

CHALLENGE



THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

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CUNY FIGHTBACK:

STUDENTS, WORKERS

TURN UP THE HEAT

BRONX, November 2—“Take a hand warmer. You’ll need it” Last week a dozen students and educational workers rallied in front of Bronx Community College due to of lack heat in the entire campus. We gave out hundreds of hand warmers and fliers calling on students, staff, and faculty to challenge racist austerity policies at City College of New York (CUNY) and to join our group that is building a strike movement. This rally was held just a week after we demonstrated a few miles south, at Hostos Community College, where the student cafeteria has been closed for over two years, vending machines and elevators are constantly out of order, and the outdoor spaces have been closed to students. The righteous anger of students and workers at the racist conditions that we’re forced to endure was on display, as people eagerly respond to our fightback message. As we fight for better student and worker conditions on campus we are also calling for communist revolution - a revolution that puts the needs of the international working class first.

What does racist austerity look like?

This fall, members of Progressive Labor Party (PLP) have been active with students and other education workers at Hostos Community College. We have helped to launch a mass petition campaign demanding the immediate reopening of the cafeteria and hiring of unionized cafeteria workers. This campaign, initiated by students, has gained much momentum as hundreds have stopped to sign and talk with us. Of course, everyone asks the same question- “What can we do about it?”

Our answer is two-fold: We must fight to open the cafeteria, to get heat back on campus and to stand up to the college administration in whatever way we can. But we must also recognize that these fights aren’t enough and that students at CUNY and worldwide will only get the education that our class needs once we have destroyed capitalism and replaced it with communism. Communism means a society that is run for and by workers, and where there will always be free, quality, life-long education for all workers. Having CHALLENGE present at these rallies has helped us get this vital message across.

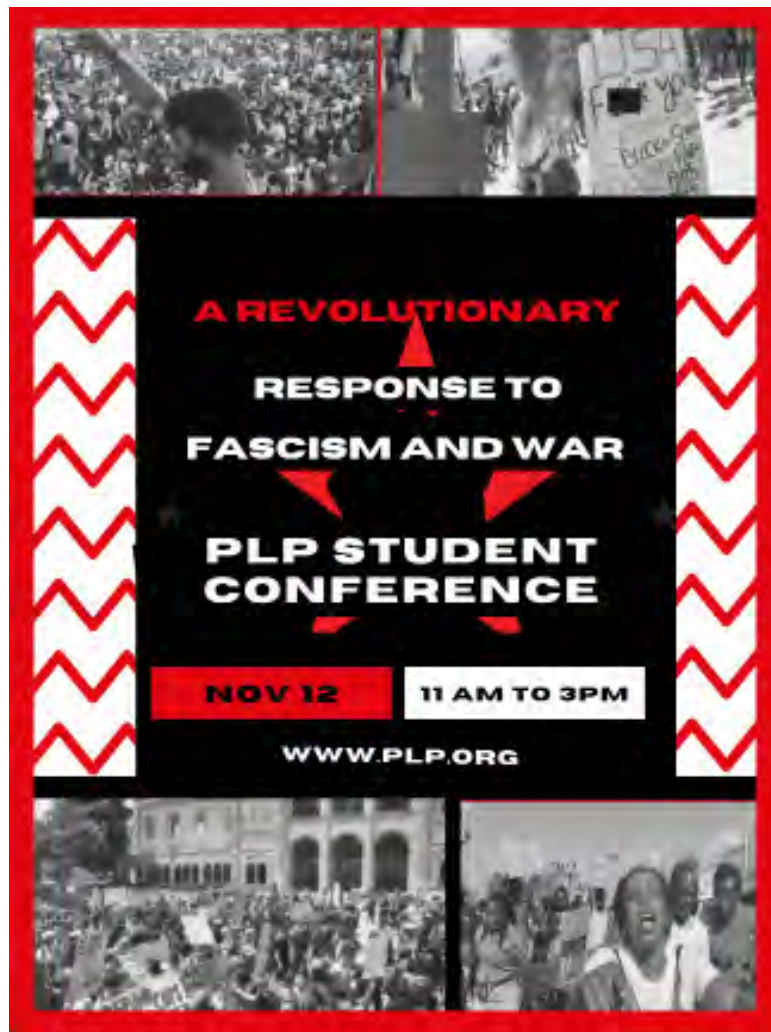
As we head into winter, students will have to head outside to buy food. Hostos is in the South Bronx, one of the poorest neighborhoods in the country and in the middle of a true “food desert” with only fast food available. We point out that the CUNY bosses have whittled many campuses to the bare bones, including closing cafeterias in almost half of the 25 campuses across New York City. This is part of a strategy that includes early cancellation of classes and offering fewer

and fewer services to students.

New student leadership emerging

“I feel like I’ve been waiting for this my whole life” was the comment made by one new student who has stepped up to help lead and organize these fightbacks.

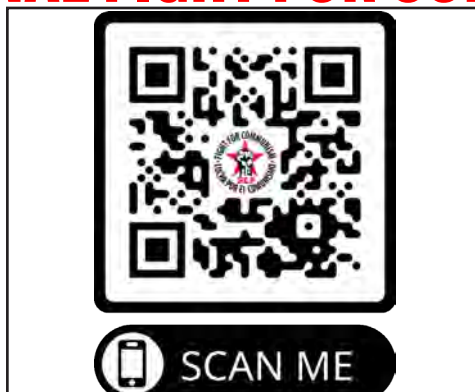
Continued on page 3



JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

★ **EDITORIAL:** *Face of fascism for a system in crisis ... p.2*

★ **LOS ANGELES:** *LA workers reject election, embrace confidence in working class ... p.3*



★ **PAKISTAN:** *Only workers can save workers: Pakistan floods prove need for revolution ... p.4*

★ **RED HISTORY:** *Robeson, Davis & Du Bois knew to fight racism, fight capitalism ... p.8*

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.

★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. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society's benefits and burdens.

★Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of “race.” Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit Black, Latin, 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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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

CHALLENGE is for the working class, produced by the working class. 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.

