

# CHALLENGE



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## Battles Over California School Cuts Show:

# Worker-Student Alliance is Growing

**BERKELEY, CA, November 20** — Early today, several hundred University of California-Berkeley (UCB) students and workers fought baton-swinging cops when the former rushed to campus to support a lecture-hall occupation and to protest fee hikes and “crisis cuts.” Despite heavy police presence, there were valiant attempts to hold the line at the barricades. The alliance of workers and students was marked by 90% of the ironworkers’ union honoring the picketing lines, disrupting construction. Solidarity greetings came from Pakistan, Canada and Britain.

“Today 3,800 students were unable to attend class in Wheeler Hall,” grumbled UCB Chancellor Burgeneu in a campus-wide letter. But constructive education DID occur, outside the classroom. On the 18th, a three-day system-wide Strike and Call to Action set the militant tone, responding to mounting attacks on workers and students by the University of California Board of Regents — the UC bosses — amid the intensifying capitalist crisis.

A worker-student coalition group organized the Strike and Call to Action, timed to coincide with the UC bosses’ meeting on the 18th at UCLA (see page 3). They were set to approve a 32% tuition increase over and above an earlier 10% hike.

By this time, attacks on students and workers were already being felt — cutbacks, furloughs and layoffs. UCB custodians were overworked following 38 layoffs. Now 900 more service workers await pink slips throughout the UC system. Staff and faculty were hit by a 4-10% pay cut. Many lecturers won’t have jobs next semester.

Students face higher tuition — a 90% rise from just six years earlier — even larger classes, slashed resources, and messed-up premises. The cauldron bubbled. The UC clerical workers’ union — unable to gain any favorable contract — supported by another campus union, the Coalition of University Employees, together with students, staff and faculty,

called for the system-wide strike from November 18 to 20.

On the 18th, the strike’s first day, pickets were out and rallying on campus. When news reached the rally of the 32% tuition hike being approved, and of a tazing incident at UCLA, the nearly-400 people jeered. Energetic speeches followed. A student noted that the cuts and hikes were inherently racist, as they will hit blacks and Latinos disproportionately hard, effectively eliminating working-class students from “this great university.” Amid this anger, political contradictions surfaced, alarmingly from some UCB professors.

Prof. Ananya Roy who teaches a course on global poverty, noted growing inequality in the world, but then said

that “we need not look for radical instruments of [wealth] redistribution” and promoted an approach of institutional reform-lite. She touted warhawk Obama’s awesomeness as a “community organizer, which you all now are!”

Anthropology Prof. Laura Nader (Ralph’s sister) would solve the crisis cuts by eliminating subsidies to campus athletics. The imperialist war (and war budget) and the current bloody crisis of capitalism (with slashed social serv-

ices, crappy health care, growing unemployment) were not connected to State budget cuts. Instead, mismanagement, greed or incompetence were blamed, dismissing systemic faults.

All their “solutions” to the crisis tells the working class to either “adapt” to the attacks or await rescue by “heroic” politicians. This could easily open the door to fascist oppression. Prof. Lakoff says “we” have a “dysfunctional system of government.” “forgetting” that capitalist government is supposed to work for the bosses, on the backs of workers. These racist budget cuts are, in reality, U.S. capitalist cuts.

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# Obama Asia Trip Flops; U.S.-China Conflict Sharpens

Obama's recent China visit generally disappointed his U.S. capitalist masters — who all U.S. presidents serve — and underscored mounting tensions between the rival imperialist powers. Obama's shortcomings stem from the stubborn fact that China's capitalist rulers have interests directly opposed to their U.S. counterparts. China's push to build a worldwide empire puts it on a collision course with U.S. imperialism.

Today the conflict plays out mainly on the economic front. But China's rulers are hell-bent on building a military, especially a navy, to challenge the U.S. war machine.

## Failures Mount

"The trip wasn't all that we had hoped it would be," lamented the rulers' New York Times (11/21/09).

- Obama failed to get Chinese bosses to revalue their currency and thereby help reduce the U.S. \$268-billion trade deficit with China.
- Obama failed to win a climate change accord limiting pollution which would effectively restrain China's phenomenal industrial growth.
- Obama failed to get the Chinese to agree to a tougher stance against anti-U.S. nuclear nations North Korea and Iran, both of whom are unpredictable.
- Obama failed even to mention "human rights," phony liberal code words for curbing the rise of Chinese influence from Sudan to Zimbabwe to Burma.

## Raging Worldwide Rivalry Can Only Heat Up Trade War Today, Shooting War Down The Road

With China thirsting for more and more energy, the top Chinese objective is to end U.S. control of Mid-East oil and gas and their delivery routes. China's support for Iran involves far more than the oil and gas Iran itself provides. Nuclear arms would help create the "regional superpower" Iran's ayatollahs vow to become, threatening U.S. dominance of oil treasure troves Saudi Arabia and Iraq. When China's coming blue-water navy finally sails into the ports of nuked-up ally Iran, U.S. forces will face an enemy vastly more fearsome than Saddam Hussein, al Qaeda or the Taliban.

The U.S. and China are already facing off over Iraqi crude. To disguise the obvious but inconvenient truth that it's a war for oil, the U.S.-directed puppet regime in Baghdad has opened bidding on its oilfields to "all comers," not just the U.S. invaders. This summer China grabbed a big share of rights to Iraq's giant Rumalia field, potentially the world's second largest, as junior partner to British Petroleum. (By no coincidence, Rumalia lies in Iraq's south, near Basra, where British troops are based.)

Exxon Mobil countered China's move by securing another big field, West Qurna, after U.S. Vice-President Joe Biden's and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's intense "discussions" with the Iraqi administration. "Energy Intelligence," an authoritative industry newsletter, warns (11/20/09), "Look for an aggressive approach by U.S. firms during Iraq's second bid round on December 11-12. If that auction is dominated by, say, the Chinese, Washington may reconsider its tactful approach to energy security." Such reconsideration may require another "surge" beyond the more than 130,000 troops and 70,000 Blackwater-type mercenaries the U.S. has in Iraq.

## U.S.-China Battle For Strategic Afghan Stakes, Higher Than Rulers Let On

In Afghanistan, the stakes are gas pipelines and strategic raw materials. China just completed the first phase of its gas line from Turkmenistan, by-passing Afghan soil. Meanwhile, the competing, U.S.-funded Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India pipeline remains unbuilt. In addition, without sending a single soldier, China has sunk \$3.5 billion into a copper mine project in Afghanistan's Aynak region.

