation. When we see that governments and politicians will never serve workers, we learn that we need a new government, one that will put the needs of workers first. This is communism. These are communist lessons.

These lessons are not yours alone, workers of Stella D'Oro. Your valiant stand has helped workers and youth far and near to learn that we have no future under capitalism. This monumental achievement is yours to claim. You will never be forgotten for as long as workers and youth in the Progressive Labor Party continue to struggle for a decent life, free from exploitation on the job and imperialist war overseas. Thank you.

Yours in the fight,
Progressive Labor Party

PLP Action In Haitian Consulate Hits Regime's Fascist Crackdown



NEW YORK, July 9 — International working-class solidarity was on display as a group of PLP'ers occupied the main office of the Haitian Consulate. They demanded immediate release of political prisoners detained in the Rene Preval regime's fascist crackdown on workers and students in Haiti who are fighting for an increase in the minimum wage. Our Haitian class brothers and sisters nodded their heads in approval as we chanted "same enemy, same fight, workers of the world unite" and were glad to receive the latest issue of CHALLENGE. Every opportunity we have to emphasize and reinforce the bond we share with workers in struggle around the world is a great opportunity and privilege for us. In this period of sharpening economic crisis it is crucial that we spotlight militant responses to the bosses' attacks on workers as examples to be followed, wherever our class is fighting back. ☺

Boeing Workers Must Smash Boss-Gov't-Union 'No-Strike' Gang-up

PUGET SOUND, WA., July 13 — "The supervisor asked us what we thought at the crew meeting," an older black Boeing CHALLENGE reader told a group of young Summer Project volunteers, referring to the "no-strike deal" being pushed by the government and the company. "We got up and walked out!" His friend thought this was great. Another Boeing comrade asked how we could turn crew-meeting walkouts like this into rolling thunder (hammering) and marches through the plants. This year's Progressive Labor Party's (PLP) Summer Project came just in time to spread revolutionary communist politics and fight-back — our answer to this fascist attack — to key plants throughout the Seattle area.

The government has stepped in to force this no-strike deal down our throats. Last Tuesday, the senior Democrat on the Congressional military committee, Rep. Norm Dicks, backed Boeing's demand. "The whole thing comes down to, can they get a long-term agreement with the union, with a no-strike clause. That's ultimately what has to happen here [to keep jobs in Washington State, not South Carolina]." The Democratic governor and the rest of the Congressional delegation beat the same drum.

At a bare minimum most workers have asked what's there to talk about. Just say no!

Not so the union! By last Thursday, the union could no longer hide behind secrecy, partly because our Summer Project volunteers were at every key plant with our communist leaflets and signs, exposing the set-up and calling for fight-back (see p. 8). "We're open to talking...[and] are working to improve our relationship with Boeing," said district union president and fascist collaborator-in-the-making Wroblewski.

We're All Auto!

For months now, PLP has predicted something like this "no-strike" regime was in the works. CHALLENGE and the CHALLENGE EXTRA pointed to Auto and the racist decimation in Detroit as the harbinger of fascist reorganization of industry.

The union countered that we're not auto. "Autoworkers got 'fat and lazy' when they were on top," asserted one union official. "Imagine getting all that pay when you're laid off. We never did

that. Nothing gets produced if the company can't make some profit. We only struck because the company was unreasonably greedy."

Our job is not to save the company, but to fight for the working class. These union mis-leaders are traitors to our class!

As last week proved, "We're all auto!" Another Boeing worker told LA H.S. and Community College students how a 54-year-old relative lost his auto subcontractor job and was forced to move in with his mother. A friend of his had been shot dead when he ran for president of a key UAW local some years back. He was clear: the sharpening worldwide crisis of overproduction was leading to wider war, eventually world war, and coming to Puget Sound.

Breaking The Law

Every worker was furious and maybe even a little taken off guard by the rapid developments. It became clear through our daily dinner discussions between workers and volunteers and meetings in the plants that the idea to limit our struggle to the confines of the bosses' laws was crippling our fight-back.

"As much as I want to, you can't have rolling thunder, marches or wildcats because that's illegal," said one honest worker. "Look," commented another friend, "that's how we started these things around contract time. It was all illegal when the Party helped organize the first marches in '95. In fact, they're still illegal! The company and the union just allow them now because they can control them."

We have to be prepared to break the bosses' laws, now more than ever, as striking itself is being made illegal in industry after industry.

Smashing The State

Inevitably, this leads to debating the nature of the government. Most of the 26,000 IAM members at Boeing "instinctively" know any extralegal fight against this key war industry, particularly in this period, will bring down the armed might of the ruling-class State apparatus. It's not surprising then that even some of our closest friends "hope against hope" that they can find an "easier" path.



Summer Project participants in front of the "burn barrel" statue commemorating striking Boeing workers

"Whether Republican or Democrat, they all turn against the working class when they get in office," said another reader and seller at yet another dinner with volunteers. "Maybe, we would stand a chance if we outlawed lobbyists and corporate campaign contributions, while limiting individual contributions to a \$1,000."

But the very politicians that our union spent millions getting elected are the ones demanding we submit to this "no-strike regime." "Do you really believe the bosses would ever let the government represent anything but their interests?" asked another Boeing worker. "It's the bosses' State; they built it to force their will on us. It must be smashed and replaced with communist workers' power."

