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PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

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# LETTERS

## **Traditional US Liberalism Is History**

American liberalism, long exemplified by Social Security, unions, the Democratic Party, the separation of church and state and international alliances, is increasingly unnecessary to US imperial plans and is not sustainable given the hollowing out of the US economy, the need for an aggressive international military position and the decay of traditional social institutions. Workers no longer have the time for, gain rewards from, or have the confidence in organizations like unions, the Democratic party or their ideas.

This means for the ruling class they are ceasing to be dominant institutions. The ruling class, absent a domestic or international communist leadership to contend with, has shifted its outlook to recruiting those blinded by evangelical faith based patriotism rather than the US liberal traditions of opportunity and personal choice.

This direction is not historically new and elements of it have been used during other crisis periods such as after WWI and WWII to mobilize the attack on worker's political movements and aspirations. After WWI, with traditional class institutions in discredit and the Russian revolution threatening to spread communism in their place, religiously based right-wing organizations such as the KKK, spearheaded efforts to isolate and persecute immigrants who had strong Marxist traditions of class struggle, internationalism and hatred of wage slavery and to attack the anti-racist aspirations of African-American vets returning from the imperialist war.

After WWII there was McCarthyism, loyalty oaths and blacklists publicly led by right-wing forces with the patriotic support of the then dominant liberal institutions. For instance, it was New York Republican Governor Pataki's father who actively organized the physical attack on the concert of Paul Robeson in 1949 in Peekskill, NY. When these right-wing shock troops like Joe McCarthy accomplished their work or became a liability, they were disbanded in favor of the American liberal social contract of personal advancement through unions or acquiring an advanced education, home ownership and consumerism. Driving this restraint of the right-wing was the need to construct a capitalist united front against the Soviet Union, China and the nationalist movements they supported. Potential allied ruling classes faced popular communist-influenced domestic populations which, having defeated fascism, had little patience for US sponsored neo-fascists. This mitigated the amount of "right-wing" power the ruling class could use domestically and even caused the ruling

class to turn on some of that power base when, for example, the reactionaries resisted the ending of Jim Crow in the South.

Outside of the industrialized world, international pressure did not restrain the US from using and training the most violent of fascists, including the Shah of Iran or the military butchers in Central America. Racism gave this double standard between domestic concessions and international aggression somewhat of a cover. Today the need for a cadre of shock troops domestically and internationally has opened up an opportunity for the religious right to take the lead in imperialist adventures and sacrifice Religion further serves as a an opiate to dull class conflict in the work place, community, or in the armed forces. Financially, unless the ruling class is willing to tax itself at a very much higher rate, there is little money to finance social rewards for working class service to imperialism. No GI education grants, home loans, or "decent" jobs. Given the relative and absolute deterioration of workers lives and given that the prospects for the future are even bleaker, the fascist cadre must be blinded to the class conflicts inherent the system.

The evangelical right has developed itself and a large minority of the population into a new right-wing to serve this purpose. Like many fascist movements (such as the Nazis and their Brown Shirts), this relationship between fascism's base and its finance capital benefactors is not without its conflicts. There appears to be little or no concern on the part of the ruling class that this trend might weaken international alliances as was the case during the Cold War.

This brings us to the underlying force driving the remake of American imperialism from liberal to faith-based values. Groups of capitalists' international fight for survival and/or supremacy based on the projection of power through the nation state means the aggressive development of nationalism in preparation for life and death struggles for power over labor, strategic raw materials and markets.

This goes for the imperialist countries like Europe, US, Russia, and Japan and for rising imperialist countries like China, and for regional powers like India, Iran, Brazil, Venezuela, and Indonesia. Religion was labeled the "opiate of the masses" by Karl Marx for a variety of reasons, one of them being its ability to numb the effects of exploitation and oppression and provide a basis for going on with life, in this case serving the needs of the national ruling class at the expense of the workers' class interests.

This is where traditional American liberalism is weak. It relies on the population seeing individual and group self interest as lying within the ruling class's policies of domination. This provides a rationalization for self-sacrifice and the destruction of others who are of the same class.

