

CHALLENGE



THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

Two Day Rebellion Leads To Boeing Strike



WORKERS MUST FIGHT RACISM

SEATTLE, WA, September 14 — “Sellout!” shouted machinists as International Association of Machinists (IAM) aerospace negotiator Mark Blondin announced Boeing workers would be going to work the next day, September 4, despite an 87% strike vote. He said Washington State Governor Christine Gregoire had arranged for 48 hours of federal mediation. In response the workers threw chicken bones and water bottles (left over from the volunteer vote counters’ dinner). The union hall erupted. Blondin and IAM District President Tom Wroblewski fled the stage. They sent out the union P.R. person, hoping for better results. No dice!

Blondin and Wroblewski flew the next day to negotiate at the Disney resort in Florida to be joined by IAM International President Buffenbarger. Back on the shop floor, “No Contract, No Work” signs sprung up at abandoned workstations. One foolish manager tracked down a worker to do a “hot” job (one that would hold up the assembly line). “Why don’t you call the governor and get her to come down here and do it!” the worker replied angrily. By afternoon, the assembly line had stopped because they couldn’t get enough workers.

When management asked us what more can we possibly want, many replied, “All we want is our egg salad on white bread (the traditional fare for picketers).” Some half jokingly threatened to “picket the union hall with baseball bats.” By Friday night demonstrations moved towards the gates with “United We Stand” signs.

Small picket lines began forming outside the plants. The Party distributed flyers and signs in the plants and at the gates. Clearly the union leadership would have to let us strike after the initial 48 hours, no matter what deals they worked out. “I always thought the union had one leg in the bed with the company, but I didn’t realize they were way under the covers,” a facilities maintenance worker said. We were in no mood to accept any contract. We made plans to wildcat if they dared to extend the “no strike” negotiations.

Even as the Boeing strike enters its second week, the big story is still how we got here. Wroblewski has been going around to union meetings pleading, “I understand the memberships’ emotion. The pot was boiling.” Acknowledging that he’s taken licks on the picket line, he tries to justify the leadership’s 48 hour betrayal saying the company blinked. If this spin doesn’t work (and it isn’t), we’ll hear many more incredible excuses. His greatest fear is being boiled in the pot of rank-and-file insurrection he had to face during those 48 hours.

The Dictatorship Of The Bosses vs. The Dictatorship Of The Working Class

Since the strike vote was taken PLP members and friends

have had discussions on the nature of the bosses’ dictatorship and general revolutionary history.

Many workers want to know what the communists are saying. Most are friendly; others are incensed at our influence on sections of the workforce. We pointed out that when the federal mediator and the governor stepped into the negotiations, they were not neutral parties. The federal mediator is in daily contact with the chief IAM negotiator.

As the Party’s flyer stated, the Governor and the mediator were “the political representatives of the ruling class.” Lest we forget, “this is the same federal government whose Pentagon says ‘outsourcing is the answer’ to the exorbitant expense of their high-tech weapons.” Outsourcing means shifting work to racist, low-wage subcontractors employing larger numbers of black, Latin and immigrant workers. This is the same government that wants a “southern aerospace corridor” in the low-wage, non-union Southeast. The legacy of racism has driven down the wages of these workers in Alabama, Florida, Georgia and Mississippi. “Both rely on racist super-exploitation to fund the bosses’ imperialist ambitions and we will continue to fight these efforts to divide us,” our leaflet warned.

“That’s what the bosses’ dictatorship looks like,” our Party argued in numerous shop floor debates. “They’ll let you vote on anything until it threatens their power. Whether it’s a Democrat or Republican, it’s still the bosses’ racist dictatorship.”

When we refused to work during those 48 hours, overriding their contract and pro-capitalist union leaders, we showed the potential power of the dictatorship of the working class. Communist revolution relies on the might of a united international working class, smashing the bosses’ repressive government apparatus. “Let the bosses tremble at the power of the working class” our leaflet ended.

“I’m Not Driving That Truck Under Any Flag”

In another discussion an anti-communist tried to portray the dictatorship of the working class as the dictatorship over the working class. He pointed to the reactionary, often pro-Nazi, people that fled the USSR after World War II, portraying them as heroes. Older CHALLENGE readers were having none of it. They remember the ex-Nazis that they were forced to work with years ago. “Those bastards would openly celebrate Hitler’s birthday at work, wearing Nazi uniforms, and the company allowed them to,” said an irate machine operator. Besides, they were the biggest kiss-asses in the shop.

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U.S. RULERS DEMAND NEXT PRESIDENT IMPOSE FASCIST SACRIFICE

A regimen of "discipline and sacrifice," enforced by the next president, is the only cure for the U.S.'s deep economic problems, according to the New York Times' Sept. 9 editorial. The Times, the leading mouthpiece of liberal U.S. rulers, decried the "vulnerabilities" that the emergency nationalization of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac exposed, and worried cryptically that it would "divert resources from other needs." Those "other needs" appear more clearly elsewhere in the news. The U.S. is expanding its Afghan war and raiding unstable nuclear-armed Pakistan. Russia, emboldened by its Georgia blitz, has emerged as a military rival. Moscow is sending bombers and a naval squadron to Venezuela to counter the revived U.S. Fourth Fleet which is responsible for naval operations in the Caribbean, Central and South America. Chinese shipyards are working overtime on a blue-water navy "China stands every chance of becoming the world's largest shipbuilder by 2020" (Le Monde Diplomatique, Sept. 2008). Iraq seems destined for permanent occupation.

CAPITALISTS AND POLITICIANS MUST JUMP ON WAR WAGON

Despite serious government attempts at regulation, including jailings and billions of dollars in fines, U.S. financiers remain largely unfocused on this sharpening rivalry—unlike their counterparts in Russia and China. Putin now adds armed force to Gazprom's and Lukoil's energy blackmail of much of Europe. China's central planners manage economic growth and militarization simultaneously. Wall Streeters, meanwhile, still serving their separate interests, have been selling each other

worthless "securities," sparking crises, and undermining the U.S.'s overall global standing, especially its ability to finance wars. Re-nationalizing Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac (LBJ privatized Fannie to help pay for U.S. genocide in Indochina) and selling damaged firms like Bear, Stearns to bigger ones aim ultimately at creating a war-time economy. Consolidation of capital under tight state

**'Lehman Bros. may be one
example [of the bosses' crack-down]
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control is a hallmark of fascism. But U.S. rulers have far to go in putting their financial house in order. We can expect sharper crackdowns on financiers in the near term. Lehman Bros. may be one example as they're forced into declaring bankruptcy with no bail-out. Ultimately, world war is the only way for U.S. bosses to maintain their status in the world.

In the same vein, the rulers strive to whip politicians into line. A commission led by James Baker (a major heir of both JP Morgan and Exxon Mobil) and Warren Christopher (whose law firm represents Exxon) proposes a new War Powers Act of 2009. By demanding Congress's express approval within 30 days of any future U.S. military action, it means to stifle ruling class dissent. It also targets today's war-impeding hypocrisy whereby Congress members tell constituents they oppose the Iraq war then vote for every nickel the Pentagon and White House ask for.