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Editorial

UK: Rishi Sunak

Face of fascism for a system in crisis

Amid runaway inflation and surging worker fight-back, Britain's chaotic ruling-class merry-go-round has turned--for the moment--to filthy-rich Rishi Sunak, the UK's third prime minister in six weeks. Britain's instability reflects the international crisis of capitalism: a looming worldwide recession/depression, the implosion of the old U.S.-led liberal world order, the bosses' escalating attacks on the international working class, and the global volatility that will lead U.S. rulers—Democrats and Republicans alike—to full-blown fascism and world war with China and Russia.

Britain, once the reliable junior partner for U.S. imperialism from Iraq to Ukraine, is a political train wreck. Following clown-car opportunist Boris Johnson and the dead-on-arrival Liz Truss, Rishi Sunak's job is to try to discipline the hopelessly divided British bosses as he assaults workers with spending cuts. The son of Indian immigrants, Sunak will lead the Conservative Party's racist campaign to scapegoat immigrants for the profit system's failures. He's the latest example of the deadly illusion of identity politics. Workers must not be fooled!

In Britain, hundreds of thousands of workers, led by critical railway workers, are fighting back in “one of the most significant waves of industrial unrest the United Kingdom has seen since the ‘winter of discontent’ in the late 1970s” (msn.com, 9/1). The Progressive Labor Party's task is to win these workers to the historic struggle for communist revolution, the only solution to fascism and inter-imperialist war.

The bosses' boss

A practicing Hindu, born to affluent immigrant parents, Sunak received an elite ruling-class education, married into one of India's richest families (Infosys), and trained at Goldman Sachs before stealing another fortune as a hedge funder and venture capitalist. He made a swift rise through Parliament by supporting his Conservative Party's lethal principles: “free” markets, deregulation, privatization of health care and other social services, mass poverty, the shredding of the social safety net, and widening racist inequalities.

For Sunak and the finance capitalists he serves, the goal is to restore Margaret Thatcher's austerity regime of the 1980s, a brutal attack that decimated the working class. Under Thatcher, the proportion of workers below the poverty line more than tripled, from 13 percent to 43 percent. Child poverty more than doubled. Meanwhile, the rich saw their tax rates cut in half, from 83 percent to 40 percent (Guardian, 2013). With inflation now exceeding 10 percent and the British pound in free fall, Sunak's job will be to balance the books through the death and despair of our class sisters and brothers.

The austerity regimes of Sunak's more recent Conservative predecessors, David Cameron (2010-2016) and Theresa May (2016-2019), created the massive economic pain that paved the way for Brexit, Britain's departure from the European Union, which has only aggravated the country's crisis. With unemployment, housing, and disability benefits gutted, millions of workers' lives were destroyed. As an aging population required more care, the National Health System was hollowed out to the verge of collapse. Tuition at many universities tripled as tax cuts helped the rich (Harvard Business Review, August 2019).

Smash the bosses' racist attacks

In line with a long and disgraceful British tradition, Sunak's government will rely on racism to divide workers, scapegoat immigrants, and regain lost profits with

more super-exploitation. The racist British legacy of imperialism and colonialism spans over four centuries and five continents. British imperialists pillaged and plundered their way from South Asia to Africa to the Americas and the Caribbean.

In particular, Britain is notorious for its virulent anti-Asian racism. After World War II, it deported hundreds of Chinese seamen who'd been recruited for the war effort, deeming them an “undesirable element” in British society. During the COVID pandemic, vicious attacks against Asians rose by 300 percent (Al Jazeera, April 2021). For nearly two centuries, Britain's colonial bosses said they couldn't leave India because the people there could not rule themselves. Now, out of desperation for their failing system, they have turned to the son of Indian immigrants to bail them out.

As Boris Johnson's chancellor of the exchequer, Sunak backed the racist scheme to return refugees and asylum seekers to Rwanda. He has reappointed hard-right racist Home Secretary Suella Braverman, another child of South Asian immigrants, who spearheaded the Rwanda plan. In a sick statement, Braverman declared, “I would love to have a front page of The Telegraph with a plane taking off to Rwanda, that's my dream, it's my obsession (thenational.scot, 10/1). This disgusting callousness shows what's in store for the working class, and why communist internationalism is vital for smashing racism.

Like Deportee-in-Chief Barack Obama and Top Cop Kamala Harris, Sunak has only one loyalty: to the capitalist bosses. Identity politics is a fatal trap. Workers have nothing in common with bosses who happen to look like them. They have only one true identity: as members of the international working class.

Liberals are the main danger

After the latest Tory debacle, it's only a matter of time before the so-called Labour Party returns to power—more bad news for the working class. Like the Democratic Party in the U.S., British liberal bosses are the main danger. On the surface, they may seem to care about workers. But behind their mask of compassion lies a group of bosses who are eager to sacrifice workers to protect their dirty profits. Time and again, the Labour Party has proven itself to be a disgraceful, racist, sexist, anti-immigrant, war-mongering cesspool.

In 2003, former Labour Prime Minister Tony Blair (1997-2007) joined George W. Bush in fabricating the weapons of mass destruction myth to justify the U.S./UK invasion of Iraq. Under Blair's leadership, Britain's prison population doubled despite a decline in crime. Countless workers struggling with the diseases of capitalism, including drug and mental health issues, were funneled into prison (Independent, July 2009). Now leading in the polls by more than 30 percent, Labour has been accused of ignoring reports of sexism and anti-Muslim and anti-Black racism by senior party members (Guardian, 10/2). These hypocritical liberals are poised to intensify Britain's attacks on immigrant workers: “Labour's pitch is not for open borders, but to make laws smarter and police the borders better” (New York Times, 10/26).

No capitalist politicians can serve our class interests. There is no “lesser evil” among the rapacious, murderous bosses. Only one party stands with and for the international working class: the revolutionary communist Progressive Labor Party. Workers must unite to overthrow the profit system that enslaves us. Join PLP! We have nothing to lose but our chains!✊

Don't vote, revolt!

LA workers reject elections, embrace confidence in working class

LOS ANGELES, November 2—Antiracist fighters have united across Los Angeles County for weeks to stand up against anti-Black and anti-indigenous racism. A recently revealed leaked audio tape exposed a top labor leader and three members of the LA city council, including the first Latin woman president of the council, Nury Martinez, using vile, racist language. They were discussing how to redistrict LA so that the voter population best benefits them. This redistricting also intentionally disadvantages their fellow Black council people. They are modeling themselves off of the big imperialist powers as they carve up the city for their gain. As the Democrats struggle to maintain the appearance of liberalism, calls for the council members' resignations have gone up the chain as high as President Joe Biden. While most workers fighting for their resignation will simply put their faith in the next up-and-coming Democrat, members of Progressive Labor Party (PLP) are struggling with our base to understand racism as the bedrock of capitalism. Our calls for "Don't Vote - Revolt" have to be even sharper when the liberals expose themselves as they do time and time again.

