

CHALLENGE



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Haiti: U.S. Bosses' Puny 'Aid' Covers Up Tightening Military, Economic Domination



Workers in Haiti organize to build tent cities

It becomes clearer by the day that the U.S. invasion and blockade of Haiti has imperialist and racist, rather than charitable, goals. Besides maintaining a grossly underpaid or unemployed, U.S.-dominated, almost entirely black cheap labor pool there, the top U.S. priority is seizing political and military control of this strategically-located country. It stands at the geo-political crossroads of Caribbean trade routes, the Panama Canal, Cuba and Guantanamo Bay, Venezuela and potential off-shore oil reserves.

This follows a century of imperialist exploitation of Haiti, making it the Western Hemisphere's poorest country, leaving it completely vulnerable to such an earthquake.

General Douglas Fraser, head of the Pentagon's Southern Command, which runs the inadequate "aid" effort, said 13,000 of the 20,000 U.S. troops sent to Haiti would remain indefinitely. He told Agence France Presse (2/14/10), of "a transition of immediate relief capability to an enduring capacity here in Haiti." The 7,000 departing troops, including the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, are now on their way to more pressing tasks in Afghanistan and Iraq.

One month into Obama's "humanitarian" occupation of Haiti, its devastated working class continues to suffer severe shortages of every basic necessity. Fraser's forces did woefully little to help Haitians:

- "As many as a million people have still not received any international food assistance." (Huffington Post, 2/4/10)

- The January 12 earthquake left 1.2 million Haitians homeless and afflicted more than 3,000,000. "Only a quarter of those in need have plastic or a tent over their heads. And a lack of latrines looms as a major problem." (Miami Herald, 2/14/10)

- The U.S. Navy News (2/9/10) boasted that, "Medical and dental personnel from the 24th MEU treated more than 100 Haitians [!] on the island of Gonave."

- The USS Normandy delivered "more than 1,000 gallons of water" in its 21 days of Haiti service, an amount the ship uses every day to flush its toilets, and equal to the water in an average backyard swimming pool.

- The \$450 million in U.S. aid sounds like a lot, but it amounts to just \$150 per stricken Haitian. Compare that with the \$1 million Obama is shelling out for each soldier in his ongoing civilian-slaughtering Afghan surge.

Bill Clinton For President — Of Haiti?

As U.S. soldiers patrol Haiti's streets, Obama & Co. are cooking up a scheme to make Bill Clinton the country's vir-

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tual colonial governor. The Miami Herald reported (2/10/10):

"The Obama administration is quietly advocating a plan to reconstruct Haiti that could involve a central role for former President Bill Clinton. The plan, designed by U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's staff and presented to top Haitian officials in recent days, calls for the creation of an Interim Haiti Recovery Commission to oversee the 'urgent early recovery' over the next 18 months. The commission's top priority: create a Haitian Development Authority to plan and coordinate billions in foreign assistance for at least 10 years.

"The plan...states that the commission could be co-chaired by the Haitian prime minister and 'a distinguished senior international figure engaged in the recovery effort.' Haiti observers believe the job

description describes [Bill] Clinton although he's not named in the document. The United Nations has already named him to coordinate its reconstruction efforts."

U.S. Bosses See Opportunity in Haitian Workers' Misery

U.S. capitalists hope such direct political control will enable them to expand sweatshop operations in Haiti. One U.S. think-tank, the Center for Global Development (CGD), bankrolled by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, actually sees Haiti's \$3-a-day garment factory pay as key to recovery, provided bosses don't beat workers too much: "Apparel assembly pays relatively low wages wherever it is done in the world.... The United States should... facilitate Haiti's apparel exports and create [these \$3-a-day] jobs..." (CGD, 1/25/10)

Before the quake Bill Clinton used his UN post mainly to campaign for more U.S. sweatshops in Haiti. Last October he led a trade mission — financed by billionaire George Soros — of U.S. investors that explored "manufacturing opportunities" in Port-au-Prince. If Obama's plan goes through, Clinton could soon become Haiti's garment boss-in-chief.

Kerry Kin Wants Relief Militarized for U.S. Wars, Present and Future

CHALLENGE has noted that U.S. rulers are using the Haitian disaster to divert people's genuine compassion into serving U.S. imperialism. We revealed that the directors of Doctors Without Borders in fact represent Exxon Mobil, JP Morgan Chase, Goldman Sachs and other interests profiting from U.S.-led wars. Now John Kerry's daughter, Vanessa Kerry, MD, has called for an open militarization of medical relief under Pentagon command.

A resident at Harvard-run Massachusetts General Hospital, Kerry wrote in a NY Times op-ed

piece (2/13/10), "The United States should create a service corps of doctors, nurses and medical technicians to deploy to humanitarian disasters like the one that struck Haiti last month." In other words, well-meaning rank-and-file supporters of Doctors Without Borders should don the uniform of the U.S. war machine.

'Healers in Uniform' — A 'Force Multiplier' Enhancing U.S. Military

Dr. Kerry insists that giving modest medical care can help the U.S. ruling class (to which she belongs by birth) win the wars it now wages and must soon wage to preserve its threatened worldwide empire. She proclaims, "Our generals in Iraq and Afghanistan have long recognized that providing basic services to populations there is central to the success of their mission." In a paradox only a capitalist could appreciate, Kerry said that more healers in uniform could actually enhance the Pentagon's killing power: "In military terminology, improved health care should be seen as a force multiplier." This is a technical term the U.S. military reserves for especially lethal weapons systems. Kerry's plea looks like a backdoor attempt to revive the "national service" program (that is, a restored draft) her father couldn't sell in his failed 2004 White House bid but one which was part of Obama's 2008 campaign.

Catastrophes like Haiti prompt outpourings of sympathy and real attempts to help from the working class and its allies. Capitalists see disasters as chances to increase both their own profits and workers' misery. Communists view them as opportunities to serve the working class, spreading our ideas to prevent disasters, with workers organizing our class to help all workers in a profit-free society.