Copper has tremendous importance in inter-imperialist rivalry. Try to make a computer or a bullet or an aircraft carrier without it. McClatchy Newspapers report (3/08/09): "The Aynak deal will help position [China] to compete for more projects in Afghanistan, where three tectonic plates converge. [The presence of these tectonic plates both help bring molten material to the surface as well as bury organic matter to form fossil fuels and unearth buried reservoirs, making them accessible to mining

these valuable minerals.] The region is thought to hold some of the world's last major untapped deposits of iron, copper, gold, uranium, precious gems and other raw materials."

Now U.S. rulers are trying to scrap the Aynak region copper mine pact, claiming, "The Afghan minister of mines accepted a roughly \$30 million bribe to award the country's largest development project to a Chinese mining firm." (Washington Post, 11/18) What hypocrisy! While killing thousands of civilians, U.S. rulers assert their preferred means of coercing Afghans is morally better than bribery.

The fight extends to Africa, where the Pentagon recently established a new Africa Command along the lines of its Central Command that oversees the Iraq and Afghan wars. According to the Council on Foreign Relations (5/6/07), a policy-setting imperialist think-tank closely tied to Exxon Mobil and J.P. Morgan Chase, "[the] command's creation was motivated by...specific concerns: China and oil. With Soviet influence gone and France's traditional presence much diminished, China has poured money into the continent in recent years as it jockeys for access to natural resources. And the United States is projected to import at least 25 percent of its oil from Africa by 2015."

## U.S. Racism Exposes Hypocrisy On 'Human Rights'

Recent U.S. action against Somali pirates disguises far larger U.S. anti-China interventions on the continent in the future. So does billionaire Rockefeller ally George Soros's concerted organization of public opinion against China's "human rights" abuses in resource-rich Darfur and Zimbabwe. U.S. rulers' hypocrisy on "human rights" is exposed by their maintenance of widespread racism against black, Latino, Asian and Native American workers which nets them hundreds of billions in super-profits and is used to divide and weaken the working class.

Currently, U.S. rulers deal with China's menace by relying on China's two-trillion-dollar holdings to keep the U.S. economy afloat through purchases of Treasury bonds. They use the threat of withdrawing U.S. government backing for these T-bills, which would sharply reduce their value. And the resulting availability of cheap Chinese goods has long served the bosses, placating U.S. workers with lower-priced goods, even as better-paid U.S. manufacturing jobs go East to low-paid workers in China and South to poverty wages in Latin America.

But ultimately, two stark realities are becoming clear: The U.S.-China capitalist clash cannot be resolved peacefully. Though we can't predict its specific outbreak, a U.S.-China clash is inevitable. Mid-East oil is an inevitable flash point, but instability in potential powder kegs like North Korea, Iran or the Taiwan Strait could hasten hostilities. Obama or a successor must someday replace a China-accommodating U.S. assault on jobs and pay with an even more drastic fascist wartime economy.

We must link the struggles of industrial workers like the Stella D'Oro strike, the job fight at Boeing and the D.C. and NYC transit workers and a campaign against mass racist unemployment — along with the worker-student battles against the budget cuts — to opposition to U.S. imperialist wars which spawn the deepening attacks on workers, students and soldiers.

We must rebuild an anti-imperialist war movement with a revolutionary, communist outlook through a PLP-led communist international. Only communism can eliminate the hell of capitalism by wiping out the bosses and their profit system and enabling the working class, which produces all value, to reap the benefits of an anti-racist, anti-sexist society. ☺

## 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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**CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed because of PLP's criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a "following" around any particular individual, especially given the fact that, while an article may be written by one person, the final version is the result of collective discussion and criticism. In fact, many times this collective discussion precedes an individual's writing an article.**

# Tuition Hike, Layoffs Spark: UCLA Students', Workers' Battle with Cops, Regents Cuts

**LOS ANGELES, CA, November 23** — Several thousand UCLA students and workers protested, marched and occupied buildings in attempting to disrupt the University of California (UC) regents' meeting here to hike tuition 32%. On the first day, several hundred students skirmished with the racist police who formed a barricade outside Covell Commons, site of the regents' meeting. Students momentarily broke through the police barricade before the cops, in full riot gear, used their batons and taser guns to regain their ground. Inside the meeting, over a dozen students disrupting it were arrested.

The next day, several hundred students forced their way into Covell Commons before the cops blocked them from moving into the meeting room. In the afternoon, despite student government opposition, about a thousand students marched across campus and then took the streets, catching the police unprepared.

When the regents had concluded their meeting, students blocked the Covell Commons' exits and trapped the regents inside for several hours. Eventually, the cops escorted the regents out. Students organized similar actions on other UC campuses throughout the week (see front page).

The regents blamed California's budget shortfall for simultaneously cutting university spending and raising tuition. Of course, in representing their U.S. bosses, they ignore the billions the state spends on the fascist prison system and the hundreds of billions the federal government spends on imperialist wars for the control of oil in Iraq and Afghanistan. These student protests occur in the context of yet another example of capitalism's failure to meet the needs of students and workers. These cuts

are racist to the core. The tuition increases and cuts in financial aid will attack black and Latino students the most. While more black and Latino students are pushed out of higher education, the racist California prison system is on pace to spend more on prisons than it does on higher education by 2012!

The evening of the first day, students held a public forum and discussed the connection between racism, imperialist war and the cutbacks to education. One student stressed that this struggle must be understood as part of a longer-term struggle for communist revolution. Both at this event and during the marches and rallies the next day, PL'ers distributed hundreds of communist leaflets and CHALLENGES to students and workers. They called for unity for communist revolution to get rid of the capitalist system that cuts jobs, raises tuition, and uses racist terror to wage imperialist war and bail out banks. Many angry protesters talked to the PL'ers about the cuts, the crisis and the war budget and had a lot of good questions about communism. Although students did not prevent



the tuition hike, it was an important experience in which we learned how to organize ourselves and fight together, a valuable lesson for future struggles. Finally, about 30 students occupied a building in a different area of the campus to support the actions outside the regents' meeting.

The student- and campus-worker-led protests showed that most are willing to fight, even defying racist cops. The task now is to turn this militancy and anger into revolutionary communist class consciousness. ✪

## Hundreds Rally vs. Cook County Racist Health Cuts



**CHICAGO, IL, Nov. 4** — Today about 300 workers, patients and members of community organizations rallied at Stroger Hospital to protest the latest round of deadly racist cutbacks. While the union, SEIU, told workers there would be no layoffs, hundreds of layoff slips were passed out, more clinics are set to close and Oak Forrest and Providence Hospitals will become little more than abandoned buildings. We distributed all 500 of our PLP County CHALLENGE shop papers and many CHALLENGES.