This train of thought has its origins in US institutional racism. The current state of American capitalism with its increasing debt, shrinking of future opportunity and increasingly narrow, corrupt behavior by leadership in every area of society is eroding the ability for the ruling class to provide any carrots to induce the working class to go along with their agenda.

If you don't have enough food to sustain work then an opiate will work for a while to keep the troops on the march. Nationalism, patriotism and racism make a strong set of chains tying the majority of potentially class conscious with the minority of religiously drugged to produce an effective fascist force.

Given this analysis it is vital to develop struggles which split the majority of the population from the evangelicals and hold the ruling class responsible for the leadership of these forces in society, their fascism and brutality and for the lack of any future for the

working class. It is progressive when soldiers refuse to go on "suicide missions" delivering tainted fuel or when their families demand adequate gear and equipment for the imperialist troops. It is progressive because these working class groups are struggling in a form which sees at least part of their interest as being separate and at odds with the officers representing the ruling class.

This in and of itself will not be or turn itself into an internationalist, anti-imperialist movement. But it challenges the leadership of the "my country right or wrong" cadre and can win our potential base away from these forces which keep them politically locked up. It is up to us, as our class begins to "think for itself", to show that communist ideas, organization and leadership can lead these struggles and that thinking for yourself means ending imperialist wars and the system that makes them necessary. The irony is that our success on this front would make the rise of a new liberalism historically necessary for the ruling class that now discards it. At that juncture the birth or abortion of any new American liberalism is conditional on how adept the PLP is in bringing the working class' struggles for a future into the world as a new communist society.

*A Comrade*

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## For Communism, Against Wages

Almost everything that is wrong with our lives can be traced to fact that rich people are making money from our troubles. In this article we trace the poisonous effect of the profit system on wages and poverty, racism, health, education, war and imperialism, and other areas where we are exploited. And we explain how to fight against it effectively.

Let's say you are ready to agree that the profit system – capitalism – is the root of our worst evils. Now a revolutionary communist brings you some facts to show how working toward communist revolution is the only way to defeat these evils. Voting, tiny reforms, "liberal" remedies and even unionism can't do the job, and nationalism can only replace your exploiters with a new group of a different color.

Even if all this sounds right to you, you remain with one big doubt. "BUT, you say, communist parties won their revolutions in Russia and China, and look what happened. The dog-eat-dog system came back." Because of these setbacks, you don't want to throw your energy into revolutionary communism. You're afraid the effort will be wasted.

But we, and you, can study and understand the mistakes which stalled the march toward communism in those countries, and which opened the door to the profiteers' comeback. And if mistakes are understood, they can be avoided the next time.

The main mistake was an honest mistake. The communist parties decided that if the new working-class government showed it could increase the production of goods and food, people would be so encouraged that they would want to press on for a better life by the next stage – the communist stage of full equality, no more rich and poor.

So, production became the only goal. Various short-term fixes were used to boost production. All these fixes involved giving more money to people who had the most (short term) influence on production: strong workers, skilled workers, and (especially) brainworkers. Also, some profiteers. Also, leaders in the communist party itself. The bad side of all this was excused, as long as production went up.

Russia's production did increase dramatically in the 1930s. A lot of workers were very enthusiastic about having a workers' government, and worked hard under tough conditions – not mainly because they were paid for extra output, but because they felt that what they were building really belonged to them, the workers.

Whether there would have been exactly the same quick growth without using a greed-wage system, we can't be sure. Maybe it would have been faster! But anyhow, we can be sure that the use of this system encouraged personal greed, slowly poisoned the communist party and soon ended the march toward communism.

Since skilled work was being highly paid, party

leaders – who after all were important in guiding the economy – paid themselves at a high-skill rate. Once they did this, they really couldn't honestly push mass campaigns or educational reforms to spread the idea that big income differences were wrong and should soon be wiped out. They would be hypocrites – unless they first gave up their own high wages, to set an example. Although they had taken only subsistence wages during the revolutionary battles against capitalist armies, they now failed to hold to that correct revolutionary position.