We don't have to be victims of the bosses' crisis. "We're all Auto" is more than a catchy phrase. Industrial workers can up the ante like no other section of the working class. With essential anti-racist alliances with subcontractor workers, students and soldiers, we can defeat the armed might of the bosses with communist revolution. This may not be the easiest path, but it is becoming increasingly clear that building for revolution is the key to our survival. This year's Summer Project helped blaze that path. ☺

Union Hacks: 'Roll over, play dead'; Workers Need to 'Roll over them!'

LOS ANGELES, June 13 — Some Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) workers are talking about striking since our contract already expired and the union leaders aren't telling us about negotiations.

When PL'ers took CHALLENGE and the CHALLENGE Extra to transit workers, they grabbed them. One gave us \$10. Others took more for themselves and for other workers and also gave money. Many agreed workers are being forced to pay for the bosses' crisis. Our taxes, wages, working conditions, benefits and pensions are all being used to bail out the banks and pay for wider Middle-East wars.

When union leaders said workers shouldn't expect any gains and should just feel lucky to have a job, workers became even angrier. We must fight back. Otherwise the attacks will get worse. Look what happened to auto workers. The UAW leaders told them to accept "labor peace" in exchange for job security. They got mass layoffs and even more attacks! But in this crisis, the real victory will be the growth of the revolutionary communist movement to eliminate the bosses and their system.

MTA Workers Should Strike Against a War Contract

World capitalism, and particularly U.S. capitalism, are facing their worst economic crisis in 80 years. Most analysts believe it hasn't hit bottom

yet; some believe it will grow into a full-fledged depression worse than the 1930s.

Faced with this gloomy future, our "fearless" union leaders whine that "Management says it has no money and unfortunately they are telling the truth...and the MTA budget for the next year calls for no wage increase." These "leaders" have no fighting plan. They tell us to roll over and play dead, hoping MTA will take pity on us and "preserve your wage guarantee and health and pension packages." But they also say, "MTA thinks it has us over a barrel." So what will stop MTA from rolling over us?

MTA bosses and our union mis-leaders are parroting the U.S. bosses' cries that there's no money. But they found trillions to bail out their banks. They've spent over \$4 trillion on their murderous, racist oil wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and are finding billions more to expand them to Pakistan. But there's no money for us!

For them, we're expendable, like the auto workers they laid off or Iraqi-Afghani-Pakistani men, women and children they're slaughtering with million-dollar missiles. For the U.S. and MTA bosses and union sellouts we're nothing but machines to be worked and discarded when no longer useful.

But we're part of the working class that produces and transports all the world's goods and people. The capitalist class sells the products of our

labor and gives us in wages and benefits a fraction of what they get for them. They keep the rest as profits. To maintain their profits, they cut back our wages, benefits, lay us off, close their factories and move them to low-wage areas.

That's why workers must fight for communism: a society without bosses and money, where the products of our labor will be distributed according to need and where everyone will contribute to society according to their commitment. That's why rolling over and playing dead is not an alternative, no matter how difficult the situation.

The only time we lose is when we don't fight for our class interests. No matter what the odds, if we and more workers become more confident in our class and more committed to destroying capitalism, then we have won. Eventually the victory will be ours.

The ruling capitalist class, although apparently all-powerful, depends for its economic empire on the industrial working class and for its military might on the children of the working class. Its very survival is based on oppressing our class. They rule by force and by pushing their poisonous capitalist ideology on us. Our struggle is to replace it with communist ideology. When the working class, soldiers and students embrace communist ideology and unite against the bosses, capitalism will be history. Dare to struggle, dare to win! ☺

U.S.-Inspired Honduras Coup: Another Inter-Imperialist Battleground



The Honduran military coup is the opening salvo of U.S. imperialism's renewed efforts to more aggressively try to stem its imperialist rivals' expansion in its "backyard." Honduras, where the two generals leading the coup were trained by the U.S. military at its School of the Americas, in Ft. Benning, GA, is the testing ground of Obama's "new policy" toward Latin America. If successful, the U.S. bosses hope to apply it to topple anti-U.S. regimes throughout the region.

But, as the continuous mass demonstrations in Honduras supporting the deposed president and the pro-U.S. forces military response shows, this process won't be peaceful. Furthermore, as the populist appeal of the anti-U.S. forces led by Hugo Chavez spreads and the European-Brazil-led bloc grows stronger, so will the need of these camps to arm themselves in preparation for wider inter-imperialist conflicts. This year Latin American regimes will spend about \$50 billion on arms, almost double what they spent five years ago, this in a region where more than 200 million people live on less than \$2 a day and 98 million sleep on the streets.

This dire poverty has proven fertile grounds for local capitalist politicians like Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez to build populist anti-U.S. movements allied with U.S. imperialist rivals in hopes of getting a bigger share of their workers' exploitation. The U.S. bosses' response to this threat has been to increase their efforts to build pro-U.S. mass movements, including \$50 million annually to "democracy promotion" in Honduras, and triple their military

aid to Latin America. Stephen Johnson, Assistant Defense Secretary for the Western Hemisphere under Bush, explaining the need to arm their Latin American allies to the teeth, said: "Right now funds for security assistance are slim and what programs we can offer are limited by complicated sanctions. That leaves a vacuum for powers like China and Russia to fill." (Reuters, May 21, 2007).