This is the second round of cuts since the blitz-

krieg of 2007 which closed half of the County clinics that served more than one million uninsured workers who live in Cook County and cost over 2,000 jobs. With the economic crash since then, the number of uninsured and those killed and injured by these cuts has skyrocketed. These cuts are especially racist in that 82% of those served by the County health system are black and Latino. This is the reality on the ground, in Obama's adopted back yard, while millionaire politicians and lobbyists carry on the hollow debate over "national health care" in the White House and the halls of Congress.

PLP mobilized our political friends in the unions and community groups, uniting patients and health-care workers to fight against the cuts. We had to battle the racist governing board and the union hacks who serve them. While we were the driving force behind the rally, SEIU moved quickly to take it over, hoping everyone had forgotten their long history of complicity with the 2007 cuts. They continue the same bankrupt tactics of lobbying and backing one politician over another, holding competing events with other unions and misleading our brothers and sisters into a future of racist poverty and wars. The union leaders are well aware of PLP and

the mass respect we have among County workers and professionals. The nurses' union left the coalition because of the mass influence of PLP, while some nurses stayed. This is an example of fighting for political leadership in the mass movement and winning rank-and-file workers away from the misleaders. This increases the potential to fight these racist cuts and to build membership in PLP.

Many workers still have faith in the pro-capitalist unions, even as we've exposed union participation in dismantling the County health system. The demonstration was dominated by SEIU union leadership, but the workers called on other forces to speak for them. One young member of a community group gave a militant anti-racist speech, connecting the racist health care cuts to the cuts in public services generally and emphasizing the need to organize more militant actions in the future.

This fight is messy, with enemies and friends tangled up in the mass organizations. We have to sharpen the struggle inside the unions to fight back. We must win our CHALLENGE readers and friends to join PLP and fight for communist revolution because the racist profit system can never meet our needs. If we can win new PLP members, CHALLENGE readers and distributors, we will have won a significant victory. We plan to bring out more workers, youth and professionals and start a PLP study group. With lots of hard work we can sharpen the class struggle and keep building a fighting Party. ✪

# Profit-Driven Global Warming Floods W. Africa with Death

Year after year our class brothers and sisters in West Africa suffer massively from late summer flooding. Homes are under water, hundreds of people drown, and most workers are too impoverished to be able to escape. No affluent West Africans are affected by the flooding at all, only workers.

Imperialism, whether from the U.S., France, or other European countries, keeps oppressive "leaders" in charge of various countries, including Burkina Faso, Senegal, Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Niger, among others. These puppets carry out the racist designs of their capitalist masters in exchange for arms that will keep them in power and millions of dollars in their personal coffers. This system allows the imperialists (U.S., China, EU, etc.) free rein to exploit the labor of the workers and the natural resources of the region.

This past summer rain in West Africa was the most severe in over 90 years. The general increase in the severity of weather is part of the pattern set by global warming, caused by burning oil, coal, and natural gas. These fossil fuels release greenhouse gasses (GHGs), mainly carbon dioxide, that trap heat in the atmosphere and warm the planet year after year. The effects are seen in ever more violent weather events (such as Katrina) that caused massive suffering from flooding in New Orleans in 2005.

In response to flooding in Senegal, the government built 150 homes outside the flood plain, but more than a quarter of a million workers have been the victims of the flooding! The token government effort is just for show. African "leaders" are just as vicious and oppressive as their counterparts in the imperialist countries, acting as proxy jailers and slave-drivers for world capitalists.

And even as these unnatural disasters take place in West Africa, our brothers

and sisters in the U.S. southeast are also suffering from similar flooding. Most of Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia, and parts of Louisiana, Arkansas, and Tennessee have seen extreme amounts of rain recently, with many towns and homes under water. Working-class people lucky enough not to drown lose their entire possessions, driving them even deeper into poverty. Nor can any significant relief be expected from the federal or state governments.

Again, the increased frequency of these disastrous events, if not any particular single event, can be laid directly at the door of capitalist-caused global warming. They have no more concern for the planet's future than they have for the health of the working class! They try to disguise these capitalist disasters as "natural disasters" but make no mistake — it will take communist revolution for our class to correct the gross damage to our planet done by the capitalist system.

Only when masses of workers gain power can production be reorganized to end global warming. Then workers' safety, not capitalists' profits, will be the only response to "natural" disasters. PLP fights to build this communist movement among workers and their allies worldwide. ✪



# Campus Teach-in Hits Afghan War and Budget Cuts

**SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, November 12** — About 75 people, including Party members, friends and CHALLENGE readers, attended a teach-in about the war in Afghanistan. The event also focused on how war spending contributes to the huge budget cuts in the California State University (CSU) system. Several speakers discussed the history of Afghanistan, emphasizing U.S. attempts to negotiate for pipelines with the Taliban in 1998 and 2001, and the U.S. attack on Afghanistan after the pipeline deals failed. Another speaker argued that the Afghan war is not about terrorism. The fighting over specific pipelines and proposed pipeline routes make clear that the U.S. wants to control Afghanistan and Pakistan to challenge Russia and China for control of Central Asia's oil and gas.

Figures showed that the enormous U.S. military spending (\$772 billion in 2009) overshadows all other U.S. capitalist priorities and had begun causing cuts in federal aid to states years before the current economic crisis. One speaker called on the audience to join a movement of students, state workers and the many workers' families that are hurt by the cuts to strike against the system.

The racist nature of the cutbacks was also explained. The combined effect of admitting fewer students, charging higher fees and setting stiffer admission standards is bound to reduce the number of black and Latino students in the CSU system, the main place that working-class students can afford to go for a four-year college degree in California. Cuts in medical care for children will also have the biggest effect on black and Latino families.

Discussion after the presentations centered on two questions. Do workers and students benefit when the U.S. fights to control oil and gas? Most who spoke answered "No," while others said killing for oil is wrong, regardless of who benefits. Others raised the question of whether the wars and cutbacks can be stopped without getting rid of capitalism. Although there was no consensus on this question, the serious discussion of this issue showed that economic crisis, cutbacks and imperialist war do put the capitalist system on trial, and more students and teachers are pronouncing it guilty. For those of us in and around the Progressive Labor Party, we hope the next step for our friends will be to move from condemning capitalism to openly fighting for communist revolution. ✪

# Budget-Cut Fight-back Opens Door to PLP's Politics

**LOS ANGELES, November 23** — Community college students at a statewide conference held a march and mock-funeral for public colleges last weekend, protesting huge budget cuts and possible fee hikes that hit black, Latino and immigrant students the hardest.