Ridding the earth of the parasite class of billionaires through communist revolution is our Party's long-term goal. ☼

OUR FIGHT

★ **Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.**

★ **Only the dictatorship of the working class — communism — can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today's world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.**

★ **Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world's workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.**

★ **While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.**

★ **Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. 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." Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit black, Latino, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.**

★ **Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women — sexism — and divisive gender roles created by the class society.**

★ **Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.**

★ **Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion's false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.**

★ **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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Obama's Terror Trial Troubles: Blood-Soaked Liberals On Thin Ice

The furor over where and how to try the 9/11 attack ringleaders stems from both Obama-vs.-Bush partisan fighting and Obama's concern for preserving his liberal cover. The Obama regime wants to maintain the fiction of "the rule of law" in place of the reality of capitalists ruling workers. Ideally, Obama would like an open civil show trial in media-capital Manhattan. But it's not just the openly fascist Bush-Cheney camp's demands for secret military proceedings that hinder Obama.

The liberal, imperialist wing of U.S. capitalists, exemplified by the Rockefeller-led Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), worries that a public trial may blow the lid off Obama's continuing "anti-terrorist" torture and murder, making it more obvious. Warning against open court in New York, the

CFR writes (2/5/10) that 9/11 mastermind's Khalid Sheik "Mohammed's lawyers have significant legal grounds to challenge the evidence against him and its means of extraction."

Obama's current "justice" for U.S. foes keeps the Guantanamo hellhole open while favoring assassinations by Special Forces and unmanned Drones that tend to wipe out innocent Afghans. On February 14, in a Valentine's Day Massacre, one of Obama's "anti-Taliban" rockets incinerated 12 Afghan civilians. Liberals like NYC Mayor Bloomberg and NY Senator Schumer protesting that NYC trials would "disrupt commerce" are, in fact, following the CFR's line against spotlighting liberal-sponsored U.S. terror. ☼

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.



N.J. Students' Rally on Haiti: '200,000 Deaths Are Not Natural — It's Capitalism!'

NEWARK, NJ, February 3 — Today, over 20 students, teachers and local workers protested the U.S. occupation of Haiti. Signs such as "Haiti: this is what capitalism looks like" and "200,000 deaths is not natural, It's Capitalism!" attracted many commuters walking by. Some joined the demonstration, while drivers honked in support. A high school student group called the rally.

Within three days after the earthquake, the group immediately raised \$1,500 for aid relief. Then, when one of their teachers read CHALLENGE and other international newspapers with the students, they realized the problem was much bigger than lack of aid to Haiti.

The newspapers reported the U.S. was barring aid because of its military build-up there. However, only CHALLENGE helped the students to understand the real reason for the build-up: the U.S. needed to put on this "humanitarian face" to mask the establishment of bases for future imperialist wars.

We also noted how the racist media portrayed Haiti's working class as "looters." One student said, "That's f#@d up; this is the same thing they did to New Orleans." Students' anger rose when reading CHALLENGE's timeline detailing imperialist interventions since the 1791 slave revolt against the French.

Then the conversation turned to solutions to these problems. Some student CHALLENGE readers jumped in, saying, "It's obviously capitalism, so we need a revolution." Another added, "A communist revolution." Others, however, still think capitalism can be reformed, that only through participating in the government, challenging the politicians and bosses who don't care about workers, can we establish a fair society. While one said "communism

will just be worse," everyone agreed that imperialism is bad, and that led to discussing an action.

The teacher reviewed past protests with former students against the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. One student yelled, "We need to have a protest to let people know what's going on. I didn't realize this was happening in Haiti until I read these articles." Others quickly agreed and began distributing flyers to students in other schools.

Later that week, at a NYC event with over 15 other NJ and NY schools, the students excitedly distributed flyers promoting the protest. On that day five students marched down the neighborhood's main street carrying posters, chanting loudly and winning other students to join them. By the time they reached their destination a dozen more had joined.

At the protest, some local workers spoke to us about the situation in Haiti. Many were unclear about what we were protesting but soon they seemed to agree that what's happening in Haiti was wrong.

One black worker said, "Say what you want, but I don't vote. I don't think voting will ever get us what we need. There should be jobs, good education and good health care for everyone. We don't have that now and it doesn't look like Obama's going to give it to us anytime soon."

Another college student walked by, saying, "I was wondering why there's so much military there. I'm glad all these high school students are out here. My college friends and I have been discussing protesting too." She then gave us her contact info and told us to call her when something else is happening.

Then a teacher explained how the conditions

created by capitalism and imperialism led to over 200,000 deaths in Haiti. Another worker declared how capitalism will never end imperialist wars,

although we've been told that World War 1 was "the war to end all wars." A young black student said the way the media portrayed many of Haiti's workers was to justify a U.S. military build-up, saying we needed to organize other students and expose the racism created under capitalism.

The next day after school we discussed what we'd done. Students were mainly positive about the event, saying it felt good to stand up for something. Some were disappointed that other high school students and anti-war organizations hadn't participated. We realized there are many liberal groups that believe the U.S. can use the military for "humanitarian" purposes, like in Haiti, and that it should only be opposed when used for imperialist purposes like in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Finally, we need to be persistent in our organizing. Even though many people may not agree with us now, as the situation in Haiti unfolds, just like with Katrina, people will increasingly see that capitalism is the main cause of the problems. The students agreed, adding that a year ago they didn't even know what capitalism was. Now they're organizing to get rid of it! ☺



NY Communist School: Movie; Study; March vs. Racist Cops, Bailed-out Bank



NEW YORK CITY, February 14 — This past weekend, members and friends of the PLP from throughout the city met, guided by the slogan of "sharpening up the contradictions" between communism and capitalism.

We started on Friday by taking a collective of students and teachers to see the movie "Valentine's Day." This film was a piece of crap but the theater was packed and millions more went to see it over the weekend. So we figured we would too, and try to sharpen up the struggle against the racist, sexist and imperialist ideas the bosses need us to absorb.

Our estimate of the period is that the rulers need to win over larger segments of the population to such views. They also are very adept at providing the masses with endless options to escape a reality of economic crisis and war. So we went to the movie expecting escapism, racism, sexism and pro-war propaganda. Sure enough it was all there, and several of the students we brought were spot-on in identifying the bosses' messages in this seemingly harmless film. We reconvened Saturday morning,

veteran and newer comrades alike, and sure enough we had a study group to discuss the movie's plotlines and politics.

Following the discussion was a very cold but enthusiastic march in Harlem. The march went past project buildings, a precinct where we denounced killer kkkops, a methadone clinic, corporate banks, and an army recruiting station situated in the heart of Harlem.

Response to our chants of "Imperialist war means we got to fight back!" and "The workers united can never be defeated!" was mainly positive. One resident encouraged us to keep marching after expressing his anger of methadone clinics in his neighborhood. Having drug clinics in a mainly black and Latino neighborhood is no solution for health care, and is a result

of the ruling class' racist attempt to oppress workers.