Despite U.S. efforts, the Russian, Chinese and European imperialists continue to make big inroads in the Americas. This is especially true in South America, where Russia and China are the main supporters of Hugo Chavez's bloc. And where the European Union, as the biggest investors in the sub-continent, support Brazil's rise as the dominant regional power vying to displace the U.S. While Russian and Chinese arms flow to the Venezuelan bloc, Brazil is acquiring European weapons.

Not everything is "peace and love" among the anti-U.S. forces. The European imperialists are threatened by Russian and Chinese growing influence in South America. The Germans — the biggest foreign investors in Brazil — are particularly alarmed by Chinese economic inroads there. They and some Brazilian bosses despise Hugo Chavez's populist rhetoric. Brazil has the biggest wealth disparity in the world. They know that crumbs thrown to the impoverished masses à la Hugo Chavez will come at the expense of some of their profits, and those of the local ruling classes.

Just because the U.S. and the European-Brazil led bloc have a common anti-Chavez position does not make them friends either. The contradictions between all these imperialists and regional bosses will sharpen even further as the worldwide economic crisis deepens. So will the anger of the working class whose needs can't be met by free market capitalism or state capitalism (Chavez's "Socialism of the 21st Century" or the Socialism that the old communist movement fought for).

Central and South American workers need to organize the internationalist Progressive Labor Party and fight for communism, shown by history to be the only viable solution for the working class. ☪

Workers' Power Is the Rx: Healthcare 'Reform' A Capitalist Shell Game

WASHINGTON, DC, June 25 — Today thousands of union workers from CWA, AFSCME, and SEIU joined health care professionals in a rally protesting the U.S.'s obscene health care system. Several PL'ers were there to greet them with hundreds of leaflets and over 100 copies of CHALLENGE. Many workers were excited by its reports about the Stella d'Oro strike. But the strategy of today's rally was just the opposite of the militant action shown by that strike.

Rally speakers included union sellouts like President Gerry McEntee and liberal politicians like U.S. Senators Charles E. Schumer and Arlen Specter. They generally urged support for Obama's health reform plan. In fact, Health Care for America Now, the "labor-community" coalition that organized the event, is part of Obama's plan to create networks that rally mass support for his legislative initiatives. But none of the health plans being debated in Congress will meet the workers' needs because of the growing political, economic and military crises facing the U.S. imperialists.

The bosses are scrambling to compete internationally by vigorously cutting the wages and benefits of workers. In the auto industry, benefits and wages have been slashed, workers laid off and bankruptcy laws used to enforce this attack. Maintaining the capitalist economy requires not just the trillions of dollar in bailouts but attacks on workers' standard of living as well.

But why not cut administrative costs, profits of insurers and pharmaceutical companies and cover the 50 million uninsured with this money, as Democratic

Party rhetoric suggests? The proposed "public plan" (or even a "single-payer plan") could not guarantee "quality, affordable health care for all." The bosses' must channel money to retool their industries, fight wars, develop innovative technology and beat out their competitors. Such is capitalism!

Any funding for reform will come mainly from the working class. The legislative debate shows that funds for reform won't come from the rich or from shifting dollars from wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Instead, the bosses will tax health care benefits, cut income tax deductions, raise co-pays and "shared costs," and tax soda and alcohol — all ways of taking even more money from workers. Capitalists can also hold down costs by cutting benefits within health plans. The worse the economic situation gets, the fewer the benefits. Massachusetts is already doing this, and more health plans will follow.

Why do the bosses even bother with health reform rhetoric? To keep us loyal to their rotten system and confused by moving money around while actually slashing benefits! More stringent cuts will certainly follow in coming years because of expanding wars and sharpening economic competition and crisis. Supporters of health care reform need to follow the lead of Stella d'Oro strikers and build a militant movement. Workers, students and professionals must fight to seize power through revolution, not be duped by the bosses' shell game. With political power, we workers can build a needs-oriented health care system, without profit, racial disparities, and big marketing budgets. All the more reason to break with the capitalist politicians and join the revolutionary PLP! ☪

Workers Sit in to Stand Up vs. Parking Meter Robbery

As the sun rose above AutoZone, it seemed that nothing could be more beautiful. After a week of around-the-clock protesting against the installation of parking meters in the economically depressed neighborhood of South Chicago, community organizers, residents, and PLP members stood in awe of the magnificent sight. As the group sat in stunned silence, it seemed there couldn't be a more perfect moment — until a CTA bus driver passed through, tearing the silence with his blaring horn and punching his fist in the air. Protesters cheered, with a new appreciation of the beauty of the working class that has been supporting the sit-in with food, drink, cheers, and by joining us for several hours at a time.

Commercial Ave. is home to small "mom and pop" businesses, a church, and several social service organizations and community centers. Meters would make it impossible for many unemployed, immigrant, and poor residents to wait the hours-long lines for groceries from the food pantry or assistance with light and gas bills. This is all likely part of the city's plan to rid "undesirables" from the area surrounding the potential Olympic site.

