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SADDAM HUSSEIN: BORN IN THE CIA

And then they left him hanging ...



Donald Rumsfeld greeting Saddam Hussein in 1983 as envoy of the Reagan Administration.

Amid all the thousands of words spewing forth from the U.S. press and TV about the life and times of the executed butcher Saddam Hussein, there's one little item missing: before Saddam became a threat to U.S. oil profits and to their Saudi-Kuwait lackeys, he was the virtual creation of U.S. rulers and its CIA (just like the CIA-sponsored Osama bin Laden later became a U.S. enemy).

The story begins in 1958 when Abdul Karim Qasim led a coup that year to overthrow the British-installed monarchy. U.S. rulers viewed him as a threat to reliable oil exports, because he was pro-Soviet and would upset the U.S.-organized anti-Soviet Baghdad Pact — an alliance of Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Britain and the U.S.

In 1959, the UPI reported that Saddam, then in his early twenties, became part of a U.S.-directed plot to

assassinate Qasim. The killing failed and Saddam was wounded in the attempt. Middle East expert Adel Darwish said the move was done "with the full knowledge of the CIA," and that Saddam's CIA handler was an Iraqi dentist working for the CIA and Egyptian intelligence. Saddam then fled to Cairo, and was put on a stipend by the agency.

In February, 1963, the military wing of the Baath Party (which Saddam had joined) overthrew and killed Qasim. Roger Morris, a former U.S. National Security Council staffer, said that the U.S. (during the Kennedy administration) played a significant role in this coup and that it was mostly funded "with American money." Historian Hanna Batatu reported that the CIA cooperated in this coup and gave the Baathists lists of Iraqi communists. The Iraqi CP had organized one million May Day marchers in 1959 and was the largest communist party in the Mid-East, but made the mistake of allying with a "progressive" nationalist (Qasim), which helped lead to its downfall. Saddam was brought back from Cairo as an "interrogator" and soon rose to the head of Baath Intelligence. Thousands of communists named by the CIA were killed.

Then, after that government was overthrown by Qasim officers, the Baathists came to power again in another coup, orchestrated by the CIA (during the Johnson administration). Reuters reporter David Morgan wrote: "In 1968, Morris says, the CIA encouraged a palace revolt...led by long-time Saddam mentor Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr, who would turn over the reins of power to his ambitious protégé in 1979. 'It's a regime that was unquestionably midwived by the United States, and the (CIA's) involvement there was really primary,' Morris says."

The U.S. specifically promoted the Tikritis to dominance among the coup-makers, which included al-Bakr and his cousin, Saddam Hussein, who quickly became the power behind the throne. When the Khomeini forces overthrew the U.S.-backed Shah of Iran in 1979, the CIA and U.S. rulers had one more reason to turn to Saddam to counter this new "enemy."

Saddam invaded Iran in 1980. In December 1983, the Reagan administration sent Donald Rumsfeld to Baghdad to meet with Saddam and his foreign minister Tariq Aziz. A U.S. State Department summary of that meeting stated that, "The two agreed the U.S. and Iraq shared many common interests: peace in the Gulf, keeping Syria and Iran off balance and less influential, and promoting Egypt's reintegration into the Arab world."

This meeting had come after Saddam had used chemical weapons to kill tens of thousands of Iraqi Kurds, which obviously was no bar to the developing U.S.-Iraqi relationship. In fact, the Reagan administration worked to prevent the UN from censuring Saddam for his use of these WMDs.

It was during the Iraq-Iran war that U.S. rulers went all

WORKERS REJECT PLEA FOR SILENCE



50,000 MARCH AGAINST RACIST KILLER COPS

NEW YORK CITY, Dec. 16 — A PLP contingent of 40 members and friends turned a liberal misleaders' "silent march" protesting the NYPD's recent racist murder of a young black man, Sean Bell, into a militant, chanting outcry by thousands against police brutality.

Tens of thousands of workers and students disrupted the usual holiday shopping as demonstrators filled Fifth Avenue from 58th to 34th Streets. The march was organized by former FBI informer Al Sharpton and endorsed by dozens of other liberal misleaders. It was part of the Democratic Party's long-standing effort to pacify the working class. This time they tried to muzzle the demonstrators' anger with a silent protest labeled, "Shopping for Justice." But workers and students weren't buying this strategy. While the liberals at the front of the march tried moving the demonstration down a slippery slope of pacifism, the Progressive Labor Party steered it in a militant direction from the inside.

The PLP contingent distributed over 1,200 CHALLENGES and over 2,000 leaflets to workers hungry for revolutionary ideas. We boldly put forward a communist analysis of the cops' racist murder, linking it to the millions of others slaughtered by the very system that produces these KKKiller cops, from Queens, NY to South Africa. One demonstrator agreed, "You're right, getting rid of Kelly [NYPD Police Commissioner] isn't gonna' stop these racist cops! The whole system's gotta' go!" (See *Red Eye on the News*, page 7, item 2) He then took eight CHALLENGES and distributed them to all his friends waiting to march.

After passing out most of our literature, we began to lead chants: "Black cop! White cop! All the same! Racist murder is the name of the game!"; and, "Asian, Latin, black and white! To smash police terror we must unite!" Soon one of the liberal demonstration's organizers tried to silence our bullhorn by accusing us of "disrespecting" the leadership's request for a silent protest. Just then another demonstrator, 20 feet ahead of us, began yelling, "No more silence! We've been silent for too long!" PLP'ers and other demonstrators then began to join our chanting, "No more silence! No more silence!"

This was a pivotal point in the demonstration and there was no turning back! From beginning to end, thousands of demonstrators began to chant all the way down Fifth Avenue. PLP'ers had changed the nature of the demonstration for the rest of the day. These liberals weren't going to silence the anger of the working class!

Our ability to influence thousands of demonstrators with the idea of fighting back inspired both us and our friends. Other groups took up our chants and a high school student in our contingent realized this and enthusiastically yelled, "Hey, that's our

Another Fiasco — Execution Backfires

Everything the U.S. bosses do in Iraq is turning into its opposite. While Saddam's execution was timed for the beginning of a Muslim holiday to exacerbate the growing chasm between Shiites and Sunnis (Saddam was a Sunni), it has mainly transformed Saddam into a martyr in the Arab world. The execution has caused so much repulsion worldwide that the Bush administration is now trying to blame its Iraqi puppet government for hurrying the hanging — as if the U.S. occupation forces don't control that regime. Meanwhile, while many in the U.S. thought they "voted for troop withdrawal" from Iraq, the opposite is looming. Bush is planning to send 30,000 more troops. And the Democrats will surely vote for the extra billions the Bush gang is asking for the fiasco there. ☺

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2006: Workers Fight Back Against Bosses' Attack

Last year began with the tragic deaths of 11 miners in Sago, West Virginia, victims of their bosses' criminal negligence. The year ended with the racist assassination of Sean Bell by the New York City police, who serve to protect capitalist property and terrorize workers. Between the bookends of these murders, the year was filled with evidence of the system putting its rulers' needs above workers' lives. But we also witnessed a glimpse of the fact that not only do workers fight back but that they can be won to run the world for the good of those who produce all value.

U.S. rulers' problems mounted to new heights in 2006: outright civil war in the Iraq quagmire, a resurgent Taliban in Afghanistan, a defeat for U.S. ally Israel against Lebanon's Hezbollah, a defiant Iran gaining strength and now an emerging war in Somalia. Wars like these, with their ever-growing death tolls for workers — over 650,000 Iraqis and over 3,000 GI's killed and tens of thousands wounded and maimed — are always part of capitalism, but this level of instability in the Mid-East also indicates a major challenge to continued U.S. control of oil profits. The U.S. position as the top imperialist power in the world is being threatened by expansionary rivals like China and Russia who are

making alliances that could endanger U.S. dominance.

Amid looming threats to their worldwide supremacy, U.S. rulers have been retooling tactics at home as well as abroad. Democratic Party politicians have taken office with the hope of being able to win workers' loyalty and better enable the rulers to control the growing chaos in Iraq and prepare for increasing inter-imperialist rivalry. Workers are being asked to accept more police-state conditions governing our daily lives. Bags are searched on subways, surveillance cameras have been installed on street corners and "universal service" is being proposed to solve the crisis of the all-volunteer military.