YOUR RETIREMENT OR YOUR LIFE

Workers should also prepare for more drastic attacks on the working class, which produces every penny of

the wealth that capitalists steal as profit or—more and more—war expense. The dominant liberal, Rockefeller-led wing of U.S. rulers hopes that Obama or McCain, once elected, will drop campaign lies and rob Social Security and Medicare in order to bankroll the U.S. war machine. The liberals made this clear recently in a two-page New York Times ad sponsored by Peter Peterson, a

Clinton cabinet member and David Rockefeller's successor as head of the Council on Foreign Relations, the rulers' top foreign policy think tank. The ad called upon the future president to address a \$53-trillion financial hole with "meaningful reforms" (this means cuts) in Social Security and Medicare. Peterson & Co. made it more than clear that workers will pay for coming wars either with their lives or the retirement they have earned. "Americans have grown too used to hearing we can have everything, tax cuts, spending increases, and war funding—for free....When politicians tell us we can have it all without making any sacrifices, we must reject that siren call and hold them accountable." Tellingly, the ad also bore the endorsement of Warren Rudman. He helped draft the Clinton-sponsored Hart-Rudman reports, a blueprint for wartime fascism designed at maintaining U.S. supremacy well into the 21st Century.

STRIKING BOEING WORKERS SHOW THE WAY

As this is written, tens of thousands of workers, many putting forth our Party's views, are striking against a major U.S. war contractor, Boeing. Their militancy shows a more viable response, than backing Obama or McCain, to the rulers' escalating war plans. It shows the potential when the working class, armed with communist ideas can seize power through communist revolution. ☪

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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DRAFT: RULERS NEED IT, BUT CANDIDATES CAN'T SAY IT— YET

NEW YORK CITY, Sept. 11 — As the U.S. bosses expand their wars to Afghanistan-Pakistan and in the future to Iran, Georgia and more, their overextended military will need millions of troops. On the anniversary of 9/11, Barack Obama and John McCain made a visit to Columbia (Obama's alma mater) to push national service as part of the "ServiceNation" kick-off event.

Both got loud boos when they told the audience that Ivy League colleges should re-institute officer training (ROTC). Both avoided the words "draft" and "mandatory" when they spoke, mainly focusing on volunteerism and charity work. Knowing that John Kerry's push for obligatory service helped torpedo his 2004 campaign, the duo tread lightly around the issue—for now.

ServiceNation is a bipartisan "grassroots" organization made up of politicians from Caroline Kennedy to Neil Bush, many CEOs, and retired military brass. It is backed by imperialists like Goldman Sachs and the Rockefeller Fund. The group's ultimate goal is a universal national service act by, at the latest, 2020.

While a handful of students were admitted to see Obama and McCain speak in person, thousands gathered on the main campus to watch via Jumbotron.

Leading up to the event, many comrades were able to get out a wide variety of literature at the campus gates, despite heavy police presence. This included



copies of leaflets and pamphlets exposing the elections and "national service," as well as issues of CHALLENGE and THE COMMUNIST magazine. We made several contacts, and engaged in a number of generally positive discussions. Inside the gates was a different story. The awestruck atmosphere towards Obama at the rally inside the campus made it more difficult to distribute literature.

Although the students in attendance at the event are not representative of the majority of working-class students around the country, we were able to get out a fair amount of literature in spite of many obstacles.

We must join the bosses' national service programs, to alert students to the gathering storm and win them to anti-imperialism, anti-racism, and — most importantly — the Party itself. In this sense, while the amassing of students in national service organizations is a great danger, it is also an opportunity for us. ☪

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Relying on Politicians Won't Stop Racist KKKops

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MD, Aug. 20—Hundreds of workers, mostly Latino, attended a vigil to protest the brutal killing of plumber Manuel Jesus de Espina by a Prince George's County cop. Manuel and his son were drinking in the stairwell of his apartment building, celebrating his 40th birthday. The cop, known for his swaggering brutality, claimed he feared for his life because Espina grabbed for his gun (or was it his baton? The story kept changing), but working-class eyewitnesses reported that Espina did not resist arrest but was beaten, blinded with pepper spray and then shot. Who do you believe? PLPers brought the message of militancy, anti-racism, multi-racial unity and the need for communist revolution to this gathering.

Under communism, there won't be cops protecting rich people's property, because there won't be any rich people or private property. The communist leadership of the new society will resolve conflicts in a comradely way, jail racists and build a unified working class. The role of cops under capitalism is to terrorize workers and protect the bosses and their system. As anti-immigrant racism grows, the cops will increasingly brutalize and murder immigrant workers to fulfill this mission.

Today we are still exploited by capitalism and murdered by racist cops. In Prince George's County, 14 workers have been shot by the cops since January 2008, several fatally. Twenty years ago, cops beat Gregory Habib, a Ghanaian student, to death here after he failed to stop at a stop sign. The cops were exonerated. "Going through channels," advocated by leaders of the vigil, has never worked to hold cops accountable, and never will end this racist, fascist intimidation.

We are already campaigning against the lynching of Ronnie White (almost certainly by cops or prison guards) in his jail cell two months ago (CD, 30 July).

Then came the needlessly brutal SWAT attack on the home of a Mayor Calvo of Berwyn Heights, and now Espina is murdered in Langley Park. These blatant attacks are just the latest in our area's long history of police violence, racial profiling and murder. The grassroots People's Coalition for Police Accountability (PCPA), led mainly by black workers in the County, launched resistance to police brutality over ten years ago, and the 2005 PLP Summer Project in D.C. joined that struggle.

Local politicians and some community activists called for patient reliance on the very system that oppresses all workers. They urged attendees not to "take matters into their own hands." The wife of State's Attorney Glenn Ivey (charged with investigating and prosecuting the lynchings of Ronnie White) hugged family members, spoke of justice for Mayor Calvo, but did not mention Ronnie White. She gave Mayor Calvo's dead dogs killed by the cops more play than a lynched young black man! Politician Victor Ramirez, Delegate to the Maryland House of Representatives, actually blamed Manuel for his own death, saying that he may not have led the most perfect life, and then quickly added that violence never solves anything, so rely on the "justice" system and don't fight back.

In addition to politicians, representatives of several African American organizations spoke out in solidarity as well. PCPA leader Dorothy Elliott spoke eloquently both about Ronnie White, and her son Archie Elliott, who was murdered 15 years ago by the cops as he sat handcuffed in a police cruiser. The translator never translated her words about Ronnie White!

The lack of militancy did not sit well with the hundreds of angry workers, who rushed to our militant bilingual signs charging PG County cops with racist murders, and linking the attacks on African American



Ronnie White and Latino Manuel de Espina with the slogan, "Workers, United, Will Never Be Defeated." Several new friends offered to help hold these signs, and hundreds more eagerly took CHALLENGE-DESAFIO as over 250 papers flew out of PLPers' hands.