Community organizers have held rallies outside the Alderman's office and during the South Chamber of Commerce meeting. When the Executive Director of the Chamber moved the meeting to avoid protesters, the rally was moved, and people took the streets, marching to the new location. People hanging out of second floor apartment windows chanted "Fight back!" with the marchers.

Overnight, workers bring carne asada, hot dogs, and tamales to cook on the grill. Passers-by join the demonstrators for food and discussion about the importance of organizing the community to fight against the attacks on the working class. Leaders of the sit-in recognize that the cry of the people may be falling on deaf ears and it's very likely the meters will be installed soon. Still, they smile as youth walk past at 1:00 am chanting "Whose streets? Our streets!!"

Demonstrations such as these have tremendous potential to build class-consciousness, develop new friendships, and strengthen the bonds with our friends. It is critical for PL members to engage in such struggles. Without our outlook that in each small battle we are building strength to wage the larger war against the bosses, our working-class brothers and sisters might become discouraged, and lose the will to fight altogether. We must remind them what we are fighting for. We must show them communism is alive and well in the workers who bring us dinner, asking for nothing in exchange; in the workers who sit with us for hours in the sun or rain; in the children who shout the loudest "Commercial Avenue not for sale!"

In an era when poverty, unemployment, and apathy often seem unbearable, such struggles also help encourage PL'ers. In the fight against capitalism time will pass, and we will see the bosses turn their wrath on the working class time and again, often more and more viciously. We will see workers' victories rolled back and taken away. Throughout it all, however, the tremendous spirit of the working class is never broken. In many ways they already live the line. They show their readiness to fight. The working class' true enemy is capitalism; we must fight to win the war for communism. Every struggle, every time — FIGHT BACK! ☪

LETTERS



Mexico: Paradise for Bosses, Hell for Workers

Mexico's federal government has rescued big businessmen financially when they steal from each other, and has exempted them from constitutional obligations such as payment of social welfare fees, and from ensuring a dignified retirement for millions of workers at retirement age.

Enormous petroleum reserves have been exhausted primarily by selling it cheaply to the U.S., petroleum that imperialism has used primarily to support its wars, killing workers every day.

In recent years, neoliberal governments along with big capitalists have looted the country, endangering workers' survival. In recent months 697,000 jobs have been lost while a day's wages are a miserable \$51.90 pesos (US\$4), an average of US\$120 a month. If Mexico's workers were unable to migrate to the U.S., massive rebellions would have erupted in Mexico long ago.

Meanwhile, the government has allotted huge incomes to the upper echelons of the bureaucracy. Supreme Court judges are paid \$700,000 pesos (US\$53,846) a month, supposedly to make them immune to corruption. But in practice they exonerate governors and senators, like Puebla's governor or Zacatecas' current senator, even when their crimes are obvious.

Electoral functionaries increased their already high salaries by 50%. Federal deputies divided up (stole) \$173,000,000 pesos, left over from the 2007 budget, making themselves white-collar criminals.

Governmental bureaucrats and the political parties — who say they represent the workers — actually oppress the workers, especially those who have struck to defend their rights, like the workers in Cananea fighting to improve safety at the workplace and like the miners of Pasta de Conchos in danger of being buried alive.

This is the reality for working-class lives under this rapacious and murderous capitalist system where exploitation and misery continue to be a daily occurrence.

We must destroy this system by organizing the working class for communist revolution. In turn, we'll build a new society where exploitation, racism and nationalism don't exist, a society that guarantees a dignified life for workers, as a result of having served society their whole working life. Let's fight for communism!

Industrial Comrade from Mexico

'Reading CHALLENGE, I view the world differently...'

The first thing I noticed about CHALLENGE was the fist. That symbolism made me want to read it. Then I liked the tone — it antagonizes you to think. "Revolutionary communism" automatically made me start asking questions. I knew about revolution, but I had only heard negative things about communism. Now I wondered: What is communism, and how does it relate to revolutionary action? Its ideals are common work, common sharing, and community. I looked at communism different from that point on.

Then I started thinking about how can I use these tools and bring it back to the students at school. Our struggles are all different, but I have come to realize that these battles all derive from the same source.

I have been reading CHALLENGE for about nine months, and view the world differently now. I'm able to distribute the paper to five or ten friends each issue.

So where do we go from here? The more I listen, I read, and participate in the struggle I appreciate that all the answers aren't there yet. Finally, I am involved in something where I am not being told what to do or how to think. I actually get to help create the kind of society I have always believed humankind deserves, or was intended to be. No racism, sexism, ageism period! No wages, foreclosures, or class/caste systems that devalue the role you play in society. I am awakened to the ways in which capitalism has destroyed families, students, workers, and so much more. We must unite and fight, live for what's right and end the usury that destroys a fruitful life.

An Awakened Reader

Mexico's Elections: One Big Anti-Working Class Attack

The July 5th elections for municipal presidents and local and federal deputies, occurred amid claims of change, employment, better quality of life, eradication of poverty and meeting people's needs. These claims and actions of the so-called representatives of the people are filled with lies and hypocrisy.

National and foreign bosses and their politicians are preparing for the 2012 presidential elections, using these 2009 elections for an electoral map — numbers of voters who will vote in 2012 — and for measuring their political force by regions.

