

CHALLENGE



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Racist Imperialists Looted Haiti for 500 Years: Capitalism + Earthquake = Mass Murder

The following is a leaflet in Creole distributed by PLP:

Kapitalis Rasis Se Yon Reyèl Desas en Ayiti

Genyen yon bagay tou piti se "natirèl" desas ki pase an Ayiti a. Kou wè Katrina, tsunami ak yon santèn lot desas "natirèl" sanble tèt koupe ak enperyalis la – espesyalman US kapitalis la ki mete klas travayè yo an Ayiti anba kalite tèwib lanmò ak destriksyon ke yo resevwa nan tranbleman tè sa a.

Anba kapitalis la profi vini anvan tout bagay. Se travayè yo ki travay di pou fè bès yo fè pwofi. Men pou bès yo travayè yo se voryen. Bati lotèl liksyè pou touris yo, se sa ki pwofitab pou bès yo, se nan bi sa a yo bati yo. Bati kay pou pòv travayè yo pa pwofitab pou bès yo, konsa an Ayiti santèn milye moun ap viv nan bidonvil. Pratik konstriksyon rasis la fè dizèn milye moun mouri an Ayiti. Yon tranbleman tè ki sanblab ak 7.0 nan zòn San Francisco Kaliforya Ozetazini an 1989 se "sèlman" 63 moun ki te mouri.

Kapitalis la kòs desas sa a an Ayiti. Yo sipote diktatè asasen kou wè Divalye. Lè travayè ayisyen yo, revolte yo enstale yon Aristid koronpi ak akolit siksesè li yo. Bès yo enterese nan travayè y'ap peye a bon mache ap pwofi y'ap fè an Ayiti. Nan lane 1993 prezidan Disney Michael Eisner fè \$203 milyon nan mèm tan travayè ayisyen kap koud py-jama Mickey Mouse fè 12 santim a lè. Ajoute a tout sa plis 50% moun pap travay, kay ki pa solid, yon swen sante ki ki pa ekziste. Sa nou wè la se pa yon desas "natirèl" men, se rasis kapitalis ak enperyalis eksplwatasyon an.

Kounye a, frè ak sè nou yo bezwen èd nou. Yo bezwen lajan, sekou, manje, rad, sekouris ak doktè, enfimyè ak teknisyen. Nou tout dwe ede chèche bezwen ki pi nesèsè pou travayè ayisyen yo, en mèm tan n'ap bati yon sistèm kominis mondyal ki pral detwi sistèm kapitalis rasis sa a. Nou dwe lite pou genyen yon solidarite nan mitan klas travayè yo ki mare ansanm lit nou an nan peyi isit ak lòt travayè toupatou sou latè. Gouvènman ameriken an genyen pwoblèm nan distribisyon dlo, men yo kapab voye 4,700 solda trè vit. Yo vle "kontrole" distribisyon an. Yon lòt kote, Pat Robertson (pastè legliz fondamantal) ak jounalis David Brooks (New York Times) ki deja bay manti ki sanble degout dlo ak lide rasis lan. Robertson di Aysyen yo sinyèn kontra ak diab, lè yo te pran indepanans yo anba la Frans. Brooks di Ayiti genyen kilti ki pa kapab fè pwogrè. New York Times te byen kontan pibliye opinyon rasis sa a ki se yon pil fatra. Kombyen desas "natirèl" n'ap pran avan pou nou wè kapitalis la entere pa klas travayè yo ak yon revolusyon kote travayè yo pral dirije le mond. Konsa, rasis la ak eksplwatasyon ap bani.

Vrèman, nou konnen byen tout mensonj Robertson, Brooks ak latriye, Ayiti genyen yon istwa



Workers in Haiti collect food and supplies from a destroyed supermarket

batay kont opresyon ki inspire lòt peyi oprese yo nan le mond posibilite pou yon demen miyò. Frè ak sè nou yo an Ayiti ap soufri anpil anba britalite kapitalis la, depi kolon espanyol yo te anvayi zile a depi 500 zan yo te masakre popilasyon indyen an e yo te fè vini 700,000 esklav nwa pou travay nan rekòl nan kann ak kafe. Apre revòl esklav yo an 1791, kolon yo te pèdi batay la, Repiblik Dayiti te pran nesans, konsa esklavaj la te fini. Men, nouvo Repiblik Dayiti a te kontinye ap swiv model kapitalis franse a. Konsa nouvo Repiblik Dayiti a te ouvri biznis ak tout peyi kapitalis dan le mond, peyi a te ouvri vant li bay peyi kapitalis yo pou eksplawte travayè yo. Enperyalis ameriken yo vle fè pi gwo pwofi. Konsa li te sezi sistèm bank aysyen an e li te voye Marin an Ayiti. Li te kontrole Ayiti 1915 a 1934. Apre yo te pati, gouvènman ameriken an te kontinye garanti pwofi yo an Ayiti, lè yo ankouraje ak kenbe o pouvwa yon seri diktatè ak gouvènman poupetwèl korompi ki toujou deside pou kopere e kolabore ak bès yo ki se gouvènman ameriken an, chèf enperyalis la.

Kounouye a, nou deside pou nou travay pi di pou nou ede frè ak sè nou yo, li lè, li tan pou mouvman kominis la kapab bati tout bon vre, se li sèl ki kapab derasine sistèm kapitalis la, yon fwa pou tout.

Pibliye pa Progressive Labor Party — www.plp.org

U.S. Rulers Enforced Racist Poverty, Magnifying Quake Death Toll

Profit-hungry — mainly U.S. — racist capitalists, having looted Haiti for 100 years, have condemned more than 200,000 of its working class to die in the recent earthquake. Just as disgustingly, these same bosses, led by liberal phony Obama, seek military and political pay-offs from the slaughter through media-hyped "relief" efforts that benefit their own class far more than they do workers.

(A New York Times' op-ed article (1/14) reported: "Money that private aid organizations rely on comes from the United States government, which has insisted that a great deal of the aid return to American pockets — a larger percentage than that of any other industrialized country....Many projects...serve not impoverished Haitians but the interests of the people administering the projects.")

The first wave of killings came on January 12, when shack-like homes in overcrowded shantytowns collapsed on desperately poor and mostly jobless workers and their families. Public buildings cheaply constructed with no concern for workers' safety also fell. Tens of thousands of lingering deaths follow, due to

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"bottlenecks" hindering Obama's "humanitarian" aid effort, which, in fact, fronts for yet another U.S. invasion of Haiti.