PLP offers a way for workers to overthrow capitalism

It is against this backdrop that PLP hosted our quarterly forum. One of our previous forums on imperialist war was in the works for weeks and was coincidentally scheduled for just two weeks after the launch of the invasion of Ukraine by Russian bosses. Similarly, this forum was already being planned to fall a week after the audio tapes surfaced. Comrades in LA are not psychic though. We just know the enduring characteristics of capitalism - war, racism, police brutality, etc. will never stop wreaking havoc on our class. The system constantly exposes itself as long as we are there to take advantage of the opportunities.

Almost 25 comrades and base members gathered to look at the long history of mass movements



in the U.S. - the abolition of slavery, anti-Jim Crow fights, the Civil Rights movement, and the recent antiracist movement reignited during the summer of 2020. The engaging presentation declared all of these time periods as potential tipping points that never tipped due to the reliance on working within the system and electoral politics. Attendees connected with the Audre Lorde quote, "The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house." That framework led to a discussion of the tools PLP has to offer our class - organizing on the job, in mass organizations, and in the military to build the Party in the fight to overthrow capitalism and replace it with a system of communism.

Elections trap workers in nightmare of capitalism

All participants agreed whole-heartedly that elections could never bring about the change they want to see in the world. One young Black high school student noted she's "been looking for like-minded people like us who really want to change

the world." She wants to attend all future PLP events! Another highlight was the attendance of a family in the anti-police brutality movement we work in here. We have known them for a while and discussed Party ideas and shared our literature, but this was the family's first time coming to an event hosted by the Party. The husband, wife, and their teenage daughter were very engaged and said they learned a lot.

This was not a stand alone forum. In addition to connecting to the LA city council "scandal," it served as a precursor to an upcoming action. District Attorney George Gascon has been heralded in LA as progressive and for the people. Even after 30 years as an LAPD officer and chief, and no prosecutions of police officers during another eight years as DA in the Bay Area, politicians and organizers alike have uplifted him to be the savior of the working class from police violence. Many families we work with believe his words that he will reopen cases and trust that he will prosecute police moving forward even though there has been little movement on his part for the first year and a half in office. Many are convinced by his excuses - that he wants to do more, but he is underfunded and under attack from the right.

The Party, working in unison for almost three years with the Flores family, has finally been able to break through some of that support. Our next action, which everyone at the forum was invited to attend, will be a march to Gascon's house. This is a big step in breaking the illusions that people can rely on the system to bring about the justice they seek for their loved ones. The next article will give updates on this action. Until then, we will continue to wage the day to day struggles in building for the time when the next tipping point will actually tip. For a lasting change for the working class, that tipping point must lead to a communist revolution, which will end racist police terror, overthrow the bosses' dictatorship, and put a PLP-led working class in command of society. ☺

Students, workers turn up the heat

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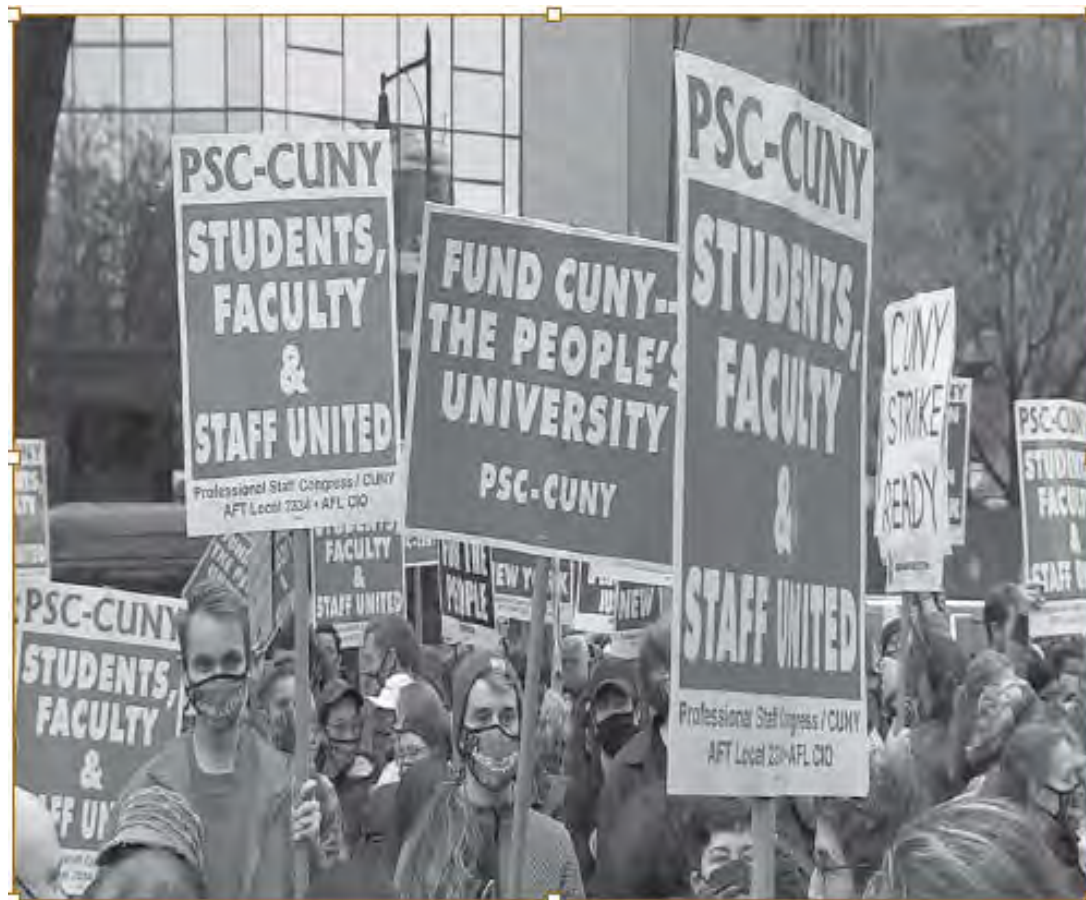
Students are seeing very clearly that these fightbacks must be led by students in order to have the best impact.