The PRI, New Alliance, and Verde Ecologista (Green ecologists) prepare for an alliance. The New Alliance, with the sellout Elba Esther Gordillo, proposes the same old tactics of mobilizing the teachers and rigging the votes for their party. The Verde Ecologista proposes the death penalty for kidnapers, killers and terrorists. They're trying to win over workers while the killings, robberies, kidnappings and social conflict grow with the crisis.

The PRI with its "preservation of institutionalism" contains overlapping contradictions between the political elite modifying the constitution according to their interests and the PAN with its "war on drug trafficking." They're displaying their deadly weapons to maintain fascist military power, backed by U.S. bosses.

The parties of the supposed "left" are also preparing their scenarios for the 2012 contest. The Party of Labor, Convergencia and PRD are in a fierce struggle with the parties of the extreme right, trying to "modernize" the left. They propose riches be generated for and by Mexico's people, endangering the situation even more by promoting intense nationalism in our class.

Meanwhile, a supposedly "leftist" sector proposed a "blank" vote, enabling people to vote for no one. They say this would be the best option to show that society needs real changes. Their examples of the "modernization of the left" are Venezuela, Bolivia and Ecuador, supposed "left-wing" regimes who can maintain their economies while going toe-to-toe with the U.S. yet kneeling to European or Asian bosses — supposedly "beneficial." But submitting to these imperialists is the same as

submitting to U.S. imperialists.

No electoral party promotes working-class power, which abolishes a system that enables a minority to live off the sacrifices of the vast majority. We need a change, but NOT the reformist one advocated by supposed "left" or right-wing parties. Progressive Labor Party proposes a revolutionary change, not the bosses' electoral fraud. We want to destroy the capitalist system and all the bosses. That's real change. We fight for communism. Join PLP.

Red Youth

What You Do Really DOES Count!

On Day 2 of the Summer Project we were handing out papers near a Boeing factory. I went to get coffee and set CHALLENGES down on the counter. One black worker stood pretending he was looking at the menu, but he kept making eye contact so I asked him, "You wouldn't happen to work at Boeing?" "Yes I do," he said. I told him how students from LA like me had been reading all year about the crisis they had going on at Boeing, and the battles, and that a few of us had mobilized to come and find ways to support the workers. One way was to pass out papers and help them organize. Our first step was to come down to the plants and meet some workers, pass out the literature and get a better feel for what was going on.

Meanwhile other Boeing workers popped up from different corners of the restaurant and surrounded us. I told them we heard about the no-strike deal from a fellow worker but the union was too quiet about the issue. I said some people were mobilizing right now and the paper was a way to start the process. I asked them if they'd be interested in taking the paper and one guy gave me a dollar. Then they asked me if they could have ten or fifteen more to put inside the plant and so I gave them a stack and two guys stuck them under their shirts. They said they would pass the papers out inside and talk more about what's going on.

Sometimes you don't really understand what you're doing until a moment like that happens, and then you know that we're really making a difference.

Summer Project Volunteer

Students, Profs Fight Capitalism's Campus Cuts

LOS ANGELES, July 9 — "The state will be required to cut down on education and healthcare to keep capitalism going. The state is not neutral. It is a tool in class society to keep the ruling class in power. We need to fight for communism." That is what a comrade said in reference to the Board of Trustees' decision to cut the winter session here in a Southern California Community College. This led to a two-hour discussion between three friends involved in the fight against the budget cuts that ended at midnight.

For the past two months hundreds of students and faculty have been fighting the budget cuts on our campus. Student-workers and part-time professors are getting laid off, sections are being cut, teachers are being laid off and the winter session has been slashed. Students have been hard at work trying to get informed about all the cuts that are going to be happening in the following semester. They have been communicating with concerned professors, attending Board of Trustees meetings, and researching on their own. The campus doesn't inform the students about the sessions being cut or the potential layoffs of faculty. The administration is intimidated by the students' and professors' organizing against the cut-backs and other attacks. In fact the administration held a budget-cuts rally and only invited students who would not challenge them and specifically did not invite any other students.

Last week at a Board of Trustees meeting, over 125 students, teachers and workers protested their decision to cut programs students need. The crowd

was very militant, and rallied outside the meeting. When they started to allow the audience inside the boardroom, students held up posters stating that there shouldn't be any cuts. Throughout the meeting students caused disruptions and attacked the board members. One of the Board members cried, "I do everything to help the students," but we know that under capitalism it doesn't matter what she wants, she serves the needs of the ruling class and attacks the working class. This aroused other students to stand up and interrupt the board members to tell the truth about who is hurt by the cuts. This isn't the first meeting students have attended, but this is the most militant one this campus has had since the crisis started.

When the decision came to cut programs, the winter session was the first to go. Cutting supplies was last. Some students joked that the school will be cutting toilet paper. Attending the board meeting showed the reality that the government doesn't really help or support the working class, but instead attacks us. It made it clear that the Board of Trustees can't and won't help the students or teachers during times of crisis.

