



Inspiration for All Workers: Stella D'Oro Strikers' Anti-Racist, Anti-Sexist Unity



EDITORIAL>>

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and Gas Bosses
En'Nobel'
Obama**
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BRONX, NY, October 8
— Stella D'Oro strikers,
the working class salutes
you!

You have shown the world an unbreakable solidarity that defied the attacks of profit-driven bosses for eleven long months during which not one worker scabbed, not one worker crossed the picket line.

You have shown how Latino, black, white and Asian workers, women and men, immigrant and native-born, can fight the bosses' racist divisive tools and unite as a class.

You have shown that capitalist sexist ideology can be defeated, as men workers refused to take the bosses' bribe offers to return to work, refusing to allow their sister workers to suffer a \$10,000-a-year wage-cut over five years.

You have not let the bosses' cops' intimidation — tearing down your tent shelter in the dead of winter — break your spirit.

You have inspired thousands across the city — postal, transit, hospital and office workers, teachers, students and college professors — to come to support you and take back these lessons to their co-workers.

You have refused to succumb to anti-communism, working with supporters from PLP, discussing our communist ideas, edging closer to adopting the red flag as your flag, waving CHALLENGE as your flag as you entered the factory. As one striker said, "We've all been 'infected' now. Who knows where we're all going to end up? But wherever we go, we're going to spread PLP."

You have seen, on the one hand, the Labor Board supposedly "order" the Brynwood bosses to take you back honoring the old contract and then these same bosses, following their capitalist laws, close the factory, and sell the equipment and brand name to a low-wage, non-union boss in Ohio. From this you can learn the lesson that as long as the bosses have state (government) power, they can manipulate their laws to throw workers on the street.

Capitalism: Billions for the Banks, Joblessness and Debt for Workers

Yes, it is true that, after this long struggle, you have joined the ranks of 30 million other unemployed workers who have lost their jobs, their wages, their savings, their health insurance and many their homes. This must not be



minimized. It is the terrible tragedy that a capitalist system, based on the drive for maximum profits, visits on the working class which produces everything of value but sees most of it stolen by the bosses only concerned with their bottom line.

And it is also true that the Obama administration gives hundreds of billions to the bankers who are responsible for these massive attacks on the working class. Meanwhile, it conducts wars seeking control of oil supplies and using our children as cannon fodder to kill brother and sister workers to maintain their profits in their fights with rival imperialists worldwide.

This combined oppression at home and abroad adds up pure and simple to fascism, U.S. style.

Through all this we can see the true colors of the labor "leaders" of unions who with over two million members in this city barely lifted a finger to support your valiant struggle. It is clear that, in their defense of capitalism, they are on the bosses' side.

It is for many of these reasons that, on short notice, over 50 supporters, mostly organized by PLP, came to salute you, cheering and clapping as you left your final shift. After having chanted inside the factory, "The workers, united, will never be defeated!" — as you did at every shift change leading to the closing — you came out wearing your bakers' caps, some in white uniforms, seemingly unwilling to let go of their craft.

One rank-and-file leader told us he learned as much in the last three days trying to organize workers to carry out a sit-down occupation than he had in the previous 14 months.

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Norway's Oil, Gas Bosses En'Nobel' Obama

Why did Barack Obama win the Nobel "Peace" Prize when he presides over two wars and the sharpest assault on jobs and wages since the Great Depression? The short answer is that the award has nothing to do with peace and workers' needs.

Arms millionaire Alfred Nobel created the prize in his 1896 will, and subsequent war-making capitalists have controlled it ever since. U.S. arch-imperialists Teddy Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, and Henry Kissinger all won Nobels. A more detailed explanation of Obama's award involves the Norwegian-prize givers' role in an increasingly deadly global energy rivalry.

Choosing Obama was the brainchild of a committee hand-picked by the government of Norway, a major energy producer and strategic U.S. ally. Its giant Statoil Hydro is the world's largest source of offshore oil and gas. Until recently, the deputy chairwoman of the Nobel panel, Kaci Kullmann Five, sat on Statoil's board.

Nobel chairman Thorbjorn Jagland acted as Statoil's virtual CEO as prime minister from 1996 to 1997 when the company was 100% state-owned. Jagland helped engineer sale of a 24% stake in Statoil to private investors led by U.S. banks State Street, J.P. Morgan and Bank of New York Mellon.

McChrystal-Biden Debate Over War Focus Behind Phony 'Peace' Prize

Through Obama's prize surprise, Statoil/Norway is attempting to sway him in the direction of



the McChrystal-McCain "surge-for-total-victory" model during the developing Afghan policy debate. Statoil aims to cash in on a U.S.-backed proposed pipeline — named TAPI — to carry gas from Turkmenistan through Afghanistan to Pakistan and India. (See map page 6)

Next month, Statoil will serve as a "Silver Sponsor" — Exxon Mobil is a Gold one, BP is Platinum — at Turkmenistan's 14th International Oil and Gas Conference. TAPI will be high on the agenda as western oil majors seek to break Russia's stranglehold on Turkmen supplies. But TAPI's success hinges on pacifying Afghanistan.

Tiny Norway plays such a big part in Obama's war in Afghanistan because it could provide Statoil access to neighboring Turkmenistan's gas riches. Norway has 500 troops in Afghanistan, a sizable contingent for a nation of 4.6 million, and the largest refugee bureau (Nobel's current and Statoil's ex-vice chair Kullman Five is a trustee). A Norwegian diplomat, Kai Eide, a former Statoil adviser, holds the highest UN post there. He recently "expressed support for the top U.S. and NATO commander in Afghanistan's [McChrystal's] call for more troops." (Voice of America, 9/29/09)

Eide recently fired his top U.S. aide Peter Galbraith for exposing the blatant rigging of Afghan president Karzai's re-election. Statoil's envoy fears that publicizing the fraud might fuel Vice-President Biden's camp, which calls for toning down the Afghan war in favor of pushing into Pakistan.

Norway has cast its lot with U.S. imperialists for the long haul. During the Cold War, it was a staunch anti-Soviet strategically-located NATO member. It now houses NATO's vast Joint Training Center at Stavanger, Statoil's hometown. Norwegian, U.S. and other forces regularly practice there, not only for defend-

ing Statoil's nearby oil and gas rigs but for invading Russia, just across the border. The "Peace" Prize move indicates Norway's rulers are asserting their loyalty to their U.S. senior partners and demanding a piece of the imperialist pie now.