With CitiGroup receiving \$45 billion in bailout money, we picketed a Citibank branch and encouraged people to join us. Barack Obama bailed out the banks and Wall St. with hundreds of billions this past year, yet teachers and students are facing cuts to funding for their classrooms.

We picketed an army recruiting station in a mostly black neighborhood. Along with bailing out banks, the bosses also target working-class neighborhoods for their imperialist war operations overseas. The bosses are desperate to gain soldiers for their oil wars by bribing scholarship money or citizenship to soldiers in return for their blood. Our picket received many words of encouragement from those close-by, who joined our chants and called for "death to the bosses!" We will be back in these neighborhoods.

Several young comrades gave street speeches for the first time. CHALLENGE and our chants were well-received in general on streets where major re-

bellions rocked the bosses system in the past and will do so again.

Sunday wrapped up our weekend with a study group on contradiction, the first law of dialectical materialism, our universal philosophy. We discussed the need to sharpen contradictions in our PL work. We shared common experiences of pushing forward political struggle with allies, of striking the balance of seeking out the points of disagreement with our friends even as we strive for greater unity in the relationship. We reaffirmed the vital importance of building these relationships in the context of campaigns to also sharpen up struggle against the bosses' system and its attacks on our class wherever we are. We emerged in a stronger position to build towards a fighting May Day 2010. ☺

Youth Blast Newark Mayor: Capitalism = Poverty

The bosses want nothing more from their schools and youth organizations than the preparation of the next generation of loyal workers and soldiers. It is a positive development that in the debate world lots of students argue against capitalism. Over the past weeks debate teams have organized picket lines at Senate offices protesting the imperialist invasion of Haiti and also protested Newark Mayor Corey Booker's opening remarks at a tournament with eighteen letters reading CAPITALISM = POVERTY. Booker's lame reply was that he was making capitalism work in Newark, where unemployment rates top 50% among black youth aged 18-30, by bringing in micro-loans to encourage small business. A lot more could have been done to disrupt his speech and a lot remains to be done to keep the U.S. bosses invasion of Haiti in the front of people's minds. But debaters are learning that real change comes from more than just talk. PLP and CHALLENGE are in the mix to point out the path to real change: communism. ☺

Exposing Airport Workers to PLP's Ideas on Unity, Resistance and Revolution

QUEENS, NY — “You know we’re gonna get screwed on this,” said the PLP’er. His coworker and CHALLENGE reader shrugged. At today’s briefing (the meeting at the beginning of a shift) the boss tried to force extra work onto a group including the PLP’er and several CHALLENGE readers. They would have to work a flight, and fuel vehicles.

One worker objected to the group having to do two jobs at the same time. Not surprisingly, the supervisor ignored the criticism since without class struggle he controls everything and doesn’t have to listen to a word we say. Furthermore, the white boss’s arrogance takes on a racist character as he ignores the input of the mainly black and Latino workers.

“We do all the work and should be making the decisions about who gets what assignments,” said the PLP’er to another group member.

“What do you expect?” responded the worker, who’d seen enough capitalist exploitation to be able to predict a thing or two as well. True, we should expect a dictatorship of the bosses under capitalism, but fighting back and building the PLP can lead to a revolution and workers’ power.

However, the workers were still under capitalism two hours later when the boss stormed into the break room, upset that two vehicles had not been fueled. What did he expect?

Since the head supervisor could now reprimand him, the junior boss told the group of workers they

were in trouble. “You’re getting a formal warning, which can lead to a letter on your permanent record and further disciplinary action.” What all this will mean is unclear, but essentially it is a boss attacking a group of workers to save his own neck — nothing new.

“They’re digging their own grave when they attack a group of us,” said the PLP’er later. “They’re happy to call you into the office by yourself because when it’s you alone against a boss they have all the power. They can take your job away; they can take the food off your table; they can take the roof from over your head.”

“But when they attack a group of us? They can’t fire all of us! We do everything around here and they know that when we remind them.”

The workers argued back and forth about if and how they should take action. “I’ll just go talk to the head supervisor tomorrow” said one worker. Another volunteered to go and try to convince the junior boss at the end of the shift.

“Whatever we decide, we should do it together, because that’s when we are the strongest. That’s when we have the power,” said the PLP’er. Unity is the key to our strength — individually fighting back is no solution.

The bosses love to isolate and alienate workers who speak up and play favorites with others. This takes on a racist and nationalist character: with white and Latino workers encouraged to identify

with white and Latino supervisors rather than their sister and brother workers. All workers get hurt when we are divided and can not stand up together against the bosses’ attacks on us.

The idea of a united response worried another worker. “I don’t know, [the junior boss] tends to get frantic when he feels cornered and won’t listen then,” he reasoned. “Good,” shot back the PLP’er, “he should be afraid.”

The workers continued to discuss their plan of action, but could not come to a consensus. The PLP’er talked later with one worker about escalating the struggle with the bosses, and that while we may not win every battle we need to build anti-racist unity for the war.

This struggle can move forward with more discussions about the need to fight back and how the little struggles we wage today are a necessary training ground for the mass struggles of the future. Workers have now been more intensely exposed to some of the PLP’s ideas of unity, resistance and revolution.

The bosses’ class war is unfortunately far from over, with many more workers from Port-Au-Prince to New York City facing death, unemployment and cutbacks so long as capitalism rages. Positively, young workers like this PLP’er are organizing industrial workers at the point of production, where the struggles to organize working-class fight-backs provide a school where communist ideas can flourish. More battles lie ahead. ☪

Obama's Fascist 'Race to the Top' Dumps Students on the Bottom

January 19th was the deadline for state grant applications under Obama’s “Race to the Top” (RttT) program. The program’s goal is to restructure the public education system on a national scale, by bribing states to bust teachers’ unions, centralize and privatize public education. At least eleven states (including CA, NY, MA, IL, and TN) are changing their state laws to be eligible for tiny amounts of grant money (\$4-5 billion to be distributed nationwide over the next four years, about \$110 per school-age student per year. This top-down policy change, which attacks the working class and centralizes the power of the ruling class, is a clear example of how fascism is developing in this country.