The organizers invited friends and coworkers of Manuel to speak after the politicians. In the beginning, they mostly spoke of what a great and loving father Manuel was. But then workers' anger came out and stories of police brutality and intimidation rang out over the crowd. The organizers only let that go on for two or three speakers and then shut down the rally, fearing the growing militancy of the crowd.

PLPers spoke afterwards with workers. One man said, "It isn't just here that this happens. It happens all over. As long as there is money in a system there will always be oppression and wars." Another cited the importance of multi-racial and multi-gender unity in the common fight against our common exploiters. Several contacts were made and all were invited to our next events, including the annual PLP Crab Feast and the PCPA forum scheduled for September 9. Our fight against racism, police brutality and for the working class will continue until the exploitative system of capitalism is crushed by workers' power.✪

Airport Workers Catch Thieving Bosses

A MIDWEST AIRPORT — "We were robbed! The bosses cheated us!" These are the only printable comments describing how airport janitors were cheated out of eight hours pay by racist ABM Industries bosses. ABM cleaners, mostly immigrants from Mexico, Central America, Africa, and Asia, were paid eight hours short on their July 17 paychecks. The bosses blamed it on the "new time keeping system." The real reason is racism.

Anti-immigrant Nazi-like raids conducted by ICE and Homeland Security, racist movements like the Minutemen and a failing economy have produced a racist anti-immigrant climate in the U.S. ABM bosses thought they could take advantage of already super-exploited immigrant workers by stealing eight hours pay. Also, they paid some of the black workers full pay, trying to divide citizens from immigrants. But a black PLP member and union shop steward organized the workers to resist this fascist attack.

A meeting was held at the home of a co-worker and CHALLENGE reader, where we discussed what to do. We agreed to file a mass grievance and to try to get all the victimized workers to sign on. We also requested an emergency meeting with the union leadership.

An SEIU leader misled the most militant workers (and CHALLENGE readers) into thinking he was not coming to the airport, when in fact he actually did! He wanted no part of us because he was afraid of being called on to do something to get the workers' the eight hours owed. So we called for a second union meeting. Some workers distributed a PLP flier that attacked the SEIU leadership for supporting the racist bosses.

At the next meeting, with everyone there, the workers put the misleader under pressure. Some workers got into a heated exchange with the SEIU misleader who shouted, "I'm not the enemy!" He hurried up and left! The workers won that round!

Later, the union leader reluctantly filed the grievance. ABM bosses were extremely upset that a few workers would defy them. They even called the shop steward into the office to attempt to intimidate him and find out how the workers were going to fight back. The shop steward kept his cool and the bosses learned nothing! It was a clumsy fascist attempt to stop the workers from resisting.

ABM workers scored a small victory and got the eight hours owed them! The bosses underestimated the anger and ability of workers to unite across nation, race and gender. Officially, we lost the grievance, but we're still getting paid from the main corporate office. The airport bosses hate this!

Frederick Douglass, the great anti-slavery freedom fighter said, "Power concedes nothing without struggle." Self-critically, we could have done more. But a few workers, mostly regular CHALLENGE readers, collectively contributed to this struggle, "from each according to ability."

More fascist attacks are coming because the racist bosses are in a global crisis. If we are to survive and defeat fascism with communist revolution, we must learn how to organize under any and all circumstances, including the most extreme. Workers, soldiers, and students need PLP!✪

PLP Exposes Deadly Election Politics to Iraq Veterans



ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA, August 30th—At this year's Veterans for Peace (VFP)/Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW) convention the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) met and worked with old friends to distribute Challenge and our "GI Notes" newsletter and make new contacts.

IVAW's actions at the Democratic and Republican national conventions drew the most excitement among the young vets. At the DNC (Democratic National Convention), IVAW led over 3,000 in an anti-war march and claimed victory when Barack Obama's top veterans affairs advisor accepted a message against the Iraq war from IVAW on behalf of the presidential candidate. However, when the vets asked Obama's representative for an expected time of reply, Obama's reps refused to give one. While IVAW is currently eager to negotiate a meeting with Obama, the lesson we in PLP saw was that Obama and the Democrats are willing to pretend to listen while they plan expanded wars in Afghanistan and Pakistan (see article on page 4).

Many in IVAW are not fooled by Obama's supposed "anti-war" stance—some in IVAW even pushed to officially oppose the US war in Afghanistan—but few see alternatives to pressuring politicians. We in PLP said that working class, lower enlisted troops, and students can end imperialism through generations of class struggle and armed revolution, not lobbying and elections. Imperialism was continued after the US bosses defeat in Vietnam because of capitalism's constant drive for profit and power, not "greedy" corporations and "corrupt" presidents. The openness by some vets to PLPs line at the convention left us energized and eager to aid in active-duty and vets struggles.

The role of police was also a hot discussion. Some wanted to trust and work more with the police because at the DNC, a handful of police in riot gear refused to point their weapons at the IVAW contingent, left their posts, and were

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Will U.S. Invade Pakistan?

PAKISTAN—On September 14, Pakistan troops fired shots into the air to stop U.S. troops crossing into the South Waziristan region of Pakistan. A couple of weeks before, twenty Pakistani villagers, including women and children, were killed when the U.S. troops crossed the border from Afghanistan to supposedly attack Taliban insurgents in Pakistan's tribal areas. Pakistan's Foreign Ministry immediately condemned it as "a grave provocation." Seven days later Bush announced U.S. intentions to continue the raids — with or without the approval of the Pakistani government — and to send additional troops to Afghanistan (Obama and McCain agree on expanding the war in this region.)

Pakistan and Afghanistan share a 1,500-mile border, that 19th century British imperialists arbitrarily cut through mountainous land inhabited by Pashtuns. U.S. insistence that the Pakistan military crack down on the Taliban has caused a backlash against the army by Pakistani fundamentalists (often Pashtuns) and al Qaeda (foreign jihadists). The fierce confrontations have killed many civilians and left thousands homeless. In Afghanistan, the seven-year U.S.-NATO occupation has worsened conditions for the majority of Afghans. More than 1,000 civilians have been killed this year.

The U.S. and its ally, India, claim that Pakistan is the center and cause of the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan, accusing members of the Pakistani Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) of helping the Taliban. This is the excuse for the recent U.S. invasion of Pakistani territory. The U.S. wants to replace its decades-long indirect domination of Pakistan with direct military control.

A 2005 report by the U.S. National Intelligence Council and the CIA, forecast a "Yugoslav-like fate." for

Pakistan. A former Pakistani High Commissioner to the UK predicted that, "The central government's control probably will be reduced to the Punjabi heartland and the economic hub of Karachi, by 2015." (Times of India 13 Feb 2005).

Breaking up Pakistan would facilitate U.S. exploitation of the vast energy reserves of the Caspian Sea region to the north. Zbigniew Brzezinski, one of Barak Obama's foreign policy advisors wrote in 1990, "The Central Asian region and the Caspian Sea basin are known to

“Nationalism and religion are constantly being used by the ruling classes to divide workers and their allies.”

contain reserves of natural gas and oil that dwarf those of Kuwait, the Gulf of Mexico, or the North Sea." U.S. oil companies plan to build pipelines to transport that oil and gas from the region through Afghanistan and Balochistan — a Pakistan province — to the Arabian Sea and so to markets in Europe and Asia. If the U.S. is unable to secure this pipeline, Russia — and China — may monopolize the Caspian oil fields. The survival of the U.S. as a leading imperialist power depends on the control of the world's energy sources — a point emphasized this week as oil baron Cheney shuttled around the Caspian States meeting local rulers and representatives of Chevron and BP. As Brzezinski noted, "whoever controls Eurasia con-

trols the world."