They could not be leaders in the necessary battle of ideas to pave the way for communism. They still believed in communism, but they were convinced it had to wait until the nation became prosperous through production – driven by greed. They didn't realize that education against capitalist greed and for communist sharing had to begin while revolutionary enthusiasm was still high – otherwise the age-old morals of capitalism would regain the advantage and the communist goal would be undermined.

If you don't battle against the poison of selfishness, most people won't reject the selfish ideas that they were taught under the old evil system. If it's fine to get high pay for doing brainwork, while a road builder or nurse or garbageman or pig-tender gets by on a bare minimum, then you are OK-ing capitalist morals. If a farmer on a collective farm is allowed to run some private land and sell his output personally, you are saying capitalism is not so bad after all. Through such policies the party kept the underpinnings of capitalism alive, defending that practice by saying it was helping to improve workers' lives.

Capitalism's schools and media teach us that communism can't work because selfishness is really human nature. But even today, under capitalism, we see countless examples of people helping others, with no selfish motive. Even more important, history shows us that early humans lived under a system of communism. When a group of hunters made a kill, it was not just for them or their own families. Or when women gathered seed and planted the land, the output went to the whole tribe. Ancient humans survived because they lived communally, so obviously selfishness is not in our genes. The greed system came later. Its final stage was capitalism.

Capitalism is not built into human nature. A way out of it can be learned. But the key word is "learned." It won't happen automatically just because a worker's government takes power. Education must attack wealth and greed, and put forward the superior morality and performance of communism – or else the old ways win by default.

China, before the communist-led revolution, was mainly an agricultural country of grinding poverty and famine (and wealthy landlords). The new workers' dictatorship began wiping out the worst aspects of rural life. But resources were limited and progress was slower than the party would have liked (although certainly better

than rural Asia in general – especially when it came to health care, education, and wiping out disease).

As we have already noted, the general thought among communists was that the primary way out of the old evils was to make high production – in farm and factory – the first goal of the revolution. But compared to the USSR, the Chinese party was more broadly and solidly based on ordinary people, because the Chinese revolution had been built almost twenty years of war, beginning with guerrilla war. So, the Chinese party believed more in the ability of the people to blaze a new road. They decided (1955) to strike out toward high production in a completely different way from the USSR. They aimed for more grass-roots control, more cooperative work, more sharing, more revolutionary education – more communism!

After all, communist analysts (Marx, Engels, and all who carried on after them) had long said that putting workers in charge would unleash new energy, bring enthusiasm and creativity into the workplace, and make the quality of life vastly better in the long run.

So in China in 1955 the "Great Leap Forward" was begun by the communist party, despite resistance from the party's conservative wing. In factories piecework, expert pay, and other divisive practices were attacked. But the heart of the Great Leap was the collective farms, where most of the population worked. Communal sharing of the fruits of production greatly increased, replacing much of the greed-wage system. New small workshops and factories were encouraged, making the collectives more all-round self-sufficient, and stimulating creativity by the workers, who had to do a lot of improvising.

Enthusiasm ran amazingly high in the early days of the Great Leap. But, unfortunately, the party pushed the Leap as a plan that would VERY QUICKLY result in higher living standards. Enthusiasm, comradeship, and a growing ability to cope with problems were not judged to be a good enough result – although these gains would have translated into higher production in the long run. Perhaps because of its conservative wing (who later became known as the capitalist roaders), the party did not put forth the Great Leap as a long-term plan for a completely better style of life – communism, a life where work would be a matter of pride and fulfillment, not a burdensome response to hunger or greed.

Promising quick material results was a bad mistake. This played right into the hands of the capitalist roaders. They found it easy to attack the "over-hasty" promotion of communism, because these quick and easy results hadn't arrived. Because it was a tremendous social experiment, Great Leap needed time to overcome mistakes and build on successes. The capitalist roaders took advantage of the lack of longer-term perspective by the Great Leap's backers and reversed China's course – for a time. Attacking the reds, they put out the slogan "Who cares if the cat is white or black, so long as it catches mice." In other words, greed-driven "experts" were a better bet to run production than solid pro-communists, usually less

educated, who had come up from the grass roots.