U.S. capitalists are in an economic crisis. As the budget shrinks, their fiscal priorities become increasingly clear. They will continue to pay for imperialist wars and to prop up falling profits, giving huge breaks to banks and other corporations. Meanwhile, they will continue to depress the standard of living of the working class, through layoffs, reduced compensation and benefits and by slashing public services. Capitalists must cut back on higher-paid, unionized public employees, such as teachers and transit workers.

The two teacher unions represent one quarter of all unionized workers in this country and are an obstacle to the massive cuts and restructuring that the ruling class needs to do at this time. Race to the Top calls for a massive expansion of charter schools, especially through takeovers or conversions of schools that are currently unionized public schools. At such schools, superintendents may “close” a school one day and “reopen” it the next, having thrown the teachers’ contract out overnight. In “underperforming” schools, all staff can be fired and forced to reapply for their old jobs, or the school can simply be given over to a charter

school management company. We have seen in recent articles about schools in Chicago that schools facing “reorganization” serve primarily black and Latino students. The same is true of the nineteen New York City public schools now slated for closing.

However bad these reforms will be for teachers, working-class students have much more to lose. As U.S. capitalists restructure the economy to support imperialist wars, they don’t want to pay a lot of money for 10-12 years of public education for every student. They want to further track and segregate public education, in order to educate a small percentage of students in technical fields needed for military service and future war production. This can be done at magnet and high-performing, selective charter schools. Meanwhile, they are abandoning large numbers of inner-city working-class students to a rotten education at low-performing charters and increasingly underfunded public schools where the neediest students land by default. The racist nature of the system ensures that black and Latino students are those most victimized by the crisis in education, as they face the worst odds in finding jobs, healthcare and affordable housing outside of school.

But in this period, U.S. capitalists face more than an economic crisis; they face a political crisis. As they move into a state of permanent wars abroad and cutbacks at home, they must get the U.S. working class to support these changes. Thus, every major newspaper has been attacking teachers and teachers’ unions, blaming them for the poor quality of education in urban schools. At the same time, they claim that charter schools are “the answer” to problems in urban education. Their goal is to split students and their families from the teachers, and get them to support the “reforms” that will worsen their own education.

RttT also calls for greater standardization of curriculum across the country, and encourages states to work together to develop new state tests. (Previous education articles have discussed how curriculum standards are used to build patriotic, pro-imperialist ideas.) Further, it calls for “linking teacher pay and teacher tenure to student performance.” RttT calls for more data collection on students and teachers which will be used as ammunition for administrators against teachers and for the government against districts. And as teachers lose the job protection the contract used to provide, they may be scared into compliance and will be far less likely to stand up for their students.

We must continue to build a militant teacher-student-parent alliance against these attacks, pointing out how this is part of developing fascism. We must show our friends that the racism which separates us is an obstacle we must conquer as we fight for a new system that will serve all students. We don’t just want reforms that might get a few more books in classrooms or save a few inner-city schools from closing. Workers have won those reforms many times, only to have them taken away as the bosses are doing now. We want communism, a system where workers will run the world, including creating schools that serve the needs of our young people. We need schools that teach all of our children to read, write, do math and know our true history so that they can contribute to a workers’ society rather than serve as cogs in the capitalist machine. ☪

Toyota 'Quality': Profits Trump Workers' Safety

In the factory at lunch I asked my friend "what do you think is the reason for all these recalls?" He answered: "It's probably because the factories where the recalled parts are made run as fast and dangerous as the one we work in."

Over the past few months Toyota has recalled over ten different models of vehicles for faulty floor mats, sticking acceleration pedals, and weak brakes totaling around nine million recalls and counting. There have been around 20 deaths and dozens of injuries from these faulty parts. Toyota started getting reports of the faulty gas pedals in March of 2007 but didn't start recalling vehicles until late 2009. Toyota kept quiet about the problems to protect its profits. But now Ford, GM, and other capitalist competitors are hoping to benefit in the competition for sales.

Toyota's recalls aren't their first and won't be their last. According to the NHTSA (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration) the recent Toyota recall takes 4th place out of the top 10 biggest auto recalls in history with 5.4 million recalls for their floor mats. GM places 3rd place with 5.8 million and 2nd place with 6.7 million recalls. Ford takes 1st place with 7.9 million recalls (MSNBC.com).

This history exposes the racist and nationalistic lie that everything "built in the U.S. is stronger and more dependable than imports." U.S. bosses use this to get workers to support U.S imperialism. While one boss may pay more than another or have slightly better working conditions, workers can never solve the racist and sexist exploitation of capitalism by chasing higher wages or supporting the "lesser-evil" boss.

Ford, GM, Chrysler, Toyota, etc. have their parts made and assembled all over the world. In the auto factory where I work you can read the labels on the boxes of parts and see that they come from all over: Kentucky, Mexico, Japan and elsewhere. Bosses go to where they can exploit workers for the cheapest parts and labor to make higher profits than their competitors.

But who is to blame for faulty parts and recalls? "Lazy" workers who don't do quality checks correctly? The non-unionized foreign auto companies? No. The capitalist system and all the foreign and U.S bosses who defend it are to blame.

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Workers' Fight Wins More Staff But Warn of Bosses' Take-back

BROOKLYN, NY, February 4 — Today a group of black female lab workers at a hospital here went on the offensive and demanded that the hospital bosses hire more workers. A meeting was arranged between the supervisor and the 1199 SEIU union delegate, who suggested that everyone should attend the meeting, since they all work in the department together. Perhaps unknowingly, the union delegate illustrated that, whatever the fight, when workers are united victory is possible. In this case, the reform fight was for more workers and not the revolutionary fight for communism. This fight also exposes the racist and sexist nature of the system. Black women are the most exploited section of the working class in the U.S., where being overworked with too little staff and paid very low wages is common.

Under capitalism hospitals prioritize profits over the health of the working class and so departments are short-staffed. Blood samples are left sitting for hours before they are analyzed, which leads to inaccurate test results. Other medical staff rely on these results to treat patients, resulting in potentially life-threatening errors. The lab workers look upon this matter seriously, taking into consideration that it is the health of working-class families that is at stake. Again, the racist nature of the system is laid bare: a large percentage of the patients receiving poor care at this hospital are black and Latino.

The doctors, on many occasions, blame the lab workers for the blood tests not being done in a timely fashion. This attitude is encouraged by the bosses, yet another way to divide the working class

and weaken us. Most of the doctors do not see the contradiction between the hospital bosses and workers who are pushed to do more with less staff, creating unsafe conditions for patient care. We should strive to show our coworkers and friends how doctors and other hospital workers have a common interest in destroying capitalism and its rotten health care system and replacing it with communism and true workers' health.