"Peace," as the Nobel Prize embodies it, actually means military conquest by U.S.-led imperialist coalitions and the loss of millions of workers' lives. War will exist so long as the profit system endures. Capitalism thrives on armed conflict to carve up the world. It would be a serious political error to view Obama's award as encouraging an end to U.S.-sponsored torture or ending Israeli-Palestinian strife or creating a new opening with Russia or Iran, as the New York Times says (10/9/09). For the working class, safety lies ultimately in joining PLP and building for a communist revolution to overthrow the profit-driven war-makers. ☛

Gore's Nobel Had Same Imperialist Energy Motive

Al Gore's 2007 "Peace" Prize for his efforts against global warming bears the Statoil hallmark, too. It so "happens" that Statoil, the world leader in trapping carbon emissions at gas plants, would profit mightily from the restrictions Gore advocates. In addition, such caps aim at stifling growth in U.S. rival China and potential rival India. On September 22, Statoil CEO Helge Lund joined the UN's Expert Group on Climate and Energy, the only oil and gas executive invited. Lund's booster Gore had helped found the panel.

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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OOPS...

In the event described on page 3 of the last CHALLENGE (10/14/09), the PL speaker at UCLA said in his speech "The most important gain that can emerge from this struggle is showing that students and workers have power when they unite to fight back and that a system that cannot meet their needs must be destroyed." In CHALLENGE it appeared that this statement was NOT made by the speaker, but it was and got a good response.



Hundreds Protest Killer Kops' Racist Murder

Rockford, IL, October 3 — Hundreds of workers and youth from Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana, and Michigan rallied today in Rockford against the racist police murder of Mark Anthony Barmore, a 23-year-old African American man. According to eyewitnesses, Mr. Barmore ran into a church day care center to avoid two cops who supposedly wanted to question him about a domestic violence incident. The cops ordered Mr. Barmore to come out of a closet where he was hiding and then shot him down when he came out, unarmed, with his hands raised.

As he lay on the floor face down and bleeding, they shot him three more times in the back, in front of over a dozen children who might have been killed by ricocheting bullets. Then, according to witnesses, the cops moved the body to rearrange the crime scene and then took family members to the police station and tried unsuccessfully to intimidate them into telling a false story. For this, the cops have been put on paid administrative leave while the case is being investigated.

Stella D'Oro Strikers

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His team did their best and did persuade a considerable number, but not, in their judgment, enough of a critical mass to spark a seizure of the factory.

What Is Winning?

So despite having been unable to overcome the whole system, its profit-protecting laws, its cops, its courts, its whole government, victory can be measured in lessons learned for the future:

- The multi-racial unity of black, Latino, Asian and white workers practiced in this struggle must guide our class.
- The international unity of native-born and immigrant from all over the world can defeat the nationalist divisions the bosses use to set us against each other.
- The equality of women and men is essential to every fight against the capitalists whose exploitation and degenerate sexist culture weakens our fight for a decent life.
- The solidarity of all workers — all for one and one for all — is our guiding light.
- The communist ideas of PLP are necessary to fight this capitalist system until it and the bosses' state power are ultimately destroyed and a workers' society replaces it in which the working class that produces all value will collectively share the fruits of our labors.
- Our biggest victory can become the joining and building of PLP — and the circulation of its ideas through the spreading of CHALLENGE, the only paper to report the truth of this long struggle — all to lead the overthrow of the racist, exploitative bosses who profit from our sweat.

A simple sign on the fence near the factory revealed the most important strategic lesson here: "The Stella D'Oro struggle shows that workers must take state power — PLP."

This is one battle in a long war against capitalism. The Stella D'Oro workers, especially those who join PLP, can spread their experiences among masses of the unemployed and among all co-workers on future jobs. The collective strength of the working class, led by communist ideas, has the power to eventually smash this hellish system.

Once more, we hail the magnificent struggle of the Stella D'Oro workers, a model for the whole working class. ☸

Capitalism is declining and anger is rising. The real unemployment rate is over 20% and for young black men it's over fifty percent. The cops fear the militancy of black youth and are intensifying their direct brutal assaults and intimidation in the hope of stopping rebellion. Only when there is fight-back do the big bosses decide to do a whitewash like the "legal" clearing (with Obama's blessing) of the cop who killed Sean Bell in NYC, or if protests threaten to get out of hand to jettison a few "bad apple" cops.

Several members of PLP from the Chicago area attended the NAACP rally. Over two hundred people, including a number of youth, directed their anger against the cops and the system, instead of against each other. The bosses complain about youth violence but they would rather have youth killing each other than fighting against the capitalist system! When the anti-racist movement of the 1960's retreated, there was a rapid rise in youth violence and gangs in our cities.

A mass anti-racist movement, led by communists, can channel this anger back against the capitalist system that is the cause of our problems. Of the many speakers that day, only one said positive things about Obama. Most made no mention of him at all. Many in our communities are coming to understand that he is not a cure for racist capitalism and that we have

to fight back ourselves. About 40 copies of CHALLENGE were distributed and Party members are making plans with members of community groups to work on more projects together back home.

Over the past 50 years, many national leaders of the NAACP have worked together with the government to take the militancy out of the anti-racist movement, even to the point of attacking grassroots militants and siding with the police against them. But like many other unions, community groups, churches and schools whose leaders push capitalist dead-ends like electoral politics, the NAACP on the local level has many dedicated grassroots members who struggle hard to fight racist oppression. Communists must unite with these militant forces in struggle against racist oppression while we struggle with them to oppose the reformist leaders who support the capitalist system.

Modern racism was born in the slave trade with the rise of capitalism, and capitalism needs racism to keep workers divided and maximize profits from lower wages paid to black, Latino and immigrant workers. PLP has been in the forefront of the struggle to destroy racism and capitalism for almost 50 years. Join PLP and help build a world-wide communist revolution to destroy racism and all oppression once and for all. ☸

Cal Campus Rally Ties Budget Cuts to War Spending

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, Oct. 6 — A student-faculty anti-war group held a rally on campus against the budget cuts in the California State University (CSU) system, and the war spending that contribute to these cuts. One speaker explained that in the U.S., war spending trumps all other priorities, amounting to about \$760 billion in 2009.

Over the period since the Iraq war began in 2003 up to 2008, the U.S. has reduced the funding for states and cities to provide services like Medicaid by about \$136 billion, including about \$16 billion for California. The one-time stimulus grant to California in 2009 of \$8 billion doesn't even make up for funds diverted to the wars in the previous five years! Clearly the fight against campus budget cuts must be linked to the fight against imperialist wars.