A student comrade and several friends passed out hundreds of copies of a leaflet titled "Let's Bury CAPITALISM." It exposed the vast expenditures for imperialist war, corporate tax breaks, and prisons, and called on students to ally with workers who are fighting back against give-back contracts and killer cops. "We are told to spin our wheels like hamsters in a cage, trying to reform a system that is racist and rotten to the core," the leaflet said, "We need to get off that treadmill and ally with workers and soldiers in a revolutionary movement to put capitalism into a long-deserved grave."

For two of the students, it was the first time they'd ever publicly put forward a revolutionary political line. They were pleased that almost everyone took the leaflet. "We'll talk to more people about it later," the comrade reported, adding that they would distribute the leftover leaflets on their own campus.

In another city, a union-funded student group

held a candle-light vigil in solidarity with the statewide action. Thirty-five students waved signs, marched back and forth across the street, and chanted enthusiastically. Still, a CHALLENGE reader who is active in the group was discouraged, "I am really tired of all these rallies that don't get us anything." She said, "The legislators don't even want to listen to us so why are we wasting our time?" A PLP comrade responded, "Other students feel the way you do, and we're here to win them to revolution."

Some students echoed their union mentors. They chanted, "we are the students, the mighty mighty students." So we started a conversation about why a worker-student-soldier alliance would be much more powerful than students alone, an idea the union had never raised with them.

A louder and more popular chant was "They say cut back, we say FIGHT BACK." Then two of us introduced "No cuts, no war, the cuts are for the war." Until then, nobody had mentioned the war, but the whole group picked it up and later started it again.

So we took it a step further and suggested: "Budget cuts are no solution, what we need is revolution!" Everyone joined in that one, too. This

response encouraged the CHALLENGE reader to invite two other students to a PLP forum the next day. Every activity — from legislative visits to rallies like this one — provides an opportunity to raise and fight for communist ideas.

The statewide organization voted to organize its annual "March in March" in the state capital, so the struggle will continue. Unfortunately, it defeated a proposal to join four-year college and university students in a one-day strike.

Reform leaders of the unions and student governments have succeeded in pitting students against each other and against workers. There is even a rumor that when more budget cuts come in January we'll be told that, "It's money for colleges, or money for families on welfare." What a vicious, racist lie!

As communists, we fight for the interests of the working class as a whole. We have started to raise the idea of organizing for a statewide general strike of public-sector workers and students against this system that can't and won't meet the needs of our class. Our PLP study group plans to discuss how we can most effectively use CHALLENGE to build this struggle. ✪

## British Bosses: Either Party Will Make Workers Pay for Crisis

**LONDON, November 19** — The ruling class here does not simply intend to make workers pay for the economic crisis. It aims to make the social take-aways permanent. In a November 9 BBC Radio broadcast, "Analysis: Death to the Deficit!," host Frances Cairncross revealed that after the next general elections — to be held by June 3, 2010 — government budget cuts will be far more than the 9% range mentioned in recently-leaked Treasury documents; "it could be as much as 15%, or even 20%."

According to the policy officer at Unison, the largest public service union, "It's unimaginable. It would mean closing libraries, sacking teachers, closing hospitals."

But this "unimaginable" return to the England of Charles Dickens is exactly the bosses' goal. The government budget deficit is scheduled to peak at 12% of Gross Domestic Product in 2010, or £180 billion (\$270 billion). Cairncross said the financial markets have agreed to lend the £180 billion "because they are confident that whichever government is in power next year, it will take speedy steps to change things;" i.e., to cut the budget and prop up the value of the pound.

This is a frank admission that "democracy" is just a fig-leaf on a capitalist dictatorship. It doesn't matter which party is elected, "cuts in public spending are inevitable. And these will be no ordinary cuts. They'll be deeper and last longer than most politicians have yet dared to admit," reports Cairncross.

"Ahead lies...the reduction in services that people value,...cuts on an unprecedented scale. This is no transient crisis. The Treasury will be rolling back public spending for the next decade."

No doubt these cuts are racist since they will disproportionately come down on the backs of millions of lower-income black and immigrant workers.

The destruction of the "welfare state" will be accompanied by tax increases to pay off the debt. Cairncross said that multinational corporations will avoid paying higher taxes by blackmailing the British government: "Globalization limits our autonomy.... If we become a high-tax country for companies, fewer of them will invest here."

Consequently, says Tony Travis of the London School of Economics, "the only way you can raise substantial amounts of money from the UK tax system...is if most people pay."

Fewer services and higher taxes, and no "democratic" say in the matter — that's what workers here, indeed workers everywhere, can expect from capitalism. But while hell on earth is inevitable under capitalism, this profit system is not inevitable. The alternative is to organize for communist revolution and eliminate capitalist economic crises and exploitation once and for all. ☸

## France: Immigrants' Sit-downs Solid; General Strike Looms

**PARIS, November 20** — Teachers, postal and bank workers were set to strike here on November 24, with joint demonstrations to be held in many cities. Meanwhile, as of November 11, 5,000 rank-and-file undocumented workers, fighting for immigrant rights, have struck 1,800 companies — many of them sit-down strikes — in 38 of France's 100 departments (administrative units about the size of a county).

The potential exists for a unified movement of citizen and immigrant workers, alongside uniting with super-exploited striking workers in Guadeloupe (see article below). This could become a huge anti-racist, internationalist action if the rank and file could overcome the misleadership of the union chiefs (see below).

Postal workers are protesting the government decision to transform the postal service into a "public company," a first step to privatizing its most lucrative activities. Three unions are calling for an unlimited strike; two for a 24-hour strike.

Teachers are holding a one-day strike against 10,000 job-cuts slated for 2010, which follows the loss of 30,000 jobs in 2008-2009. These attacks have led to overcrowded classes, obligatory overtime and the hiring of temporary teachers.

Five unions are calling strikes for pay hikes against the Société Générale and HSBC banks. One trade union, SUD-banques, has called for a nation-wide industry-wide strike.

Finally, the SUD-Rail railway workers union has called on the other rail unions to strike on November 24 to reinforce ongoing local rail walkouts over local conditions. So far, however, the other unions have refused.

### International Support Grows for Immigrant Workers' Strikes

On November 19, trade unionists from Benin, Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Sen-

egal, meeting in Dakar, sent a message of support and called on their governments to pressure the French government to "legalize" the undocumented workers by giving them residence and work permits. Many of the undocumented workers are of African origin.

Neither the government nor the bosses have moved an inch to meet their demand for across-the-board "legalization." Instead, they've obtained court orders to expel the undocumented workers from company premises. Unions and immigrant rights associations which are supporting the immigrant strikers are seeking a ruling against these evictions.