The U. S. is now sponsoring India's membership in NATO, which will add one more powerful U.S. ally to the growing circle around Russia. When the Indian army took part in NATO exercises in Arizona in August, Russia retaliated by announcing that its strategic bombers would patrol the Indian Ocean. The U.S. and India signed a nuclear arms agreement that, according to Administration officials, "seals a long-term strategic alliance between the two countries, which had tense relations during the Cold War." With a rapidly expanding capitalist economy, seeking new markets, trading partners and oil, India also has interests in the Caspian Sea reserves and has its own plans for pipelines from Iran, through Balochistan to India.

Nationalism and religion are constantly being used by the ruling classes to divide workers and their allies. In Pakistan, India has joined with the U.S and Britain to covertly support and arm the separatist Balochistan Liberation Movement. In Indian-controlled Kashmir tension is growing between Muslim and Hindu, fundamentalists and secularists, and spreading to the border with Pakistan in the east.

The former Yugoslavia was broken up in part with the promotion of nationalism and the organization of separatist militias. For Yugoslavia's working class the result was fascist/racist terror, bloody civil wars and atrocities. Revolutionary communists must show the Afghan, Pakistan, and Indian working class and its allies — Pashtuns, Balochis, Sindhis, Punjabis, Kashmiris, Hindus — that nationalism is not the answer to their problems. That is the goal of the PLP in the region. Join us! ☛

France: Thousands Strike Against Job Cuts



Undocumented workers at a rally.

UZES, FRANCE, Sept. 11—The summer holiday season is over and the first strikes and demonstrations against job cuts and worsening conditions are breaking out. A case in point: high school teachers struck the whole first week of classes in this small town in Southern France (pop. 7,800, 2004 unemployment rate: 19%, average weekly household income: 275 euros), occupying the principal's office on Sept. 1. The strikers were mobilizing against obligatory overtime and over-crowded classes. The local board of education refused even to receive a parent-teacher delegation on Sept. 4.

The French banks have lost nearly 20 billion euros since the beginning of the subprime crisis, practically throwing the economy into recession. According to UN-EDIC (the French unemployment agency), 35,000 workers lost their jobs in the second quarter of 2008. And the real income of the average French household fell over the past year, according to the National Consumption Institute. But workers are fighting back:

Hospital workers struck at the public hospital in Strasbourg yesterday to protest the administration policy of placing profits over patient lives and the resulting multi-tasking of hospital workers.

Over 2,000 auto workers struck Renault plants across France today against the planned axing of 4,000 jobs, which comes on top of 10,000 job losses over the past

three years.

And thousands of teachers demonstrated today in over half of France's 100 départements (the equivalent of a county), with strikes in five départements (Ardennes, Champagne, Essonne, Guadeloupe and Marne) to protest job cuts: 11,200 this year, 13,500 planned next year, and 40,000 over the next three years.

Five postal workers' unions are calling for a 24-hour national strike and demonstrations throughout France on Sept. 23 to protest government plans to privatize the postal service.

Finally, six trade union federations are calling for a national protest on Oct. 7, the "world day for decent work" organized by the reformist International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC).

But all this indicates is that the reformist and reactionary trade union leaders, with the radical unions in tow, are pursuing their usual strategy of launching isolated local protests and 24-hour strikes in the hope of "building momentum" for a big national demonstration, and possibly a nation-wide 24-hour strike. This piecemeal strategy has failed to obtain any gains for workers since 1995.

As a result, Education Minister Xavier Darcos felt safe heaping scorn on the protesting teachers when he appeared on national television today, proclaiming "I love teachers" while denouncing teachers unions as promoting a "strike first, negotiate later culture," and denying that job cuts are resulting in larger class sizes and poorer education.

Leftist trade unionists here are trying to overcome the piecemeal strategy by pushing for an unlimited general strike, like the one that shut down France for two months in 1968. But that experience shows that even an unlimited general strike, if it leaves the capitalist system intact, falls short of what the working class needs— particularly in this age of worldwide capitalist crisis, more racism and endless wars. Workers here need to turn these struggles into schools for communism, and build a revolutionary internationalist movement to fight for the only real solution to the bosses' attacks: communism. ☛

PLP Exposes Deadly Election Politics to Iraq Veterans

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moved to tears by a powerful speech given by an IVAW member.

The police attacked the rest of the DNC anti-war marches. Also, the basis of IVAW's appeal to police was individualist and patriotic, focusing on the psychological effects on the cops for attacking "American" veterans who were mostly white. Given racist police murders and anti-immigrant raids by ICE, law enforcement would probably treat black, latino, and immigrant troops differently.

Similar tactics of vets appealing to cops did not work at the RNC. Uniformed cops openly tried to sit in IVAW's closed workshops in the IVAW convention room, they photographed vets walking to hotels, and attacked protestors during IVAW's attempt to bring McCain's campaign a veterans rights message.

Many at the convention were motivated to stop more troops from experiencing the guilt of killing for oil and greed, and to stop the killing of civilians. Many really believe politicians will listen to them or that enough troops and public will rise up so the anti-war movement will stop the bosses war in the next few months or years. But vets need a long term struggle against the profit system behind the wars. Many of the young vets we met are motivated to do more around Veterans issues and racism against Iraqis. PLP plans on working with and giving them communist leadership to oppose capitalism and all it's imperialist wars, not just Iraq. ☛

Send letters and articles to desafio.challenge@gmail.com subject GI Notes.

Bolivia: Gas-Oil Profits Behind Racism of Fascist Goons

LA PAZ, Bolivia, Sept. 15 — This Andean country is on the verge of a racist civil war as the governors of the “Half Moon” (in the eastern plains of the country) are in open rebellion against the central government of Evo Morales. There is a real threat of the country breaking apart. Right now, there are two governments: one led by Morales in the Andean region and the other led by the “autonomist” governors of the eastern plains. The gas and oil fields there are at stake, as well as the agricultural wealth of the “Half Moon.” The openly fascist governors — supported by the U.S. embassy — don’t want to share this wealth with the central government, particularly since Evo Morales is an ally of Venezuela’s Hugo Chávez. Morales expelled the U.S. ambassador last week, accusing him of meeting with the “autonomists.” Ambassador Goldberg was a U.S. diplomat in the former Yugoslavia in the mid 1990s when it was ridden by imperialist-caused nationalist civil wars.

The “autonomists” are openly fascist and racist. When their attempted putsch began last week in the state of Pando, with open support from the local governor, neo-Nazi goons from the youth group Juventud Cruceñista targeted what they call the “damn Indian race.” They killed 30 indigenous workers and peasants. These thugs attacked central government offices, took over an airport, gas and oil fields, cutting off gas supplies to Brazil (which get 50% of their gas from Bolivia) and Argentina.