Two other speakers protested a racist change in the admission policy that is a part of the cutbacks. This policy gives preference to students from other parts of the state, and is likely to reduce the percentage of black and Latino students on this campus.

Another speaker explained that the current economic crisis "provides us with a clear view of the priorities that the state of California, the United States, or, more generally, any profit-driven economy must take." He pointed out that California's huge spending on its racist overcrowded prison system, where 70% of released inmates are sent back to prison, takes billions that should be spent on education and public



Students Listen to Rally Speeches

services. The state spends \$49,000 each on its 170,000 prisoners, more than 60% of whom are black and Latino, but has reduced state support of the CSU to \$4,600 per student. "We should take the economic crisis as an opportunity to see clearly that the state's priorities are not in the interests of working people, and recognize that these policies for war, for prison and for education cutbacks are not in our common interest as a working class."

Several hundred students heard some part of the rally, 300 leaflets were distributed, and about a dozen students signed up to be contacted further. It is our responsibility as communists to show students and faculty that fee increases and layoffs are a result of racism and imperialist wars created by capitalism. ☸

Workers Must Destroy System Capitalism Breeds Racism

Many of us identify ourselves by “race” and ethnicity in daily conversation as well as on government forms. However, according to the American Anthropological Association, there are no biological foundations or genes for “race.” Humans are genetically more alike than different, yet the idea of “race” is embedded in our everyday dialogue. This is because “race” is an idea, a concept carefully reinforced and reproduced by capitalist society in order to maintain itself.

Over 140 years after the end of chattel slavery in the U.S, the ruling class still wields racism, as it’s most vicious tool against the world’s workers. In New York, official unemployment among blacks is four times the rate among whites. The college graduation rate of blacks is half that of whites in the U.S. Around the world, virtually every measure of health, from infant mortality rates, to stress and high blood pressure, to diabetes and heart failure, is worse for blacks. In the U.S., 1 in 10 black males age 30-34 is in prison, 1 in 4 is in the criminal justice system. On a daily basis young black and Latino men are gunned down in the streets by racist cops, or killed by crime that rises with the unemployment and poverty rate.

Obama A Cover For U.S. Imperialism

The election of a black president has not blunted racism. On the contrary, the bosses hope that Obama provides a cover to the horror of U.S. Imperialism. Already the ruling class is licking its chops at the rise in black military recruitment since Obama’s election. These young men and women will be sent to kill and risk death in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan. Meanwhile destitute workers from Uganda are being used as soldiers in Iraq, paid only a fraction of the wages of the U.S. military, and used as shields in a protective ring around U.S. mega-bases. Building anti-racist, international unity among these soldiers with a revolutionary outlook is the way forward to eliminate racism.

Racism is not merely a vestige of an old system, but an essential part of capitalism. From the very beginning of capitalist society, the ascending ruling class was profiting enormously from slave labor and indentured servitude, a system by which poor workers were committed to a single boss for a set period and then “freed” to become wage laborers. But as black and white indentured servants began uniting with Native Americans to resist exploitation in this new social order, race laws were enacted and brutally enforced to divide the colonial work force.

In 1662, Virginia passed a law that enslaved blacks for life. Legislation was passed to determine what a “black” person was since so much inter-marriage occurred. These laws were also used to justify the enslavement of children produced from the rape of black slaves by the colonial rulers. While black slavery was enshrined in law, a 200-year genocide against Native-Americans was carried out, led by butchers such as Andrew Jackson who would go on to become President.

‘Founding Fathers’ Justified Slavery

Slave-owning racist Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the United States and the author of the Declaration of Independence, said in 1789 that he could never imagine a “biracial republic.” The hypocritical “founding fathers” needed to justify their brutal ownership of enslaved African workers while simultaneously touting the “ideals” of “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

The Abolitionist movement grew in reaction to the continued brutality of chattel slavery. Many people spoke out. John Brown and Nat Turner led the most militant attacks on slaveholders, with John Brown trying to unite white and black workers alike. They planted the seeds for anti-racist actions that played out in the U.S. Civil War, and continue to inspire workers all over the world.

At that time the ruling class was becoming divided between the Northern industrialists and the Southern slaveholders. The industrialists used the

mass hatred of slavery to weaken the southern bosses, eventually leading to the Civil War. After hundreds of thousands died fighting slavery, Lincoln saw it was no longer politically tolerable and reluctantly ended chattel slavery in 1865.

The limited politics of the struggle didn’t allow for racism to be defeated, as the Abolitionists did not make the fight against capitalism the issue, but only against slavery. So, chattel slavery became wage slavery; it didn’t end, they just changed the rules. The bosses have since stolen trillions of dollars of additional profits through the super-exploitation of black, Latino and Asian workers being paid lower wages.

After chattel slavery, new laws against integration, called Jim Crow, physically and politically separated workers. White capitalists, using former confederate officers and soldiers to protect their privilege through terror, formed the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. They attacked black workers organ-

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izing, speaking out or uniting with white workers.

Great strikes such as the New Orleans General Strike of 1892 illustrated that white and black workers could see past racism as the struggle united them. They fought scabs and the U.S. army and were stronger together than they ever could have been apart. From the 1930’s to ‘50s, uniting black and white workers in the struggle against racism became a cornerstone of the old Communist Party.

Communists Led Fight Against Racism

From building a mass movement to defending the young black men framed in Scottsboro, to organizing integrated sharecroppers and steel workers unions in the south, the communist movement led the fight against racism. Our Party came out of this movement, and by learning from its successes and mistakes and fighting many battles against the Klan, Nazis and racist cops, we have advanced our understanding of racism.

In June 1964, the first mass big-city rebellion erupted in New York City’s Harlem when many thousands of black workers and youth took to the

streets to protest another police murder of a black teenager. They marched through Harlem’s streets, displaying the front page of CHALLENGE as their “flag.”

PLM (Progressive Labor Movement, forerunner of PLP) was the only organization to support the rebellion — all the reformist black leaders and the old “Communist” Party tried to simultaneously cool the rebels and attack PLM. We defied being banned from Harlem by the state, and held a mass demonstration during the height of the rebellion calling for the bosses, their judges, and their cops to be hanged.