Haiti's Working Class: A Super-exploited 'Reserve Army of Labor'

The horrific destruction of Haiti's slums results directly from U.S. rulers' and their allies' exploitation of the country's almost entirely black population as what Marx called a "reserve army of labor." Keeping one group of workers jobless and/or grossly underemployed and, when working, grossly underpaid, helps imperialist capitalists hold down wages throughout their sphere of influence. U.S. rulers' racism super-exploits black, Latino and Asian workers in Africa, Asia and Latin-America. But their racism reaches new heights in Haiti, a more effective wage suppressor for U.S. and allied bosses than even Africa is for their European and now Chinese rivals.

The Progressive Policy Institute reports (5/1/08): "Haiti's per capita income is \$450 per year. This is barely a tenth of the \$4,045 figure for Latin America and the Caribbean, and well below the \$746 average for sub-Saharan Africa....Between 200,000 and 350,000 of Haiti's nearly nine million people have permanent paid work."

U.S. policies deliberately enforce Haitian workers' perpetual impoverishment and largely jobless urbanization, which both boost U.S. rulers' profits and vastly magnified the earthquake death toll. U.S. Coast Guard and federal immigration cops brutally deter immigrants from Haiti, towing their rickety boats back out to sea and jailing those who do make it to U.S. shores.

U.S. garment bosses, with Bill Clinton, the

Rockefellers' Oily Hands In Haitian 'Relief'

The private U.S. relief groups at work in Haiti are channeling sincere compassion towards imperialist goals. The U.S. arm of Doctors Without Borders, which the media keeps trumpeting as a worthy recipient of donations for Haitian aid, is headed by Richard Rockefeller, MD, another crown prince of U.S. imperialism. His father David, heir to the vast Standard Oil fortune (now Exxon Mobil, Chevron, and BP), ran both Chase Manhattan Bank (now JP Morgan Chase) and the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) think-tank.

In David's heyday, the CFR drafted blueprints for President Kennedy's, Johnson's and Nixon's genocide in Vietnam and provided "geniuses" like the Bundys and Kissinger to execute it. Today "altruistic" Dr. Richard chairs the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, the CFR's main bankroller.

The CFR, with help from its mouthpiece at the New York Times, cooked up the "Weapons-of-Mass-Destruction" lie "justifying" Bush's 2003 Iraq invasion. This has since led to Exxon's partially-successful seizure of Iraqi oilfields at the expense of a million Iraqi deaths. "Healer" Richard's CFR contributed mightily to crafting the Bush-Obama killing surges in Iraq and Afghanistan.

UN's "Special Envoy to Haiti," shilling for them, and backed by an Act of Congress, lured workers to Port-au-Prince with promises of sweatshop jobs at less than \$2 a day. All but one of Haiti's textile plants — which accounted for 90 per cent of its exports — were in Port-au-Prince. And U.S. interests destroyed what there was of Haiti's farm economy (see page 3), increasing migration from the countryside to the capital.

"In the 1980s and 1990s, under pressure from international financial institutions and the United States, Haiti lifted tariffs that protected the livelihoods of its rice farmers, leaving local producers unable to compete with heavily subsidized U.S. agribusiness." (Boston Globe, 5/5/08)

Clinton Aids U.S. Rulers' 'HOPE' for a Permanently Poor Haiti

Last April, Haiti's U.S. puppet prime minister Michele Pierre-Louis told NY garment manufacturers they could count on "250,000" ultra-low-wage factory workers in Haiti "before 2011." She was touting the Haitian Opportunity through Partnership Encouragement Act, or HOPE, passed by Congress in 2006 and strengthened in 2008. It guarantees U.S. bosses investing in Haiti "duty-free status and lower labor costs [our emphasis, Ed.]...for the next 10 years." (Women's Wear Daily, 4/14/09)

In September 2009, Bill Clinton, pushing HOPE in Port-au-Prince, spoke of 100,000 garment jobs while betraying his true class loyalty: "All of our efforts will have to be judged by...whether we perform for the investors and make them a profit." (CBS-TV, 10/1/09) Blatantly imperialistic, HOPE forbids Haitian subcontractors to "engage in activities that undermine United States national security or foreign policy interests."

U.S. Military Invasion, Cloaked in 'Humanitarianism'; Half-baked 'Relief' Pales Beside U.S. War Efforts

When the quake hit, geopolitics suddenly replaced economics as Obama & Co.'s chief concern in Haiti. Warmaker-in-Chief Obama immediately grabbed the chance to assert U.S. military dominance over the Caribbean Basin, dispatching 10,000 Marines and soldiers under humanitarian cover, to quell any potential rebellion by angry, starving, jobless workers.

As a warning to Venezuela and Cuba, and their Chinese and Russian pals, U.S. forces immediately summarily seized the capital's

airport and sent warships steaming to Haiti's shores. While the Navy flotilla includes a hospital ship, it also boasts two guided missile cruisers, which, bristling with weapons, deal only in death.

The day after the quake, Douglas Fraser, the U.S. general in charge of the Haiti operation, made it clear that wielding power, not providing relief, was Job One: "We're focused on getting command and control and communications."

Delays in relief have caused thousands of needless deaths. Pentagon brass blame Port-au-Prince's battered one-runway airport and the "logistical nightmare" of distributing food and water. What nonsense! During World War II, U.S. construction battalions would build mile-long airstrips in days while under enemy fire. And today, the remotest U.S. Afghan outposts get regular supplies of food —and ammo — by the ton. Saving Haiti's workers is simply not a priority for the U.S. war machine.

One positive thing coming from the Haiti horror is the outpouring of working-class solidarity for the victims. But it will all go for nothing without a class outlook. Applauding Obama's militarizing "relief" or giving to Doctors Without Borders (really, Capitalists Without Scruples) can only bolster U.S. imperialism.

The class solidarity and militancy of Haiti's workers amid the catastrophe shows the way. We must unite with them in solidarity by raising the above ideas in unions, shops, on campuses, in barracks, churches and community organizations. And we must expose the real looters — U.S. bosses — while collecting aid to send directly to Haiti's workers on the streets, by-passing the phony relief groups serving U.S. imperialism.

These workers are battling the U.S.-led "security" apparatus to get food and water to share with their communities. What's needed even more is an internationalist party that embraces such struggle with the outlook of eventually eradicating the life-sucking billionaire class in a communist revolution. That's what the Progressive Labor Party is building. Join us. ✪

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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Why Articles Are Not Signed

The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from 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. While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual's writing of an article.