We believe that the main lessons of the Great Leap were positive. It showed that workers and peasants, even in a poor nation, could grasp Marxism-Leninism, display great ability to manage their affairs, and march toward communism. They were set back in this battle but would rise up again in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-68).

The negative or cautionary lesson of the Great Leap was that, even with a farm and factory working class more politically advanced and pro-communist than the USSR had in the 30s, the Chinese party stayed fixed on one idea – that abundant production must come before a full commitment to communism. This meant that capitalist ways were not sufficiently attacked, and retained their foothold.

The story of the next upsurge of communism – the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution of 1966-68 – is so fascinating that it seems a shame to condense it into a few pages. But to give all the details would overwhelm this booklet. (Readers can get hold of longer articles on the website of the Progressive Labor Party.)

By 1965 large numbers of Chinese workers and Party members were realizing that capitalism had been given an opening by the party's toleration of the greed-wage system. Even some important party leaders were attacked as capitalist roaders. Some in that right-wing camp probably smelled the riches that could be theirs if capitalism made a full comeback. But many still really believed that all workers would be better off if incentive systems were reinforced again and again, and cooperation, sharing and communism all put on the back burner.

Regardless of individual motives, a capitalist road was growing within the party. A mass movement against this capitalist road rose up. But the prestige of Mao Tse-Tung, who verbally attacked the capitalist roaders, meant that he could keep control and steer a large part of this mass movement into a compromise. Mao maintained that 95% of the party leaders were basically good, and only a minor cleansing of the party was needed – not a thorough revolution which would clean out all those who were "just a little bit" capitalist.

Even the most far-left of the leaders of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution could not bring themselves to attack Mao, who after all had earned tremendous respect for past leadership of the revolution. So, even though the far left numbered tens of millions, reached positions of governing power in some areas, and actually launched a movement to seize guns from the Army when Mao used it to enforce his compromise, the left was defeated by its inability to truly challenge Mao and his personality cult. He was the man who could do no wrong. Their old-time trust in Mao led them to circulate plans which spread confusion. They often advised their forces to believe that Mao's shifty line was actually a clever plan of temporary retreat under which the working class would soon win control.

So the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, which probably had enough supporters to become a true mass revolution against the "red capitalists", was undermined by the personality cult's hold. It was scaled back to a mere firing of a small percentage of leaders who Mao felt were dangerous to his centrist rule. He still relied mainly on more production – including the greed-wage system – to move the nation forward.

As we know, these compromises were trying to deny the truth known by Marxists, that there is no middle way: either the workers rule or the capitalists' rule. Mao gave the capitalist roaders the breathing space they needed. Without an all-out attack against capitalist ideas, the long-standing ideology couldn't be stopped from growing back like an old cancer. Finally more and more party cadre lined up behind the slogan "to become rich is glorious", and restored full capitalism. Such was the end result of a policy of single-mindedly building the economy first, and putting fierce ideological struggle off until it was too late.

Of course, true communism cannot produce a smoothly running economy overnight. Trailblazing involves mistakes and learning from mistakes. Very possibly China does produce more goods today than it would have if a communist road had been taken early. But who today gets the benefit? National health care, China's great achievement, is gone. Unemployment is back and keeps rising as "inefficient" factories and farms are squeezed out. Cheap labor is the backbone of economic "growth". Meanwhile the lucky percentage gets enough of the crumbs to stop a united mass revolution from being organized – so far. But the original revolution was not fought merely to make China a nation that could boast total output nearing that of Europe or the US. It was fought by workers seeking a decent, secure, enjoyable and creative life, based on good health and broad education for all. These aims are still stated by the corrupt party, but have obviously been abandoned.

The lesson here is: an all-out and continuous assault on capitalist ideas and methods must be carried out early by any revolutionary party or government. Build upon revolutionary enthusiasm. Otherwise the long-standing ideas of capitalism get too many chances to re-assert their old power.

What about the USSR?

In many ways, China had less obstacles to overcome in building workers' power and communism. The USSR was immediately attacked after the Bolshevik revolution, by capitalist – financed nearby armies (Polish and others) and by soldiers from the US and Britain as well. All energies went into winning these wars, and the economy was devastated.