In the ‘60s and beyond, the bosses have tried to turn anger against racism into a wedge to keep workers of different “races” separate. Nationalist groups like the Black Panther Party called for blacks to stick together in a militant way. More mainstream ideas called for black-owned business, black cops and black politicians. President Obama is the ultimate figure in the disarming of the struggle against racism. His rhetoric about the “post-racial” society is an attempt to delude workers into not seeing the realities of racism all around them.

Racism As Widespread As Ever

The foreclosures and unemployment rates of the current economic crisis affect blacks more than whites. Racist police brutality persists, and during his candidacy, Obama’s only comment on the assassination of Sean Bell was that the police were justified. During his inaugural speech, this supposed trail-blazer described himself as following in the footsteps of the “founding fathers” who created the

racism he downplays.

Racism was created by the ruling class and developed as capitalism developed. It allows bosses to keep workers of different colors apart so they will not join forces to rebel. Racism creates a group of super-exploited black and Latino workers, keeping wages lower for all, as workers fear asking for more because others work for less.

The most heroic class struggles of workers have been waged by building multi-racial unity. The battle of the Stella D’Oro workers over the last year has been the most recent example of this, with workers of every nationality standing in solidarity and male workers refusing to take deals that would not benefit the women workers in a stand against sexism as well. PLP was founded on the belief that we must fight racism in order to create a new world and that only a communist revolution can destroy this capitalist creation. The rulers built racism to make more profits for themselves. Workers don’t need or want the ideas that separate us from each other. Workers will destroy racism as they destroy the whole capitalist system and build a world that serves our needs instead. ☸

Haitian Revolution Crushed French Slave-owners

The Haitian Revolution (1791-1804) was the most important revolution of its time. Haiti was the richest colony in the Caribbean, and it would have been a launching pad to begin a French offensive into the North American continent. The enslaved workers of Haiti, with nothing but meager weapons, managed to defeat the powerful French army. They fought Napoleon’s armies that were rampaging all across Europe, and they gave that despot his first defeat. The uprising was successful in overthrowing the French landowners, as well as defeating the European armies that came to France’s aid in order to restore “order.” The former slaves also freed the slaves of the Spanish colony that would be later named “The Dominican Republic.” The former slaves managed to wipe out their oppressors, but they were trapped in the ideology of race. They saw white workers as the enemy, and this racism became nationalism as it was co-opted by pro-capitalist misleaders like Toussaint L’ouverture.

The Haitian Revolution foreshadowed the failures of all of the future National Liberation Movements, as they did not fight against all bosses, but only the white bosses, not recognizing just how virulently racist the black slave-holders were. Haiti became the first example of neo-colonialization as well, as the capitalist nations forced Haiti to pay billions of dollars in today’s currency in reparations to the French slave-owners, thus impoverishing the Haitian workers and enslaving them economically to the designs of the imperialist nations. Haiti has been punished to this day for daring to rise up and defeat capitalism while it was ascending, and their great revolution has been carefully removed from the capitalist’s textbooks.

Bus Mechanics Fight Union Hacks, Demand Action vs. Racist Murder

LOS ANGELES, October 12 — After a bus driver's nephew, Darrick Collins, a young black worker, was murdered by a racist county Sheriff (see CHALLENGE, 10/14), we asked the driver to speak at our union meeting of mechanics about this racist terror. When we talked to the family at the funeral, they called the uncle, and after a long phone conversation he said he'd be glad to speak to other union members. He related a dozen other recent police killings, news of which we distributed in our PLP flyers, "Wanted for Mass Murder: LA Sheriffs and Capitalism."

We told the driver we wanted to introduce a motion to condemn the Sheriff's Dept. for this brutal racist murder and call for a five-minute work-stoppage in protest. "But," we said, "we know the union leadership will do everything they can to prevent the motion." The driver was unfazed, saying "I'll have to get time off from work to make the meeting, but I'm coming."

When the driver arrived at the meeting, the union president said, "You'll have to wait outside. You're in the driver's union. This is a mechanic's union." This "warm show of unity" toward another transit worker brought by a mechanic was followed by the divisive union hack's warning the membership, "Watch your pockets!" (In other words, "he's just here looking for money.")

But the rank-and-filers at the meeting rejected the mis-leadership's motion to exclude the driver, saying they wanted to hear the brother. The Party, through CHALLENGE readers and friends, fought

to make sure workers supported this fight in the union and at work.

'We're the ones they come down on...'

After waiting half-an-hour in the lobby, the driver was received and spoke humbly but urgently for us to take a stand against the killings. "I didn't come here for pity or charity. I came to raise your awareness. I'm no one special; I'm just a blue-collar worker like all of you," but he warned, "We are the ones they come down on, the ones they kill, like this young man in my family."

Then there was a long discussion where workers talked angrily about experiences of racist police terror and jailings, while the union president sat numbly at the back. But soon he resumed his real role by ruling a job-action motion "out of order." "We have contracts," he cried. "We would get huge fines like New York City's transit union [in 2005]." A service attendant asked sarcastically if we could now expect cops to shoot us with picket signs in our hands, when we go on strike, recalling a cop killing of a man with a stick in his front yard. "We won't be going on strike," the president told him. But another worker said, "We need to go on strike!" Another worker said that everyone should wear red arm bands in protest of the racist murder of Darrick Collins.

Afterwards, in discussions in the parking lot, a black technician thanked a worker for inviting him and "for staying on my ass to make sure I came." One mechanic was disappointed in himself for not "shoving the president's words down his own

throat. It crossed my mind to make a motion to give a thousand dollars to the family since the driver never even thought about money. "He [the president] insulted all of us."

For The Future

As U.S. capitalism declines, it increasingly unleashes racist terror. Workers plan to take this motion to the drivers' union as well. Even though we didn't win the motion, more workers are reading and distributing CHALLENGE. The confidence of newer and older PLP members in the workers and the Party is growing.

Our leaflet, distributed outside and inside bus divisions, declared that these racist, cold-blooded murders by the bosses' death squads are aimed at instilling terror in all workers, to accept passively the bosses' economy of sacrifice and their genocidal wars for oil. It called for revolution to destroy racist capitalism.

Advocating a political strike against a capitalist system that thrives on racist exploitation and mass murder at home and abroad deepens workers' understanding about the nature of the beast we're fighting and the need to destroy it, together with its cops and union misleaders. In this fight, we're going beyond calling for removing Sheriffs from transit security and restoring the Transit Police, as suggested by the union president. Instead we're raising the need for communist revolution to bury our class enemies entirely. ☸

John Brown, Harriet Tubman

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ers attended public meetings, donated money, passed word to their friends and helped harbor fugitive slaves.