Bosses' Profit Drive Wrecked Haiti

Haiti Before the Earthquake

Electric service was working only an hour a day. No potable drinking water. Roads had 10-foot potholes. Totally inadequate sewage systems. Few public services. Unemployment over 60%. Millions with no satisfactory homes, or are homeless.

Before French colonization, 97% of the land was forested. The French cut and seized the most valuable wood. By the 1800's, only 60% of the land was forested. In recent years, desperate peasants cut the remaining trees for fuel. Currently, only 2% of the land is forested. Wholesale deforestation of the island has caused erosion of large parts of the arable land.

This, in turn, sent huge amounts of sandy soil into the sea, killing the coral without which the fish population dies, thereby impoverishing those making a living from fishing.

Port-au-Prince's population has grown from one million in 1988 to over three million today. Two million impoverished rural people moved to the capital seeking jobs. There were at most 60,000 factory jobs at the peak of production in the early 1980's. Hundreds of thousands stood on the streets, desperate for work.

Imperialism Destroys Local Agriculture

Imperialism has thrown most small farmers out of business. First, agribusiness shipped cheaper foreign-grown rice to Haiti. Second, the 1970's "food-for-work" program was used to give Haitians free foreign-produced rice in return for road construction work. Third, another 1970's-1980's policy, "PL480," under dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier, gave aid to local governments in the form of food; the local governments distributed this food, selling it below cost on the market. Fourth, in the 1990's, the USA and Haiti lifted tariffs on foreign-produced food; this policy, initiated under military regimes, has continued under Aristide, Lavalas and Préval. Poor local farmers could not possibly sell their products under these conditions.

Finally, recent global food price increases have meant mass starvation in Haiti. Many now eat "dirt cookies" — dirt mixed with sugar and water and sold as "food" to stave off hunger. ☛

(We just received this message from a friend in Haiti, a militant trade unionist fired for organizing but still in the struggle.)

Brothers, sisters, comrades and friends: Haiti has just been struck this 12th of January by a violent earthquake, largely destroying the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince and causing, without exaggeration, at least 200,000 deaths. The country was already half-dead, torn to pieces, the prey of crises both manufactured and real, forced down onto its knees before the blind application of the policies of structural adjustment imposed, or at least enabled, by the often cynical behavior of callous rulers.

This violent earthquake seems to have ended any hope that Haitians still had. But the working class of Haiti cannot die. Just as the Haitian revolution showed the way, breaking through to the road of freedom [against slavery], so will it come through in this situation.

Haiti's motto — the world's first black independent republic — is "L'Union Fait la Force" ("Unity is Strength"). So your unity, solidarity with us in Haiti will be most warmly welcomed.

Help us face up to this tragic situation.

A Friend in Haiti

U.S. and European Imperialists Looted Haiti for 500 Years

1492 — Columbus lands and claims the whole island for Spain. In the following years the indigenous population was nearly completely wiped out by disease, enslavement and murder.

1606 — British, French and Dutch pirates establish bases to attack Spanish ships.

1664 — France takes control of the western part of the Island; began importing slaves in 1670. Slave insurrections were frequent. Some slaves escaped to the mountains and settled with the few remaining indigenous people.

1791 — A slave revolt begins the Haitian Revolution. Former slaves establish a government.

1796 — The British invade and are defeated.

1802 — Napoleon sends a massive invasion force, including 40,000 troops from other European countries. France gains control of part of Haiti and tries to reestablish slavery, but are defeated after a brutal war that killed tens of thousands of Haitians and ended with over 30,000 French and European troops dead. Poland's military force refused to fight; about 100 joined the Haitians to fight Napoleon's forces. Afterwards the Poles were the only whites allowed to remain in the country.

1804-1825 — France, Britain and the U.S. impose a crippling embargo, destroying Haiti's economy and force Haiti's government to pay 90 million gold francs to France as compensation for "lost property," i.e., the slaves. The government is forced to take out high interest loans from U.S. banks, taking until 1947 to pay off the debt.

1915-1934 — U.S. Marines invade at the request of U.S. banks holding Haiti's debt, to prevent Germany from establishing a naval base. The Marines dissolve Haiti's government. The U.S. State Department writes a new constitu-

tion, eliminating the prohibition on foreign ownership of land. When Haiti's parliament refuses to ratify the new constitution, the Marines, led by General Smedley Butler, dissolve the parliament and enact the State Department's constitution through a rigged election limited to 5% of the population.

1934-1947 — The Marines leave but the U.S. retains control of Haiti's finances.

1995-present — U.S. and UN troops invade, initially to help Jean-Bertrand Aristide return to power. In 2004 the U.S. kidnaps Aristide and removes him from office.

General Smedley Butler, 'A Racketeer for Capitalism'

"I spent most of my time being a high-class muscle-man for Big Business, for Wall Street and for the Bankers. In short, I was a racketeer, a gangster for capitalism.

"I helped make Mexico, especially Tampico, safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in. I helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American republics for the benefits of Wall Street. The record of racketeering is long. I helped purify Nicaragua for the international banking house of Brown Brothers in 1909-1912. I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests in 1916. In China I helped to see to it that Standard Oil went its way unmolested.

"During those years, I had, as the boys in the back room would say, a swell racket. Looking back on it, I feel that I could have given Al Capone a few hints. The best he could do was to operate his racket in three districts. I operated on three continents." ('War is a Racket,' Brigadier General Smedley D. Butler) ☛

Reprinted from CHALLENGE, 7/29/09



NEW YORK, NY, July 9 — International working-class solidarity was on display as a group of PLP'ers occupied the main office of the Haitian Consulate. They demanded immediate release of political prisoners detained in the Rene Preval regime's fascist crackdown on workers and students in Haiti who are fighting for an increase of the minimum wage. Our class brothers and sisters from Haiti nodded their heads in approval as we chanted "same enemy, same fight, workers of the world unite" and were glad to receive the latest issue of CHALLENGE. Every opportunity we have to emphasize and reinforce the bond we share with workers in struggle around the world is a great opportunity and privilege to partake of. In this period of sharpening economic crisis it is crucial that we hold up militant responses to the bosses' attacks on workers as examples to be followed, no matter where in the world our class is fighting back.