Inside the U.S., rulers attempted to "reform" immigration. As blatantly racist organizing by anti-immigrant groups like the Minutemen spread nation-wide, some politicians favored keeping immigrants out of the U.S. But the more dangerous reformers were the ruling-class liberals who plan to "legalize" undocumented immigrants by putting their youth into the military to fight and die for imperialism. The danger of the liberal bosses comes from their ability to win workers to "work with the system," and in this case they did. Millions of workers in every major city marched for immigrant rights behind the red, white and blue.

Progressive Labor Party brought CHALLENGE and its internationalist, revolutionary ideas to these liberal politician-church-led events, just as we took on the disgusting racism of the Minutemen and their kind

from the West Coast to the East Coast. In Farmingville, Long Island, we openly fought our battle against anti-immigrant racism in the courtroom after arrests at a street rally in defense of migrant workers harassed by racists.

Mass participation in immigrant rights rallies is one among several examples of the anger of workers fighting back against the injustices of the system this year and of what communists can learn and accomplish within those struggles. This year's May Day celebration took place inside massive anti-war marches in U.S. cities, bringing a revolutionary communist message to those protests. Some GI's in Iraq have refused to simply accept their roles as killers, petitioning Congress with a statement against the Iraq war. However, we must struggle sharply with these anti-war soldiers over the petition's call for patriotism — allegiance to the bosses' government — and apparent readiness to fight in other imperialist wars.

While the rallies, marches and petitions all put forth liberal, patriotic politics in general, PL'ers were still able to join with workers in struggle to build a base for internationalist, anti-imperialist politics and at the same time expose the pro-capitalist politics of the leadership of these movements. In a positive indication that this kind of struggle for communist ideas moves our class forward, several Metro transit workers in Washington D.C. joined our Party amid a comrade's re-election campaign for the union presidency.

We have seen inspiring evidence of how workers and students will fight back against capitalist oppression. In the state of Oaxaca,

Mexico, sparked by a teachers' strike, workers and their allies rebelled and took over the city of Oaxaca for six months, and fought local and federal cops. But the reformism of the struggle's leadership misled it, calling for a "lesser-evil" governor to replace the hated repressive governor Ulises Ruiz. Many also have illusions that the social-democratic opposition party of the "legitimate President" of Mexico, López Obrador, is the answer to the pro-U.S. National Action Party which succeeded (and is now allied with) the PRI, rulers of Mexico for 60 years.. PLP brought ideas about turning the battle into a school for communism and forging a mass revolutionary party to eliminate all the bosses.

We also learned a great deal from the struggle of our class brothers and sisters in New Orleans this year. Comrades traveled from all over the U.S. to the hurricane-devastated city. We saw first hand the destruction caused by the historical and on-going racism of the capitalist system. We learned about serving our class by collectively helping in the gutting and rebuilding process. And we gained experience fighting for communist ideas in the middle of reform movements. PLP is continuing to send members and friends to work with these embattled workers.

The events of this year have shown us the deadly logic of a system driven by profit, the danger of the liberals' false promises and the potential of our class when roused by anger. As communists, we know that while anger is necessary, it is even more important that we bring communist ideas of collectivity and anti-racist internationalism to every struggle. Capitalism cannot be reformed, but must be destroyed by communist revolution that will build a new future where workers control their own labor for the benefit of their class. We call on all our readers to join our fight to change the world. ☸

WHAT WE FIGHT FOR

☸ 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 workers.

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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Workers in Oaxaca Mexico fought a furious battle with the bosses and their goons.

50,000 MARCH AGAINST RACIST KILLER COPS

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chant!" Another student declared, "People are really feeling what we have to say!" Towards the end of the march we were surrounded by approximately 200 people marching and chanting with their fists in the air.

This was exactly what Sharpton and the Democrats didn't want. They want to silence working-class anger, hoping to win thousands of young workers and students to die for the U.S. oil empire in the Middle East. These liberals know that racist terror at home will make young black men even less willing to fight and die in the rulers' endless wars, so they use "safe" methods of "civil disobedience" and blame some "bad cops" instead of the entire racist system. We must counter this with the message of a fight for workers' power!

Although many marchers thought disrupting the profits of these multi-million-dollar Fifth Avenue shops was a good idea, the premise of seeking justice under capitalism and pacifying workers' anger only perpetuates fear and a cynical attitude towards the only true fight for justice — the struggle for communism.

We should not underestimate the power of the working class. We can draw important lessons from history. A racist cop's murder of a 15-year-old unarmed black high school student led to the 1964 Harlem Rebellion (See

CHALLENGE, 1/3/07). Thousands took to the streets in a militant fight-back, not only against cops and their brutality, but also against racist living conditions and rampant unemployment. Thousands of workers and youth have the same anger today, but it's constantly misdirected by the liberal Democrats and Sharpton-like sellouts.

We must expand our efforts to win workers and students in mass organizations away from the liberal message that capitalism can be changed by supporting and voting for the "right" politicians. With this long-term perspective, such efforts can lead thousands of workers to embrace communist ideas and take leadership in future struggles opposing racist outrages against our class.

If we patiently develop that kind of leadership, these thousands of workers on Fifth Avenue could not only shut down all the stores in mid-Manhattan, but also paralyze the entire city with a massive anti-racist strike, sending a message to masses of workers worldwide that the idea of workers' power is alive and well! Towards that goal, PLP will continue to call on workers and youth to channel their anger against the very system — capitalism — that breeds these racist killer cops and spills the blood of workers like Sean Bell. March with us under the red flag in the struggle for a better world, the fight for communism! ☸

Saddam: Born in the CIA

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out to help Saddam. Former National Security Council staffer Howard Teicher affirmed that, in a secret National Security Directive, "The United States actively supported the Iraqi war effort by supplying the Iraqis with billions of dollars of credits, by providing U.S. military intelligence and advice...and by closely monitoring third country arms sales to Iraq to make sure that Iraq had the military weaponry required." This included cluster bombs.

UPI reported that, "During the war, the CIA regularly sent a team to Saddam to deliver battlefield intelligence obtained from Saudi AWACs surveillance aircraft to aid...Iraq's armed forces....According to Darwish, the CIA and DIA [Defense Intelligence Agency] provided military assistance to Saddam's ferocious February 1988 assault on Iranian positions in the al-Feo peninsula by blinding Iranian radars for three days."

This is not even the complete story but there would have been no Butcher of Baghdad without the three decades of nurturing by U.S. rulers and the CIA. (For more see <http://www.plp.org/comm03/1saddamncia.html>) ☸

PL Teachers Lead Fight vs. Bosses' School 'Reform' for War

LOS ANGELES, Dec. 13 — “What! Take away our right to vote on schedules? I’m walking out now. I’m not even waiting for a strike vote!” declared a teacher at an area-wide union meeting about the district’s give-back demands. “And they want to eliminate shared decision-making if our test scores are too low!” said another. “This is part of what I would call growing fascism,” a comrade explained later to colleagues, “consolidating control in the hands of the state as the capitalist class prepares for war.”

After five years of No Child Left Behind, inner-city schools like ours are in dismal condition, with vast numbers of kids not learning basic skills because of years of racist mis-education. PL teachers are dedicated to the principled struggle for all kids to learn. But the ruling class is reforming education to meet their need for patriotic soldiers and workers with the bare minimum math and English skills.

While teachers still have the right to vote on schedules, we’ve been fighting against the bosses’ school “reforms” and their attempt to impose a schedule forcing students to take four classes at a time over four eight-week “semesters.” This means more classes in every school year but fewer hours in each class.

We told the union’s city-wide House of Reps that

this will restructure instruction to serve the ruling-class agenda, sacrificing the study of science and history, shifting resources so any student below grade level takes double blocks of English and math. Bill Gates’ “Second-to-None” grants require this “4x4” schedule. Two schools’ teachers here have fought this corporate takeover, rejecting this new schedule. It’s been forced on other schools.

Teachers at our school have battled 4x4, but the principal pushes it, winning many teachers to feel this is the only way to teach reading and math. But if the bosses mainly wanted to improve basic skills, they would fund smaller classes. Teachers have fought for

“The bosses’ agenda means reorganizing society for the long-range fight to maintain U.S. supremacy over their capitalist rivals.”

decades to get 15-student maximum class size for remedial students. The district, however, increased average class size to 38.5 students.