We will need a mass group of people to make a change on our campus and around the world. We must work with students on these issues to win them to our revolutionary ideas. That's why it's good that some of these students will be active in the PLP Summer Project. Some of them are reading CHALLENGE and we plan to expand this number so that more students can see that they're part of the international fight against the capitalist system. ☺

'Fog of War' Pretty Clear: McNamara Murdered Millions

Michael Jackson... Farrah Fawcett... the bosses' media flooded us with news of their deaths. Yet many workers probably didn't notice the death of an enemy of the international working class whose life reveals the horrible reality behind the lies of hope and change promised by liberal politicians like Barack Obama.

As Secretary of Defense under Presidents John Kennedy (JFK) and Lyndon Baines Johnson (LBJ), McNamara is probably most infamous for his pivotal role in the imperialist Vietnam War, launched by U.S. capitalists to protect their strategic interests in Southeast Asia, particularly against Russia and China. Three million Vietnamese and 58,000 U.S. soldiers were killed.

Early on McNamara oversaw operation "Rolling Thunder," the carpet bombing of North Vietnam that hurled nearly triple the number of bombs dropped on Europe in all of World War II (WWII). McNamara played such a pivotal role in conducting the war that at times it was called "McNamara's War." He was rightly hated by many, including many veterans from the war. Nonetheless, many understood that McNamara and the military were serving the larger interests of U.S. capital.

Harvard-trained, McNamara was a "Whiz Kid," famous for his analytic abilities and his goals of "maximum efficiency." At that time, "We were the best and the brightest," he reminisced. ("Fog of War," 2004) Tellingly, McNamara recalls that while at Harvard "society was on the verge." He was referring to the Great Depression and often communist-led mass fights for unionization and against unemployment

and evictions. He acknowledges that the liberal rhetoric and policies of then President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) helped save U.S. capitalism. FDR was another liberal politician whose deceptive appeal Obama and his handlers hope to copy.

During WWII, the U.S. military sought Harvard's help to become more effective. This became McNamara's first experience as a mass murderer for U.S. bosses. He worked under General Curtis LeMay to maximize the efficiency of B-29 bombing over Japan.

This produced the firebombing of Tokyo that, according to McNamara himself in the documentary "Fog of War," killed 100,000 Japanese civilians in one night! To fully understand the scale of destruction he helped plan, McNamara says that Tokyo's size then equaled New York City's. Now picture that destruction in NYC. Many more Japanese cities were similarly firebombed.

When asked by the interviewer in the "Fog of War" if he was aware of his responsibility in these mass civilian deaths, McNamara recalls General Lemay saying, "If we lost the war, we'd all have been prosecuted as war criminals. And I think he's right....We were behaving as war criminals."

After the war McNamara quickly became a darling of the rulers' liberal wing. Ford hired him to make it profitable and he became the first company president who wasn't a Ford family member. Soon afterwards JFK named him Defense Secretary. McNamara quickly entered JFK's inner circle. Today Obama fashions himself

as an heir to the FDR/JFK legacy.

The bosses' media encourages popular nostalgia about JFK's Presidency, a supposed "Camelot" or fairy-tale place of "idealism" and "service." Obama and his ruling-class masters echo these same themes to win support particularly among youth, students and workers. Beneath the Kennedy/Obama liberal rhetoric is the lie that workers and bosses are on the same side and that an "enlightened capitalism" can consider workers' interests. But the reality of these politics is continued capitalist exploitation, racism, anti-communism and murderous imperialist war that McNamara symbolizes.

Today many rightly despise Cheney and Rumsfeld for their roles in overseeing the Iraq oil wars under the Bushes. But as PLP says, "It's not just Bush, it's capitalism." Many hope that a liberal Obama foreign policy will somehow be "less" imperialist. But when capitalists compete for the exploitation of the world's resources and workers, war is inevitable.

To those who view Obama and the liberal rulers behind him as "good guys," especially following Bush, McNamara's life proves that the international working class has no friends among any capitalist rulers, liberal or otherwise. Obama will continue McNamara's murderous imperialist legacy in Afghanistan, Pakistan and elsewhere. Communist revolution remains the urgent task for the working class. The idea that workers might find solace and compassion with "lesser-evil" liberal bosses and politicians repeatedly and inevitably leads to the mass murder of workers 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

Stress and suicide rife in U.S. Army

NYT 6/7 — Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, ...predicted the toll this year will top the record of 2008 when the Army suffered 133 suicides. That was twice the number in 2004, before the Iraq and Afghanistan campaigns turned into a slog of repeated tours.... He conceded there may be no study establishing an "overwhelming" connection between combat stress and suicide, "but I just can't believe that it is not very much related."