Developing Communist Leadership in Heat of Oaxaca Class Struggle

OAXACA, MEXICO, January 13 — Last December, 37 comrades attended a communist school here. A broad discussion included an analysis, with examples, exposing the evils of capitalism, studying political economy, and stressed the urgency of continuing to build a base for communism. But, in a new dynamic, we formed work-groups to answer such questions as:

- Why does poverty exist?
- Why are there wars, and can they be avoided?
- What is communism and how does it work?
- Why do we need a party to build communism?
- Why should we fight directly for communism, not for socialism?

Then each work-group reported on its understanding of these questions, enabling the majority to participate. It was encouraging to hear some of the new participants explaining that war is inevitable due to the nature of capitalism or that the only war that will exist under communism is one against hunger, racism, sexism, etc.

Discussions focused on the lessons of the 2006 uprising against the Oaxaca state government and its murderous Governor, Ulysis Ruiz. One lesson was that, if we fight consistently for

the Party's line of organizing a movement of workers and students with the long-term goal of communist revolution, we get results.

Fighting for PLP's politics in the heat of the uprising wasn't easy. Internally Party members disagreed. Some thought our main role should be to support the uprising while others felt it was more important to sharpen and develop

unions and mass organizations — and see PLP as an alternative. Recently a group of families who regularly read CHALLENGE and gave mass leadership in these struggles agreed to meet with PLP. Another positive aspect was the presence of new youth, creating the potential for future leaders among young workers to build the Party.

At an afternoon dinner at some comrade's home, we continued discussing what communism is and how it will work. Despite the fatigue of those who had traveled all night to come to the schools, our enthusiasm lasted well into the night.

An older comrade, whose activity had been somewhat distant from the rest of the Party's, asked for support to

carry out the Party's political work in his community, which we'll be planning shortly.

In order to gain greater ability to carry out the Party's politics among the masses and develop new political leaders who will guarantee building for communism, we're planning three communist schools in 2010.

Greetings to all comrades worldwide as we advance qualitatively and quantitatively this year in the fight for the international working class. LONG LIVE COMMUNISM! ☘

...if we fight consistently for the Party's line of organizing a movement of workers and students with the long-term goal of communist revolution, we get results.

the ideological struggle for communism. We concluded that they aren't necessarily opposites — we were part of many of the actions, including proposing more militant workers' struggles — if we focus the action on our communist outlook and expose the illusions in reforms and reform leaders.

This produced results: recently some communities who were among the most militant, today are disillusioned with APPO — a coalition of

Seizing Opportunity to Build PLP in Fight vs. Budget Cuts

NEW YORK CITY, January 3 — The recent Obama Nobel Peace Prize award and widespread budget cuts have opened the door to build the Party at our school. Our goal as communists in PLP is to link the cuts to the bosses' massive war budget for Afghanistan and Iraq, to expose the inter-imperialist wars and rivalries dominating the world and to expose the nature of the cuts as racist, an attack on the overwhelmingly black and Latino student population.

A PL teacher had already planned to teach a unit on Afghanistan as part of the World Literature curriculum. As soon as he heard that Obama was sending even more troops, he seized the opportunity to discuss it in the classroom.

The comrade discussed the pipeline (see CHALLENGE, 12/23/09) and explained that capitalism is little more than organized crime — whoever controls the product, controls the streets. When the class was asked what product was being fought over, they shot back "oil to control the world."

The students were informed that they would soon be watching the film "Afghan Women" and that a comrade who had served in Iraq would be visiting the classroom to discuss the war. Integrating Obama's Nobel Peace Prize with the current escalation of the pipeline war, combined with proper classroom planning, created the opportunity to build closer ties with the students and raise class struggle and consciousness.

That same day, the school's union chapter was meeting to discuss the budget cuts, the fact that the bosses want to remove tenure and fire teachers after ten years as well as other

attacks on the working class. PL teachers and students in the school had already decided at an earlier PLP club meeting to call for a demonstration in front of the school. So at the union meeting PL'ers raised the need to fight back through a rally. The chapter leader liked the idea so it was agreed that a union action would be set for the following Tuesday. PL'ers envisaged bringing students since only by building worker-student unity can the Party and the fight for communism be advanced.

One teacher who has previously participated with the Party took leadership, made the flier and posted it for the event on Monday. The event could not have happened without her help and initiative.

The PL teacher didn't do enough to build for it, but at 5:30 AM the alarm rang and he showed up alone, in the cold, to be met by other teachers. Several others showed support, and one asked to join the action committee to help plan larger future events. Several students walking by joined the rally. Within ten minutes, a group of four teachers and ten students were rallying outside the school chanting, "Budget cuts mean, we gotta fight back." One teacher in particular was impressed and inspired as she did not believe the students would be so loud.

Though the rally was small, it raised spirits at the school. Now people there want to hold another one. Aspects of the Party's politics were clearly present as workers and students united under communist leadership to fight for our class. Years of patient CHALLENGE distribution and struggles inside the classroom as well as hours spent afterwards at local taverns bore fruit when the opportunity presented it-

self.

Though the chapter leader had the best of intentions, she wanted to postpone the rally until the media could be called. This could have been disastrous since it might have re-enforced the ideology of "we can't do anything." This thinking of "let's not do anything until every 't' is crossed" and "let's rely on the media" are bad ideas. They hold us back from struggle and make us dependent on part of our enemy — the bosses'-owned and -controlled media.

We must constantly do everything we can, within the limits of our circumstances, to motivate our co-workers towards increased struggle and understanding of communist ideas.

Many students who later heard about the rally were excited about it and wanted to participate in another one. Two signs that the students made were posted in the hallway adjacent to a classroom and many students read them with pride. This will be the first of many actions we will organize, becoming schools for communism to bring down the system.

The following Thursday the union chapter leader noted that a recently-closed school had just organized a large rally, saying we should do one in solidarity with them. She said that since the Tuesday rally went so well, we should have a larger one in front of the school, invite students and parents and notify the media. This action clearly illustrates how the working class leads the way and that we have much to learn from them.

(Continued next issue; stay tuned) ☘

Algeria: Wildcat General Strike Paralyzes Ports, Auto, Steel Plants

ALGIERS, January 15 — A massive wildcat general strike of nearly 20,000 auto, steel, port and public health workers is in its twelfth day and is spreading across Algeria, amid repeated pitched battles with thousands of cops and security forces. Workers are not only striking against their companies but also directly against the government, defying its ban on public rallies and demonstrations, stemming from a "state of emergency" declared in the early 1990s.

Strikers are demanding a wage hike, and in a political challenge to the government, changes in the minimum wage and tax laws. They're also denouncing the sweetheart deal signed by their union misleaders which raises the retirement age from 50 to 60 for workers doing difficult and dangerous work, some of whom began working at age 17.