Surprisingly, at the end of the meeting, the bosses stated that the lab workers would get additional staffing. However, this small reform victory should not create the illusion about the racist, capitalist-run health care system. Too often in the hospital, the workers have seen the bosses hire more workers and then suddenly shut down the department. (We saw a similar example in the Stella d'Oro struggle where the workers "won" the strike only to have the factory immediately shut down and sold.) As recently as last year the laundry department was subcontracted to an outside vendor, just after the bosses had hired more workers.

Like all capitalists, the ones who run this hospital are only in business for profit. Under capitalism, the needs of workers and patients in a racist health care system cannot be met. The workers' vision is for a better health care system that exists to improve the quality of life, not to make profits. This can only be achieved by many workers joining the fight for a communist society and building the PLP. ☺

Italy: Immigrant Farmworkers Rebel vs. Racist Exploitation

Questions have arisen over the migrant workers' revolt in the small Italian town of Rosarno, Calabria. The NY Times (1/12) suggested that the reason for the violence was locals and immigrants competing for the fruit harvesting jobs, although immigrants had worked in the fields for years. Fifty people were injured, cars burned and windows smashed. The major Italian news agency claimed "racism and poor conditions fueled violence," ignoring not only Rosarno's anti-racism demonstration after the conflict, but also the national anti-racism demonstration of 250,000 held in Rome last October.² Once again, the bosses' media didn't dig below the surface.

The Comitato Lavoratori Immigrati e Italiani Uniti (Committee of United Italian and Immigrant Workers), an immigrants' rights organization in Rome, analyzed what happened. This report from Italy is based on that analysis.

The violence that exploded after local youths shot at three African laborers grew out of an intense class struggle that began years ago, when wholesalers increased profits by reducing the prices paid for agricultural products and local residents refused to accept a one-euro wage-reduction for each box of fruit. To make up the cheap labor shortfall, the Calabrian Mafia, or 'Ndrangheta, began organizing "illegal" immigration. Africans were promised decent pay and living conditions, but were forced to accept much lower wages and inhuman living conditions after arriving in Italy as undocumented workers.

The Italian press reported one of the workers as saying, "I, too, was protesting... but then the situation got worse and they began shooting.... I can't go back [to Rosarno]."

It's not hard to read between the lines. The immigrant workers were not protesting random shootings, but rather lousy conditions and pay. To intimidate them into keeping their mouths shut and their heads low, the 'Ndrangheta began shooting at immigrants with air rifles. The gangsters' strategy backfired, and Rosarno became the site of open class warfare.

Italy's current government has adopted a tough stance toward "illegal" immigration. It shipped about 1,200 undocumented workers to detention centers. Others fled to nearby regions. The xenophobic Interior Minister, however, has announced that more than half will be given working papers.

The fruit rots on the trees, but that's not the only thing rotten in Calabria. In a town of fewer than 16,000 residents, it's not possible that almost 2,000 Africans could have been employed in the fields and not been noticed by the police. Calabria was a concrete example of the class struggle, illustrating how capitalism not only needs a reserve army of the unemployed on a global scale, but also requires its government servants and organized crime to regulate that workforce.

What happened in Calabria shows that so-called unorganized and unskilled immigrant workers possess a militant class-consciousness, and that it's the

bosses profiting from their labor — and not presumably native-born workers — who foment racist violence.

While currently modest in size and influence, PLP in Italy is helping to develop an international anti-racist movement that proposes a revolutionary solution to the oppression faced by exploited and superexploited workers alike. ☺

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LETTERS



Bakers Respond to Call to Fight Plant Closing

It was 5:40 am and the sky was black when the two of us arrived at the Nonni factory in the Bronx. It was really cold, but our leaflets were hot. Every single worker we met took a flyer which called for the workers to resist Nonni's plans to close the plant and move production of the Old London Foods line to a non-union plant in North Carolina.

Bakers with hairnets on came out from the plant and asked for multiple leaflets to give to their friends inside. One shop steward told us how she thought her union (Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union) was selling the workers out. We exchanged numbers and plan to meet with her soon.

Today, the official unemployment rate in the Bronx is 13.9%. This is considerably higher than any other area in New York State. We plan to return to Nonni next week with reinforcements. Our next flyer will explain in detail why we say that unemployment is racist and a basic component of the capitalist system.

College Instructor and Stella D'oro Striker

Solidarity with Immigrant Strikers in France

The following is a solidarity letter sent from airport workers to the African immigrant strikers in France supporting their antiracist struggle—Airport Red.

Revolutionary Greetings: We are a group of immigrant and citizen airport workers who are cleaners just like you, at a major U.S. airport in North America. We face the same type of racism you struggle against in France. We read about your fight in CHALLENGE the revolutionary communist newspaper of our allies in Progressive Labor Party (PLP). We enclosed copies of CHALLENGE for you to read. We stand in antiracist international solidarity not only with you, but with our Latino working-class brothers and sisters here in North America who are immigrants that have been victims of U.S. racism. At our airport we are native-born, Africans, Mexicans, Central Americans, Asians, etc.,

all workers who are fighting the U.S. bosses' racism and their economy in crisis. Your fight is our fight because racist global capitalism is in crisis! We hope you ally yourselves with antiracist French workers to unite against French racism! Some of us want communism and revolution, but all of us are against racism! Keep up your struggle against the French bosses and their racism! You are an inspiration to workers globally! Liberty, Equality, Fraternity!

In International Solidarity, Airport Workers

Hail Airport Cleaners Standing Up to Bosses

Midwest SEIU Cleaners, we are writing to support you in your decision to vote to strike against the cleaning bosses cutbacks and blatant racism. We are airport workers in New York City who see your struggle as very important, even if it is far away.

We were outraged to hear that your bosses tried to get away with paying the new, mainly black workers \$2.50 less an hour. As the same time, discrimination on the job is nothing new to us. Here at the airport in NYC, the bosses use seniority as an excuse to start the new, mainly black and Latino ramp workers at \$10 an hour less than their high-seniority, mainly white coworkers (it takes ten years to get to top pay)! Even worse, racism, sexism and subcontracting are used to justify paying the mainly Latino and women cleaners and cabin service workers minimum wage (or just above) with no benefits! Like we read in CHALLENGE newspaper, the bosses reap maximum profits by thus paying us less and keeping us passively divided.