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

Join PLP

We invite all workers, soldiers and students who participate in these struggles to join Progressive Labor Party.

Today's supporters of anti-racist struggle understand — just as did the thousands backing Brown and Tubman 150 years ago — that revolutionaries like the raiders then and PLP now are the honest, reliable leaders in struggle. When direct action is required, they know to whom to turn. CHALLENGE constantly reports workers being won to militancy and multi-racial unity in struggles against the racist bosses, hailing those joining our ranks. Step by step, the communist movement will grow and lead the working class to revolution and a new world based on members of our class mutually meeting each other's needs, without racist bosses and their profit system. ☸



Harriet Tubman (far right) with freed slaves

'I really want NATO and U.S. troops to leave....'

[A CHALLENGE reader received this message from a friend in Afghanistan.]

Today there was an explosion in an area in Kabul close to the U.S. embassy, NATO and ISAF (International Security Assistance Force), killing 80 people, not 16 as the media reported. I don't know when they will stop killing innocents. The U.S., NATO and ISAF, the Taliban, the Jihadis (warlords) — they are all killing innocent people. Westerners are committing most of the explosions and killings.

I really want NATO and U.S. troops to leave. If they can't bring security, why are they here?

The election will go to the second round. There will be chaos and, according to the constitution, a state of emergency. There will be a loyal jirga (a nation-wide council of representatives) but I'm afraid that the warlords who are now in power, like Masud, Rabani, Fahim (vice-president and minister of defense), Sayyaf and Dostum will dominate it again.

All those in power, including [president] Karzai, are rich, making money from the situation. They have militias and weapons and are only looking to fill their pockets. (Russia and Iran recently gave money to two warlords who control territory close to the Russian and Iranian borders.) They are criminals. They stole the reconstruction money. In eight years of U.S. occupation, they built no public projects. Even foundation work has not been started!

Who will bring work, education and security? Do you think the Americans

will do this? They have done nothing in the last eight years. And they say they will not leave until 2015.

The military situation is very bad. They have plans to divide Afghanistan like Yugoslavia. But they will not succeed to divide Afghans; we will fight against that.

A friend in Afghanistan

CHALLENGE Comment — PLP supports our friend and the exploited masses in Afghanistan. We are fighting wherever we can against the U.S. rulers' imperialist invasion of that country, which leads to our thoughts about the question our friend poses: "If they [NATO and U.S. troops] can't bring security, why are they here?"

U.S. bosses invaded Afghanistan not to bring its people security but to attempt to control oil and gas pipelines from that region and its strategic military position, in their inter-imperialist rivalry with China and Russia. All of the forces the writer mentions are enemies of the country's workers and farmers. This bosses' battle is what is killing innocent people.

The U.S. ruling class is trying to remain the world's dominant power to be able to exploit the world's working class, not bring it security. In fact, it is these profit motives that are the source of the insecurity that tramples on the aspirations of the masses in Afghanistan and everywhere else, including on the U.S. working class. ☸

Imperialists' Fight Over Pipelines Ignites Wider Wars

The threat to U.S. political and economic domination of the Persian Gulf and Caspian Sea areas today centers on pipelines that U.S. oil companies and rival coalitions of the area's weaker powers are proposing to build to transport oil and gas to lucrative markets in Europe and Asia.

Afghanistan is a vital transit route for U.S. multi-billion-dollar oil and gas exports, going from the energy-rich Caspian Sea on Afghanistan's northern border to the Arabian Sea. Five U.S. oil giants — Unocal, Chevron, Pennzoil, Amoco and Exxon — have invested heavily in the region, said to have the greatest energy potential outside the Middle East. Bush-Cheney, with strong oil company ties, invaded Afghanistan in 2001 to secure a flow of oil and profits. This policy — not the hunt for Al Qaeda — is also the driving force behind Obama's continued military occupation.

Last year's stand-off in Georgia highlighted the potential of Russia-U.S. military confrontation. Behind the clash was the U.S.-backed BTC pipeline, which by-passes Russia and Iran to transport Caspian oil from Baku in Azerbaijan through Tbilisi in Georgia to Ceyhan, the Turkish port on the Mediterranean.

In May, Iran signed a deal to export 150 million cubic meters of gas per day to Pakistan via a proposed Iran-Pakistan pipeline, which Russia and China are planning to fund. (India, initially involved in this project, recently backed out at U.S. insistence, sweetened by a deal giving India U.S. nuclear power technology, although India's decision may not be final.) It would be routed through the Pakistani province of Baluchistan which shares a common border with Iran. China is potentially interested in extending the pipeline to its north-western provinces bordering Pakistan.

All this intensified the conflict between Iran and the U.S. and revealed the dangers the U.S. faces from its so-called allies, Pakistan and India, and from its major competitors, Russia and China. The latter's economic growth depends on a steady supply of oil and gas so it's also making deals with Iran, whose oil reserves rank as the world's fourth largest while its gas reserves are

second to Russia — much of it undeveloped.

The Iran-Pakistan deal revived a proposed rival U.S. pipeline, TAPI (see editorial, CHALLENGE, 10/14), which would transport gas from Turkmenistan through Afghanistan to Pakistan and India. TAPI is funded by the Asian Development Bank whose major investors included U.S. financial institutions and oil companies.

TAPI would go from Turkmenistan through Western Afghanistan, head south across Helmand province — the stronghold of the Taliban and local drug lords — through the neighboring Pakistani province of Baluchistan to the Arabian Sea for shipment to Europe and Asia.

The Afghan government is expected to receive 8% of TAPI's revenue. Given the corruption in Afghanistan, very little of that would benefit the desperately poor Afghan population. There will be more civilian deaths, refugees and devastation in Afghanistan and Pakistan as the U.S. fights to protect the proposed pipeline routes.

In Baluchistan, where nationalist groups are already fighting for greater autonomy from Pakistan's central government, the presence of a Pakistani pipeline could precipitate a break-away. Anger is rising at that government throughout Pakistan's four provinces and federally-administered

tribal areas.

Pakistani Senate Deputy Chairman Jan Muhammad Jamali told the Upper House recently, "Time is running out.... There is no other option left but to grant provincial autonomy to all the provinces, including Baluchistan."