One worker declared, "For years they've been promising us significant wage increases. Algeria is raking in hundreds of billions of dollars in oil profits but the citizen still has to contend with indescribable poverty."

In condemning the union sellouts, one worker told the press: "I began to have doubts when all the parties said they were satisfied with the meeting of the UGTA [the union], the government and the bosses. Three speakers, each of whom is defending his interests, cannot all be equally satisfied unless it is on the backs of the workers."

Strikers Battle Cops

On January 3, 5,000 SNVI auto workers wildcatted near Rouiba, to be joined within 24 hours by workers in Hussain-Dey near Algiers, in Annaba to the east and in Tiaret in the southwest, as well as by thousands in the industrial zone east of here. The cops blocked marchers there by massing all-country vehicles, troop transport vans, tear gas grenades, water cannon and sanitation trucks to occupy strategic intersections in the zone. One worker said it was ironic since it is the workers who had produced all these vehicles.

Workers from Anabib, Mobsco, Hydroamangement and Enad also walked. All told, 11,000 had struck.

Marching workers have been attempting to

force their way through police roadblocks. On January 6, 2,000 workers heading from their factory gates to Rouiba were stopped by police, who injured three workers. The next day, 5,000 marched on Rouiba, when two more were injured in clashes with thousands of riot police. The latter are trying to prevent different groups of factory strikers from joining together in these demonstrations.

On the same day, workers tried to force their way through roadblocks leading to the Mobsco factory on the main roads in the industrial zone. Then when hundreds of gendarmes armed with wooden clubs resembling pickaxe handles rained down blows on the front ranks, barring the route. The workers chanted slogans exposing the government and the union confederation and its chief sellout, Sidi Said.

When the union misleaders tried to pacify the angry workers, they began throwing stones at the cops' roadblocks.

"We work under difficult conditions and we can't even manage to feed our children," declared one worker. "The oil money is shared by the [government] and their zealous servants, while the worker is condemned to live a hell on earth."

Another said, "Despite the repression, we aren't going to stop demonstrating if the authorities do not announce concrete measures to improve our purchasing power."



The worker has a sign reading "grève" which means "strike."

The boss says "Believe me, we have the same train of life [standard of living]... only you are in the economy class car."

-from El Watan, January 18, 2010.

Steel Goes Out; Port Paralyzed

On January 12, 7,200 workers at Arcelor-Mittal, the giant multi-national outfit, began an "unlimited strike" to prevent the company from closing its El-Hidjar plant near Annaba and force it to renovate to keep it open. The next morning, the steelworks, the depots and warehouses, and port installations were totally paralyzed. Two days later a massive march of steelworkers went from company offices to the guard post at the steelworks.

This uprising of basic industrial workers in Algeria is a model for all industrial workers to follow. But the bosses still hold state power and will use this apparatus, helped by their lieutenants "leading" the unions, to attempt to either crush or divert these militant workers from their just demands. What is needed is communist leadership to head the workers' movement in the direction of revolution, to destroy the bosses' state power and establish workers' power, the only answer to the continuing hell created by capitalism. ☸

France: Undocumented Strikers March, Call for Greater Unity

PARIS, January 9 — About 6,000 people marched here today in the cold and snow demanding "across-the-board 'legalization' and the abolition of the ministry of shame," that is, the Ministry of Immigration and National Identity. Simultaneously, there were calls for greater unity among the organizations defending undocumented workers, 6,000 of whom have been on strike since October 12.

The march included 14 undocumented-worker collectives from the Paris region, plus the CSP 59 collective from Lille in northern France. The latter group chanted, "We have marched from Lille to Paris to remind Mr. Sarkozy [France's president] that it's because of the IMF [International Monetary Fund] and the multi-nationals that we left our countries." (The chant rhymes in French.) Other chants were: "I'm here, I'm staying, I won't leave!" and, "We are in danger, we aren't dangerous!"

Massed anti-riot police stopped the marchers from reaching the French presidential palace.

"We've been trying to achieve unity around the rue Baudelique [see below], but it hasn't been easy to organize," said Djibril Diany, a spokesman for the CSP 75 collective. "Since [the 1996 occupation of the church of] Saint Bernard, the undocumented workers' movement has not been unified. But unity is very important so that we can be strong and solid against the government."

The "rue Baudelique" is a complex of empty buildings in Paris which has been occupied since last July by thousands of undocumented workers led by the CSP 75. They've renamed the complex the "Ministry of Legalization of All Undocumented Workers." Roland Diagne, a CSP 59 spokesman, said: "Today, Paris is the center of the struggle, which has taken on two forms: the strikes of undocumented workers and the Ministry of Legalization. These two forms overlap and they have to come together. We need the broadest possible united front of resistance to the government."

Continuing its attacks on the undocumented workers' movement, the French government has gone to court to force the village of Billière (population 25) in southwestern France to blot out a fresco, "The wall of the deportees," that's painted on their community center. It's dedicated to the memory of deported undocumented workers and their children. In 2009, France deported 29,000 undocumented immigrants.

Today's demonstration proclaimed an aim to protest "laws that create undocumented workers." It's clear, however, that demonstrations and strikes cannot end such laws, because capitalism needs the super-profits it makes by super-exploiting undocumented workers. Only communist revolution, which will smash all borders and the capitalists who create them, will emancipate these and all workers. ☸

LETTERS



PLP Students, Teachers Lead Action vs. Fare Hike

The unfolding of the recent MTA (Metropolitan Transportation Authority) protest was a classic example of how strategy and tactics need to be based on objective reality. A PL teacher in another school told me we were planning a protest the following Tuesday against NYC MTA bosses' plan to take away free student Metrocards. We both understood the need to sharpen the class struggle by leading students and teachers to protest this attack against our class.

I told my classes on Thursday about the Tuesday protest. On Friday morning a student said that there would be a massive protest on Monday organized through Facebook. I talked to another comrade who informed me that the massive protest was on Monday and had been on the local news that morning. A few phone calls later, and the protest that was planned for Tuesday was moved to Monday so that we could centralize our forces.

On Monday, PL'ers made a concerted effort to tell their friends and classes about the protest. Several students had been inviting their friends over Facebook, and they were struggling with them to go to the protest. Ironically, student PL'ers who rarely miss events could not make the protest, but several students and a teacher came to what was their first protest.

Watching students — who had a week earlier marched outside of our school — invite friends and protest in front of the MTA was inspiring. One student grabbed a bullhorn and led chants, as did the teacher who was at her first protest.