Even more than feeling outraged, however, we were impressed by your unity and refusal to be passive. Right now, with the economy in crisis, we know it is hard to stand up to the bosses because if you get fired it will be very hard to get a new job. But the cleaning bosses can't fire all of you easily. If they do, they will create massive chaos and lose millions of dollars. Even if you are not able to overcome this current cutback, you are winning by providing an example to all workers around the world that the only way forward is to fight.

We want you to know that if you strike, we will raise money to help cover for your lost wages. We are also reaching out now to our union affiliates and anyone we know in your area, calling on them to respect your picket line and not work if you strike. An attack on one group of workers is an attack on all of us. Know that you have our support!

New York City Airport Workers

Jackie Robinson Not Positive Anti-Racist Development

A CHALLENGE letter-writer commented that the article on the Daily Worker and Jackie Robinson was "awesome"! I don't believe Jackie Robinson's career was a positive anti-racist development of the civil rights movement any more than I believe the political victories of the black politicians and Obama will change the country's murderous racism.

Paul Robeson was a black artist and pro-communist champion of the international working class since the 1930s. He sang and spoke against U.S. segregation, lynchings and exploitation of blacks nationally and internationally and became a real embarrassment to U.S. imperialism during the Cold War. So Branch Rickey, capitalist owner of the Brooklyn Dodgers called Jackie Robinson into his office and got him to issue a press release (that suddenly became worldwide news) to the effect that Robeson did not speak for black people or reflect their views. U.S. government-inspired anti-communism and racist physical attacks on Robeson followed and he was banned from traveling abroad or speaking nationally.

If we are going to write about busting Jim Crow racism I think we should choose fighters who devoted their lives to the working class and stood up against racism when the chips were down, like Robeson did or the two black Olympic winners who raised their fists to protest U.S. racism and were barred for life from competing, and many others.

A Comrade

Toyota Recalls

continued from p. 5

At the auto factory where I work, the bosses are continually speeding us up at work. On the factory floor quick assembly and rushed quality checks lead to a shorter life span of vehicles, faulty parts, recalls, injuries, and even deaths for both consumers and assembly workers. Safety for the workers who make the vehicles or the safety for customers isn't the bosses' concern unless it gets in the way of their profits.

As workers in a foreign-owned, non-unionized, sub-contracting auto plant, my friends and I see the contradictions of safety and profit every day. The workers in our factory get hurt because of the long hours, speed and monotony of our work. Unsafe conditions hardly ever get fixed until someone gets seriously hurt or parts get damaged. Many times I've seen someone get hurt and no management or boss comes to help. But if a machine breaks and stops the production line, within seconds you'll see tons of managers and bosses run out to see what's going on.

We workers constantly confront the bosses on safety issues. We have also discussed organizing to slow or stop the line to prevent layoffs and plant closings. But capitalism will never allow the conditions for workers to make products, machines or the vehicles we use to be as safe and efficient as they could be because capitalism and its bosses will always put profits before people. I try to use these situations to show fellow workers that it's the exploitation, racism and sexism of the capitalist system and the bosses that are making our lives this hell. Our factory is just like many other factories: It's loud, sweaty and fast paced. But ours is also a school for communism. ☺

Communism Needed in Palestine-Israel

continued from p. 8

The apartheid Wall, which Israel has built since 2002 to surround the Palestinians, cuts through large parts of Jerusalem where Arabs live, and they are now being declared "non-Jersulamites," thus losing their access to Israeli health care and the right to work. Thousands of homes occupied by Palestinians in East Jerusalem — where they were driven 60 years ago — have been declared illegal and are being demolished or forcibly taken over by Israelis.

Eighty-five thousand Bedouins live in "unrecognized" villages in Israel, where they receive no services and have simply been declared "not to exist." In the desert, people are living in boxes and shipping containers, only miles from modern cities. Meanwhile, half a million Israelis have moved into settlements in the occupied territories, complete with Israeli-only roads connecting them to Israel.

Most Israelis tolerate or applaud their apartheid state because they're raised on a diet of virulent racism. They're taught that anti-Semitism is a special form of racism that can never be eradicated, not understanding that racism has been used by ruling classes throughout history to divide the ruled against each other. They also learn that all Arabs are "infected" with anti-Semitism and only want to destroy Israel, and that Jews can only be safe in a militarized state.

Schoolchildren are taught a completely distorted history. There's no mention of the expulsion of Palestinians from their

land, only the myth that they left "voluntarily." In fact, the anti-Arab racism among Jews in Israel has made them reviled throughout the Muslim and much of the Western world and actually leaves them more vulnerable than ever. Israel receives \$3 billion a year from the U.S. and only exists because it is, for now, strategically important to the U.S. as a military outpost which can help protect U.S. oil interests. If and when U.S. rulers decide Israel is more of a liability than an asset, the hated Israel bosses might not survive very long. This could depend on the U.S. ability to sustain enough military bases in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Middle-East and Central Asia so as to no longer need Israeli might, or if the U.S. decides that antipathy to Israel prevents desired normalization of relations with the Muslim world.

Some Comrades

(Next issue: Internal struggles within Palestine and Israel, and the potential for communist organizing.) ☺



At a crossing in Hebron, soldiers harassing and detaining youth

When Capitalists Count, Up is Down, Down is Up

The unemployment figures coming out of Washington are as phony as a three-dollar bill. By reporting that the unemployment rate went "down" in January to 9.7% from the previous month's 10%, the Obama administration is trying to spread the notion that the great recession is receding. Bullshit! No matter which way capitalism twists the figures, unemployment and underemployment is the highest since the Great Depression. Consider the following:

- Firstly, when taking into account "discouraged" workers who've given up looking for non-existent jobs (not counted in the phony 9.7% statistic), plus part-timers who can't find full-time jobs (also not counted), the actual rate is 21.2%. (Shadowstats.com) In fact, one reason for the "lower" 9.7% rate is that more workers stopped looking for jobs, conveniently reducing the number the government counts as unemployed.

- Secondly, how do they square the "fact" that unemployment is decreasing if the government reports another 20,000 jobs lost. And this is only the initial figure. Often when the current month's figures are announced, they are "revised" once the following month's numbers are reported, usually revised downward. They've already lowered their December employment level downward by 1,363,000. One wonders what the revised January figures will be a month from now. It's hard to keep up with the half-truths and outright lies.