U.S. government circles have also considered a Yugoslavia-style break-up to be advantageous to U.S. domination in the area. Baluchistan — where the CIA has been secretly training and funding the rebels — would become a U.S. client state, creating a buffer between Iran and India. It would help thwart China which is building a refinery in the Baluchistan seaport of Gwadar to be connected to the proposed pipeline taking Iranian oil north to western China.

With challenges and confrontations from enemies and allies, U.S. imperialists will do what they've always done to hang onto their economic and geopolitical power: use more military force.

To fight against these warring imperialists who are sucking the blood out of the masses, a revolutionary party is needed, especially in Afghanistan and Pakistan, to mobilize the working class and the peasants towards the goal of destroying the profit system which is exploiting tens of millions in this region. ☸



Racism Rampant in France

PARIS, October 7 — Brice Hortefeux, France's Interior minister — the "top cop" in charge of the national police and the gendarmes — has been subpoenaed to appear in criminal court on December 17 for making racist insults. The chances that the bosses' courts will condemn a government minister are, of course, microscopically small.

The suit was brought by the Movement Against Racism and for Friendship Among Peoples (MRAP) following the Internet publication of a video in which Hortefeux cracks racist jokes about North Africans. Hortefeux first tried to deny his racism; later he apologized to the French Council of the Muslim Faith.

Government Racism

Before being promoted to Interior minister, Hortefeux was the Immigration minister who (as CHALLENGE reported 10/31/07) launched a racist anti-immigrant rampage. Immigrants were so terrorized that they leapt from windows to escape the police, some leaping to their deaths.

Hortefeux's racism is replicated by the cops he commands. One recent example: on May 9, during a clash between police and youths in the Paris suburb of Villiers-le-Bel, the cops fired tear gas and "flash balls" [rubber bullets] in all directions. Two black men lost their eyes.

Bruno, 31, a truck driver, told an interviewer: "It was a friend's birthday. About a dozen of us were ordering sandwiches.... The riot police...entered the housing project, [and] started firing right away.... I wasn't involved at all... I was eating with my friends, like we often do. And all of a sudden I was hit right

in the head.... I fell down.... My friends...took me to the hospital.... My eye is dead. There's no hope.... They're going to operate to take it out and put in a prosthesis."

A rigorous study of police ID checks published on June 30 and conducted by the CNRS (a research organization financed by the Ministry of Higher Education) shows that the cops stop "Arab-looking people" seven times as often as whites, while blacks are stopped 11.5 times as often.

The Ministry of Higher Education itself spreads racism. Every year, the ministry-run academy of overseas sciences offers a 4,000-euro (US \$5,880) prize for the best book dealing with "the positive aspects of colonization."

Similarly at the Ministry of Education, Serge Bilé and Mathieu Méranville have just published a 160-page book detailing the racism faced by black teachers on the part of the ministry, fellow teachers, parents and pupils.

Bosses' Racism

The bosses' racism here — revealed in a university study published September 9 by the Observatoire des inégalités — shows that, on average, to get a single interview for an accounting job, a person with a Moroccan first and last name must send out 277 job application letters. A person with a French first and last name, with exactly the same qualifications, only has to send out 19 letters before landing a job interview.

According to sociologist Saïd Bouamama, the bosses here try to get all workers to accept this rac-

ism by promoting so-called "positive stereotypes." In a Sept. 29 interview, Bouamama said that "for this system to function correctly, they have to add an ideology that makes this situation less revolting. For example, blacks are supposedly better bouncers because they are 'more diplomatic.' North Africans are supposedly 'naturally good' in the building trades, and Asians are 'painstaking' in the garment industry.... There are supposedly ethnic capacities, or rather qualities. The strategy is to get as many people as possible to accept as self-evident the limitation of blacks or North Africans to a certain type of job."

Racist discrimination in housing, according to a French government study (September 3), shows landlords twice as likely to invite people with a French name to visit an apartment as people with an Arabic or African name, and four times as likely to sign a rental contract if the applicant is white.

Because of this racism, 22% of North African immigrant families live below the poverty line, compared with 6% of the general population.

France is sick with the racism bred by capitalism and imperialism. Racism generates super-profits through the super-exploitation of these groups. Their low wages drag down the wages of all workers. Most importantly, racism prevents the working class from realizing the class unity necessary for communist revolution, which is the only way to eliminate capitalist exploitation, the material basis of racist ideas. That's why communists here and everywhere fight racism and promote the multi-racial unity of the working class. ☸

3 Minutes on Workers' Revolution Panics Bosses' Labor Lackies

"A system that destroys decent jobs doesn't deserve to exist," said a Machinist at a recent Boeing local union meeting. That was too much for the local president.

"Three minutes, brother!" he shouted, invoking a seldom-used rule to cut us off. Eventually he succeeded, but not before we called for demonstrations, strikes and sit-ins against a system that offers us nothing but fascism and war.

Interestingly, the district president Wroblewski hasn't attended our local meeting since PLP's well-received, much discussed Summer Project demonstrations at factory gates. We were protesting the no-strike deal demanded by the company, Democratic and Republican politicians and the bosses' media. "Are you surprised?" asked another machine operator. "He knew we'd string him up if he ever agreed to such a thing after you guys passed out those leaflets at the gates."

But we should have no illusions; the union misleadership is trying desperately to find some kind of accommodation. Two meetings ago, the district president's representative denied that Wroblewski even discussed this issue when he had a private meeting with the new Boeing Commercial Aircraft chief. He then droned on praising Wroblewski for "listening to the company's ideas."

Cutting Through the Rhetoric

"That's the worst non-denial denial I ever heard!" exclaimed an exasperated shop steward at an impromptu post-meeting meeting that discussed how to take the offensive. Now the bosses and their agents are floating code words like arbitration and contract extensions in a poor attempt to camouflage the no-strike regime.

Capitalism's economic and political crisis is forcing the major union mis-leaders to look for new positions in an increasingly warlike world. Their trade union politics demand it.

At IAM (International Association of Machinists) national meetings they spread the illusion that the system is basically sound, that militant rhetoric and electing the right politicians can answer any "temporary" attacks. They contend the system will soon right itself and resume negotiating decent contracts. "It's enough to make you sick," said an honest official after returning from just such a gabfest.

But actually the top union hacks have become overt members of the repressive bosses' state apparatus. The New York AFL-CIO chief now heads the New York Federal Reserve, meeting with bankers from Chase and Goldman (government) Sachs to plot the salvation of the empire. The IAM international president calls for a national (actually fascist) industrial policy and commission in which he will no doubt be a major player.