A social studies teacher remarked, “What all these unsavory forces want is to eliminate a broad-based, well-rounded education. They want basic skills, and nothing more.... Encouraging students to think about history...will be out the window.” Even when the ruling class allows the teaching of more social studies

and science, their curricula pushes their ideology, not critical thinking.

In the union, we explained that focusing on remedial reading and math while shortchanging science and history was part of the rulers’ plans for war. We argued for standing firm on teachers having schedule choice in local schools. Teachers nodded as we showed that the same ruling class which has been fast-tracking kids from schools to prisons now wants to give them just enough skills to function in the military or war production. An elementary school teacher said, “This is what scripted instruction has done to elementary. They don’t care if kids know history or can analyze problems scientifically — they just want them to read well enough to follow instructions and know enough math to operate the machines.”

The bosses’ agenda means reorganizing society for the long-range fight to maintain U.S. supremacy over their capitalist rivals. PLP teachers’ victories come when we show our colleagues that inter-imperialist rivalry is driving these changes. Without this perspective, workers can believe that the bosses really want to improve education. Our sharper political discussions lay the basis for more CHALLENGE sales and recruitment.

Even more important is the political preparation of our students. The bosses need young industrial workers and soldiers for their war machine. The working class needs young comrades in those exact strategic locations to organize to take state power. As we expose the bosses’ use of school reform to prepare for wider imperialist war, we’re preparing our young comrades to play the historic role of turning imperialist war into a revolutionary struggle for a communist society.✪

Welcome CHALLENGE at Rally Opposing Anti-Immigrant Raids

WASHINGTON, D.C., Dec. 19 — Over 30 spirited demonstrators organized by the new D.C. Committee for Immigrants’ Rights picketed Homeland Security’s Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) office here. On December 12, ICE agents raided Swift Company sites in six states and arrested 1,286 workers, claiming they “stole people’s identities.” Workers were arrested and detained; many face deportation. These raids resemble those in the 1930’s Nazi Germany when the fascists criminalized entire groups, rounding them up at their homes and jobs and blaming them

‘Despite some hesitation, many ICE workers took fliers and agreed with the need for workers from all countries to unite for common goals.’

for Germany’s problems. Demonstrators chanted, “Stop Racist Deportations, Working People Have No Nation!” and, “Deportaciones, No! Amnistia, Si!” Workers gave speeches in English and Spanish.

Despite some hesitation, many ICE workers took fliers and agreed with the need for workers from all countries to unite for common goals. Latino construction workers from a site across the street, inspired by the rally, joined the picket line, welcomed CHALLENGE and the Committee’s fliers and spoke out.

We should all be in the streets demanding an end to these raids and the profit-driven system that benefits from exploiting immigrant workers.✪

Winning Young Workers to Turn Bosses' Recruiting Upside Down

“Only twelve more hours to go Tony.”

“Yeah I know, tomorrow and Friday too.” Tony replies.

“I wonder what the hours are like for the workers in the factories in China,” Joe asks.

Walter interrupts, “Hey you guys know all that work that is going to China is coming back don’t you?”

“Oh yeah, how come?” asks Joe.

“Because, man, the U.S. isn’t stupid,” Walter answers. “Believe me, we’re the middle class and they can’t survive without the middle class.”

Of course that’s what the ruling class would like us to believe. However, it’s the manufacturing industries that are vital for a capitalist nation bent on war. The old model of high concentrations of workers in a few giant factories is declining. The new trend for war production here is smaller sub-contracted shops. So when the liberal press talks about Boeing’s plant closings, those jobs aren’t disappearing; they’re simply being moved to a cheaper production site. In fact “7 out of 10 outsourced production jobs stay in the U.S.” (L.A. Times) and 96% of military production remains in the U.S. Right now the ruling class can’t expand production fast enough because these sub-contracted shops can’t keep up. The bosses’ increasing dependence on these shops makes them key areas in which PLP can plant the seed of revolution. These workers have the most power to affect the ruling class’s profits, since they can halt the production that is the source of capitalist wealth and imperialist wars.

A pamphlet — “Surge” — published by the International Association of Machinists, a major war industry union, presents the U.S. rulers’ assessment of their “War Production Capacity and Military Power.” One of its main points is recruitment of young workers and students to “loyally serve their country” by working in these factories.

A front-page article entitled, “Factory Shift: Manufacturers struggle to fill highly paid jobs,” describes how a university student rejects a scholarship and instead attends a community college’s “two-year technical training program” sponsored by the company to which he applied. The big carrot? The arti-

cle says he will earn \$58,000 annually upon completing his training, “more than his college-educated brother...” In reality, most production workers usually make around \$9 to \$10 per hour — \$20,000 per year — and that’s with some schooling. This article is a clear recruiting call from U.S. bosses for high school and college students to re-think their future and join the industrial workforce.

The ruling class has also begun its recruitment campaign for immigrants to join the military and/or work in factories. Its call for “immigration reform” actually signals increased exploitation and use as cannon fodder.

A PL club of young industrial workers has taken an aggressive approach to winning young workers to use this rulers’ campaign as a vehicle to win workers and youth to the Party’s ideas, including a Weekend Workshop on getting these types of jobs. With continued effort and leadership, these young workers can learn how to turn the factory reform struggles into schools for communism. Join us!✪



Cop's Vietnam Torture Tactics Used on Chicago's Black Men

CHICAGO, IL, Dec. 16 — As the war in Iraq spins more violently out of control, the racist police here at home are on a killing spree. Two weeks after the Chicago police killed 22-year-old Michael Smith, the NYPD executed 23-year-old Sean Bell in a barrage of 50 shots. Both men were unarmed, but capitalism treats the unprovoked murder of young black men as "collateral damage" in the war against the poor and black section of our class. Capitalism in crisis has to resort to more fascist brutality to keep our class in line. So the "first black President," Bill Clinton put 100,000 more cops on the streets while the prison population doubled, 70% of whom are black and Latino.

The police murder of Michael Smith comes just months after four Chicago cops were indicted on charges of home invasion, drug dealing, kidnapping and a long list of other charges. They were part of an elite police unit, similar to those involved in the killings of Smith and Bell, who shake down drug dealers for money, tip them off when a bust is coming and take out rival dealers. These racist terrorists are being charged for their attacks on black working-class youth only because their out-of-control corruption doesn't serve the ruling-class's police-state agenda. Growing

fascism must discipline all ranks of society, including sections of the ruling class and their police death squads who don't toe the line.

This is nothing new. From the 1970's to the 1990's, Jon Burge terrorized the black South Side community. Electrical shocks to the genitals with home-made torture devices, being shocked with cattle prods, burnings, mock executions, pistol whippings and beatings with flashlights were just some of the ways that Burge and his cops tortured black men in police custody. Long before Abu Grahib, Burge learned his torture tactics while serving U.S. imperialism in Vietnam, torturing information out of Vietnamese workers and peasants. Burge and his Gestapo tortured "confessions" out of over 100 black men and a 13-year-old boy, also a victim of electric shock to his genitals, during this twenty-year terror spree.

Jon Burge will not be prosecuted for his crimes. He continues to live comfortably on his police pension. Former state's attorney and current mayor Richard Daley prosecuted many of the torture victims, to build his reputation and lay claim to City Hall. Burge's racist outrages were "justified" because he did his job to control and terrorize the working class.

As fascism increases in the U.S. and the inter-imperialist rivalry shifts into high gear, we will see more Jon Burges in Chicago, more Ramparts in L.A., and



NYC, NY Dec. 16 — PLP during the march against police terror

more 50-shot killings in NYC. But if we do our job, the new Nazis will end up like the old ones. However, this time we must make sure they never come back. ☛

Students Tie War in Iraq to War on New Orleans Workers

Recently, a group of students on a Southern California college campus held a forum commemorating Katrina's first anniversary. Both students and faculty attended this student-led event. Some speakers were students who helped with the reconstruction for working-class families in New Orleans last summer.

The students offered a sharp class analysis of the situation in New Orleans. They contrasted the government's utter neglect of the working class's attempt to recover their houses with the immediate reconstruction and improvement of the profit-producing hotel and tourist industries, among others. The students stressed that one reason why the workers in New Orleans (and just about any city) are unable to meet their basic needs is because the ruling class must invest in controlling the vast Middle-Eastern oil reserves through imperialist wars in competition with their rivals.