Even though the rally was supposedly organized through Facebook by others, it was our Party that provided on-the-ground tactical leadership. We brought the bulk of the students, parents and teachers that stayed, and if it weren't for our Party, the political misleaders would have hijacked the demonstration. The demonstration foreshadowed how our Party will some day be able to lead millions away from the bosses' political misleadership, how well we can coordinate our actions and how we can change our actions based on a strategic understanding of changing objective circumstances.

Red Teacher

Summer Projects Were Important Steps in 2009

In a club meeting of a group of PLP teenage students, we read and discussed the latest edition of CHALLENGE. We read the article about the highlights of 2009. We felt that overall in 2009 there were great advances in the Party's work, both internationally and also locally, especially the Summer Projects in Seattle and Los Angeles. We felt the Projects should have been covered in the article "2009 Marked by Capitalism's Crisis, Workers' Anger and Fight-Back." These were important steps in sharpening the Party's work and understanding

of the importance of work in industry and the military.

There were connections made in the Summer Projects between Party members of different generations and different cultures. Allowing people from different countries and different states to meet and interact with the new PLP members and friends is very important. It influences not only PLP members but also workers in different industries who are getting exploited more and are not taking the "sugar-coating" but becoming cynical and angry and thus being more open to fascism or communism. And even though great things have happened inside and outside PLP, more raids, check-points, budget cuts, and layoffs have been occurring. Also, there's more war. Not only have the cuts affected the workers themselves, but also the sons and daughters of the working class. The Summer Projects gave workers, soldiers, and students the solution to these attacks. This work can't be underestimated. It represents one of the big gains of 2009.

Also, we had a forum recently where we students presented a slide show and explained how the war in Afghanistan is linked to the budget cuts and exploitation of millions of workers. We showed how all the attacks made against the working class are used to pay for the bosses' crisis and wars. Students not only want to help fight to stop the attacks on the working class but want to change the whole system that makes everyone except the bosses suffer. Our presentation helped show that the solution is to fight for communism.

Students from L.A.

'Why isn't PLP in 9/11 Truth Movement?'

I researched issues of CHALLENGE going back to 9/11/01. I found 28 articles mentioning the events of 9/11: 17 uncritically accepted the "official" story, that the attack was carried out by Al Qaeda and fire brought down the buildings. Seven articles accepted the idea that the U.S. rulers knew about the attack, but let it happen on purpose (LIHOP theory). Two articles mentioned the idea that the U.S. rulers could have planned the attack and carried it out on purpose (MIHOP theory). One article (the editorial on 9/12/01) took no position. Four articles downplayed the significance of 9/11 as compared to other mass murders, wars, etc. carried out by the capitalist class at other times and places. (The total adds up to 31 articles instead of 28 because some stories mention

two possibilities.)

Only one article mentioned the growth of a movement that questions the official story. PLP apparently has no presence in that movement, as there are no articles about any political struggles going on within the "911 truth movement." Since PLP believes in joining mass movements to win people to the Party's understanding of world events, why is PLP not active in the so-called 911 truth movement? Does PLP regard the movement as unalterably misguided, not a mass movement worth investigating, or not important?

Many architects and engineers have pointed out that the physical evidence presented to justify the official story violates the laws of physics. An international team of scientists published a peer-reviewed article in a scientific journal proving that nanothermitic explosives brought down the buildings on 9/11. It is puzzling to watch an organization that was quoting the Hart-Rudman Report before 9/11 stand on the sidelines of the 9/11 truth movement.

Skeptical engineer

CHALLENGE Comment: We appreciate the letter and agree that based on the Hart-Rudman report and past ruling-class lies, we feel there is a lot more to the story of 9/11 than the "official" ruling-class version. We lean towards the idea that, at a minimum, the ruling class had some idea this was going to happen. We remain open to other possibilities.

We have not been active in the 9/11 truth movement because we have limited forces. We feel that at this time the liberal wing of the ruling class is the main enemy. Therefore, we've concentrated our forces in the unions and factories and anti-war, campus and community organizations being built by this wing of the ruling class.



Seattle Boeing Summer Project Participants

Militant Healthcare Workers Need Broader Unity vs. Racist Bosses

BROOKLYN, NY, January, 12 — Healthcare workers at three of nine healthcare centers run by a private medical group here are furious and fighting back. They face cuts in paid holidays, loss of paid days off, longer work-days and no increase in their meager wages. Their struggle mirrors those of workers from coast to coast as U.S. bosses attempt to lower labor costs as international capitalist competition intensifies. This is especially intense for black and Latino workers, who, because of racist discrimination, suffer super-exploitation.

Here, these mainly low-paid black and Latino women workers are counting on their union to lead this fight. The reformist unions, however, are unwilling to challenge the system that can only survive by squeezing extra profits from the racist and sexist exploitation of black, Latino, immigrant and women workers. Workers need to fight for a system, communism, that is organized around meeting our needs or we will never get off the treadmill of trying

to gain or retain the crumbs the bosses offer.

Today members of SEIU 1199 HealthCare East picketed one of the three health centers whose contract had expired. (The nine centers have different contracts and different unions.) The arrogant managers from Pivot had also unilaterally begun increasing the work-week and lowering paid days off during contract negotiations. They had also locked out workers today for daring to picket this center. Workers angrily chanted, "Bosses say cut back, we say fight back!" and, "The workers, united, will never be defeated." At this center, where a previous march to the administrative office had resulted in suspension of 17 workers, none were intimidated.

The union has planned a three-day strike at the three centers, but it has not organized to spread the fight to the other six centers in the medical group. The cuts healthcare workers face are part of an attack on the working class as a whole. Health-

care workers need to unite with patients and other union workers in a common struggle that can build working-class solidarity and confidence in the power of our class.

Union retirees came to today's picket line to offer solidarity. We spoke to workers and learned about their struggle and exchanged experiences. One retiree explained to the receptive picketers that workers and patients have the same enemy and the same fight in battling the healthcare bosses.

Today's militance and reception to solidarity was a positive step. Communists in Progressive Labor Party will build support for this struggle in unions, schools and community organizations. In the class struggle we can all learn to fight and fight to learn. This is an important part of building an army that can rid us of the racist, exploitative capitalist system. ☪

U.S. Communists, Stalin Crucial in Busting Baseball's Jim Crow

Among the best-kept secrets about the battle against U.S. ruling-class racism is the huge 10-year anti-racist campaign conducted by communists in busting the 50-year exclusion of black players (and, for the most part, by extension, Latino players) from professional baseball.