In the past month, new students have come forward to help organize petitioning, make signs, write speeches, and even help with a social justice history trip. We plan to win more students to join the Party. These struggles are a training ground for these students. As students combat racist and sexist inequality on campus they accumulate the knowledge and experience they need, alongside our class siblings, to eventually build and run the communist world they deserve.

What do communist ideas look like in the struggle?

PLP members are always learning how to participate and help lead reform struggles while advancing communist politics. We have a study group that is meeting with students from different campuses around the Northeast, biweekly CHALLENGE rallies in the Bronx and an upcoming conference we are building for. We are challenging identity politics and are clear that having a Latin or Black administrator doesn't mean they will be more responsive to our students.

Identity politics and reforms are not the end goal - it is communist revolution. Join PLP!



Only workers can save workers: Pakistan floods prove need for revolution!

Since June, a third of Pakistan has come under water resulting in over two thousand deaths and upwards of 20 million displaced, revealing the complete failure of the capitalist Pakistani government in particular and ineffective capacity for capitalism globally to solve the problems endemic to the climate crisis. In 2022 alone, famines, floods and catastrophes wrought by climate change have laid bare to workers from East Africa to Pakistan two facts of this profit-driven system: first, that international “aid” is often a smokescreen for imperialist aggression; second, that local government neglect and corruption leaves millions around the world starving and tens of thousands dead—often women, children and the most vulnerable. Take Haiti where, after the 2010 earthquake and ensuing cholera outbreak, mafioso agencies diverted needed goods to the poor to line the pockets of greasy Haitian elites via either the black market or for personal use. As in Haiti, Pakistani workers show us that only the heroic efforts of members of the working class will offer the courage, energy and political commitment needed to share our resources and help prevent further suffering from class brothers and sisters.

The recent floods in Pakistan are the direct outcome of the deadly admixture of heavier than normal monsoon rains and rapidly melting glaciers, both resulting from the bosses’ system of profit-driven production which continues to pollute the atmosphere, ravage the ozone and intensify global warming. Chinese, US and neighboring bosses in India contribute the largest share of CO2 emissions, and workers the world over suffer the impacts. Pakistan’s share in the world’s CO2 emission is 0.5 percent only which may not be a reason for climate change, but the government-backed rich landowners divert the natural flow of water toward the small piece of lands and dwellings of poor farmers to save their own crops and properties.

Bosses save their profits

The bosses there have proven entirely ineffective with government mismanagement of international aid and mob-like agencies swarming to hoard the “charity” and relief donations arriving from around the world, causing even more death and devastation than the floods themselves. While the Current Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif’s brother is largely behind the corruption in the current flood relief, the Sharif brothers years ago opportunistically called out the former regime in the aftermath of the 2005 earthquake that killed 100,000 people, claiming the Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority had misused 60 per cent of the funds. According to one local journalist, Shadi Khan Saif, “There are already quite credible reports concerning criminal negligence and abuse of authority to loot and misappropriate the funds and resources meant for the flood victims...It is, however, quite ironic to see the power-greedy elite looking at this calamity as an opportunity to accumulate more wealth.” Saif is mistaken, however, to see this greed as ironic when it is in fact the parasitic nature of a system based on exploitation for profit that such “corruption” take place (in.investing.com/news).

Workers better than anyone know not to be fooled, as many impoverished Pakistanis understand that donors are sending the relief items like tents, mosquito nets, blankets, mattresses, kitchen utensils, medicines etc. that are being diverted into the markets.

As winter is approaching a large number of



displaced populations are living without shelter, clean water and warm clothes. Still more than ten million people are surrounded by water which is breeding ground for malaria-breeding mosquitos, because the government is doing nothing to get the water out of the affected areas. As of October 25, “in Sindh, 59 health facilities are fully damaged and 461 partially damaged, further limiting access to primary health care. In Sindh, between July and early October, nearly 350,000 people were suspected of having malaria, more than 700,000 had some form of diarrhea, and over 770,000 people reported a skin-related disease, according to the Directorate General of Health Services” (reliefweb.int/report). Not only do poor people have no way to access hospitals, but capitalists owning the pharmaceutical companies are creating artificial scarcity of life saving drugs to increase the prices of medicines. Now an ordinary medicine like Paracetamol is not available in the market which is widely used to treat dengue and malaria. Some lifesaving medicines became very expensive. Those capitalizing on the shortage offering black market generics have joined the ranks of those responsible for severe reactions and sudden deaths.

Workers save lives

We approached some areas where there is no road intact. We used boats without engines/motors and were pushed by the men using a piece of wood to reach out the poor people with medicines, clothes and tents. We are a party of the poor working class therefore we don’t have resources to meet the requirements of poor displaced people but we used to collect some used items, food, water and lifesaving drugs from our neighborhoods, and we coordinated to establish some medical camps. Some of our comrades fell sick because of Malaria and dehydration during these efforts.

We in the PLP are trying to expose the bosses’ high officials and political leaders for their sys-

temic neglect and discrimination against members of our class. When we told them that we are from a political party which is striving to establish a society without classes and exploitation, we collected all that stuff from the poor working class people and their sympathizers, they in turn showed full support to our ideology and activities. They asked us to come over here again when the situation gets better. We have found very good contacts in these areas to develop a base of support for workers’ class consciousness, a critical step toward revolution. We are proud of our poor brothers and sisters living under the sky without a tent, warm clothes, mosquito nets and clean water but understanding that it is all because of a bad political and economic system which is creating problems for them.

Natural disasters require political solutions!

Whether it be the crushing of innocent people in Seoul’s Halloween celebration or last year’s Travis Scott concert, October deadly collapse of the bridge in India, or recent cholera outbreaks from Haiti to Pakistan, capitalism proves time and again that profiteering bosses are always at root of the events that cause needless death for our class. Natural disasters will occur even under communism, but natural disasters under capitalism are 90 percent man-made. They can only be combated and mitigated through political organization and the power of our class. Hoarding of commodities, competition over land ownership and business, pharmaceutical profiteering are all political problems fueled by the capitalist world order. Until workers seize control of land, of pharmaceutical plants—we will continue to be left at the mercy and will of the same class that places us in this continuous cycle of crisis, displacement, misery and death. Long live Communism and PLP. ★

The red wrecking ball: communists vs capitalist housing, Part 2

“This is the comrade party; the others are the boss parties.”