Messages and donations for the support of, and solidarity with, the striking undocumented workers can be sent to:

Raymond Chauveau  
Union Locale CGT Massy  
14, Chemin Femmes  
91300 Massy, France

### Unity a Must

The potential to unite these struggles and generate a strike wave runs counter to the union misleaders who only want to let the citizen workers blow off steam while appearing to justify their own salaries. Last spring's series of symbolic 24-hour strikes at six-week intervals petered out and won nothing, discouraging many workers.

The action of the undocumented workers can inspire all workers. Clearly, workers here need to develop communist leadership to champion unity and a long-term perspective. That could transform these piecemeal strikes into schools for communism that would set workers here on the road to revolution, the only real answer to the evils of capitalist society. ☸

## Guadeloupe: Workers' Battles Erupt Again; is Revolution on Agenda?

**POINTE-A-PITRE, GUADELOUPE, Nov. 18** — Is revolution on the agenda in this French overseas territory?

The demands put forward during the 44-day general strike last spring (see CHALLENGE, 3/11) remain unsatisfied. These include measures to fight unemployment (youth have a 60% jobless rate), job insecurity, land speculation and pollution; training for youth; help for the aged and handicapped; and a definitive end to profiteering and high prices.

Now the Alliance Against Profiteering (LKP), including the trade unions, have called for a two-day general strike on November 24-25 to force the French government and the local bosses to respect the Bino Accord which ended the last general strike. Strike demands include total application of the Bino Accord; an end to all layoffs; new negotiations on wages, job training and working conditions; job protection in the oil and other industries; and protection and development of agriculture, among other demands.

Meanwhile, activists and leaders of the spring strike have been fired for their part in it. Barely half of the 50,000 workers have obtained the promised 200-euro net monthly wage increase, agreed to in exchange for ending that strike. And the French government will end its financial supports, cutting

monthly wages 50 to 100 euros from April 2010 to 2012.

In addition, the Total oil corporation is demanding the government pay it 110 million euros for "losses" due to a gas price freeze resulting from the last strike. Now the government would force the workers to pay for this in a 22 euro-cents per gallon (33US¢) price hike.

The LKP scheduled a week of meetings to organize a "revolutionary" response to the French government. French president Nicolas Sarkozy announced new measures to deal with the political crisis in the French overseas territories and departments. The struggle against capitalist and imperialist profiteering on this Caribbean island has appeared to have entered a new stage.

The LKP denounced Sarkozy's decision to replace local authorities with specialized institutes and "a super-powerful prefect" answerable directly to him. They are to impose a free-trade market economy and defend profiteering, notably by the island's hotel, import and retail trade bosses, intensifying the racist colonial exploitation of this island's workers.

The LKP also denounced the French rulers' racist decision to reinforce the teaching of the French

language and culture as an attempt to annihilate "all mental and cultural development based on our native language, culture and environment."

The struggle, says the LKP, has prompted "the idea of a possible...society free of capitalist and colonialist profiteering." The LKP "reaffirms that when the legitimacy of the ballot box has not been able to deal with the concerns of the broad masses due to pure disregard and political blindness, the legitimacy of the street cannot be forbidden from expressing itself."

But unfortunately the LKP's analysis contains a fatal flaw: It distinguishes between "bad bosses," who support French colonialism, and "good bosses" who are "patriotic." Indeed, the LKP demands "a measure to organize and protect a real technical, financial and economic space for Guadeloupe entrepreneurs."

True revolution can only be defined in class terms: the working class — which produces all value — destroying the old ruling class, all bosses, who rob the working class of most of that value and is the source of the bosses' profits. This can happen only through a communist revolution led by a revolutionary communist party, and this is what workers in Guadeloupe need. ☸

# LETTERS



## Liberals' 'Solution' to Job Cuts: Wage-Cuts!

Following up on your unemployment article (CHALLENGE, 11/25), it's interesting how low the liberal "solution" to the capitalist-produced crisis of mass racist unemployment can sink. NY Times columnist Paul Krugman suggests (11/13) that the U.S. adopt the German policy to reduce joblessness: "a short-time work scheme" which "provides subsidies to employers who reduce workers' hours rather than laying them off" = less hours, less pay.

So, instead of, say, laying off half of a 1,000-person workforce, maintain all 1,000 workers' jobs by cutting their pay in half, thereby maintaining the bosses' profit. On top of which the boss gets a subsidy — still more profit — for doing that!

What about the bosses "subsidizing" the workers by raising their hourly pay when cutting their hours, thus maintaining their wages without laying anyone off? But naturally that would run counter to capitalism's bible: maximum profits, a thought that would never enter the minds of these liberal economists.

Just one more reason to dump the profit system with a communist revolution in which everyone would work and share the value they produce, eliminating the bosses and their profits.

*Brooklyn Comrade*

## 'Lesson Plan' on Rape and Sexist Ideology

I would like to share some experiences we've had fighting sexism here in the Bay Area of California. After a recent gang rape that took place nearby in Richmond, we heard of many contradictory reactions as students talked among themselves: many argued that it just wasn't right; they saw it in personal terms "it might be me, my sister\mother\cousin; some argued that the young woman "really brought it on herself." Some criticized the "bystanders" while others said "no snitching."

A Richmond teacher and others, including PLP members, talked during the week about effective ways to influence young people. We felt compelled to react but unsure of exactly how. We discussed the contradiction in this situation: there can be no tolerance for rape and sexism by individuals but yet we did not want to be part of the "lynch-mob" mentality represented in the media, calling for "trial as an adult, life sentences for the monsters." We can see sexism and constant disrespect for women in capitalist culture all around us: the use of sex to sell commodities, attacks on single, usually black and Latina mothers, "soft porn" fashion, most popular music, and the free labor that is demanded of women in child-rearing and elder care, etc. These material conditions have produced a change in some young people to the point of dehumanizing women. We wanted to point out the interplay between the individual and society without making an excuse for brutal and sexist behavior.

We joined a rally of about 200 people organized by two women who had survived teen-age rape themselves; the majority of the participating organizations were non-profit youth groups and women's groups focused on sexism, in general, and rape, in particular. The main point of unity in the march was "Rape is never the victim's fault" and the chant "Don't rape, Educate!" was popular. We brought the message that we had been discussing all week: "Stop sexism in our culture which is poisoning our youth!"

Heartfelt speakers talked about how they felt racism and sexism were intertwined in this society and addressed issues of "bystanders" and "snitching." One made the point that just as white families picnicking as bystanders at a lynching were despicable, so too are bystanders who do nothing about rape. Another made the point that just as fighting racism requires multi-racial unity, fighting sexism requires the unity of men and women.