- Thirdly, long-term unemployed — those out of work more than a year — are no longer even counted in the "discouraged" category (courtesy of the Clinton administration's "re-definition"). The number of long-term unemployed is the highest in 70 years.

- Fourth, unemployment among 12 million undocumented workers is hardly included in these totals.

- Finally, the Bureau of Labor Statistics assumes that employment in new businesses more than offsets layoffs by firms going out of business. (And the number of "new businesses" is also an assumption.) But if the folding businesses don't report their payroll elimination, the BLS just counts those workers as "still employed." Shadowstats.com estimates because of this and other "quirks" the BLS undercounts monthly job losses by about 150,000.

The Racist Nature of Unemployment

Of course, the headlines don't shout out the racist unemployment rates among black and Latino workers, or youth. Because of racist discrimination, black and Latino unemployment is well over 30%. And youth unemployment hovers around the 50% mark — one out of every two young workers can't find jobs.

In cities like Detroit — which has been in the throes of a depression for years and where an overwhelming majority of the population is black — the overall unemployment rate of the entire working class is 50%. In states like California, it's nearly 30%.

The "official" jobless rate, hovering around 10%, represents over 15 million workers. So the unemployment and underemployment rate plus "discouraged" uncounted workers totaling over 21% means there are well over 30 million workers who can't get full-time jobs. And there are nearly 200,000 soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan who are not counted as part of the labor force. Without these two imperialist wars, a goodly percentage of these "jobholders" would be jobless. Not to mention a good portion of the 2.4 million inmates in prison.

Unemployment itself is a killer. According to a 1971 Congressional study, it leads directly to the deaths of hundreds of thousands from stress-related heart disease and other recession-related afflictions.

Capitalism has never had full employment. It's inevitable "boom-and-bust" cycles breed unemployment in periodic recession/depressions, not to mention breeding wars which kill millions of workers worldwide (another way to "lower" unemployment?).

A mass movement to fight racist unemployment must be the order of the day. Communists in such a movement would be linking this horror to how the system needs and uses unemployment to weaken the whole working class. Such a movement could become a real "school for communism."

Building the PLP out of this "school" can help lead to a revolution that would destroy the bosses, their system, and evils like unemployment, racism and war, replacing it with workers' power — communism. ☸

Haiti's Workers' Fight for Survival

continued from p. 8

to fill them. The situation is so critical that we saw a man drinking water from a puddle on the ground. There are markets; supermarkets, restaurants and roadside stands that are open and sell food. This food is only available to people who have money to pay for it. There are private companies that sell water that can fill up your buckets or tanks with just a phone call. If you have the money you can survive here. If not, you are forced to search for food and water and hope that you are lucky enough to be close by when the distribution effort begins.

In the newspapers, I have read that there are security concerns with regard to food distribution. I saw people from the World Food Organization delivering food to an orphanage; armed guards accompanied them. The only guns I have seen in Port-au-Prince, in fact, are those that belong to people in uniforms. The city is crawling with U.S. soldiers and UN soldiers. Although people surely are desperate for food, I have not seen evidence of attacks or violent robberies. Instead, I have seen lines of people waiting for food and water, and people using their creativity to look for food anywhere they can find it.

When we entered the city of Croix-de-Bouquet we saw many destroyed buildings, and a lot of people in need. There are little signs of how the city will begin to rebuild itself. One image I can't get out of my mind is a destroyed school. It was a seven-story building. During the earthquake, it shook so hard that it completely crumbled. The walls disintegrated and each floor fell on top of the other. People say that there was a room full of students in the basement, and that they likely have died slowly of thirst and hunger, as no one came to clear the building and rescue them.

The loss of life in that one school is a clear example of the fact that many lives were lost, not just because the earth shook, but also because Haiti is a poor country. The incredibly poor quality of the seven-story building meant that the walls crumbled under the weight of the ceilings. The lack of sufficient heavy machinery meant that there were not enough trucks to come and remove the rubble and potentially save the lives of the children and teachers in the basement.

The accumulated human suffering in Haiti is unfathomable to me. Although I have now left Haiti, images of destruction run like a slideshow through my mind. The fact that many of these deaths were preventable makes it worse.

A friend

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

Israel's attacks were war crime

GW, 2/5 — Israel submitted a 46-page report to the UN last Friday saying its forces abided by international law throughout that three-week war last year.... A highly critical UN inquiry by South African judge Richard Goldstone.... concluded that... the attacks were "intentional and precise," and they were "carried out for the purpose of denying sustenance to the civilian population." He added that the attacks violated the fourth Geneva convention and may constitute a war crime.

The Israeli report said... there were Hamas fighters "in the vicinity."

No bailout on mass unemployment

NYT, 2/5 — All the [Washington] talk is about how to shave a few billion dollars off government spending, while there's hardly any willingness to tackle mass unemployment. Policy is headed in the wrong direction — and millions of Americans will pay the price.

Hunger up as crops go to fuel

GW, 1/29 — A quarter of all the [corn] and other

grain crops grown in the US now end up as biofuel in cars rather than being used to feed people....

In 2008 the Guardian revealed a secret World Bank report that concluded the drive for biofuels by American and European governments had pushed up food prices by 75%....

Since then, the number of hungry people in the world has increased to more than 1 billion people, according to the UN.

In many US tribes poverty leads to suicide

GW, 1/29 — Close to a million people live on 310 Native American reservations. Some have done well from a boom in casinos on the reservations.... But the leaders of many of the 564 recognised tribes speak of communities in crisis....

Oglala Sioux children kill themselves....

The deaths were a symptom of a wider crisis among the Oglala Sioux. More than 100 people, mostly adults, tried or succeeded in suicide on the reservation last year. "This is about how defeated our people feel. There's hopelessness out there. People across the US don't realise we could be identified as the third world... People think we are living high off the hog on welfare and casinos."

Pine Ridge is one of the largest reservations.... There is more than 80% unemployment and a desperate shortage of housing — more than 15 people live in each home and others get by in cars and trailers; more than one-third of homes lack running



water or electricity. The infant mortality rate is three times the US national average, there is dependency on alcohol and a diet so poor that half of those over the age of 40 are diabetic.

The Oglala Sioux's per capita income is about \$7,000 a year....

Native American teenagers are more likely to kill themselves than any other minority group in the US. Some statistics show the rate at three times the national average. But those figures shield the fact that self-harm is most likely to occur on poorer reservations.

Young people have almost no hope of work unless they sign up to fight in the army.