The following is part two of a seven-part series reprinted and lightly edited from the communist newspaper *Daily Worker* in September-October, 1932, written by famous communist Mike Gold.

Workers here are referred to as Black instead of the original “Negro” to reflect our antiracist principles as well as the linguistic shifts that occurred over decades of antiracist class struggle.

Communists have a long history of fighting against racist attacks on our class. One such fight was against landlords and evictions. In the early 1930s, amid Jim Crow segregation, a great depression with record unemployment levels that sunk the working class—particularly Black workers living in the urban industrial core—into deeper poverty and despair, the Communist Party in the U.S. (CPUSA) was fighting for revolution inside U.S. borders. This period was a golden age of class-conscious fightback when communist ideas were popular and gripped the imaginations of the working class. Under the leadership of the CPUSA, workers organized militant housing councils, tenant unions that led bold actions that weakened the power of profit gluttonous landlords.

Today our class is in a different period marked by increasing volatility. We are choked by record-high inflation, rent hikes, food price gouging compounded by stagnant wages, high unemployment, and an eviction crisis worsened by a still-raging global pandemic. Though the CPUSA is a shell of its former self, decaying into a toothless, reformist party, their history is just as valuable as they were in 1932. This series highlights this antiracist revolutionary fightback and contains kernels of working-class wisdom.

In this article, the popularity of communist ideas and struggles among Black workers is described by Gold, emphasizing an important aspect of our line that Black workers play a key role in organizing for communist revolution. Another important political aspect highlighted by Gold’s piece is the role of

churches in misleading Black workers, winning them away from communist ideas. The relationship between cops and churches in maintaining capitalist oppression is as true today as it was in 1932.

Thousands gather around those eviction scenes, and watch the council volunteers hauling in furniture. At first, the crowd seemed only a casual and neutral observer. But if the cops come, and begin their usual murderous slugging, the crowd turns partisan at once. It jeers, boos and even stones the gangsters in uniform. The heart of the Southside is with the Council.

Everyone on the south side knows and sympathizes with the work of the councils. It has penetrated everywhere. In a little barbecue restaurant, five truck drivers were at lunch, devouring huge platters of pork ribs. I heard their talk; they were discussing that morning’s editorial in the *Daily Worker* on Germany. On a wooden stoop at sunset sat a group of tall jobless men and their wives. One giant in overalls fingered a guitar; another was reading aloud to the serious little group out of a pamphlet by Lenin.

There are several parks on the south side where enormous meetings are held daily. The communists speak here every day to crowds averaging two to five thousand, all afternoon until 10 o’clock.

The meeting was to begin at three. But at least 500 Black workers were already gathered at two o’clock, lounging on the benches around the speakers’ stand, or arguing in groups under the trees of the massive meadow.

Many of them sleep and eat here. They have no other home. “Comrade, can you spare a cigarette?” It is a chunky little woman in a torn gray sweater who asks. She has the “New Masses” and the monthly “communist” under her arm. On her other arm sits a brown big-eyed infant.

Under an elm tree fifty husky steel mill and

stockyard workers are talking, shouting, arguing, roaring with Homeric laughter. A fat little butter-tub of a man in comic spectacles is the butt of their jokes. All try to shout down his loud passionate speeches. He is a preacher, I am told, and every day he comes here to win back some of his vanished flock. They used to fear, respect and bring him for a pass to heaven, now they laugh at the sweaty little humbug.

“Get that good old Moscow News, daddy of all the workers’ press!” This is what a coffee-skinned little man in a torn yellow shirt and salvaged yachting cap is shouting. He is a news vendor, with a line of conversation that amuses the crowd, and makes them buy. “Get that good old *Daily Worker*, and learn about the world you live in! How can you talk about the revolution, if you don’t read about it? I’m always reading, and I can tell you what is happening in Germany right this minute! Read, read, read, and grow yourself a set of proletarian brains! If I had the money, I’d pay you to read, fellow workers! Get some ammunition against the boss-class! Get the Soviet Russia pictorial, or some of these here pamphlets, and learn the workers’ truth!”

“The Comrade Party”

On one of the benches sits an old woman who fascinates me. She has a grim, mysterious face, and her old shawl and bonnet seem the costume of a witch. She sits there like fate and smokes a large briar pipe. All through the meeting later I could see her. She listened and puffed grimly at her pipe. On the lap of this old pipe-smoking granny from the piney backwoods lay a *Daily Worker*.

Fathers, mothers, grandmothers from the deep south, and scores of children – all the generations were at the forum. This communism has become a folk thing. They have taken communism and translated it into their own idiom.

“For this cause I am ready to eat corn husks and sleep in the cold fields” – said an old Black worker.

“This is the comrade party; the others are the boss parties.”

“We Blacks love our party, because it means freedom.”

“From east to west, from north to south, the news is going forth, and as to a mother, the Black is rushing under the wings of our comrade party.”

“If we must die, we will die for Communism and a great cause, not like stuck hogs.”

After the communists spoke in Ellis Park for some months, seven churches found themselves bankrupt. The preachers grew thin and indignant, and seeing the pork-chops of this world fade and heaven approach their persons, they complained bitterly to the cops. Another plot followed, of course. It was determined to prohibit all speaking in Ellis Park.

But the communists held a meeting. That brave and sensitive young leader, Herbert Newton, was speaking when the thugs arrived. He climbed into an old oak tree, when on talking from its branches. Some of the uniformed killers tried to climb up after him, but their graft-swollen bellies interfered. It was comical, and the crowd laughed.

Then several cops pulled their guns and pointed at the crowd. The people did not flinch, nobody ran away, they cheered, booed, and yelled, “Stay up there, Comrade Newton, we are with you!” A cop fired a shot. Instantly a shower of stones and rocks fell upon the cops. Then Newton came down, rather than give the police a “justification” for killing. He submitted to arrest, but the fight was won; the speaking continues in Ellis Park. ☛

LETTERS

We encourage all **CHALLENGE** readers to send in letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses worldwide.

CAPITALISM BREEDS SEXISM RACISM & IMPERIALISM!