The students exposed the capitalist drive for profits in Baghdad and in New Orleans. They also condemned the government for sending Blackwater mercenaries and the National Guard into New Orleans to terrorize working-class youth, beating back righteous class anger.

An impressive presentation was a "virtual levee tour," a slide show taking the audience through the city's two different levee systems. The audience was horrified to see the working class being "protected" by short and weak brick walls while the rich neighborhoods are

surrounded by levees larger than football fields consisting of steep slopes and remote-controlled flood gates. Students emphasized that the levees are only a painful and shocking symbol of the gross racist inequalities existing between the workers who produce wealth and the bosses who for centuries have exploited the labor of our class to fill their own pockets.

A black student from Louisiana participated actively in the discussion, expressing his respect for the group for holding such a sharp event. He said that everything presented was accurate, and reiterated that although most people affected by Katrina are black, there are white, brown and Asian workers who are still suffering. "You're right," he said. "This is an attack on the working class by the government." He took leaflets to share with his friends in both California and Louisiana.

The working class is hungry for a class analysis. However, if such events do not make communist politics primary — both in the process and ultimately — it's impossible to sustain a winning long-term plan for our class. With expansion of CHALLENGE networks and a commitment to building relationships based on communist politics, it is possible to win workers to the long-term fight to destroy capitalism once and for all and create a communist society that fulfills workers' needs. ☛

Youth Spread Internationalist, Anti-Racist Pledge Among Marines

"The war is wrong. That's why I got out. I believed the recruiter that I would be a cook—I ended up as a combat escort in a Humvee. Nobody should be over there," a black ex-marine told visiting students.

The response to our revolutionary ideas was better than a year-and-a-half ago. We students went to a town near a Marine base to talk to over 50 young marines about the imperialist war. We brought a pledge that called on soldiers to act in anti-racist, international solidarity against the imperialist war in Iraq. Although nervous at first, we quickly got into serious conversations.

There were two groups of marines. Those who had been in longer and had experienced Iraq were more open to conversation and agreement. The newer recruits agreed less, still believing the patriotic indoctrination they undergo. However, they listened to us with interest.

One marine said, "Do I feel like being over there is worth it? No! [The Iraqis] have been living this way for a long time. [We] don't have the authority to go over there and tell them their way of life is wrong."

Another said, "We are there to protect the freedom of people." We responded, "There are many regions from Africa to Asia lacking freedom. A lot of that misery is caused by U.S. rulers. The only reason the U.S. has troops in Iraq is to control its oil." We compared this war to Vietnam, adding that politicians are talking about needing a draft to win this seemingly endless war for oil profits. "The draft will never happen," answered the young marine, "because they don't want people that don't want to fight."

A Latino marine, walking hand-in-hand with his five-year-old son, stopped to talk: "I have been in the Marines for many years, but I'm not going to reenlist because I have been treated in a racist way by my superiors."

Another showed us his bandage-covered arm, saying, "I was injured by a bomb in Iraq. I'm ambivalent: I think we should be there, but I also think we shouldn't because of all the deaths and everything that has happened."

Not everybody thinks the same. One marine said, "If you want to know what it's like, you should go over there. The Iraqis killed my friends. They should all die." He was in the minority, but we saw how the bosses use racism to misdirect soldiers' anger. When your friends are dying, you're going to be angry either at the Iraqis or at the U.S. bosses who put you in harm's way for their bloody

oil profits. Class-conscious soldiers, influenced by PLP, can play a crucial role in exposing the dangers of patriotism, the lie that U.S. Marines have more in common with U.S. bosses and their politicians than with Iraqi soldiers and workers. We told everyone that the oil companies' profits were not worth a drop of their blood, their lives or the lives of Iraqi workers.

The students on this trip saw that they can talk to young soldiers and Marines. One student noted about a Marine, "He just graduated from high school; he's only 19 years old." After overcoming shyness and some feelings of intimidation, the students had many conversations with marines. We included many points, always trying to approach the idea that the soldiers, if organized, have the power to help lead a movement to end imperialist war with revolution for workers' power.

Every one (except the guy who wanted to kill 'em all) took the pledge and promised to think about it. The students plan to continue these visits, bringing communist ideas and building relationships with individual marines, in order to have a real impact on the long-term fight for communist revolution. ☛

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U.S. Oily Fingers Behind War in Somalia

Thousands of Ethiopian troops using MIG fighter planes, tanks, artillery and helicopters invaded Somalia, routing the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) from Mogadishu, the capital city. Thousands have died in the fighting. One of the Ethiopian troops' first acts was to secure the compound of the former U.S. embassy — the biggest in Sub-Saharan Africa before 1993 when the U.S. was forced to leave Somalia. They were preparing the ground for the U.S. return here. The U.S.-backed Ethiopian invaders have now returned to power the weak warlord-supported interim government which had only controlled the city of Baidoa after the UIC routed it last June 10.

The UIC is aided by Eritrea, which from 1998-2000 waged a bitter war with Ethiopia over a still-disputed border. Thousands of Eritrean troops are in Somalia helping the UIC. Saudi Arabia (a "staunch" U.S. ally financing the Sunni insurgency in Iraq), Sudan and Yemen are helping the UIC, along with Jihadists from across the Middle East who see the struggle here as part of their "holy war" against the U.S. and its allies (in this case, Ethiopia).

The UIC is also allied with Ethiopian insurgents of the Ogaden National Liberation Front — from the ethnically Somali Ogaden region — and the Oromo Liberation Front, which represents Ethiopia's largest ethnic group and is fighting for independence. As CHALLENGE (11/29) reported: "The Ogaden region bordering Somalia

sits on an unexploited gas field. The Malaysian oil giant Petronas has bought three concession blocks there. Ethiopia's rulers fear a resurgent Somalia will seek to annex Ogaden. The area's likely coming war is, in part, gas-powered."

But this is much more than a holy war or a proxy war among local ruling classes; it's mainly part of the inter-imperialist dogfight shaping world events. In the past this area has been ruled by France, Britain and Italy. When U.S. rulers tried to take control in 1993, under the guise of sending "humanitarian" aid to hungry Somalians, they were routed, following the famous "Blackhawks down" incident when two U.S. copters were shot down during a fierce battle in Mogadishu, Somalia's capital. Their captors paraded the chopper's 18 U.S. Army Rangers through the city's streets.

The strong imperialist interest in Somalia involves its coastline, which lies along the maritime routes taken by oil tankers crossing the Horn of Africa; 15% of the world's maritime traffic passes along that coastline. NATO had sent boats in the recent past to protect oil tankers from pirates based in Somalia.

As this series on Africa has stated, all this continent's conflicts are shaped by inter-imperialist rivalry. China is now becoming a major player there, investing heavily in all areas, particularly in the key energy industries. The U.S. is exploiting human rights violations in Darfur to counter

China's big investments in Sudan's lucrative oil fields. Ethiopia's Prime minister Meles Zenawi also has his sights set on attacking Sudan. When Eritrea seceded from Ethiopia, it left the country landlocked. Eritrea now has a strategic port on the Red Sea. That port's closing would affect Libya, Egypt, Germany and France, Eritrea's leading commercial traders.

The current battles in Somalia might become a protracted war as the UIC and Jihadists turn to guerrilla warfare. Again, the U.S. and its allies — in this case, Ethiopia's rulers — might descend into a quagmire à la Iraq.

Even though the Islamists are in retreat, contradictions in the region are now worsening. The Ethiopian army wants to leave Somalia as soon as possible to avoid a guerrilla-type quagmire, but Ali Mohamed Ghedi, the Prime Minister of the weak interim Somalia government, "says that heavily-armed soldiers from Ethiopia would be needed for months." (BBC World News, 1/2/07)

The fact remains it's Ethiopian soldiers and the youth of Somalia who are dying. (The UIC shut Mogadishu's schools to recruit young fighters.) Many Ethiopian workers and youth hate their rulers, who have imprisoned and killed anti-government protestors. The potential exists to turn the war into a massive revolutionary struggle to oust imperialism and the local bosses, but only if there is communist leadership to carry that out. ☛

U.S. Imperialists Follow Nazi Footsteps...Again

CHALLENGE has reported how U.S. rulers have used Nazi personal and organizational models to staff and organize their government after World War II. Now faced with preparing for a "long war," U.S. rulers are again looking to Nazis for lessons. In the Joint Force Quarterly (JFQ), a magazine published by the Department of Defense for the Joint Chiefs, U.S. rulers examined the battle for Stalingrad to find its enduring lessons. However, they failed to study the political will and military organization of the Red Army. Instead they turned their attention to the Nazis and how they would have been victorious if only they followed U.S. rulers' strategies.

Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Brian Hanley argues, "The Germans could have succeeded at Stalingrad if they had some of our ideas of joint operations and, of equal importance, our high standards in regard to professional integrity." In particular, the article notes the collection of battle-tested divisions of the Nazi army and asks, "Where did this collection go wrong? How could talented leaders blunder on such a massive scale?" Lt. Col. Hanley makes it clear that U.S. rulers need to heed the lessons of the Nazis' defeat so as to ensure the U.S. will not make the same mistakes. "We study the battle for Stalingrad from the German point of view so that 50 years hence, students of military campaigns will not be asking similar questions about U.S. performance in whatever major clash of arms awaits us."

In the same issue of JFQ, Army Lieutenant Colonel Stephen R. Dazell helps guide U.S. rulers' preparations for future combat operations. The colonel emphasizes that, as in Iraq, future U.S. conflicts will likely be in cities, especially shantytowns and urban slums in developing countries, where the military will have to learn how to fight "three-block wars" similar to the battle of Stalingrad. The author explains, "It will no longer be possible to think of cities as obstacles to be by-passed or key terrain to be seized in a single move. In the course of a conflict, a series of three-block wars will extend incrementally over the region, with low-level conflict flaring up repeatedly in areas behind the 'front line' on our tactical maps."

The military will have to handle civilian and reconstruction operations. The chain of command will have to rely more on working-class troops to think strategically in combat while making tactical decisions. While still wielding a powerful grip on U.S. troops' minds, they will never learn lessons to defeat communist movements. The bosses are seeking Nazi-like commitment from vast numbers of troops. The longer the Iraq fiasco continues, the more problematic such commitment becomes.

The ruling class has been forced to turn to "new liberal" arguments to shore up soldiers' patriotism, even couching it in anti-Iraq war rhetoric, masking their fascist intentions. Exposing their plans and winning soldiers to fight for their class interests is crucial, now more than ever. As rulers depend more on the working class, PLP's ability to influence events on the battleground can have a greater impact in building a red army for a class war. What we do counts. ☛

'Social Programs' Aim to Win Workers' to Capitalism à la Chávez

As pointed out in CHALLENGE (1/3), the inter-imperialist struggle over South America is sharpening. Venezuela's Hugo Chavez is a creature of this rivalry. He has tremendous popularity among the world's oppressed masses because he spits in the eyes of U.S. bosses.

Many view his Bolivarian revolution as an answer to the hell imposed by free-market capitalism, pushed mainly by the U.S. and its junior partners. They believe the alternative is the "new ideology" of Chavez and the local anti-U.S. rulers. Phony leftists, who never fought for communism, have embraced this ideology and wind up allying with anti-neoliberalism politicians like Chavez, Brazil's Lula, Mexico's Obrador and their imperialist backers. This strategy is lethal for the working class. For workers to smash all our enemies — local bosses, all the imperialists and their pseudo-left agents — communist politics must become primary.

Chavez also understands that politics is essential to motivate Venezuelan workers because opposing the U.S. and allying with other imperialists eventually means war. He knows that his "window of opportunity" is based on the U.S. disaster in Iraq/Afghanistan and on the fact that, as Elliot Engel, the high-ranking Democrat on the subcommittee of Western Hemisphere affairs, says "...it is counterproductive to try to punish countries with populist leaders, especially with China and other countries making inroads in the region." ("Latin American Advisor," 12/04/06).

But these conditions won't last forever, so Chavez is arming. Also, Brazilian bosses want MERCOSUR members (the South American common market) to form an "anti-imperialist" shield — a NATO-like group — in 2007 to defend the region's natural resources and prevent foreign military intervention.

CHAVEZ'S SHOPS FOR LOYALTY FOR WAR

Using part of Venezuela's oil profits, Chavez has created social programs in health care and education and Mision Mercal provides food at a discount of 20% to 70% to nearly half the population. Primary-care clinics and 30,000 Cuban doctors attend to the poor. Some also have access to all

levels of education. Venezuela's poverty rates have declined from 49% to 37% under Chavez. This still leaves over ten million poor, while many bosses and hacks in his movement have become fabulously rich — the stock market gained 129% in 2006, one of the world's highest.

Nevertheless, with these crumbs and a revolutionary-sounding program for construction of "socialism in the 21st century," Chavez hopes to win the loyalty of the Venezuelan workers, similar to Castro in Cuba. But Chavez also wants to assure the bosses and imperialists who support him that this is just rhetoric to fool the masses.

Shortly after his re-election he declared, "There is no space in Venezuela for any other project that is not the Bolivarian Revolution," and, "We don't want the dictatorship of the proletariat that Marx spoke of." During his last visit to Russia he stated, "We need to bring the invisible hand of the market and the visible hand of the state together in an economic system where there is as much of the market as possible and as much of the state as necessary."

His hero is Simon Bolivar — a rich Venezuelan slave-owner who, in the early 19th century, fought Spain on behalf of South American bosses' independence and dreamt of Latin America's unity. On this ideological basis, plus phony anti-racism, Chavez is building a 300,000-soldier army and a two-million citizen militia.

No capitalists or imperialists will ever serve workers' needs. Neither will patriotism/nationalism in any form. Mountains of workers' corpses have been piled high under these banners. Our class must reject patriotism, nationalism and any type of socialism.

Communism must be our goal. Masses of Venezuelan workers desiring and even fighting for change will not in and of itself make such a revolution. Communists who see the need to build such a red-led party must introduce these ideas as their primary duty to their class. Venezuelan workers need to join and build the PLP! ☛

LETTERS

Send Letters to CHALLENGE PERIODICALS,
PO 808, Brooklyn NY 11202 or email, cd188@juno.com

Collectivity, Not Capitalism, Worked in Seattle Storm

After midnight December 15th a wind-storm in Seattle knocked down an estimated 1,000 trees and took out power for nearly half the 3.5 million residents. At least 13 died mostly from carbon monoxide poisoning as they tried to keep warm with propane or generators during the twenty-degree nights. A 28-year-old and a family of four with two small children were among the casualties, while over a hundred were treated in emergency rooms for inhalation of toxic fumes. What a condemnation of capitalism's anti-collective nature! There was no need for anybody to die like this in a crowded city.

When a falling tree brought down our electric lines, we were forced to spend 8 nights at friends and comrades. We became unexpected guests at extended family birthdays and other social occasions, where everybody talked about the storm.

It wasn't long before people began to complain and their anger grew when they thought about Katrina or Iraq. The utility companies were arguing over who was going to pay for repair work while thousands remained without power or phones. "Imagine going through this for years in Iraq while bombs were dropping," said a bakery worker.

Some reminisced about the tighter neighborhoods of their youth. Others pointed to workers who spontaneously helped out. We saw some of this collective potential in our neighborhood. Our neighbors drove us around and lent us cars (ours were crushed by the tree). They warmed us and ran extension cords from their houses so we could dry our flooded basement since their power was restored before ours. We met even more of our neighbors during the first days as it was warmer in the street — where small multi-racial groups congregated — than in our individual homes.

A young comrade got more to the heart of things when he criticized the ideology of the "me generation." It's really a question of communist political leadership.

When the technological infrastructure collapsed, what was true all along became crystal clear. The organization and politics of the working class is key. This holds true be it the imperialist army in Iraq or Seattle's freezing citizens.

The spontaneous outpouring of help from workers, past and present, shows the potential for communist motivation, but not the actual fact. We need a "political general staff" for our class to reach its potential. We need a Party to lead a communist revolution.

Once the question was presented in this way, the electrical maintenance workers at my job designed life-saving, reasonably-priced solutions. "Why not have neighborhood centers that are wired underground with well-ventilated backup generators," they proposed. "Under communism, the Party would organize neighborhood and worksite political committees that could check on everybody and get them to these shelters if necessary," I

added. The storm showed once again that fighting for communism is a life and death question.