To expose this charade, the union meeting speaker listed nation-wide examples marking the bosses' real plans for re-industrialization through intensified racist exploitation. These include shutting down Pratt and Whitney aerospace engines in Hartford, Conn., moving the work to low-cost, non-union Georgia; closing unionized G.E. in Arizona to take advantage of cheaper non-union labor in the Southeast; moving work from Republic Doors in Chicago after a historic sit-in; and closing the Stella D'Oro bakery after a courageous 11-month strike and moving the work to a non-union outfit in Ohio.

The list ended with the threat of erecting a new Boeing-787 line in South Carolina after workers there rejected the union. "We can no longer assume that even hard-fought contracts can provide any immunity from the attacks of this sick system," concluded our speaker.

Adding an exclamation point, the company just announced another billion-dollar charge for the new 747 primarily because the crisis has forced airlines to delay orders. This means "thousands of layoffs"

(NY Times, 10/7). So far this year the company has charged \$3.5 billion to production delays. What seemed impossible just a short while ago is now a marked possibility: a federal take-over like GM, trashing our contracts and mounting job cuts.

The right-wing union leaders understood the implications of all this. That's why they risked discarding any illusions of "democracy" to cut us off. Our friends and CHALLENGE readers were aware of the stakes as well. To win this struggle, these co-workers must help bring this developing revolutionary working-class understanding to the vast center in the shops, selling CHALLENGE to their friends and workmates, building class struggle and recruiting communist leaders.

Who Needs Three Minutes?

Unlike the union mis-leaders that must conceal their class-collaboration schemes, we "communists" distain to conceal our views and aims." What Karl Marx said 137 years ago is still true today.

One doesn't need three minutes to state the obvious: capitalism can't meet the needs of workers and must be smashed. As the Communist Manifesto declared, "Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communist Revolution. [We workers] have nothing to lose but [our] chains. [We] have a world to win."

LATE BULLETIN — More auto union sellouts in the works: The "leaders" of the UAW at the Philadelphia Boeing factory (making mostly military helicopters) scheduled to strike October 19, won't call the local out on strike despite the contract expiration.

Meanwhile, the UAW leadership accepted an agreement at Ford freezing wages for new hires and containing a no-strike clause at the end of the contract. It awaits a membership vote. More next issue. ☺

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 media let Katrina die

MinutemanMedia.org, 9/10 — Four years later, corporate media outlets seem to have largely forgotten about Katrina and its survivors, let alone the conversations about race and poverty that were supposed to accompany it. Neither the Washington Post nor the Los Angeles Times ran a single piece on Katrina in the week surrounding the anniversary. ABC and Fox News didn't mention the hurricane or its aftermath once. In the New York Times, readers found only a few articles on Katrina; it mentioned that "fundamental problems" still exist, like high unemployment, and some neighborhoods that seem "barely touched" since four years ago. Race, the elephant in the room, wasn't mentioned a single time.

In addition to the estimated 1 million people still displaced by Katrina, rents in the New Orleans area have increased by 40 percent since the hurricane, and an estimated 11,000 people are currently homeless there. A report also reveals striking racial disparities in the impacts.

Capitalism globalizes toxic waste

NYT, 9/27 — Exporting waste illegally to poor countries has become a vast and growing international business, as companies try to minimize the costs of new environmental laws. Trash is bound for places like China, Indonesia, India and Africa. There, electronic waste and construction debris containing toxic chemicals are often dismantled by children at great cost to their health. Other garbage that is supposed to be recycled according to European

laws may simply be burned or left to rot, polluting air and water.

The temptation to export waste is great because recycling properly at home is expensive: Because of Europe's new environmental laws, it is four times as expensive to incinerate trash in the Netherlands as to put it — illegally — on a boat to China.

"The traffic in waste exports has become enormous."

Jobless recovery, poverty growing

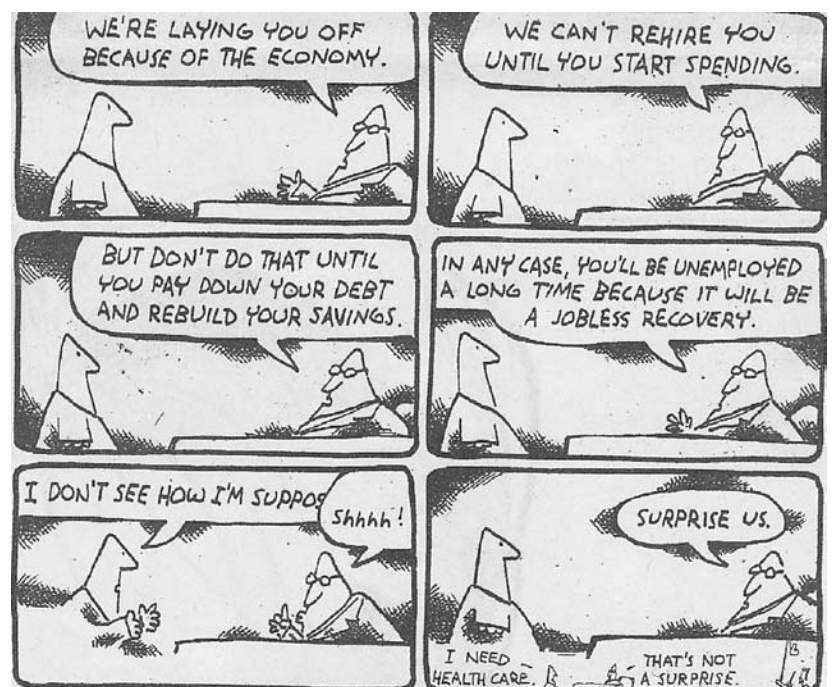
GW, 9/25 — Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke said last week that the recession is "very likely over." Bernanke cautioned that the recovery may not be strong enough in 2010 to generate significant job growth or bring down unemployment. The global recession is expected to push 89 million more people into extreme poverty by the end of 2010, the World Bank said last week.

9/11 outrage outranked by Vietnam

Creators.com, 9/11 — As assaults on a society go, the Sept. 11 attacks, which left 3,000 dead and are sure to be described in this anniversary week as being among the greatest historical outrages, were something less than that, given the world's experience with the ravages of war. The countless Russians and the 6 million Jews killed... come to mind. The 3.4 million Vietnamese, mostly rice farmers, whom Robert McNamara admitted to having helped kill with his carpet-bombing of their country, are a forgotten footnote.