FIGHT FOR A COMMUNIST WORLD
BUILD THE INTERNATIONAL PLP!
PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

Worker to worker: Rodwell-Spivey organizing continues

Last month, a group of comrades in Newark, NJ canvassed with Monique Rodwell, the mother of the Rodwell-Spivey brothers, in front of Save-A-Lot, a grocery store on Springfield Ave, (a street that was the site of the '67 Newark Rebellion) where we spoke to people and asked them to sign petitions. It was fantastic; we reached out to a lot of people. We got feedback about racial profiling and housing issues. Most of the residents were vocal about politicians who only came around when it was election time. When asked if they thought things were different since the election of Newark's mayor, they all said nothing has changed. If anything, things have gotten worse.

We need more unity. I think that we

should address certain issues differently. Communication is a must. People will feel more comfortable talking to people who are going through the same struggles and come from the same neighborhoods, because they feel like that person can relate. And there are too many organizations, too many egos and not enough working together. We have to put aside personal differences; it's about community.

Those who signed the petition need to get together soon.

★★★★★

Build bonds with co-workers

Organizing in the Transit Workers Union (TWU) as a Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) worker has been challenging. Progressive Labor Party (PLP) members try to learn as much as we can about our contractual rights within our union and within the bosses' company so we can share that info with the rest of the workers. It creates that revolutionary potential when workers learn the limitations this system offers, paving a way to more fight back.

Many workers, myself included, are isolated and get bombarded with ideas and historical events of workers' fightback not amounting to much, especially in recent fightbacks, like for George Floyd. But even when they do report our fightback stories the ruling class dilutes them of their militancy and lies about their effectiveness. They also remove any communist influence, birthing cynicism. Workers don't know what we don't see. So it's our job to read and share this paper that is filled with our victories and strengths.

This is where our strength comes from and without it any one of us can be prone to idealist ideology, like it's enough to have a union that fights some of the time or Biden is "better." Our co-workers don't show up to meetings because the union misleaders don't want them to. They don't want the workers to bear witness to their limits.

Going to our union meetings where the leadership blames the workers for our problems is like meeting with vampires. It has taken a toll on me. The bosses' influence translates into not trusting my coworkers with a communist newspaper. But I'm overcoming that influence as now I am willing to trust someone. I ...am willing to trust someone. The bosses' message is a lie. The answer is clear; we must be bold and confident in our line. As I have made bonds with many workers, now I see it was my own anticommunism all along. Time to remove that and practice trusting myself with my coworkers with communist ideas. Communist-led fight back has potential in transit. It's the only way it has worked and continues to work; by trusting the working class. I don't expect coworkers to join right away but I'm ready to show them the door. Soon, I'm sure to my surprise one (or more) will walk through it.

★★★★★

Fighting bosses' barriers against booster shot

This past week I tried to get my Covid-19 and flu booster from Walgreens. I heard by way of my nonprofit job that bosses at Walgreens recently made a partnership with DoorDash and UberHealth bosses to deliver Paxlovid, a Covid-19 antiviral in pill form for workers suffering from the virus. The week leading up to the Walgreens visit, I noticed in almost every interaction that I had with friends and comrades that someone had a cough or a tickle in their throat, or excess phlegm. I figured it was as good a time as any to get fierce about boosting my immune system. In the Walgreens near my home in Jersey City, one of the most expensive and quickly gentrifying cities in the U.S., there were tons of visibly sick people waiting at the pharmacy, and each was maskless; leav-

ing them and us vulnerable. The place was not that clean, and the longer we waited, the more the store filled with coughs and lines of people. What I also noticed was that there weren't many workers running the place - pharmacists or cashiers. I tried my best to be patient and wait, but as we neared closer to closing time, things looked bleak.

I left and tried to look up other, maybe better Walgreens that I could find based on Google reviews. Each review told an experience similar to the one that I just went through. I found a small, less mainstream pharmacy in a wealthier small town nearby. I noticed it was run by a family from India. Although the place was clean, well stocked and they made the process of getting vaccinated easy, the two people running the pharmacy had an on-edge method to keep the lines shorter, and a kid was stocking the shelves. Even the most well-intentioned people that start and run businesses still have to participate in exploitation. Walgreens, Uber and DoorDash are some of the wealthiest businesses in the U.S. They make their profits by also being the most exploitative. To smash exploitation and this whole racist, sexist system, we as working people need to fight for a full-fledged communist revolution. Only with masses of working people working together across borders to smash this system and build communism can we have a fighting chance for healthy generations to follow us and a healthy planet they can live on.

★★★★★

Radiation, harmful only at high doses

The CHALLENGE article "Imperialism poisons workers with radiation" (10/19) rightly points out the U.S. bosses care nothing about our health. However, the article errs by highlighting radioactivity in general as the main cause of health problems from Superfund sites.

These toxic dumpsites, often located in Black and Latin communities, are primarily dumping grounds for often cancer-causing, but not radioactive, waste. The article also states "[p]lutonium is the most-deadly." Wrong. Radioactivity is generally harmless except at very high doses.

Radioactive isotopes are used both to treat and diagnose diseases such as iodine (I-131), which is used to treat thyroid diseases. I-131 is far more toxic than plutonium, but the doses used are below the threshold for harm. I-131 was the main worry in the aftermath of Chernobyl and Fukushima but estimated doses to the thyroid from those events were a tiny fraction of doses used in nuclear medicine to save lives.

All agents have thresholds that separate "too little" from "just right" from "too much." What matters is the dose and rate of delivery. When used in the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, plutonium was hazardous.

We live on a radioactive planet. We are all radioactive. Without radiation, we would fail to develop immune systems. Radiation is a necessary nutrient in low doses, and those doses are within the same range as the exposures from radioactive Superfund sites.

A study of twenty-six Manhattan Project workers accidentally received "significant doses" (see Gwyneth Cravens's *The Truth About Nuclear Energy*). These workers were studied since 1951. Their cancer and death rates are the same as the average male population. Fifty years later, most were in good health.

Let's learn more about radiation's effects on health at various doses. Capitalism destroys lives with pollution, imperialism war, racism, and exploitation. We need to focus on that as we build towards communism.