SHIVERING IN SEATTLE

EU Bosses Extend Beyond Western Europe

The CHALLENGE article (1/3/07), "Iraq Study Group Shows ..." says, "These nations are part of growing anti-U.S. energy and arms alliances, including China, Russia and French-led Western Europe." Europe hasn't been split into East and West since around the time of the fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989 — 17 years ago.

With the European Union already including Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, and planning to gobble up Romania, the reference to "Western Europe" is not just an anachronism but underestimates the threat European bosses represent for U.S. bosses.

A READER IN EUROPE

Sharpen Political Struggle in GI Appeal Movement

A letter — Link GI Petition Campaign To Red Ideas — in the last issue of CHALLENGE characterizes Cortright's solutions as "reformist" and asserts that, while the line in the Campaign to Appeal for Redress is "weak," we must work in this movement. This characterization of the appeal for redress and of Cortright's politics significantly understates the danger of both.

In this period of expanding war leading to World War III, any appeal to soldiers based on patriotism and reliance on the U.S. government is a serious danger to the working class. Such patriotism sets soldiers and the working class up for more wars, and blinds both to its potential as one international working class able to fight for their own interests. The Appeal is based on nationalism, with not a word of anti-racism or internationalism.

The Ford and Rockefeller foundations have funded Cortright because they fear an anti-imperialist, anti-racist movement in the military, especially at this time when the Iraq invasion has been labeled a failure. He is a paid analyst for the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund Communicators' Task Force on U.S. Global Leadership. He cannot be dismissed as a run-of-the-mill reformist.

Communists should work in the movements the bosses are using to win our class to the imperialists' side. But we must be sharply critical of the danger of patriotism in these movements. Reformist movements built and publicized by the bosses historically are meant to tie the working class to the imperialists. Struggle is primary over unity. The most important challenge we face is sharpening the struggle against the enemy ideas in the mass movement. We should not critically support their leaders or line.

Also, it would be wrong to conclude that the main, or only, way to work with GI's or to build an alliance between GI's, students and workers, is by using

Cortright's appeal for redress or tailing his politics. Every avenue has to be aggressively pursued to build an anti-racist, anti-imperialist alliance between workers, students and soldiers that can lead to turning the bosses' wars into a war for workers' power. There are many ways to do this.

Those working in Cortright's movement have the job of winning their friends away from the dangerous politics of the imperialists and the brass, some of whom — for example, Ohio Democrat Congressman Kucinich — support this petition. During the last presidential campaign, this "anti-war" politician urged his supporters to back Democrat John Kerry, who argued for national service and patriotism in the interests of the U.S. imperialists.

Our tactics in the reform movement do matter. However, they must be consistent with, not contradictory to our strategy to build the fight for internationalism and communism. Underestimating the dangers of nationalist reformists undermines the fight for communism and gives a longer life to the deadly imperialism we seek to destroy.

A COMRADE

Israeli Kibbutz: Socialism or Fascism?

Much has been made for almost 100 years of the alleged socialist experiment in Israel — the Kibbutz. This has been an idealist experiment, without private property on a given farm and where the children are raised collectively by Kibbutz members, not just by their own individual parents. Sounds good? In some ways, it could be. However, this system has two major flaws.

(1) However economically progressive it appears, those Kibbutzin that have had collective farmland could only sell their products in the capitalist system, characterizing Israel's economy, and, of course, Israel is part of world capitalism.

(2) The Kibbutz movement has always been a major contributor to the Israeli Army (IDF). Of course, Jews worldwide have viewed the IDF as bastion of defense for themselves, especially in Israel as well as the world over.

"Never Again!" certainly has been the voice of reassurance for Jews that the Holocaust will never happen again. But in reality, Israel is so closely allied with U.S. economic and political interests, that it has become a violent military state vis-à-vis its neighbors, especially toward the Palestinians. The story of David (a Jew, according to the Bible) and Goliath (a Palestinian), has been reversed, with David now the pitiless aggressor, and Goliath, the intended victim. Gaza, one of the Palestinian territories, has become a giant prison, and the West Bank constantly suffers one Israeli military incursion after another.

There's nothing rational about Israel's fear for its own survival. The children of the Kibbutz, who leave home to first join the Army and then afterwards pursue their careers, have unwittingly been manipulated by historical events into oppressing all working people in the

Western part of the Middle East.

RED EX-KIBBUTZ MEMBER

Airport Workers Fight Anti-Muslim Racism

On November 21, six Muslim clerics were profiled as possible terrorists and thrown off a US Airways flight at Minneapolis-St. Paul airport. They were handcuffed and interrogated for five hours by Homeland Security, the FBI, the Secret Service and other police agencies, all for the "crime" of speaking Arabic and looking like they were from the Middle East!

This incident sparked outrage among anti-racists. At the airport where we work, union members wrote, distributed and supported a union resolution condemning US Airways' racism, and sent them a copy.

At the same time, over the Thanksgiving weekend, Northwest Airlines ramp workers at Minneapolis-St. Paul participated in job actions against the threatened outsourcing of their jobs. Daily work stoppages lasted for a few hours with workers rallying on the tarmac. Again, workers at our airport endorsed a resolution supporting the Northwest workers, the immigrant Modelux workers at DeGaulle International Airport in Paris, and the ongoing battle in Oaxaca, Mexico. The resolution was distributed to the workers and copies are being sent to the Northwest and Modelux workers. A PLP leaflet linking all these struggles to the attacks against African immigrant workers at our airport was circulated by CHALLENGE readers and distributors. It said that from Paris to Oaxaca to Minneapolis-St. Paul, the international working class needs communist revolution.

AIRPORT RED

Use the Internet to Spread PLP's Ideas

CHALLENGE seems to be embracing the internet. In addition to citing the PLP website (www.plp.org) in the masthead, more articles refer readers to other websites. In the November 29 issue, the article on Metro transit from D.C. ends with a reference to the Local 689 website. The letter on medical fascism under the Nazis cites an online version of a museum exhibition. In the November 15 issue the editorial page refers readers to PLP's analysis of the 1956 anti-communist Hungarian revolt.

The editors are to be commended for linking the print version of CHALLENGE with the internet, which is increasingly used by many younger workers, students, professionals and soldiers worldwide to get all or most of their news these days. In addition, many periodicals and professional journals now have a section that summarizes online articles that might be of interest to readers.

CHALLENGE should consider a regular section or box that contains internet references to websites, blogs, You-Tube videos and other online material that can help communicate the Party's ideas and spread the truth about capitalism and workers' struggles around the world. Also, we should consider posting articles as they come in, especially around timely events like strikes, upheavals, AIDS Day, etc., rather than waiting until they appear in the print version.

A READER

GI 'Appeal' Fails to Indict Imperialists

The Washington D.C. Peace Center — a Quaker-led pacifist anti-war and anti-racist organization — decided to honor

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LETTERS CONTINUED

continued from page 6

the GI's who started the Campaign to Appeal for Redress from the Iraq War. A co-worker of mine who is heavily involved in the Veterans for Peace Organization suggested the name of one of the Appeal's organizers (also a friend of mine) to attend to get an award. But he couldn't go, so he sent a Marine buddy, Marcus, instead. I organized some co-workers to attend to show him support.

I also prepared a flyer explaining the Appeal, to encourage discussion and to remind workers and GI's that the U.S. government is the enemy of both of them and the Iraqi people, while outlining things people attending the event could do to help. Marcus knew no one there other than me and didn't know what to expect. He was very touched that we organized the flyer and the support.

I was disappointed in the affair itself. The Peace Center gave awards to about 24 groups and individuals. Few could speak and they were quickly shuffled on and off the stage. In fact, a group of awardees (including Marcus) were not even given their certificates on stage, being told, "OK, now get off the stage, we're running behind schedule."

I was pleased that a group of my co-workers felt it important enough to give up their Saturday night to attend. One read the Appeal and was disappointed to see how reformist it was. (The Appeal stated that its signatories were "patriotic Americans" who were proud to serve their country, and, while calling for the troops to be brought home, offered no insight into the cause of the war, such as U.S. imperialism, control over the oil, etc.).