Oil wealth doesn't reach workers

NYT, 9/27 — Destruction, or at least a lack of



progress, has been the fate of most nations unlucky enough to sit on top of large pools of oil today. They have grown corrupted by oil, their leaders relieved of the need to show accountability as long as they can buy off well-connected foreigners and pay for the security and protection they need from their own angry, disenfranchised citizens.

Equatorial Guinea's vicious leader, Teodoro Obiang, plunders virtually every cent of his nation's wealth, aided by Riggs Bank of Washington, which sometimes sent employees to the embassy to pick up bulging suitcases of cash. Locals don't even get the benefit of jobs because the manual labor is supplied by Indians and Filipinos brought in by Marathon Oil. One does manage to find a booming source of local employment: young Guinean girls called "night fighters" because they jostle for a chance to sell their bodies to the oilmen from Texas or Oklahoma. "Más Petróleo = Más Pobreza." So say graffiti on the pipelines.

MORE ITEMS AVAILABLE ONLINE:
www.plp.org

John Brown, Harriet Tubman: Models for Multi-Racial Unity and Action

On October 17, PLP'ers celebrate the raid on Harper's Ferry as a revolutionary action showing today's need for militant, anti-racist, multi-racial, revolutionary struggle!

The southern slaveholders were terrified by the Harper's Ferry raiders' militant, multi-racial unity, a real-life rebuke of their racist stereotyping. One of the raiders' five black freedom fighters, Osborne Anderson, described the atmosphere before-hand:

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

From Childhood, Brown Vowed to Fight Slavery

This trust among whites and blacks did not happen overnight. John Brown's father was a conductor on the Underground Railroad in Ohio. At 12, Brown met a fugitive slave boy and saw the suffering slavery had inflicted on him, influencing Brown forever. He believed blacks and whites were completely equal. He put this knowledge into action daily.

As an adult, Brown moved his family to a farm in North Elba, N.Y. near a black community of former slaves. Blacks were regularly invited to the house for dinner with Brown's family. He addressed them as "Mr." or "Mrs.," sharply contrasting with the era's racist mores (true even among many slavery opponents).

Preparing for the raid, Brown turned to both black and white abolitionists. In April 1858, while gathering money, arms and volunteers in Canada, he visited Harriet Tubman. She was well-known to the black fugitive slave community there, having personally guided many to freedom. Tubman supported his plans, urging him to set July 4, 1858, for the raid and promising to bring volunteers. They agreed to communicate through their mutual friend Frederick Douglass, black abolitionist and former slave.

Tubman Single-handedly Freed 300 Slaves

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

Over the following 11 years, with a bounty on her head, Tubman made approximately 13 trips south and guided an estimated 300 slaves to freedom in Canada. This resolute, daring revolutionary declared, "I never ran my train off the tracks and I never lost a passenger."

Tubman warmly endorsed Brown's armed struggles in Kansas against the pro-slavery gangs. Brown, in turn, knew Tubman's courage, militancy, and knowledge of the land and Underground Railroad network, and felt Tubman would be invaluable in executing their plans to free the enslaved by any means necessary. He always addressed her as "General Tubman." Both believed in direct action

and armed violence to end slavery.

Tubman became ill and could not bring her forces to Harper's Ferry, but her work inspired the rest of the raiders. Tubman's example, like that of Osborne Anderson and the other black raiders, discredited the image of black people as passive victims, terrifying the southern slave-owners and politicians, and inspired the abolitionist movement.

Black Rebels Petrified Slave-owners

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

Today the "outside agitators" are PLP communists, fighting to abolish racist capitalism. The bosses assure us that the impoverished working class is too ground down, too alienated to fight back col-

gling over their differences.

Today, U.S. capitalism has created its own contradiction. Workers still often live in neighborhoods separated by "race" but many are integrated within their workplaces and schools. The bosses try to divide us there as well, with racist job classifications and different types of bourgeois culture to keep workers apart (e.g., soul "versus" country music). Nevertheless, workers rub shoulders every day. Class-conscious workers in PLP must develop these acquaintances into friendships and unbreakable bonds in struggle.

Class Struggle Trumps Racism

As in Tubman and Brown's time, racism permeates society. But rebellions and strikes reveal multi-racial unity and struggle against the bosses. At the Smithfield Ham Factory in Tarheel, NC, for example, a 15-year unionization fight witnessed intense intimidation from the bosses to scare workers from signing union cards. But by organizing support from grocery workers from far and wide, Smithfield workers felt part of a larger community.

When the bosses got immigration agents to raid the plant, targeting Latino workers for deportation, the workers saw through this divisive trick and, in November 2006, 500 marched out in a two-day strike protesting this raid, forcing the company to re-hire all the fired immigrant workers!

In the Bronx, NY, the Stella D'Oro workers struck for 11 months. These immigrant workers from across the world, men and women, overcame differences and stuck together. Not one worker crossed the picket line! PLP organized friends, comrades, teachers and students onto the picket lines, bringing solidarity and communist leadership. PLP members steadfastly stood in solidarity with the strikers via donations, rallies and marches, and supported their fight against plant closure.

John Brown's raid and Harriet Tubman's courage in freeing 300 slaves along the Underground Railroad teach us many lessons. Militancy was foremost in their thinking. Tubman declared she would never return to being a slave, that she would rather die fighting. Brown, after fighting in Kansas, realized that only bloodshed could end slavery. Many workers agreed with them, especially after the 1857 Dred Scott decision legalizing slavery nation-wide.

Multi-racial unity is essential in any fight. Black workers escaping from enslavement received needed help from white abolitionists to reach the North. Thousands of workers, black and white, helped escaping slaves along their journeys and defended them when attacked by slave-catchers. These work-

continued on p. 5



lectively, saying workers hate communism. Yet they organize cops, plant security, the Minutemen, black nationalists and sellout union "leaders" to try to keep communists out, and instantly fire them when they're discovered in a factory. Why are they afraid if the working class is supposed to be so passive?

Today, uniting to fight the mutual class enemy is one of the main ways people of different backgrounds are able to overcome the "natural" segregation capitalist society promotes. Brown and Tubman demonstrated that racist and nationalist ideas cannot be overcome primarily inside one's head. It requires material change in the way one lives. Among the black and militant white abolitionists, multi-racial unity developed over years of working together, getting to know each other while strug-

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