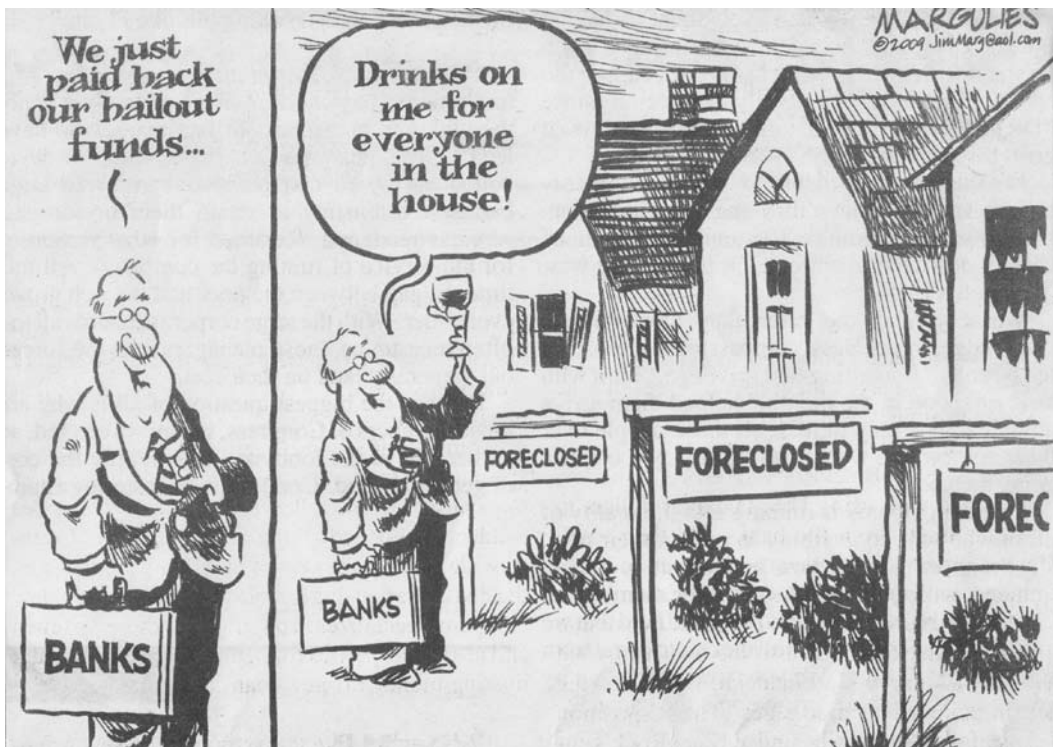
Troops in the field already know this the hard way. About one in five returning home privately admit to post-traumatic stress disorders, but only half seek treatment. Soldiers fear their careers will be compromised if they reach out for help.

N. Korea nukes already restrain U.S.

Pythian Press 6/14 — "Iran and North Korea appear to be seeking small nuclear arsenals in order to deter potential adversaries from launching an attack upon them — by threatening them with unacceptable damage in retaliation," says Daley.... "It is really quite a remarkable development," says Daley....In contrast to all the debate....about whether the United States and/or Israel ought to launch a preemptive strike on Iran — no one seems to be proposing any kind of military strike on North Korea. Why not? Because of the mere possibility that North Korea could impose unacceptable damage upon us in reply."

No safety net for the desperate

NYT 7/5 — Government "safety net" programs like Social Security and food stamps have pulled growing numbers of Americans out of poverty since the mid-1990's. But even before the current recession, these programs were providing less help to the most desperately poor, mainly non-working



families with children.... The overhaul of cash welfare since 1996, aimed at pushing single mothers into jobs, 'makes sense when unemployment is 5 percent.'

"But if you are out of work, the welfare system in a time of recession doesn't have anything to offer."

Facing court with no interpreter

NYT 7/4 — When Maythe Ramirez went to Superior Court in Contra Costa, Calif., for a child custody hearing in 2006, she wanted to tell the judge that her husband beat her and should not be allowed broad visitation rights. The court did not provide an interpreter for her however....

The court system can be a bewildering place for anyone, but it can be terrifying for those who do not understand English.... But while interpreters are commonly offered in criminal cases, many states do not require the services in all civil cases....

In family law cases, which deal with issues like divorce, child custody and abuse, the lack of language help "can mean the difference between justice and injustice,"

Insurance co.'s steal health money

NYT 6/25 — Congressional investigators said Wednesday that two-thirds of the nation's health insurance industry used a faulty database that overcharged patients for seeing doctors outside their insurance network, costing them billions of dollars in inflated bills....

"The result of this practice is that American consumers have paid billions of dollars for health care services that their insurance companies should have paid,"

For bankers, recession is over

GW 7/3 — Bankers are again looking forward to bumper payouts, eight months after the sector faced meltdown. After weeks of firing staff, there's a hiring frenzy in investment banks. Business is booming, partly as a result of the chaos caused by the bankers. Bond markets are hectic as a result of governments' need to finance deficits, and economic ills have created (profitable) volatility in foreign exchange markets. Even guaranteed bonuses have made a comeback.

MORE ITEMS AVAILABLE ONLINE:
www.plp.org

PLP Project Develops Young Leaders, Worker-Soldier-Student Alliance

SEATTLE, July 13 — “This project was great because we got such instant response to our leaflets,” concluded a young East Coast volunteer. We distributed about 1,200 CHALLENGES and over 2,000 Extras and flyers at Boeing plants in the early morning as workers drove in. Then we talked to workers and returned to update our flyers daily, reflecting what we learned from the visits.

Our banner, “NO-STRIKE DEAL? NO WAY! FIGHT BACK!” was a big hit. Workers slowed down, stopped, requested CHALLENGE, honked their horns, called supportively out the windows, and raised their fists in solidarity! Their positive response to our multi-racial, age-integrated groups gave us energy to keep getting up, selling CHALLENGE and enhancing student-worker alliances.