I agreed that sharpening the political struggle among these anti-war GI's was needed, along the lines suggested in the flyer. Marcus enjoyed the conversation with my co-workers; all received CHALLENGE.

Our next step is to get a resolution passed at the next union meeting calling for participation in the Jan. 27th Anti-War March in Washington, D.C. and assembling a contingent of my local to attend.

D.C. RED

Paraguay: Electing Reformist Bishop
No Solution for Workers

Paraguay is the center of many struggles and of a growing U.S. military presence to counter its rivals in South America. Some of us are struggling to win people to the idea of one international working class, fighting for the needs of our class under one Progressive Labor Party. We distribute some CHALLENGES, have a PLP study group and engage in some struggles.

Paraguay is South America's second poorest country and one of the most corrupt in the world. But there is a lot of fight-back against the bosses. Recently nurses and doctors struck; the National Farmers Front (Frente Campesino Nacional) frequently occupy land and block major highways in demanding more land; and retired teachers are fighting for their well-deserved retirement pay.

Last November, the owners of supermarket Ycua Bolanos were tried for the August 2004 deaths of 400 people. These workers were burned to death when the owners locked supermarket doors during a fire. Their only defense? Preventing looting!

These vicious capitalists received sentences of only five years, about 4½ days for each murder. Workers rebelled against this injustice and for an entire day clashed with police, liberating the entire inventory of two other supermarkets owned by the murderers. The battle was so intense that police were left throwing rocks at the protestors.

Electoral struggles are intensifying contradictions within the reform movement. Voter fraud was widespread in recent elections for mayors and city councils, enabling the right-wing Colorado Party to triumph nation-wide. This party has ruled Paraguay for 70 years, led by dictator Alfredo Stroessner from 1954-1989, who gave asylum to Nazi war criminals, like Joseph "The Angel of Death" Mengele, after the Red Army crushed the Nazis. Stroessner was supported by the U.S. bosses because he was a staunch anti-communist.

Continuing this fascist tradition, Paraguay has begun military exercises with U.S. help to counter Venezuela's agreement to support Bolivia militarily on its border with Paraguay, should Bolivia need assistance. U.S. troops are stationed in the Chaco Desert, site of the Mariscal Estigarribia Airport.



Those opposed to the current rulers have mounted an "anything-but-Colorado" campaign against current President Nicanor Duarte Frutos for the 2008 presidential election. The main opposition candidate is former Catholic bishop Fernando Lugo, who has launched a social-democratic movement (Tekojoja in Guaraní, the language spoken by most people, along with Spanish). Workers are already organizing protests and fight-backs against Frutos and the Colorado Party.

Is this reformist movement the answer to the Colorado fascists? Our revolutionary communist politics have stimulated debate. Some progressive youth and some workers have bought CHALLENGE. A PLP Study-Action Group has begun, focusing on the need to build a mass communist movement.

However, Bolivia's Movement Towards Socialism (MAS) has recently expanded to Paraguay (PMAS), and claims that Bolivian-Venezuelan socialism, not communist revolution, is the solution. Several PMAS members have become frustrated with this socialist reform strategy and like PLP's revolutionary communist message.

Paraguay has a rich history of struggle under the leadership of the old communist movement in the 1960's under Oscar Creydt and the famous guerilla leader Agapito Valiente, as well as the armed struggle of the M14 Movement and FULN. Marxist ideas are not new to Paraguayans. We hope to add a new chapter by putting the fundamental principle of Marxism — revolution for communism — into every struggle we enter. The working class in Paraguay is ready for change.

RED GUARANI

RED EYE
ON THE NEWS

Below are excerpts from mainstream newspapers that may be of use for our readers.

'New' Iraq Plan: Stay in and grab oil

The Iraq Study Group report...was hardly a prescription for abandoning the U.S. military project in Iraq... James Baker was at pains to repeatedly point out...that the report "makes clear we're going to have a really robust American troop presence in Iraq and in the region for a long, long time..."

And...it said: "The United States should assist Iraqi leaders to reorganize the national oil industry as a commercial enterprise."

In short, the Baker-Hamilton report was a fall-back position for U.S. military intervention — and for using American firepower on behalf of U.S.-based oil companies ... (Norman Solomon, Creators Syndicate, 12/18)

Killer cops given every chance to fix a story

In a typical shooting incident where the police know who was involved but not how the shooting happened, investigators are trained to immediately separate and question suspects and participants, preventing those involved from getting together and devising a shared story...

In the 1997 Abner Louima case, preferential treatment bought time for the few bad officers to meet in the basement of the precinct and concoct a story.... In 1999, immediately after Amadou Diallo was shot 41 times, instead of isolating the four officers, their union delegates accompanied them — as a group — to the hospital so they could be treated for ringing in their ears. They spent the next several hours together.

Eventually a narrative emerged....

Of course, we don't know yet what narrative will be

offered by the officers who fired their guns in the Bell case. But we do know that before they utter a single word on the record, they will have had the opportunity to...review every finding of the crime scene unit... (NYT, 12/24)

The Real Global Threat is Profit System

To the Editor:

...Faced with the prospect of environmental catastrophe,...

There is no point in throwing money at the symptoms while the disease goes unchecked....And the problem, the disease...is...an economic system whose one yardstick is profit. (GW, 12/21)

Gov't wants a whiter, richer New Orleans

Sixteen months have passed since the apocalyptic flood that followed Hurricane Katrina. More than 13,000 residents who were displaced by the storm are still living in trailers provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Another 100,000 to 200,000 evacuees — most of whom want to return home — are scattered throughout the United States.

The undeniable neglect of this population fuels the suspicion among the poor and the black, who constitute a majority of the evacuees, that the city is being handed over to the well-to-do and the white....

The federal government has not come close to meeting the challenge of this overwhelming humanitarian crisis. (NYT, 1/1/07)

(No headline needed)

A top strategist at the Pentagon says the war on terror



could take 100 years. Today, President Bush warned against setting these time-tables. (Jay Leno)

Many Chinese remain proud of revolutionary surges

During the Cultural Revolution, many, many citizens rushed to join in voluntarily. Indeed, many Chinese today can still recall the initial sense of euphoria, liberation, and exhilaration that accompanied their participation in the movement....

It is, in the sense, their event — not something they simply suffered through, but rather something they own....

As outsiders,...it becomes very easy for us at once to view contemporary China as a repudiation of the past and to wait expectantly for the citizenry to cast off the government that victimized them in the past and still lionize Mao Zedong in the present. Yet for Chinese citizens, just as the Cultural Revolution is their own, so, too, is Mao Zedong and the Chinese Revolution more broadly. Their revolution's track record is undoubtedly ambivalent, encompassing the full gamut from exhilarating liberation to grotesque calamity, but — still in the process of unfolding.... (Harvard Magazine, January)

DESERTER'S BOOK EXPOSES BRUTAL RACIST U.S. WARMAKERS BUT MISLEADS ANTI-WAR SOLDIERS

U.S. Army private Joshua Key, who fled to Canada rather than return to Iraq, has written a moving and politically instructive account of his experiences. Key's memoir, "The Deserter's Tale" (as told to Canadian journalist Lawrence Hill), shows a poor, white, working-class young man from Oklahoma practicing anti-racism and internationalism while defying the brass in the midst of war.

Unfortunately, however, Key's admirable conscience and courage wind up down the drain. Blaming the war on Bush & Co. and not on the profit system, he mistakenly thinks he can hide out in Ontario until things blow over. History shows that individual desertions do nothing to limit capitalism's endless parade of wars. However, organized armed mutinies, rebellions, and mass fraternizations between "enemy" armies can prove tremendous advances towards communist revolution.

Key destroys the liberals' "white privilege" myth as he starkly describes growing up destitute in a two-room trailer. The homes he later raids in Iraq are "far more attractive, spacious, and comfortable." He manages to hold off "a string of Army recruiters" until after high school. But when Key and his wife, working as pizza deliveryman and waitress, can't feed their children, he finally falls prey to the "poverty draft." The lying recruiting sergeant assures Key that the Army will assign him to a "non-deployable" unit that builds bridges at bases in the U.S. Shortly after enlisting, however, Key finds himself in Colorado preparing for combat in Iraq.