The subject arose recently in obituaries upon the death at 98 of Lester Rodney, the first sports editor of the Communist Party's newspaper the Daily Worker (DW). Brooklyn Dodger president Branch Rickey is credited with breaking this barrier, signing Jackie Robinson to play for the Dodgers in 1947. But Rickey, who had run a virtual slave operation when heading the St. Louis Cardinals' farm system, was as profit-driven as any boss.

Given the anti-racist sentiment flowing from the fight against Hitler, Rickey figured black players would eventually be signed so he might as well get the profit jump on his rivals.

As it happens, the Village Voice (6/10/1997) reported, "The Seventh World Congress of the Communist International..., presided over by Joseph Stalin in 1935, played a significant role in Jackie Robinson suiting up for the Brooklyn Dodgers on April 15, 1947.

"It was decided at the Congress that the Daily Worker, the feisty newspaper of the American Communist Party, should focus...attention on sports...in an attempt to make the paper more appealing" to the working class. And the vantage point for this attention was the fight against racism. A DW editorial contrasted baseball's Jim Crow with Hitler.

So on August 16, 1936, the DW pronounced: "Jim Crow baseball must end." In the next two years Rodney produced over 150 articles pushing the campaign. And over the next decade, the DW condemned the club owners for banning black players and criticized the bosses' press for ignoring the issue.

The DW, joined by the CPUSA youth group the Young Communist League, organized a grass-roots

campaign, establishing picket lines and circulating petitions outside major league ball parks, collecting tens of thousands of signatures and sending them to the blatantly racist baseball commissioner Kene-saw Landis.

Rodney and the DW actually forced the Boston Red Sox to try out three players, which coincidentally included Jackie Robinson. But the Sox dismissed them out of hand. (Perhaps, if they had signed them, Boston would not have had to wait nearly another 40 years to win a World Series.)

One of the Negro League club owners offered the Yankees four player contracts, including Willie Mays, Robinson and Josh Gibson, probably baseball's greatest catcher, but the racist Yankee owners turned them down.

Meanwhile, Rodney interviewed major league players for their reactions. In 1937, Yankee great Joe DiMaggio, who barnstormed with Negro League teams after the season, told Rodney that, "Satchel Paige is the greatest pitcher I've ever batted against." While other reporters heard him, only Rodney printed DiMaggio's comment about, arguably, the greatest pitcher that ever lived.

Landis and the club owners dismissed the anti-segregation campaign as "a communist ploy." The white baseball reporters joined the owners' efforts in a "conspiracy of silence." Meanwhile, the baseball establishment refused press credentials to reporters for the black newspapers, denying them access to the players.

But while the "mainstream" sportswriters remained silent, helping prolong baseball's Jim Crow, the communists never let up, furthering the long struggle against racism generally.

In "Baseball's Great Experiment: Jackie Robinson and His Legacy," Jules Tygiel wrote that the Daily Worker and Rodney "unrelentingly attacked the baseball establishment," forcing the issue before the public. And Arnold Rampersad wrote in his 1997 biography, "Jackie Robinson," that "the most

vigorous efforts" to end the color barrier "came from the communist press."

This campaign was part of the communists' tremendous effort in that era to combat racism throughout capitalist society. But it also must be noted that Rodney and the CP, while exposing racism, did it largely from the vantage point of "extending American democracy" to black people, rather than from a communist perspective of exposing racism as integral to the profit system. They were advocating it as a reform to make capitalism "more democratic," not as part of a revolutionary fight to overthrow it.

This writer, when a 19-year-old long-time DW reader, encountered this weakness in 1949 when writing to Rodney disputing his characterization of the Dodgers as "the proletariat's team," while marking the Yankees as representing "corporate America." That was before the players' union and multi-million-dollar salaries; most players had to work in the off-season to make ends meet, were sent one-year contracts and if they refused, they simply didn't play. I maintained what I felt was a "class view," that the Yankee and Dodgers players had much more in common with each other than either had with their bosses.

Rodney somewhat accepted this analysis, even offering me the paper's press passes to cover the two teams that summer. But ultimately, he and the CP took the reformist road, Rodney quitting the party in 1958 following Soviet leader Khrushchev's anti-communist condemnation of Stalin.

While the CP and Rodney played an outstanding role in fighting racism in sports, it is still widespread there and in all of society. Racism can only be eliminated when capitalism, which spawns racism, is destroyed by communist revolution. Then athletics will involve the entire working class, and not be a conduit for bosses to make billions in profits while workers suffer mass racist unemployment and all the other evils of capitalism. ☪

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

Religions help ruling-class sexism

NYT — The New Testament quotes St. Paul (I Timothy 2) as saying that women "must be silent..." An Orthodox Jewish prayer thanks God, "who has not made me a woman." The Koran stipulates... that a woman's testimony counts for half a man's....

Abuses — along with more banal injustices, like... paying women less for their work — arise out of a social context in which women are, often, second-class citizens. That's a context that religions have helped shape....

"Women are prevented from playing a full and equal role in many faiths, creating an environment in which violations against women are justified...."

"The belief that women are inferior human beings in the eyes of God... gives excuses to the brutal husband who beats his wife, the soldier who rapes a woman, the employer who has a lower pay scale for women employees, or parents who decide to abort a female embryo."

...Religion [is] one of the "basic causes of the violation of women's rights."

In unplanned economy, many adrift

GW, 1/8 — Behind the image of tech-savvy IT

specialists in India lies a dispiriting picture: a multitude of educated but unemployed young men....

Rising education rates have led to higher aspirations. At the same time, governments have often cut the public-sector jobs upon which educated people depended....

The scale of the problem is staggering. There are regularly more than 10,000 applicants for a single government post in Meerut. Students say it is necessary to possess "source" (social connections) and "force" (the money for bribes).

Immigration jails cover up deaths

NYT, 1/10 — As one man lay dying... jail medical personnel had falsified a medication log....

Silence has long shrouded the men and women who die in the nation's immigration jails.... Few facts were available about who these people were and how they died.

But behind the scenes, it is now clear, the deaths... generated thousands of pages of government documents, including scathing investigative reports that were kept under wraps, and a trail of confidential memos and BlackBerry messages that show officials working to stymie outside inquiry.



Human brain not anti-communist!