Evo Morales has mass support, winning 67% of the votes in an August referendum. Since then, the aim of

the pro-U.S. fascists has been to provoke a military coup (Bolivia has a long history of putsches). But, Morales so far has the support of army since he put some of his loyal officers in control. Most soldiers are recruits and Indigenous (most upper and middle class white youth use their families’ economic power to avoid the draft.) Chávez threatened to send troops to Bolivia to help Morales, and even expelled the U.S. ambassador to Caracas in solidarity when he accused Venezuelan military officers of conspiring to kill him.

Given the growing instability in the region, the powerhouse of South America — the Brazilian ruling class — decided it doesn’t want the U.S. oil companies to control the gas and oil fields of Bolivia (because they will compete with Brazil’s Petrobras). So Brazil’s President Lula put his foot down and stated that Brazil will not tolerate the break-up of its neighbor, Bolivia. (El País, Madrid, 9/14). This led to a regional rulers meeting — excluding the U.S. — which came out in support of Morales.

But, the contradictions between the secessionists and Morales continue since the anti-Morales bosses don’t want the national government to cut into their share of the revenues (taxes) they get from the oil-gas profits. Also, the rivalry between the U.S. imperialists and Brazil and Venezuela is growing. And the inter-imperialist dogfight will sharpen as Russia’s Gazprom is in negotiation with YPF (the state-owned Bolivian energy



company) a \$2 billion investment.

As far as workers and their allies are concerned, the solution doesn’t lie in the 21st Century socialism (state capitalism) of Chávez or its Morales’ version of Andean capitalism. Morales continues attempts to negotiate a deal with the open fascists, demoralizing workers and peasants who have illusions about his government. The only solution is to build an anti-imperialist and anti-racist movement to fight for a society without any form of capitalism: communism. ☸

Imperialist Rivalry Spurs Mexican Rulers’ Oil Battle

The U.S. now faces a historic crisis and, desperate to stop their decline, they must control sources of energy. They are currently pushing for privatization of energy in Mexico through the government of Felipe Calderon and his allies in the Mexican Congress who promise the U.S. control over oil and gas, since Spain has stepped in and is already savoring part of the energy pie.

The rivalry between the imperialists is sharpening all around the world and reflects weakening U.S. domination and the strengthening of rivals like Russia, China and India. Control of the world’s oil safeguards U.S. bosses’ continuing worldwide supremacy. Without that control, this goal will be illusive. In the Caucasus, the U.S. wants to break Russia’s fuel monopoly and thus assure a third major source of energy on the planet. This intensifies the rivalry between the two imperialists.

Some Mexican capitalists don’t want to share with the U.S. or Spanish capitalists. That’s why they push nationalism to win worker support for their own control of the oil profits. Lopez Obrador is the spokesman for the nationalist capitalists. He may be willing to fight a civil war to defend this wealth against mainly U.S. bosses, not for the well-being of Mexican workers, but for higher profits and stability for Mexican bosses. That’s why he’s formed the FAP (Broad Progressive Front) in which an estimated 3 million people participated in mobilizations for the “peaceful transformation of the public life of Mexico,” in reality to support Obrador against the privatization of PEMEX.

The actions organized by FAP mean that they have too weak a presence in Congress to achieve their goals there. That’s why they threaten actions against privatization to be carried out by workers in the different states of Mexico. But the politicians trap workers into trying to win reforms from various profit-hungry capitalists who only want the best deal for themselves, keeping the workers chained to capitalist exploitation.

Mexico is a strategic ally of the U.S. Most Mexican oil and food sales go to the U.S. That’s why they have designed Plan Puebla Panama as a supplier of the wealth of Latin America to North America. Many U.S. manufacturers gain great profit by paying skilled Mexican workers so little. The most profitable industry is auto and lately aerospace in the north, mainly Chihuahua. In coming wider wars, these industries will play an important role, since they make weapons.

Behind Felipe Calderon’s “war against drug traffic” is the militarization of the country. The U.S. bosses and their lackeys in Mexico will fight to protect their wealth like oil, natural gas, water, biodiversity, uranium, etc. from their imperialist enemies. They could also try to control any popular uprising by unleashing police terror against workers.

Through the Alliance for Security and Prosperity of North America (ASPAN, a treaty made with ex-President Fox), the Merida initiative with Calderon, and recently the proposal to integrate Mexico into NORAD (North American Aerospace Command), the U.S. has entered a financial, military and energy “alliance” with Mexico and Canada, which is basically a proposal to focus on the strategic security of the U.S. in the face of wider war.

There’s no good or lesser evil capitalist or imperialist. They all seek to live off the wealth created by the working class. Siding with either block of capitalists is the worst error workers could make. We need to build an alliance with workers, students and soldiers around the PLP and fight internationally to destroy this system. Communist ideas must illuminate our staunch struggle to end the nightmare of capitalism. Only a communist revolution can establish a society that finally ends individualism, sexism, racism, nationalism and exploitation. That society is communism and for that we’ll fight to the win. JOIN US! FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM! ☸

Pacifism Hindered Calif. Mass Farmworkers’ Strikes

My experiences of many decades of organizing among farmworkers have shown me that pacifism causes despair for workers engaged in struggles, and even for pacifists themselves when reality hits them in the face.

In general, pacifists are religious believers, they hate violence particularly when it comes to labor conflicts. According to their religious dogmas, humans shouldn’t be the ones to decide about their lives. This is up to a divine being. In this way, they look good in front of their god and with the bosses, but not in front of their fellow workers in struggle. They believe that through sacrifices and suffering, even with hunger strikes, the bosses will get a conscience and will stop exploiting workers. Cesar Chávez, who was the leader of the United Farmworkers’ Union (UFWU), became famous with his hunger strikes and urged others to do the same during the strikes in the California fields from 1965-70. These mass struggles were almost lost because of Chávez’s pacifist philosophy. His pacifism didn’t only put a break in the the advance of the struggle, but also castrated it, taking away all its strength that could lead to victory in a shorter time. Thanks to the militancy of many strikers who didn’t think like Chávez, the strike wasn’t lost.

Most pacifists are not enemies of workers, but because of their fear of god and the bosses they think it is better to be a pacifist in the the struggle. But, when honest pacifists participate in labor conflicts and reality hits them in the face, they begin to change their attitude and end up joining the non-pacifists.

It happened in 1973 when the Calif. growers refused to renew the UFWU labor contracts and another strike erupted. And this one was rather violent. Then those who opted for pacifism (even preachers and priests) joined the rest of the workers, forgetting about non-violent strategies and took part in the struggle as if they had never been pacifist.

I think it is important to wage ideological struggle with workers involved in class struggle. We must bring to them the workers’ philosophy to distinguish between who are our friends and our enemies. We mustn’t fall in the anti-working class trap put up by politicians, bosses and even the same leaders which trust in the “justice” of the corrupt capitalist system. ☸

A Veteran of the Fight-backs in Calif.