★★★★★

GLOSSARY

COMMUNIST TERMS

Fascism

Capitalism's response to a crisis of their system, when the bosses can no longer sustain the charade of liberal democracy and resort to more direct control and state terror instead. Fascism is marked by the ruling capitalists disciplining their own ranks to serve the urgent needs of the capitalist state and weather the crisis. To defend their system from internal and external threats, they use all the means available in their state apparatus, including violence. To build unity within their class and loyalty from workers, they rely on nationalist politics and calls for sacrifice. Their strategy is to mislead the working class to kill our working class sisters and brothers in the next inter-imperialist war.

Big Fascists

The Big Fascists are the dominant finance capitalist faction of the U.S. ruling class. They represent the wealthiest and most powerful bosses in the U.S., including multinational banks like Chase and Citibank, multinational oil companies like ExxonMobil, the big automakers, Boeing, Amazon, and the major media companies. As the dominant grouping since World War II, the Big Fascists were the architects of the liberal world order with the U.S. bosses on top. Their dominance rests on U.S. financial and military power and its strategic control of the Middle East and the flow of oil to Europe, Asia, and Africa. To sustain this dominance, they need to rebuild a huge, multiracial military for inter-imperialist war, most likely with China.

Small Fascists

The Small Fascists are a group of domestically oriented U.S. capitalists who are challenging the Big Fascists over the direction of U.S. imperialism. Since their interests are less tied to controlling the flow of oil, they are against heavy taxation to keep troops in the Middle East and in general oppose costly military bases and invasions. They're willing to rely on a smaller, whiter army, backed by nuclear weapons and the Air Force. They use open racism to build a political following.

Death of a Salesman

In life and art, Black capitalism is still capitalism



The all-Black leading actors who are cast in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, now playing on Broadway in New York City, pay tremendous homage to a well-known play by pro-communist writer Arthur Miller. It's about the deep alienation that results from the commodification of not only human labor but also human ideals and potential. But this production inevitably feeds into the current trend in bourgeois capitalist culture—on television, in media and in film and theater—of presenting Black workers in fundamentally pro-capitalist spaces as “progressive,” when, in fact, the primary function of such representation feeds the illusion that material conditions for the masses are improved by virtue of

some stars “making it.” Notably, the current Broadway play continues the laudable effort on the part of Arthur Miller to present his “profit is evil, profit is wrong” assertion as a universal predicament for all workers regardless of race or ethnicity. Still, the fundamental weakness in the play, overall and this rendition, in particular is that the “race blind” critique of capitalist alienation—partially challenged by positioning Black actors at the helm of this current production—continues to undermine the very commitment to portraying the truth about how racism and sexism are pillars of capitalist exploitation.

Make no mistake, Arthur Miller, in spite of his liberal tendencies, was no traitor of the communist movement. In 1956 when he was called into the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), the judicial arm of the bosses' post-World War II vicious anti-communist political attack on the working class, Miller refused to name names—though surely he had many—risking even jail time to uphold his principles of workers' justice.

While figures such as Paul Robeson (see page 8) used theater in the twentieth century as a mechanism for invoking the power of internationalist proletarian culture, the general fact is that Broadway culture—on and off Broadway—is in many ways inaccessible for most workers, especially in times of stifling inflation such as exist today. Just this past summer, young comrades in our Progressive Labor Party staged a short but powerful skit in the community outside of a public housing complex where one of our comrades resides, using this skit to shed light on the substandard conditions inflicted upon workers, inspiring many in the crowd to then participate in a CHALLENGE distribution in that same housing complex. It is this kind of art-theater as practice for workers' empowerment—that our class must support, create, and use in the effort to overturn capitalist inequality and build a world in which commodity production and the alienation it produces—such as that embodied by the tragic character of Willie Loman—no longer exists. ☺

Robeson, Davis, and Du Bois knew

To fight racism, fight capitalism

Continued from page 8

He continued the fight against the racist U.S. rulers to his dying day.

Du Bois joins Communist Party “the logic of my life”

Finally, there was the great, world-respected William E. B. DuBois, a founder of the NAACP over a century ago, who, after more than 60 years of fighting racism, joined the Communist Party in 1961. Du Bois declared that becoming a communist was “the logic of my life.”

Du Bois was a leader in the fight against racism across intellectual fields and in the mass movement. He brought a class line on racism to the NAACP's newspaper *Crisis*, which under Du Bois' editorship grew to have a circulation of over 100,000. Du Bois took on the battle against the eugenicists and popularized the understanding that race is a social construct without any scientific basis and was created by capitalism to divide the working class.

Du Bois defended the Soviet Union and Joseph Stalin against anti-communist attacks during the McCarthy period. Like Robeson, Du Bois was world renowned. He wrote regularly for *Foreign Affairs* magazine and was a staunch critic of liberalism as perpetrating capitalist racism. Like Robeson and Davis, he was hounded by the ruling class, banned from traveling, unable to find work. Like them, he never backed down.

Today, Progressive Labor Party is here because of people like Robeson, Davis and Du Bois and millions of other workers who have fought the bosses and united the working class. We look to the lessons learned from their practice. We are focused on the fight against racism as key to uniting the working class. We see that the way to respond to the bosses' attacks is to fight even harder. We know that we must stay focused on the fight for workers' power, and that's a communist world.



RED EYE ON THE NEWS . . .

U.S. prepares plans for world war

Foreign Affairs, 10/27—In its recent National Security Strategy, the White House wrote that “the [People's Republic of China] and Russia are increasingly aligned with each other,”...the conflict in Ukraine is likely to be protracted...Chinese leader Xi Jinping...could try to seize Taiwan as the war in Ukraine rages on...China's expanding interests and global footprint suggest that a war with Beijing would not be confined neatly to Taiwan and the western Pacific but instead stretch across multiple theaters, from the Indian Ocean to the United States itself...

A war with China could easily spill from east Asia into the Indian Ocean, which connects China with its sources of energy in the Middle East, and even to the Persian Gulf...even if things go well for Washington, and a Chinese missile campaign or amphibious invasion ends in failure, Beijing would likely fight on...But the presence of nuclear arsenals would also significantly raise the stakes of escalation. It's not impossible that the war could produce the world's first nuclear attacks since 1945.

Flooding in Pakistan is worse than terrible

Al Jazeera, 10/28—The catastrophic floods in Pakistan have pushed the country to the brink. These floods follow the COVID-19 pandemic, rising inflation and the most severe heatwave the country has faced in more than 60 years. When he visited in September, United Nations Secretary-General

António Guterres said he had “never seen climate carnage on such scale”.