Later, after the Red Army won out, the party leaders knew that this was only a temporary respite. The capitalist West was building up Nazism and Fascism as a spearhead for a new assault. This was a believable excuse to resort to emergency use of incentive methods and to bribe capitalist "experts" to build up heavy industry, the army,

and the food supply. So, although we can learn from the Soviet mistakes, it is hard to say that the leaders were evil or inept. They faced real emergencies, and actually did build up an industrialized nation that defeated Hitler – at enormous cost in lives. But no matter how much we may sympathize with their dilemma, the final result was that communism – and therefore all the world’s workers – suffered a great setback when capitalism won control after the death of Stalin.

Ironically, the actual successes of the USSR’s five-year plans – which not only built heavy industry but also raised general living standards dramatically in the 30’s – created a surplus that enabled the party leaders to live on a much higher scale than the average worker.

But nothing in traditional Marxism said that it was OK for party leaders to get high pay because they were using an incentive system. Far from it. Although Marx and Engels’ analysis called for incentive pay as a first stage after revolution, they also said that a prime lesson of revolutionary Paris Commune of 1871 was that workers would not have confidence in a revolutionary government unless all officials were limited to working-class wages.

The USSR communist party could have remained true to the working class even if they thought economic progress required pay differentials. That is, party members could have set an example by living on subsistence wages, as they did during the revolutionary wars. Then they, without being hypocrites, could have sparked an educational campaign to identify the greed-wage system as an expedient, an evil to be disposed of as soon as possible.

They did not do this. Especially at the higher levels of leadership, they lived very well. In the long run this turned them more and more into a group more interested in protecting their privileges than in learning from and guiding the workers.

Party power – the dictatorship of the working class – became more and more consolidated in the hands of Stalin. Like Mao in China, Stalin led many campaigns that benefited farm and factory workers, and he had mass support.

Meanwhile many of his early opponents in the party actually did back policies which would have weakened the USSR and possibly led to the defeat or partition instead of victory against Hitler. So a cult grew. For the USSR, Stalin became the man who could do no wrong.

Stalin’s opposition was not a grass-roots mass of workers who wanted more real communism. Because of its focus on production, the party had never built such ideas. So when, after Stalin’s death, struggle broke out within the party, the main issue was not communism, but

condemnation of Stalin for high-handed methods. (And it is true that when Stalin was convinced that a measure was good for the working class he did not hesitate to trample on any opposition.)

Khrushchev, who led the denunciation of Stalin and his cohorts, had little to say about new pro-worker policies. Mainly they didn’t like being on such a short leash within the party. They wanted their own power. And they wanted personal wealth, which Stalin had never sought. Their attacks on Stalin were mainly in the interests of a group of upper-middle class party people. Instead of analyzing Stalin’s actual mistakes in managing the dictatorship of the working class, they wanted to use Stalin to prove that the whole idea of a workers’ dictatorship is poison.

Well, either workers rule or capitalists rule. Nowhere has this Marxist truth been disproved. So we must learn from mistakes – not throw out the idea of workers’ power.

Meanwhile, around the world, with capitalists controlling all media, Stalin is not seen in his true light: as a man who, despite his mistakes, brought great material benefits to the people of the USSR, brought education and health to new breadth, fought hard against racism, and prepared the nation to defeat Nazism. In his own country he is remembered proudly and fondly by a majority of those who, when polled, were old enough to personally remember the years of his rule.

But today US capitalist mouthpieces paint him as “worse than Hitler”. He is falsely charged with killing twenty million political enemies. Since he is not charged mass killings of women, children, or old folks, this would mean that he killed off more than half of the able-bodied men who would be needed for an anti-Hitler army! But the capitalist servants who write these lies don’t have to worry about being exposed, because the capitalist propaganda machine is mobilized behind them. (For a saner view of deaths under Stalin, read a thesis by Getty or a Progressive Labor Party article based upon that book.)

We suggest that honest people should be very suspicious that so much continues to be written about Stalin so long after his death. The ruling class wants us to view Stalin’s rule as entirely negative. We suspect that their real motive is to make us feel that there is no way out from capitalism. If Stalin’s mistakes can be labeled as something that must happen under communist leadership, then we are supposed to settle for capitalism and never make revolution.