LETTERS



INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL SPREADS COMMUNIST IDEAS

As reported in CHALLENGE (9/17), a PLP international communist school was held on a recent weekend in Spain with comrades visiting from France, local citizens and immigrant workers from Colombia, El Salvador, Brazil, Perú and other countries discussing ideas, experiences and the politics of PLP.

A good discussion began when a worker said, "In Brazil they want us to think that there are only two classes: the upper class and the middle class." After talking it over, we all agreed that class struggle between workers and bosses is the moving force of history and therefore these are the only two real classes in any capitalist system.

Another good aspect was that people came to the meeting willing to talk to workers, students and soldiers, to share the communist ideas of the Party. Our group continues to include more workers who understand that we must wage an armed revolutionary struggle against the class enemy to destroy capitalism and to install a new system: COMMUNISM.

"In France, one month the transportation workers go on strike, then the next month the doctors strike, and next the lawyers," said a friend from France. We responded that while capitalism forces workers to strike to get some crumbs, the union leaders use these struggles to build illusions among workers about the system. Nowadays, with the growing international crisis of capitalism and endless wars, the bosses and the sellouts leading the unions make it harder to get even minor reforms. Our job is to bring our communist politics to workers involved in these struggles (and all workers and their allies) and to show them that the only real solution is to fight to destroy the capitalist system building a mass revolutionary party to fight for communism.

The participants in the 3-day communist school came out satisfied with PLP's line and politically moved forward. They found real answers to the problems facing the world's workers, contrary to the false promises of the electoral parties and their politicians.

Workers all over the world need these meetings, because the schools and other institutions of this system only give us lies about communism. We need all the cadre of PLP to spread the Party's ideas and win more workers. We're now distributing more CHALLENGE newspapers in France and Spain. Continue to advance, comrades. The march is slow but we keep marching. LONG LIVE COMMUNIST REVOLUTION and the PLP!

Comrades in Spain

CHILD VICTIMS OF IMF/WTO RACISM

At the Awet Secondary School in Mbulumbulu, Tanzania, a seventeen year old girl was beaten by her headmaster. She had simply responded to his question about some students who were late to do a chore, and he slapped her on the side of the head, damaging her eardrum. This kind of incident is common at Awet. Last year, the headmaster beat a boy and locked him up for more than eight hours in a tiny closet. After that, the poor boy left the school and committed suicide. After a discussion with their American sponsors, the girl's sister who was also beaten by the headmaster, has compiled a list of names of students who have been abused. The sponsors are writing a letter to the higher authorities demanding that immediate action be taken, and the girls have agreed to circulate it among their friends.

The IMF (International Monetary Fund) and WTO (World Trade Organization) make the rules that perpetuate oppression. The IMF loans money to the Government and then limits the degree to which it can subsidize the people's basic necessities of life. And, the members of Parliament, primarily committed to increasing their own wealth, administer these policies.

The IMF forbids free secondary school education. Even the public secondary schools charge tuition (about \$200/year), adding a terrible burden to parents who can hardly find jobs or a market to sell their crops. Children are regularly kicked out of school for non-payment of fees. In addition, a severe teacher shortage is driving up class size, to often 100 children or more. In order for

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conditions to change here, workers and youth must begin to understand how imperialism generates the obscene inequality between the rich and poor countries of the world. Revolutionary communist consciousness will enable workers, farmers, and youth to stop blaming themselves, their family members, their tribe, or their luck and begin to seek a collective solution to poverty. Building a new communist movement is humanity's only hope for escaping the hell that capitalism creates for most of the world's population.

Internationalist Comrade

CAPITALISM CHOOSES PROFITS OVER HEALTH

No matter how well I understand capitalism's capacity for screwing the working class, and no matter how many times I think they've reached the absolute depths, the US government continues to find new ways to amaze. It is not enough that scandalous under-funding of government safety inspections of our food supply leaves the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) only able to inspect 1% of the meat supply—they now want to make sure no one else inspects the other 99%!

Creekstone Farms Premium Beef in Kansas had begun advertising that they were inspecting 100% of their cows for mad cow disease, but the competing beef producers have taken them to court to prevent them from doing it. Not to prevent them from advertising it, but from actually carrying out the inspections. No longer content with simply withholding funding for inspectors and thereby rendering laws requiring food inspection toothless, the administration, through some of its court appointees, has actually ordered the USDA to PROHIBIT Creekstone from inspecting their own cows for mad cow disease. The court has decreed that Creekstone doesn't have the right to inspect their cows.

The reason the beef producers have acted is obvious: they don't want the expense of inspecting their own cows to cut into their profits. But the reason the courts have backed them may be less obvious to many people. Despite their claim to be neutral and "above the fray," the courts, as well as the entire government, are set up to protect the profits of the other producers rather than the health of the entire population, both here and abroad where such meat may be exported.

The government, as Marx pointed out 150 years ago, belongs not to the people, but to the ruling capitalist class. If this outrageous and shameless act of harm to the public interest doesn't nakedly expose the courts and the rest of the government for what they are, it's hard to imagine what would. If we want a government that acts in our interests, we will eventually have to overthrow the power of the capitalist class with an armed revolution and replace their government with one that belongs to our class, the working class.

Saguaro Rojo

OLYMPIC GAMES—WHERE IS SPARTACUS?

Too much talk about the Olympiad. The interna-

tional big bosses never take a break from bemoaning Tibet, human rights, air pollution — a sign of the Western capitalist countries' uneasiness about China. Well, we know that's how imperialist rivals talk about one another. As if European governments were not guilty of the same violations.

What about recent laws in Italy against immigrant and gypsy communities? Construction of concentration camps in North Africa to keep Europe "safe" from "unwelcome intruders"? The Spanish oil company Repsol's human rights violations in Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia? The spirit of Fascism — sorry, I mean the true spirit of capitalism! — is more alive in Europe than ever.

But what about the Olympics' sportsmen and sports-women? You saw them march proudly like soldiers behind the flag, the ideal representation of the nation-state. I remembered the German proletarians being deceived by their own party, the socialist SPD, which encouraged them to fight for "their nation" against other fellow proletarians during World War I. Today the U.S. soldier is fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan for "democracy, freedom" — the greatest nonsense of Western ideology. We all know the real meaning of these words: the democracy of money, the freedom of profit and exploitation, blood becoming oil.

All the fallacies of the capitalist state could be seen in the athletes fighting like soldiers for the pride of their nation. Look at the swimming competition. On the surface it's U.S. versus German swimmers. But look a little closer: it's the manufacturer Speedo, sponsor of the U.S. team, against Adidas, sponsor of the German team. Do we need to say that Speedo is the #1 swimwear brand and Adidas #2? You see the swimsuits but not the miserable conditions of the working poor in the underdeveloped countries who make them. But Adidas and Speedo sponsor "the Olympic spirit." What a joke!

Look at the soccer pitch. Brazil against South Africa... or Nike against Puma? The Olympic spirit of capital, and athletes as its models, the proletarians of this big circus, exploited in the arena to please the bosses, as Bush shakes hands with a Speedo executive while another world record is broken. A job well done!