Other speakers reminded us that larger forces are at work to manipulate this incident so it would further criminalize black and Latino young men. There was a general feeling that depending on the media, the police or the establishment was useless since they are part of the problem. Another said that rape is a world-wide part of class domination,

but still, personal. He mentioned the U.S. "rape of Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan in search of control of raw materials, rape as terror by an occupying army, and rape inside the U.S. military."

We came away with a better "lesson plan" for both in and out of school. Our posters and graphics have helped on-going struggles against sexist ideology. We made contacts among presenters who are active at a school in Richmond. Participating in this action gave us confidence that a class line which makes capitalism squarely responsible for sexism does not come off as exonerations for the perpetrators.

*Retired Red Transit Workers and Friends*

## Treaties Can't End Imperialist War

Recently 25 of us met to analyze the problems workers face under the capitalist system. There was a presentation and profound criticism of how agriculture functions under capitalism and how it will function in a communist society. This meeting had a warm atmosphere and was very productive, above all because four new workers participated, all of whom asked to join the Progressive Labor Party.

We explained that one of the main contradictions of the capitalist system and for which it's in decline is the crisis of overproduction and that the bosses' dogfight to control markets will take us inexorably to World War III.

A new comrade asked whether the possibility existed for the bosses to agree on a treaty that would avoid the coming war. Another comrade explained that this wasn't possible, since the very nature of the capitalist system is to generate profits, exploitation and poverty and to fight for markets, energy, natural resources, etc, among the capitalists. This inevitably will produce a worldwide battle to re-divide the world.

Another comrade explained that one way U.S. imperialism, with the support of the Mexican government, is preparing the ground for this war is that the U.S. Congress is financing the Mexican government through Plan Merida to supposedly "fight" narcotraffic. The real goal of this financing by U.S. imperialism is to help the Mexican government militarize Mexico. This would guarantee control principally of oil, natural resources, and protect the industry the U.S. imperialists need for war and at the same time control the eruptions of rebellion that can come from the angry workers.

"This is the reality in which the working class lives under in this capitalist system," yelled a comrade. That's why all of the oppressed and exploited must be convinced that this capitalist system only serves the insatiable ambitions of a minority of bosses at the cost of hunger and misery imposed on the working class. The only solution is to destroy it with communist revolution. In its place, we'll establish a new society that meets the needs and interest of the workers. This is possible since it's us who produce all the wealth. The working class doesn't need the bosses since the only thing they do is to rob the products of our labor. Under communism we won't need electoral parties, Congresses, unions or opportunist leaders who today serve the bosses, killers of the workers.

*Comrades from Mexico*

## Generals Push 'Education Reform' to Supply Recruits for War

You are probably in favor of "fully funding early childhood education programs, improving graduation rates, supporting families in ways that improve parenting skills and reduce child abuse, improving child health, mental health and nutrition services, and helping troubled kids get back on track."

But guess who's championing all these good things? Mission: Readiness, a new organization of senior retired military leaders, led by retired four-star General Wesley Clark. Clark was supreme commander of NATO under Clinton during their war against the pro-Russian Serbian dictator Milosevic. In Yugoslavia Clark directed a massive bombing campaign that killed and maimed tens of thousands of civilians.

Mission: Readiness is calling on "all policy-makers to ensure America's national security by

supporting interventions that will prepare young people for a life of military service and productive citizenship." They quote Gen. William S. Wallace: "The U.S. Army today faces an imminent and menacing threat to our national security: ... The lack of fully qualified young people to serve in the military" ([www.missionreadiness.org](http://www.missionreadiness.org)).

There's a contradiction for you: Senior military leaders are pushing early-childhood health care and education so that the kids can grow up to fight, kill, and maybe die for U.S. imperialism.

Standing with the generals and echoing their line, Secretary of (Mis-)Education Arne Duncan said, "A quality education is really an issue of national security." They were pushing \$1 billion for early childhood education in a bill that's supposed to be funded by recent changes to the federal college student loan program that supposedly will save the government over \$8 billion per year.

The PLP has said for over ten years that the bosses' "education reform" is designed to prepare students for widening imperialist war, up to and including World War III. Now you're hearing it straight from the horse's mouth. Don't be fooled! Education reform under capitalism will never serve the interests of workers and our children. Our job, which is getting more and more crucial, is to prepare our young people to organize, inside as well as outside the military, for communist revolution.

*Red Teacher*

## Were Soviet and Nazi Armies' Commitments Similar?

The informative front-page article in the last issue of CHALLENGE unfortunately included an uncritical comparison of the political commitment of Soviet soldiers to socialism with German soldiers to fascism. U.S. rulers have long pushed the lie that communism and fascism are the same thing, ignoring the tremendous advances in health care, education and quality of life that workers gained after the revolutions in the Soviet Union and China — and the return of alcoholism, drugs, prostitution, unemployment, etc. that has marked the return to capitalism in Russia and China.

The political commitment of communists has nothing in common with that of fascists. Those won to the racist lies of fascism are most often bullies whose "courage" only comes from a temporary overwhelming physical superiority. Skinheads and the Klan are comfortable in groups when they can isolate and attack an individual worker, but witness how the KKK and Nazis have either fled or hid behind their partners-in-blue when PLP-led forces attacked their demonstrations. Soviet soldiers and communist-led resistance forces in World War II showed their political commitment and courage even though they were most often outmanned and outgunned — working-class anti-racist and anti-sexist solidarity that smashed the selfish anti-Semitic master race garbage of German fascism.

*NYC Red*

## Teacher Union 'Leaders' 'Answer' to Cuts: 'Adjust!'

The abundant student activism here on California State University campuses provides an opportunity for PLP to grow and fight for communist ideas within a large reform struggle. On one campus three different groups organized three anti-cutback rallies in three weeks. Art Department students will be organizing a walkout. An anti-cutback list of students on Facebook, called "Revolution 102," has hundreds of subscribers.

Many teachers want to fight the cuts, too, but teacher union leaders, from K-12 and college, are mainly trying to get people to "adjust" to the cuts. The September issue of the California Teacher Association's "California Educator" has articles like "Handling crowded classrooms"; "Coping with re-assignment, closure and layoffs"; etc. The California Faculty Association (CFA) has organized some rallies, but has the same outlook: coping with the cuts. The CFA leaders' strategy also unites teachers with the administration, which keeps the anti-cutback movement within the limits the administrators will tolerate.

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# more LETTERS

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The CFA is bringing Assembly Majority Leader Torrico to events on several campuses. He's advocating AB 656, a bill taxing oil companies 10% for oil they extract in California. The \$1 billion this bill would produce would supposedly be reserved for higher education. But Torrico and other legislators are the budget-cutters, not allies in the fight against cuts.