Across 81 districts, a total of 78,000 sq km (30,000 sq miles) of farmland were flooded. That's an area bigger than the entire Czech Republic. More than 80 percent of crops across the country were damaged, according to the government. Thousands of hectares of standing food crops like rice, onions, tomatoes and other vegetables have been destroyed. More than 6,000km (3,728 miles) of roads and bridges have been damaged, causing significant disruptions to the transport of the food that has survived.

U.N. mulls invading Haiti again

NPR, 10/21—The United Nations Security Council is considering an international intervention in Haiti to open up aid corridors and resolve what the U.N. secretary-general calls “an absolutely nightmarish situation.” Armed gangs have blocked the main fuel terminal in the capital since last month and severed access to aid routes...Nearly half the population faces acute hunger. And now the country faces an outbreak of cholera.

In response to this spiraling crisis, [Prime Minister Ariel] Henry has asked the international community to intervene with a “specialized armed force.” But the request has been met with horror by many in Haiti, who are more than familiar with the checkered history of foreign intervention and occupation...U.N. peacekeepers brought cholera to the

island over a decade ago, causing an outbreak that killed thousands of people.

Many in the U.S. are also wary of Washington's history of occupation and intervention in the Caribbean nation. In 1915, the U.S. invaded Haiti and occupied it for nearly two decades ...but it left behind chaos. Then in Operation “Uphold Democracy” in 1994, President Bill Clinton sent in more than 20,000 troops to restore ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to power.

New York politicians call in troops to deal with overflowing shelters

NY Post, 10/27—National Guard members are being deployed to New York City's homeless shelters to help assist the overwhelmed facilities that are also housing migrants...The city shelter deployment came after Gov. Kathy Hochul mobilized 100 National Guard troops for deployment earlier this month to “provide logistical and operational support” to the city's controversial migrant tent city on Randall's Island.

The city Department of Homeless Services' hit a new occupancy record this month, with 62,174 people living in shelters as asylum-seeking migrants continue to arrive from the southern border. The surge in migrants to the Big Apple forced Mayor Adams to declare a state of emergency and predicted it would cost \$1 billion to house and provide social services for the nearly 20,000 new arrivals.

ROBESON, DAVIS, AND DU BOIS KNEW

TO FIGHT RACISM, FIGHT CAPITALISM



Robeson, Dubois, pictured right shaking hands and Davis pictured left, comrades in antiracist struggle

The principled stance taken by three of the greatest Black communist leaders of the 20th century — Paul Robeson, Benjamin Davis and William E. B. Du Bois, showed through their practice that to fight racism you have to fight the bosses. They understood that racism was created by capitalism to both divide and weaken the working class as well as to net the bosses hundreds of billions in superprofits from the lower pay forced on Black and Latin workers.

These three leaders of the working class fought in different spheres and in different ways. Robeson became a world-famous actor and singer who used his fame and position to support anti-racist struggles and workers on strike. He also helped to popularize the Soviet Union, at that time led by communists. Robeson traveled the world and in practice built international working-class unity.

Benjamin Davis graduated from Harvard Law School and defended Angelo Herndon, a Black communist organizer in Georgia who was on trial for organizing Black and white workers to fight for relief payments in Jim Crow Georgia in 1932. Davis went on to become a communist community organizer in Harlem who was elected to the New York City Council as an open communist.

W.E.B. Du Bois took on the bosses across many fields as a writer, sociologist and political organizer. Du Bois used the bosses' publications and academia to attack capitalism, fight against pseudo-scientific racism and fight for workers' power. His organizing led him to finally join the Communist

Party (CP).

Black workers' leadership, key to communist revolution

Robeson, Davis and Du Bois showed the strength and power of Black leadership in the fight for workers power. They were communists and represented both the strengths and weaknesses of the communist movement in the period of the 1920s through the reversal of workers' power in the Soviet Union in 1953. The communist movement was the leading force in the fight against racism around the world. It also made serious errors, such as participating in the bosses' elections, as Ben Davis did, that ultimately weakened the communist movement and led to its temporary collapse. The CP built illusions that capitalist controlled democracy could serve the working class. Despite the weaknesses of the old movement, all three understood you can't fight racism by following the bosses. Robeson, Davis and Du Bois never kowtowed to the big bosses. In the face of tremendous attacks they fought the racist rulers throughout their entire lives.

Robeson felt free of racism in Soviet Union

Robeson stood up for the communist-led Soviet Union during the height of Cold War anti-communist frenzy. U.S. rulers seized Robeson's passport, fearing his revolutionary influence around the world; hauled him before HUAC (House Un-American Activities Committee), cajoled Black "leaders" and the popular major league baseball player Jack-

ie Robinson to condemn him (although Robinson later said he had made a mistake) and took away Robeson's internationally acclaimed acting and singing career.

Throughout all these attacks Robeson never once flinched. He was maligned for vowing that Black people in the U.S. would never fight an imperialist war against the socialist Soviet Union (USSR), declaring that the USSR was the first place he had ever felt free of racism. Robeson was awarded and accepted the Stalin Peace Prize. Now, when he is long dead, the rulers and their lackeys try to "honor" him in order to allow some of his greatness to rub off on them, conveniently "forgetting" on whose side Robeson stood.

Davis, communist jailed for fighting U.S. imperialism

Communist leader Benjamin Davis, beloved by Black and white workers alike in the 1930s and 1940s, was elected to the New York City Council from Harlem on the Communist Party ticket, garnering more votes than any other Councilman of his day. He was a leading fighter to end Metropolitan Life's ban on Black tenants in their huge tax-supported housing development, Stuyvesant Town. He was indicted and jailed by the Cold War government of Harry Truman for his communist beliefs and support of the worldwide fight against U.S. imperialism.

Continued on page 7

CHALLENGE strives to be the communist paper for and by the international working class. We call on all readers, supporters, and comrades to submit class struggle articles, analytical pieces, original photos and graphics, letters, and political cartoons. The next deadline is the **Friday evening of November 11**. Send to desafio.challenge@gmail.com. For some guidance and house style rules, please go to:

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All submissions are open to collective discussion, struggle, and change. See box on page 2 about fighting for collectivity and against a cult of the individual.

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