The athletes of today could be the gladiators of ancient times, the cheap entertainment, or "bread and circuses" as the poet Juvenal called them, foisted on the Roman poor to gain political power over them. It's the same today. And today, too, sports need their modern Spartacus.

A friend in Europe



Boeing Strike

continued from front page

This led to a discussion on how fascism relies on extreme racism and nationalism. This discussion inspired another reader to relate a small but significant struggle he had against flag waving. A small U.S. flag was placed on top of the delivery truck his area uses. Every time he saw it, he would throw it to the ground. Finally, he had enough. He gathered his shop-mates around and delivered an ultimatum. "I'm not driving that truck under any flag." The flag hasn't been seen since.

We ended with an old story from WWII. A PLP veteran was with the U.S. Army in a small town in Italy when the war ended. The locals got a ragtag band together to celebrate. He thought they would play the Italian national anthem. Instead they broke into The (Communist) International. Red flags of revolution were everywhere --- Now there's a flag you can drive a truck under!

Some of the participants of this last discussion will organize continued discussions in various cities to accommodate Boeing's far-flung workforce while we are on strike. Either way, we are filling the [non] workday with intense struggles over revolutionary ideas.✪

We need your support! Send letters of solidarity and donations to help produce leaflets and CHALLENGES to Boeing Strikers C/O PLP Box 808, Brooklyn, 11202.



Job Security, Outsourcing Big Strike Issues

"They say you can't have job security these days," said IAM District President Wroblewski at recent union meetings, referring to one of the most contentious strike issues, "And I agree with them." He then pleaded for a break from worrying about this during the next three years (the duration of any new contract signed after the strike).

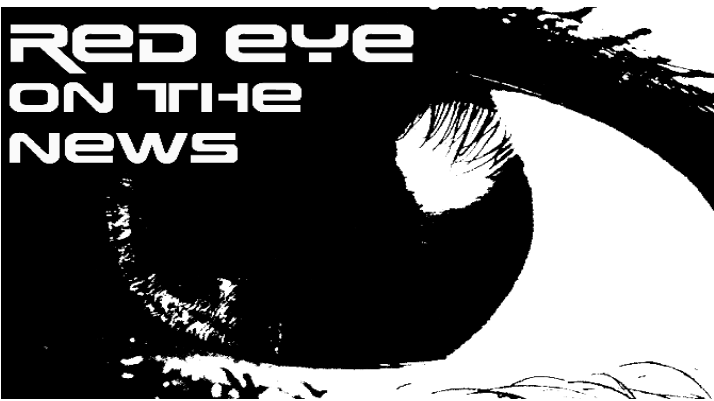
The union has confined the debate to facilities maintenance, parts delivery inside the plants, and bidding to undercut proposed manufacturing outsourcing. The latter will accelerate the racist trend to a low-wage union workforce within the Boeing plants: what has become known as the "Kick Your Kids to the Kurb (KKK)" contract.

The union is reportedly looking for language that is similar to that among GE unions. What a joke! GE is known as the Gone Elsewhere, having outsourced more jobs than anyone.

It's true under capitalism workers have as much security as a pig at a BBQ. That's why we can't limit the debate to what's possible under this system. Production for profit pits not only nation against nation and company against company, but also worker against worker. Communism, on the other hand, produces for the needs of our class. Under communism we welcome extra hands. We would use the help to increase production to support the revolutionary aspirations of our international brothers and sisters, dedicate more of our time to developing political leadership among our fellow workers or shorten the workday.

It's no accident that it is only our Party that has produced letters of support from subcontractor workers. Uniting with these super-exploited workers will build the kind of anti-racist, international solidarity that can really advance the struggle and pave the path to revolution.

CORRECTION: In the Last issue a sentence was omitted in the article "FIGHT WARMAKER BOEING'S ATTACKS ON ALL WORKERS". This is how it should have read:
 "We also discussed how capitalism reinforces racism, sexism and imperialism. We discussed how the dog-eat-dog capitalist economic base makes it impossible to mitigate, let alone eliminate, these divisions in the working class "How can communism succeed when we are so divided against each other?" asked our friend."



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



India's Muslims Brutally Repressed - NYT 8/27

India is usually tagged as a "rising superpower" or "capitalist success story" - that India since 1997 has been "stable, peaceful and prosperous". But four million Kashmiri Muslims suffer every day the misery and degradation of a full-fledged military occupation. A report by Human Rights Watch in 2006 described a steady pattern of arbitrary arrest, torture and extrajudicial execution by Indian security forces. A survey by Doctors Without Borders in 2005 found that Muslim women in Kashmir, prey to the Indian troops and paramilitaries, suffered some of the most pervasive sexual violence in the world. Thousands of Muslims have peacefully demonstrated over the last 30 years against these injustices, but a brutal suppression of nonviolent protests will continue to radicalize a new generation of Muslims.

FBI Poised To Be US Gestapo - NYT - 8/21

New guidelines would allow the F.B.I. to open an investigation of an American, conduct surveillance, pry into private records and take other investigative steps "without any basis for suspicion." The plan "might per-

mit an innocent American to be subjected to such intrusive surveillance based in part on race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, or on protected First Amendment activities". The Justice Department is already expecting criticism over the F.B.I. guidelines.

Russian Invasion Echoes U.S. Acts - LAT 8/14

Russia's invasion fits perfectly into that most ancient of great-power traditions - asserting semi-sovereignty over its immediate neighbors. The United States even has a name for its right to intervene in its neighbors' affairs: the Monroe Doctrine. And just as Russia moved to undermine a militantly pro-American government on its borders, so the United States moved to overthrow Castro at the Bay of Pigs and depose the Sandanistas in Nicaragua, and green-lighted an attempted coup against Venezuela's Hugo Chavez in 2002.

LA: Immigrants Fear Red Cross - NYT - 9/7

When Hurricane Gustav bore down on New Orleans, many immigrant workers feared that immigration agents would arrest them at Red Cross shelters. Staff members at the New Orleans Workers' Center for Racial Justice said they pleaded in vain for written assurances from the Red Cross that undocumented immigrants would be safe in its shelters. It asked the Red Cross to state in writing that its volunteers would be educated about the open-door policy, and that immigration agents would not be allowed to enter shelters for raids or investigations. With the storm rolling ever closer, and the authorities ordering people to flee, no letter came. More than a thousand people decided they could not take the chance of being picked up.

Voting Won't End Nightmare for 20 Million Unemployed Workers

Voting for either set of warmakers — Obama-Biden or McCain-Palin — won't end the nightmare suffered by over 20 million workers who are either unemployed, have given up seeking non-existent jobs or are working part-time because they can't find full-time jobs. Capitalism marches on!

While the "official" jobless rate rose to 6.1% (highest in five years), this excludes the other two categories above, so the real rate is 16.8%. And because of racist discrimination, unemployment rates among black workers are double that of white workers, and 60% higher among Latinos.

This is a full-fledged recession, although — as the saying goes — if your neighbor's out of work, it's a recession; if you're out of work, it's a depression.