Torrico & Co. voted for corporate tax cuts last September and February, which together slashes \$2 billion a year from the government treasury. Since AB 656 goes solely to higher education, it provides nothing for even more serious cuts in welfare programs like children's health care. It takes higher education away from people harmed by the cuts even more than students and teachers.

The capitalist economic crisis spawned these cuts, aggravated by reduced federal funds for California throughout the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, and by California's huge spending on prisons. These attacks are intrinsic to the capitalist system, not just a short-term "glitch."

We have proposed a state-wide strike of students, teachers and other public workers. Campus CHALLENGE sales are up. Our readers are active in the cutback fights. We're aiming for CHALLENGE readers groups that can give leadership to coming struggles.

A "sanctity-of-higher-education" line is emerging in the movement here. But this is capitalist education, with its patriotism, racism, war research, officer training and anti-worker ideas. It shouldn't be restored. Education will only serve the working class when workers take power, through com-

munist revolution and build a communist society dedicated to needs of the international working class.

*Red Educator*

## From the Mouths of Babes...

In this capitalist-dominated world it sometimes appears that the future of communism is bleak, but the essence of that contradiction rests in the hearts and minds of the people and their children. Following are excerpts from a Metro newspaper article (11/19) about a multi-racial group of schoolkids with worldwide heritage who were asked what they would do if they ruled the world:

- Age 9, from Nepal: "I would stop all wars and bring about world peace. I would give out money to those people who don't have any."

- Age 16, from Harlem, NY: "I would stop child abuse and make their education more important."

- Age 9, from Fiji: "My father is a soldier in Afghanistan so I would stop all wars....I would put children in charge of schools. Children would...have free lunches."

- Age 8, British/Portuguese: "I would ask for more tolerance and give the poor people in Africa proper food to eat...."

- Age 16, Manhattan, NY: "I would have everyone pledge to do their personal best to protect every citizen of the world from any violation of their rights."

- Age 17, Brooklyn, NY: "I would break down all governments and unite the world under one government."

"Yes, Virginia," there is a communist spirit.

*Spirited comrade*

## Dump Capitalism: Racist Bosses Dump Toxic Waste on Poorest Workers

Capitalists all over the world have an absolute necessity to foster racist practices, policies, and ideas in order to keep profits flowing. If profits stop, businesses crumble. The worldwide competition for these profits causes murderous wars and deadly hunger and poverty for the working class. One example is the unconscionable way that poisonous and hazardous trash is exported from the U.S., Canada, and Europe and dumped in countries where workers are already being superexploited by racist capitalism.

These industrial countries all have laws that prohibit the export of hazardous waste (like plastics, paper, electronics, and poisonous metals) and require safe recycling. But the bosses thumb their noses at these laws; after all, it only costs a quarter as much to pay underground waste-traders as it does to recycle safely. The bosses' governments wink at these violations. They hire only a handful of inspectors, only pretending to care about workers' health. So many companies simply smuggle their waste products out on ships to such places as China, Indonesia, India, and Ghana with little danger of more than an occasional slap on the wrist.

Many ships that deliver goods from Asia to Europe and the U.S. avoid wasting the trip back home with an empty ship by taking on this highly profitable toxic cargo to dump in less developed countries. That's profit from death!

Rotterdam (in the Netherlands) has become what the New York Times calls "Europe's main external garbage chute," exporting over two-thirds of the toxic waste that should be recycled. The European Environmental Agency estimates that 20 million containers of such poison are smuggled out each year to be dumped on unsuspecting populations. Hong Kong alone reports that about 100 such containers full of hazardous waste arrive each day from the U.S.

Profit determines the actions of corporations. Profit and international competition will continue to be the deadly, driving force of imperialism so long as the working class of the world permits capitalism to survive as a system. All workers need communist revolution to stop this systematic racist murder of brothers and sisters in the so-called "less-developed countries." ☸

## 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

### Soldiers applaud anti-war Brit

**GW, 11/6** — A British lance corporal who faces jail for refusing to return to fight in Afghanistan has claimed that fellow soldiers are rallying to his cause.

Joe Glenton, 27, of the Royal Logistics Corps, returned to his barracks near Oxford last week after speaking at a peace rally in defiance of orders. After calling for a withdrawal of troops, he feared a hostile reaction, but was applauded by fellow soldiers. "There were handshakes and a lot of pats on the back. Someone said I was saying what everyone else is thinking."

### Pre-election Obama promised jobs

**NYT, 11/7** — What a difference a year makes.

In October 2008, the candidate Barack Obama delivered a major economic speech in Toledo, Ohio. In it he said:....

"So today I'm proposing....a plan that begins with one word that's on everybody's mind and it's easy to spell: J-O-B-S...."

Fast forward....

Job creation has dropped from top priority to one of many, and President Obama has been remanded to pandering for patience and offering excuses.

### Big cover-up of workplace injuries

**NYT, 11/17** — Employers and workers routinely underreport work-related injuries and illnesses, calling into question the accuracy of nation-wide data that the Occupational Safety and Health Adminis-

tration compiles each year....

...Many employers did not report workplace injuries and illnesses for fear of increasing their workers' compensation costs or hurting their chances of winning contracts.

The report also said workers did not report job-related injuries because they feared being fired or disciplined....

...53 percent of health practitioners had reported experiencing pressure from company officials to play down injuries or illnesses, and... 47 percent had reported experiencing this pressure from workers....

One manager took an injured worker to several medical providers until the manager found one who would certify that treatment required only first aid....

One manager took an injured worker to several medical providers until the manager found one who would certify that treatment required only first aid....

### US 'advisor' getting \$100 million in oil

**NYT, 11/12** — Peter W. Galbraith, an influential former American ambassador, a powerful voice on Iraq....In the summer of 2005, he was also an advisor to the Kurdish regional government as Iraq wrote in its Constitution...including issues like how Iraq would divide its vast oil wealth.

Now Mr. Galbraith...stands to earn perhaps a hundred million or more dollars as a result of his closeness to the Kurds, his relations with a Norwegian oil company and constitutional provisions he helped the Kurds extract....

...He received rights to an enormous stake in at least one of Kurdistan's oil fields in the spring of 2004....

The central Baghdad government...has long maintained...that all oil contracts signed by the



Kurdish government were illegal....

...Some of Iraqis' deepest fears include...theories that the true reason for American invasion of their country was to take its oil.

### Can US Muslims back the wars?

**NYT, 11/9** — In the South Asian and Arab communities where the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are deeply unpopular, Muslim military members have often felt criticized for their service....

Some return exhausted and traumatized from their tours, only to hear at their local mosques that they will go to hell for "killing Muslims...."