SAVAGERY IN ABU GHRAIB AND FALLUJAH: OFFICIAL U.S. POLICY, NOT 'BAD APPLE' ABERRATION

Before shipping out, Key receives a thoroughly racist indoctrination: "Our commanders taught us to demonize and hate Iraqis and Muslims." Key's training shows that racist brutality is the official

policy of U.S. military officers and the politicians directing them. While GI's should have refused orders to murder and torture in Fallujah, Haditha, Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo, nevertheless those orders came from the top.

Says Key: "Our commanders told us that Americans were the only decent people on the planet and that Muslims and terrorists all deserved to die. One day, all three hundred of us lined up within the bayonet range, each facing a life-sized dummy that we were told to imagine was a Muslim man. As we stabbed the dummies with our bayonets...one of our commanders shouted into a microphone: 'Kill. Kill. Kill the sand n——s.'"

Key recalls a favorite marching chant of the drill instructors, "One shot. One kill. One Arab. One Asian." It reveals U.S. rulers' early attempts at motivating troops for racist slaughter beyond the Middle East.

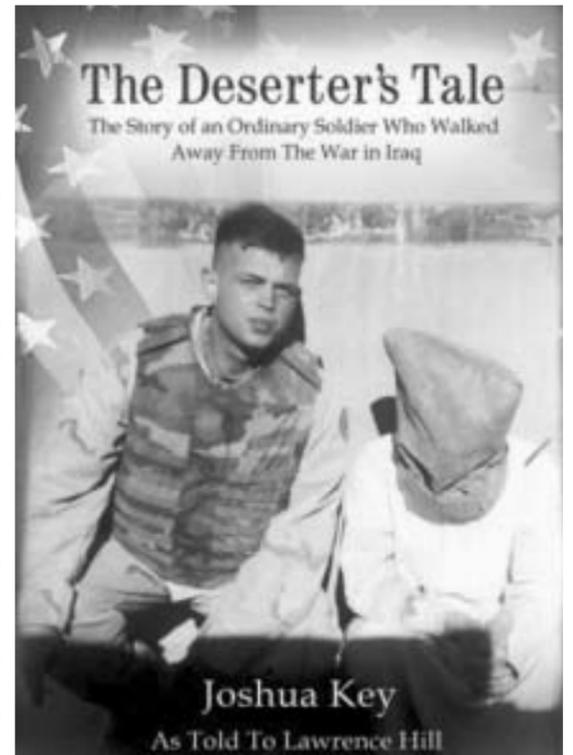
When Key arrives in Iraq, he sees that racist terror is indeed the Army's standard operating procedure. The brass tell GI's to treat every Iraqi as an enemy. Key's squad has the job of raiding houses in search of terrorists and rounding up every male over five feet tall for detention and likely torture. Key does his best to avoid the worst abuses. Under orders, he beats some Iraqis but kills none himself. He even makes friends and shares his rations with a few locals. Officers reprimand Key for "fraternizing with the enemy." But other GI's fall for their commanders' racism. Two outrages stand out. They disgust Key and help him decide to run. A U.S. soldier decapitates four innocent Iraqis with machine-gun fire and then kicks the heads around like soccer balls. Later, a soldier shoots to death a seven-year-old girl whom Key has been providing with food.

INSTEAD OF DESERTING, GI'S SHOULD ORGANIZE TO SMASH IMPERIALIST WARMAKERS

Granted a brief leave back to the U.S., Key makes up his mind to move with his family to Canada. At this point, the story sours politically. Although Key bravely faces the risk of prison as he eludes the Army officers tracking him, his individualistic solution offers no help to the Iraqis he once befriended. The Pentagon reports over 8,000 desertions since the war began. But the killing only accelerates.

Key also errs in counting on Canada to take him in. It may yet return the Key family to the U.S. Long gone are the days when Canada's Trudeau government, cozying up to Western European and Soviet bosses, welcomed thousands of deserters from the Vietnam War. The imperialist tide has since turned. Today, Canadian Navy destroyers police the Persian Gulf for the benefit of Exxon Mobil and Chevron, while Canadian troops fight under U.S. command in Afghanistan.

Sad to say, Key's tale does not serve the working class, despite its sincere anti-racist, anti-officer views. In fact, it aids the ruling class in several ways. Key never indicts imperialism — that is, the need of U.S. rulers to control the Mid-East and its oil at all costs — as the root cause of the Iraq war. By portraying Key as a sympathetic hero, it steers others down his dead-end road. Key examines but one side of the all-important question of ideology. He knows that the bosses use racism to get GI's to do their dirty work. But he ignores the opposite: The Vietnam



Syndrome still haunts the U.S. bosses. There are reports that Robert Gates' recent visit to Iraq included dealing with a military mutiny by the U.S. Army VI Battalion in Anbar province, where they refused to obey orders, preferring not to leave their base in Ramadi, the provincial capital * (see webpage below for more info). There is great potential for PLP'ers to win many black, white, Latin and Asian GI's to anti-racist, internationalist and anti-imperialist ideas through our communist politics.

(NOTE: "The Deserter's Tale" is due to be published by Atlantic Monthly Press next month. CHALLENGE obtained an advance copy, on which this article is based.)

* <http://globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=viewArticle&code=20061225&articleId=4261>

PLP History: Harlem Rebellion Grand Jury and Reform vs. Revolution on the Railroad

The PLP history column on the Harlem Rebellion (CHALLENGE, 1/7) reminded me of my own participation in that struggle, especially its reference to "daily picket lines" of the Grand Jury that had been convened to conduct a witch-hunt against the Progressive Labor Movement (PLM).

Whenever a PLM member was subpoenaed, he or she would ask friends and co-workers to join the picket line on the day we were to appear. I had worked on a railroad for ten years before our entire roster was laid off when our jobs were subcontracted out. Many found work elsewhere. When the Grand Jury subpoenaed me, I contacted many of my ex-colleagues, explained the circumstances to them (including being a communist in PLM) and asked them to join the picket line.

These workers had known me as an organizer of militant, anti-racist rank-and-file actions, for which they had elected me Local president. But throughout those ten years they had not known (so I thought) that I was also a member of the "Communist" Party ("C" P). That Party had instructed us not to tell anyone we were members or discuss communist politics with them because it would "isolate" us. This was the era of the Cold War and McCarthyite witch-hunts. (This, of course, was one of the reasons many of us left the "C" P and formed PLM and then PLP.)

The day of my appearance arrived and I was shocked to see about 20 of my former co-workers had responded to my calls. They had taken the day off from their new jobs to join a communist picket line for the first time in their lives. It was then that I real-

ized the enormity of my mistake in not trying to raise communist ideas with my co-workers. Had I done so, over a ten-year period, there's a good chance I would have been able to recruit some number of them. And now, after we had all been laid off, and many had found other jobs, we would have had "ready-made" communists at GM, the Transit Authority, Ford and other places where many of them now worked.

In fact, this is the way the bosses help us spread communist politics: bring us together into one work situation, give us the basis to recruit, then lay us off and force us to go elsewhere where we can repeat the process. Thus, if we do our job as communists, the bosses help our Party grow! This is part of what Karl Marx referred to when saying that "the capitalists create their own gravediggers."

But there is also the other side to this process. We must immerse ourselves in these workers' day-to-day reform struggles, fighting for many demands which we know capitalism will either deny us or, if we manage to win them, will eventually take away. After all, they have state power. But if we don't, as Lenin said, get down in "the muck and mire" of the class struggle, then we will not have laid the basis for them to listen to us and our ideas and eventually become communists themselves.

So we must do both — spread our red ideas amid participation in the daily struggle, even if we disagree with the reform road the workers may have chosen. In my case, it meant, for instance, warning the workers that going to the Labor Board for a "neutral" decision in our fight is an illusion, but still going with them



Ex-railroad workers join PL picket line

when we couldn't convince them. (Of course, there are limits, such as refusing to scab to help break other workers' strikes.) But when workers take actions which contradict their class interests, we will not be in position to wage a struggle with them against such actions — they are less likely to listen to us — if we haven't been involved in those daily reform fights.

If we don't stick with them and participate in the struggle they have chosen — even though we disagree and express those disagreements — we will end up "in glorious isolation." And if we take part in the daily reform struggle, even very militantly, but do not spread our communist ideas and attempt to recruit them, we will end up without a Party.

OLD-TIME COMRADE