Still worse, inflation has been outstripping wages, so the so-called Misery Index — unemployment + inflation — is at 11.7%, the worst in 17 years.

Of the 600,000 jobs wiped out in August, there are nearly as many college graduates as high school graduates; the jobless are up among adults, many over 45, not just teenagers, as unemployment rose for the 8th straight month, the most sustained increase in 25 years.

Combined with this picture is the home foreclosure rate, triple three years ago and the highest in nearly three decades. Unemployment feeds the foreclosures, leading to a downward spiral for millions of working-class families. In the next four months, the airlines will lay off 36,000. State and local governments will continue to cut back because of lower tax revenues. And the shakiness of the banks, credit and stock markets are heading towards a "financial tsunami," predicts the manager

of the world's largest bond market — as it was shown by the virtual nationalization of the mortgage giants Freddie Mac and Fannie Mac. So the Treasury arranged a deal that throws Fannie and Freddie shareholders over the side, but promises to protect Wall Street and foreign creditors (from China, Japan, oil-rich Gulf emirate and even Russia). Without these big lenders, credit would dry up and the blow to the bosses' economy could be historic. So, the feds couldn't wait till after the elections. Neither Obama nor McCain opposed this huge robbery of workers' tax money. Eventually it could cost \$500 billion to save these mortgage giants.

With U.S. imperialist wars in Iraq and Afghanistan (and Pakistan and Iran looming?), trillions in workers' and future workers' income taxes are being sucked into the bottomless military pit the ruler's system has created, while simultaneously slaughtering millions of workers internationally.

Meanwhile, Obama and McCain continue to spout "concerns" for the jobless and offer meaningless "programs" for stimulating the economy, even as the last "stimulus" of \$160 billion this past spring failed miserably to ward off a deepening recession. And they still propose troop increases for Afghanistan and the Army in general, to funnel more billions down the drain to protect their oil empire against rival imperialists in Europe, Russia, Japan and China.

Not one U.S. president has ever ended unemployment because the profit system by definition cannot provide full employment. Capitalism operates on cut-throat competition. As one set of bosses wins the competition, another set loses and inevitably cuts costs to



try to maintain profits by laying off thousands and millions of workers. With "globalization" permeating the capitalist world, Toyota wins and GM loses, cutting tens of thousands of jobs. Even the one GM department that was making money, GMAC (its financial arm) has just announced 5,000 layoffs.

We in PLP call on workers not to vote, instead to organize breaking with all these politicians and union hacks who are all serving the bosses. Instead of blaming immigrant or workers from other countries or even other areas for losing jobs, we must unite internationally. This unity is key to fighting for the only solution to joblessness and endless wars this racist profit system breeds: a workers-led communist society with no bosses, no profits, no wage slavery. That's PLP's goal. It's a lifetime job. Join us.✪

Baltimore Youth Learn: There's No Such Thing As a Good Politician

Representatives of Peer to Peer Youth Enterprises (a coalition of youth organizations employed by the city of Baltimore) shouted "ZERO DOLLARS IS NOT A NEGOTIATION!" in disappointment after meeting with Baltimore Mayor Sheila Dixon to ask for more funding.

After a Peer to Peer Youth Enterprises (P2P) Extravaganza, and a Sleep-Out titled Operation Occupation in front of City Hall, Peer to Peer organized a 5 day hunger strike.

P2P employes youth to pass on knowledge to their peers, involving groups such as the Baltimore Algebra Project, Baltimore Urban Debate League, Hip Hop Congress Baltimore, Wide Angle Youth Media and Kids on the Hill.

When Mayor Dixon asked P2P to work with her and compromise, students decided to suspend the hunger strike until negotiations were complete but left the meeting with zero dollars. Mayor Dixon

said she'll work with P2P youth but did not schedule another meeting. Even after many emails, phone calls, and press conferences where P2P demanded another meeting with Mayor Dixon for true negotiations, Mayor Dixon still never met.

This campaign for \$3 million from Baltimore City budget for youth jobs in the knowledge based economy helped me to sharpen my understanding of class struggle and the role some youth play as flunkies for the capitalists.

When P2P youth organizers met with Mayor Dixon during the hunger strike, present in the meeting were members of her Youth Commission, the so called youth voice of the city where each young person represents a district of the city. This youth

Commission holds no power and works as a front for politicians to say that they work with youth. The role of the Youth Commissioners in the meeting with the Mayor was to try to convince P2P organizers that we shouldn't ask the Mayor for funding for youth employment but raise the millions of dollars ourselves through fundraisers.

The P2P campaign demanding three million dollars from the city budget is only a small investment in Baltimore's youth. Three million dollars can employ up to 1,000 young people who will teach up to 6,000 young people.

After trusting that Mayor Dixon would negotiate and compromise, and after the City Council gave false hopes in finding three million dollars in the city's budget, P2P decided to use this summer to build a larger base of supporters and build fundraising strategies.

A couple of PLP comrades are tightly involved in the Peer to Peer Movement. There are students in P2P who are fed up with the poor and racist conditions of Baltimore City and its politicians. The special thing about Baltimore is that a good number of youth have been involved in political struggle and truly want change, they just need to be introduced to the Progressive Labor Party's ideas.

Believing that politicians will negotiate and compromise with students to gain economic justice and provide employment and quality education is a false hope under capitalism. All politicians are puppets to the capitalist class and workers are not yet organized enough to hold them accountable to their lies. To end this madness of unemployment and mis-education we need communist revolution and less conversations with politicians at City Hall. ✪

"There are students in P2P who are fed up with the poor and racist conditions of Baltimore City and its politicians."

The Decision of a Lifetime

"How do things change?" a comrade asked in the summer project study group.

"It takes power," I answered.

The idea is to unite the working class and overthrow the bosses. So here I am, rushing between cars on the parking lot of Atomic Denim, a garment factory in South L.A., to sell Challenge/Desafio. "I need more Challenges!" I yell to my fellow comrades. Workers consistently take the paper while moving quickly past us to get to work.

The boss and the secretary come out and yell as they snatch the Challenges out of two workers' hands and throw them on the ground. "TRASH IT!" the secretary yells. A worker then whispers to a comrade, "Maybe you guys can bring little pocket cards with your message and contact info, so the bosses can't see."

I am really excited to see the workers accepting the literature as I watch them walk into the factory with their eyes glued to the Challenges.

We left Atomic Denim with about 150 Challenges and leaflets in the workers' hands. We left with two police cars called on us because we were trying to organize the workers. We left with the bosses angry and most of all, I left feeling accomplished in my goal of reaching out to the working class.

So I think to myself, how can I break these imaginary walls that are separating my commitment from the Progressive Labor Party. How can these walls be broken? I'm thinking over and over.

I am fighting for the working class. I am sick and tired of the bosses exploiting the working class. I am revolutionary. I am an advocate of equality. Am I in full agreement with the PLP's beliefs about communism? Am I willing to dedicate my life to PLP at this moment? The question has not yet been answered. I often hear of party members joining and then dropping out. One thing for certain, when it's time for my commitment, I'll be here, and here for good!

Daddy's Girl