...It has been increasingly difficult for Muslims to support the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, as accounts have emerged of the killing of civilians, the corruption of American-backed local governments, and prisoner abuses like that of the Abu Ghraib scandal.

"Is it an army that defends the oppressed, or have you...become the oppressor?"

**MORE ITEMS AVAILABLE ONLINE:**  
[www.plp.org](http://www.plp.org)

# Racism, Imperialist War Drive GIs to Mental Breakdowns

It used to be called shell shock, then combat fatigue, now it's Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The illness is the same, soldiers suffering, and sometimes cracking from the stress of killing for the capitalists. Unlike the Soviet Red Army in World War II where soldiers and civilians fought side by side committed to defend workers' power, many soldiers in the U.S. military see that the war is in the interests of the oil bosses running the U.S.

This conflict between being ordered to defend imperialism and what soldiers actually believe in tears people apart and results in mental turmoil for many. The shootings at Ft. Hood by the mentally broken Maj. Nidal Hasan have now added 43 more victims to the list of casualties from PTSD. Five of the 13 people killed by Hasan were Army mental health therapists.

By the VA's own estimates, 20% of Iraq vets are suffering from psychological disorders. If the Afghan war is included, it means several hundred thousand invisible casualties. Now the people assigned to treat these soldiers are cracking also.

The Army has only 408 psychiatrists, including civilian contractors, to treat 553,000 active-duty troops. The ideology of the capitalists is forced on soldiers in the methods the bosses use to fight the war. Racism against Arabs is drummed into recruits from the beginning of basic training and the people of the Mid-East are dehumanized. Military psychiatrists spend their days hearing the stories of soldiers who have been ordered to run over children in the street and shoot unarmed people.

Bret Moore, a former Army psychologist at Fort Hood who quit after five years, described the effect of treating soldiers returning from the front, "You become detached, you start to feel like you can't

connect with your patients, you run out of empathy. And the last thing you [the psychiatrist] want to do is talk about it with someone else. It really puts a wedge between you and your loved ones."

Another psychiatrist, Lt. Col. Reagon P. Carr described a typical week in which he visited three locations in Iraq, meeting with 36 soldiers who came in for immediate help: 3 were contemplating suicide, a dozen were unable to sleep, 5 said their marriages were dysfunctional and 16 were disgruntled with the leadership [of their units]." (NY Times, 11/8/09)

Military mental health practitioners are caught between caring for the soldiers and the needs of U.S. imperialism. The military wants soldiers returned to battle; they want the psychiatrists to make that happen. This adds to the burden, as Army mental-health staff members are forced to grapple with their own guilt over returning these soldiers to the war.

Capitalism has a long history of using psychiatrists to force soldiers back to the front. The German Army during World War I developed electric shock treatments, repeated cold showers and locking soldiers naked in isolation chambers as ways to force "shell-shocked" soldiers back into battle. But torture rarely succeeded as very few German soldiers suffering psychological casualties were returned to the front.

Today the military is trying to employ a softer touch, but ultimately when therapy fails the military is pressuring psychiatrists to give "individualized" diagnosis of soldiers that classify their PTSD as "not severe enough" to prevent them from being redeployed. (WCVB TV, Boston, 11/11/07)

During the Russian Revolution, the Chinese Revolution, Vietnam War, as well as at other times, soldiers responded to the horrors of imperialism by turning their guns around and fought against the bosses for the interests of the working class. While this is not the trend yet today, the pain many soldiers are suffering shows that they are not completely won over to the side of the capitalists. Our efforts to build a revolutionary movement to win soldiers to the fight for communism will not only serve these soldiers, it will lead the way to a better future for the whole working class. ☺

### General, Your Tank is a Powerful Vehicle

It smashes down forests and crushes a hundred men.

But it has one defect:  
It needs a driver.

General, your bomber is powerful.  
It flies faster than a storm and carries more than an elephant.

But it has one defect:  
It needs a mechanic.

General, man is very useful.  
He can fly and he can kill.  
But he has one defect:  
He can think.

Bertold Brecht

## Worker-Student Alliance

continued from p. 1

The working class must see these attacks for what they are, in order to guide our actions towards smashing capitalism with communist revolution.

The International Monetary Fund has forecast ten years of cuts for the industrialized world. U.S. imperialism has priorities and California complements them. Between 1970 and today the state budget for UC has been cut in half. In 1965, the state covered 94.4% of a UC student's education. Last year it was 58.5%. This year, California will

spend an estimated \$3.3 billion to operate UC. It will spend triple that — \$9.9 billion — on the state's 33 prisons.

On the 19th more cops shut down on-campus meeting spaces and the Open-University teaching panels. The remaining custodians piled garbage bags at the Chancellor's office doorway. UC President Mark Yudof posed "empathy" with angry students and workers now holding militant actions at UCLA, UC Davis, and UC Santa Cruz. "We do not have the money to...run the University of California," he cried, implying that the attacks are "necessary" to offset capitalism's \$535 million "budget deficit." The ruling class and its lackeys will always cover for imperialism.

By Friday, anger mounted. News of a semi-spontaneous occupation of Wheeler Hall garnered more support from students. The occupiers demanded a rollback of the 32% hike, the re-hiring of the 38 laid-off custodians and dropping of all charges against themselves. Hundreds showed up. Sure enough, cops from throughout the Bay Area

were sent to guard Wheeler. Clashes erupted when police pushed to set up barricades, brutalizing students.

Chants arose. "Peacekeepers" spoke. Contradictions boiled. Rain poured. A chant about "democracy" outside Wheeler Hall revealed the nature of capitalist democracy: attacks on students and workers, illusions and promises. Students and workers realize their potential power when they unite against the common capitalist enemy, represented here by UC bosses. Then the police, fearing a riot if the occupiers were ousted and arrested, released the group of 41 students.

"Hey, Hey, UC! Education must be Free!" will not happen without more ideological and class struggle. One of the released occupiers summed it up: "What we did in there was nothing compared to what you all did out here! But it cannot end tonight! None of our demands were met! This should be the start of something bigger!" Plans to build on this newfound unity are emerging. The struggle continues. ☺

### Did You Know...

On December 2, 1953, 33,000 can manufacturing workers shut down over half the container industry in the U.S. and Canada, demanding an end to the wage differential between men and women and between the North and the South.

On December 6, 1931, tens of thousands of National Hunger Marchers coming from all over the U.S. in the depths of the Great Depression reached Washington, D.C. to demonstrate against starvation, demanding jobs and unemployment insurance.

On December 10, 1906, the first sit-down strike in U.S. labor history saw members of the International Workers of the World (IWW) GE local close the company's Schenectady, NY plant demanding re-hiring of three fired workers.

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