NYT, 1/3 — We are born with a highly-structured brain. But those brains are also transformed by our experiences, especially our early experiences. More than any other animal, we humans constantly reshape our environment. We also have an exceptionally long childhood and especially plastic young brains. Each new generation of children grows up in the new environment... and each generation of brains becomes wired in a different way. The human mind can change radically in just a few generations.

MORE ITEMS AVAILABLE ONLINE:
www.plp.org

'Avatar': Mysticism Masquerades As Militancy



James Cameron's new movie Avatar is on its way to becoming the highest-grossing movie of all time. In many ways, the content of the movie is secondary. In a capitalist society it is perfectly acceptable for someone to spend \$500 million making a movie that will bring in many billions of dollars, while billions of workers suffer every day. The

content of the movie is important, however. The movie clearly takes place in an advanced imperialist society. A precious natural resource called unobta-

nium has been discovered on Pandora where the Na'vi live and the U.S. Marines attack the Na'vi for the profit of a U.S. company. Replace the Na'vi with Iraqi and Afghan workers and unobtainium with oil and the movie would be about contemporary U.S. imperialism.

Avatar has many aspects that PLP members and friends can use to further the discussion: The film depicts soldiers who turn the guns around and fight against their commanders. Importantly, however, this is not a mass, military-wide movement. Only two soldiers rebel and they make no effort to recruit other soldiers to their principled fight. One of these two soldiers is a powerful Latina character and there is an anti-sexist message. The main female Na'vi character is a warrior who fights side-by-side with her male partner.

Toward the climax of the movie the army attacks the natives with their full force, an attack that is pro-

voked by the unification of multiple Na'vi tribes. On screen and in real life, the unity of workers is what scares the bosses more than anything. The movie also demonstrates the futility of pacifism. The military is relentless and brutal and only by actively fighting back do the Na'vi have any hope for victory.

The movie is draped in a mysticism that gives the movie an overall pro-religious feel. There is a "Great Spirit" that connects all of the living things on Pandora. In the end, the inhabitants of Pandora rely on this Spirit to overcome the imperialist army. In other words, it is religion, not the collective might of the Na'vi that make the difference. Religion, however, is a pacifying not a liberating force for the working class. Only a militant working class, organized around communist dialectical principles, can guarantee it's own freedom. ☸

Bosses Use Calif. 'Master Plan' for Education to Prepare for War

CALIFORNIA — The fight against racist budget cuts is heating up in schools and colleges. Students are growing angrier and more committed to standing up to police attacks. They are open to see that its not just bad management. Capitalism and its inevitable imperialist wars are to blame. Many are questioning a system that cuts education, health care and jobs for wider imperialist war and bailing out banks.

Union leaders and some students are trying to divert mass anger into an electoral campaign to reform the California budget process. The liberal Vasconcellos project draws student activists to ally with "legislative, business and community leaders." In contrast, PLP'ers in mass organizations are building a worker-student-soldier alliance for class struggle and revolution: "Strike against a system that can't meet our needs and has to be destroyed!"

The call for mass action on Thursday, March 4, is spreading across the U.S. "Save education!" But only the Progressive Labor Party is asking the critical questions: Not only education "for whom?" but also education "for what?"

Education Conforms to Bosses' Needs

Public education in California has shifted rapidly to meet the bosses' changing military and economic needs. In the 1930s, teachers were sent to Civilian Conservation Corps camps to organize evening high schools. Adult education grew to include 10% of California adults, providing a safety valve in an era of mass unemployment.

During World War II, nearly a million California workers were trained for jobs in war industry. In the 1950s, K-12 education was reorganized with a vocational-technical emphasis to serve the bosses' need for workers with new skills. During the economic slump of the early 1990s, K-12 shifted to college-prep, leaving "career-technical education" mainly to the community colleges.

We are now seeing another seismic shift as the bosses prepare for World War III. Today, as U.S. imperialism is in decline, the bosses are pushing education for the next war. But this system of mis-education, even if well-funded, can never serve the needs of the working class.

'Master Plan' For Education Serves The Capitalist Masters

The California Master Plan for Higher Education (1960) responded directly to sharpening inter-imperialist rivalry between the United States and the So-

viet Union after Sputnik (the first satellite, launched into space by the Soviet Union in 1957). The "first-tier" University of California was expanded mainly for war research. For example, atom-bomb scientist Herbert York was called from Livermore Laboratory into President Eisenhower's new Science Advisory Committee in 1957, and then to the Pentagon. Three years later he became the first chancellor of the new UC-Irvine campus, building it up with new federal funds from NASA and DARPA (Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency).

The California State University system became "tier two," training teachers and social workers as well as cops and others whom the bosses are fighting to win to keep the rapidly-expanding working-class in California under their control. However, angry students in the California State University (CSU) system now facing huge cuts are fighting back. More are eager to talk about the link between the cuts, imperialist war, capitalism and communist revolution.

The "third-tier" junior colleges "guaranteed" access to higher education for everyone in what was then a 90% white population, promoting the cold-war ideology of capitalist "freedom" and "opportunity." New colleges (including LA Southwest and West LA Colleges) opened after the Watts rebellion, with increasing numbers of black and Latino workers filling jobs in California's growing economy. Yet the system remained racist to the core. "It was a sorting system for human capital management in an open society," according to CSU Northridge provost Harold Hellenbrand. The current racist cuts are heavily affecting the schools that the majority of black and Latino students attend.

Imperialism And Ideology in Higher Education

Today's budget crisis — an aspect of the general crisis of capitalism — allows the capitalist class to reshape education to meet its needs as it prepares for intensified global competition and, increasingly, wider war. Colleges starved for funds are rushing to qualify for new federal funds that are specifically directed toward workforce development. Most students will increasingly be pushed into job-training programs tailored for the employers, including some in defense aerospace. PLP has the opportunity to reach out to students in these programs with the revolutionary fight to end racist exploitation.

We shouldn't be nostalgic for "liberal arts" programs, which serve mainly to push the bosses' ideology. Education under capitalism teaches some useful skills and a lot of illusions! Working-class students are made to feel that if they don't succeed they have only themselves to blame, while the system is stacked against them. Many struggle valiantly to maintain full-time status (needed to qualify for financial aid) while working 30, 40, or more hours a week to support themselves and often their families. But more students are joining with PLP to fight against these attacks, and to join the lifelong struggle to get rid of the system based on racism, exploitation and war.

As we fight the current round of devastating budget cuts our job isn't to "restore the luster" of capitalist education (LA Times, 12/28/09) but to fight for communist revolution that will, for the first time, let us create the educational system we need. ☸

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