We distributed a special flyer along with CHALLENGES for 220 soldiers at nearby Ft. Lewis. The day before we discussed the fallacy of the “good war” in Afghanistan, where many of these soldiers are being sent. We included a map of the proposed oil and natural gas pipelines the U.S bosses want to build through that country.

Soldiers are not solely victims of, or killers for, U.S. imperialism, but potentially a key force for revolution. Indeed, without winning these working-class soldiers there can be no revolution. Four gave us contact information to continue receiving our communist literature.

Training to take leadership, this group of mostly college and high school students from

across the U.S. came together here for the 2009 Summer Project at Boeing. Combating the capitalist training endured in school, they met and ate with workers, participated in study groups and sold CHALLENGE.

Under capitalism, schools teach self-interest and individualism, but this Project proved we can live and struggle collectively in the interests of our class — in this case by creating relationships with industrial workers. This develops collectivity as we forge a strong worker-student alliance.

Boeing workers told us the company has just bought a non-union factory in South Carolina to induce workers to compete with each other for jobs, and that the IAM union may sign a “no-strike” clause “to keep jobs in Puget Sound” (see page 4). Many workers no longer believe the union is working for them. Despite the leadership’s assurances that plenty of backlog work exists to keep Boeing workers busy in this area, workers notice they have less and less work.

Workers feel they’re being used like tools that can be easily removed when the bosses don’t need them. In meeting us, workers realized they’re not alone in questioning the bosses’ and unions’ actions, and even the system altogether. These conversations also taught us how the industrial struggle unfolds. We also saw workers moving to the left from our discussion about the limits of reform.

PLP veterans led a study group about the history of PL’s industrial work, and then passed the torch to younger participants to discuss dia-

lectical materialism (the study of understanding and analyzing how to change the world), racism, sexism and communist work in the military. Many first-time participants were involved in the Project. Their frankness about their experiences in the Project, in their lives and through their questions about PLP consistently sharpened the debate. They also benefitted from hearing that others face similar struggles in their own lives. Several described their uneasiness advancing communist ideas although not understanding them completely. These first-time participants confronted this by leading briefings and study groups.

After the activities, first-time Project participants led discussions and posed questions about why we are focusing on Boeing workers. We discovered that about 50% of Boeing’s production is military, connecting it to current imperialist wars, but also dramatizing aerospace workers’ revolutionary potential. Winning Boeing workers to revolution will enable them to construct military equipment in winning the class war.

Leading political discussions has increased the confidence of the newest participants to share PL’s ideas with their friends. Our CHALLENGE distribution improved every day as we engaged workers and developed our class-consciousness together. The young leaders who matured in the Seattle Summer Project will be great assets in their home cities as they take on more leadership in the working-class struggle for communist revolution. ☺

Worker to PL’er: ‘You guys were always there...’

Project Unites PL’ers with Stella D’Oro Strikers

BRONX, NY, July 11 — “We are hard workers. Most of us have been working in this place for 20 or 30 years. When we went on strike we approached it the same way. We went to the picket line like we go to work; 24/7, seven days a week. That’s how we won.” This quote from a Stella D’Oro worker summed up the feelings of the eight strikers at a closing forum of the Stella D’Oro Summer Project. The Stella workers enthusiastically spoke about the battle — how they kept up morale during the long strike, how they fought sexism and built unity between men and women, and fought nationalism and racism and came to see themselves as a family.

A man who had been in the plant many years talked about how they kept together, “Before, I would go in the plant every day and mainly think about whatever problems came up at work, but during the strike I began to see the human side of the people I work with.” When asked about whether or not there was anti-communism in the strike in reaction to the presence of PLP, one worker said, “You were with us in the cold, in the rain, in the snow, you brought us pizza and coffee. You guys were always there. What can you say to that?”

The day before the project began, PLP students and teachers and a Stella D’Oro striker held a meeting to make plans to spread communist ideas during the Project. Plans were made to go to shift changes and discuss the CHALLENGE article, “Winning Means Destroying the Profit System: Stella D’Oro Strikers Fight for All Workers” (see front page, 7/15/09).

With copies of CHALLENGE and an invitation to the project’s evening events, we greeted the workers as they went in for their shifts. During the shift changes we reached over 60 workers each day and contacted over 30 workers by phone, in addition to distributing over 1,000 CHALLENGES.

The first evening event was a showing of the communist-made film, “Salt of the Earth,” about the struggle of Mexican-American mineworkers in New Mexico against their brutal bosses. A Stella

D’Oro worker compared his experiences to those of the miners. He asked for a copy of the movie, planning to organize more Stella workers to see it.

The next night, a PL comrade gave a talk on the Flint Sit-down Strike of 1936-1937. Hearing how workers can take over the bosses’ factories and organize against attacks from the National Guard and police showed the power of the working class to organize life inside the plant, while battling the bosses trying to get them out.

This group of Stella workers, from all over the globe including North Africa, Europe and Latin America, showed tremendous fortitude, strength and optimism about the necessity of the working-class’ fight. It was clear that this struggle is not over.

The final forum, which concluded with the singing of the Internationale, raised the ques-



tion of what is next for the Stella workers, and what is next for all workers and students as we face budget cuts, layoffs, evictions and increased attacks. We will continue to visit the plant, fight alongside the Stella D’Oro workers, and struggle to fight for a society led by the working class — communism! ☺

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