MORE ITEMS AVAILABLE ONLINE:
www.plp.org

Struggle for Communism Needed in Palestine-Israel

(Part I)

The main change since our last visit to Israel/Palestine over a year ago has been the intensification of racist violence by Israel bosses against Palestinians. On 12/27/08, Israel swooped down on the tiny occupied Gaza strip, killed 1,440 people, including about 430 women and children, wounded 5,000 and left 50,000 homeless. It's been well-documented that the Israeli military used banned weapons, such as white phosphorous, and targeted civilians who had nowhere to flee.

Since then, no supplies have been allowed in through the high wall completely surrounding the territory, so there's been no rebuilding. The water is contaminated with sewage, all industry has ceased, and the sick cannot leave for medical care. Gaza is a concentration camp for 1.5 million people.

The supposed rationale for the Israeli attack on Gaza was an unsuccessful attempt to defeat Hamas, the Islamic fundamentalist party that won the 2006 Palestinian election, but was driven out of the West Bank and took up leadership in Gaza. Ironically, it was the Israelis who began building up Hamas in the 1950s as a counterweight to the secular nationalist Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO).

Despite Hamas's militant rhetoric, the only actual resistance emanating from Gaza were some primitive rockets which killed 13 Israelis over

several years. The Israeli slaughter's main point was to further humiliate and intimidate the Palestinians, build Israeli nationalism and impress the West with Israel's might. Currently, Egypt, a lackey of Israel and the U.S., is building a steel wall on its side of the border with Gaza to close the tunnels which are Gaza's only source of goods.

In 1948, when Israel became a Jewish state, over 700,000 Palestinians — 6 out of 7 — were forcibly driven from their homes in Israel into Gaza, the West Bank or to other countries. Today there are 4.5 million Palestinians who still live under Israeli military occupation. Travel from this area, and even within it, is restricted by over 700 checkpoints, which can only be crossed with a permit. Only a minority of Palestinians are eligible for these passes — the rest are prisoners in their towns and villages. Unemployment exceeds 50%, amid shortages of water and health care. Palestinians who live in Israel comprise 20% of Israel's citizens, but are second-class citizens, with inferior housing, schools and wages.



Fencing above a street to protect Palestinian workers and shoppers from bricks and garbage thrown down by fascist Israeli settlers.

Currently the number of Jews and Arabs in Israel/Palestine is almost equal, and Israel engages in a furious game of trying to maintain a majority of Jews in Israel proper so it can claim to be a "democracy" by winning elections. To this end Israel's rulers are accelerating their campaign to remove as many Palestinians as possible from its territory while grabbing as much land as possible.

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Eyewitness Hits Bosses' Lies About Haiti's Workers' Fight for Survival

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti — As we entered the city we found it to be remarkably calm, especially at night. Many people sleep in the streets; some do this because they have lost their homes, others because their homes are presently unsafe, and because they fear there will be another earthquake. Workers here have built tent cities to live in. Despite the poor conditions, there is order and community. People arrange their tents into straight lines, leave spaces for public use, and organize a security crew to watch over them at night and to ensure that cars do not trample the tents.

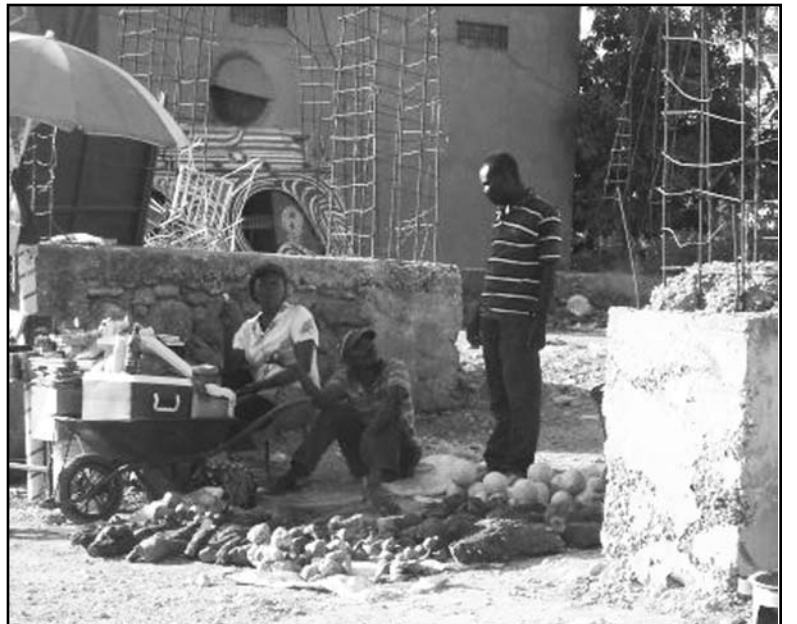
I have not seen any evidence that people are hijacking cars on the roads and stealing provisions, as friends and the media had warned us. This trip has provided me with insight into many ways that the mass media misrepresents the current situation in Haiti. Their portrayal of Haiti is sensationalist because major corporations need to make a profit. Advertising dollars flow with images of "looters," destruction, and social disorder. Thus, the media's profit motives contribute to the misleading portrayal. The primary reason, however, is racism.

The idea that Haiti is filled with "robbers" and "rapists" is one that fits into the racist ideology that we are all fed. The idea that workers in Haiti are actually working together to survive under very difficult conditions or that people are organizing themselves into orderly tent cities — and that the major role of the United States has been to patrol with soldiers and guns — is not one that fits the image of Haiti or of the U.S.'s role there. In fact, there are a lot of soldiers all over the city. It is unclear what their function might be. They patrol the streets with big guns at the ready, yet I have not seen any soldiers engaged in the clean-up effort. (Ed. note: see previous issue of CHALLENGE, and this issue's front page, for analysis of the U.S. military's role in Haiti)

Food For Profit, Not For Need

As we drove around Port-au-Prince we saw plenty of evidence of people looking for food. At several junctions, we saw people crowded outside of places where aid was being distributed. I have heard time and time again that there is plenty of food and water in Port-au-Prince, but that it is not reaching the people it needs to reach. The distribution effort is too slow and not systematic.

We met several pastors outside one of the UN military bases who were soliciting food for their congregation. They complained to us about the lack of food and the poor nutritional quality of the food available — mostly white rice and sardines. There were long lines at places where water was available. Many people walked around with buckets and jugs looking for water



Vegetables for sale in Port-au-Prince, if you have money.

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