Instead, let’s learn from past errors and do better next time.

*A Comrade*

## Advancing Marx's Line: 'Communism, Not Socialism'

In CHALLENGE (3/15) in the article "50 Years Ago..." the author writes, "Stalin also committed grave errors. They were not his alone. He followed the line of Marx and Engels...and of Lenin...Stalin and his predecessors believed in 'two-stage revolution.' They did not think that the workers could be won at the outset to the politics of communism, and so they advocated socialism which had a foot in both camps." The consequence was "the wage system, material rather than political incentives and...social inequalities...these poisons..."

This statement reflects a wrong understanding of Marx and Engels (although perhaps not of Lenin). There is no evidence of two-stage theory in any text of these two revolutionaries. They wrote in two successive tomes (1844-45) that "the proletariat can and must liberate itself" and that "from this class (itself) arises the communist consciousness, the consciousness for the necessity for a profound revolution." In 1864, Marx wrote that "the emancipation of the working class is the task of the workers themselves" and the next year he wrote to a friend "the working class is either revolutionary or it is nothing."

**A Reply from the Editors:** *We thank the comrade for reminding us to carefully study the history of the communist movement to inform our own practice. We should read the classic works of Marx, as well as those of later revolutionaries. We have much to learn, not only from our own practice, but also from the experience of the giants who went before.*

*Marx is clear in his writings that the working class itself must, through its own self-activity, liberate itself through class struggle and revolution and create the new communist society. Marx was reluctant to provide a detailed blueprint of the new society because he felt it would emerge from the practice of the working class. But some of his insights are contained in his sharp critique of the reformist Gotha Programme of the German socialists (led by Ferdinand LaSalle) in 1875. Here Marx suggests that the workers' revolution will not immediately lead to a mature communist society in which the slogan, "From each according to his ability to each according to his need" would be in place. Instead, he argues that "bourgeois right" would still prevail. He says, "What we have to deal with here is a communist society not as it has developed on its own foundations, but, on the contrary, just as it emerges from capitalist society; which is thus in every respect, economically, morally, and intellectually, still stamped with the birthmarks of the old society from whose womb it emerges. Accordingly, the individual producer receives back from society—after the deductions [for society's costs in investing in new equipment, administering the economy, and the like] have*

Six years later he marveled at the Paris Commune, entirely created by the ordinary workers of Paris who hardly even knew the names of Marx and Engels. Marx learned from the Parisian revolutionaries a possible outline of the organization of the future society. Marx and Engels considered socialism and communism as simply two terms for the same thing: a society of free and associated producers arising on the ruins of capital and created entirely by the laboring people mediated by its own revolution without any outside help, a society from which all the instruments of enslavement in hitherto existing human society—state, commodity production, wage system, to name the most important—have been eliminated.

Thus, as Marx famously put it, humanity leaves its "pre-history" behind and enters "history." I hope the comrade who wrote the article will take this comment in a comradely spirit. We must be careful in evaluating the twists and turns that the world communist movement has taken, and realize that our founders' words are really reflected in our modern understanding of the needs of the revolutionary movement, i.e., the abolition of the state, the wage-system, and inequality.

*A Reader*

*been made—exactly what he gives to it." Marx thus lays the foundation for Lenin's interpretation that the first stage of post-revolutionary society includes, in essence, a wage system. Marx goes on to point out that during the early period of communism, there would still be differences in the amount of consumption goods that people would receive because of differences in strength, size of families, and so on. The elimination of private property and the growing productivity of society would eventually allow mature communism with distribution according to need to develop.*

*We have learned a great deal since then. We have observed workers' struggles fighting past the limitations of the wage system of 20th century socialism in such world-historic events as the Great Leap Forward in China in which many goods were distributed free, according to need, within 10 years of the revolution. One important lesson is that we must not consolidate a separate period of "socialism" which institutionalizes a wage system and wins workers to this system as an appropriate "stage." Whatever "birthmarks of the old society" we have to deal with on the morrow of the revolution, we must never justify them as appropriate for the new society, but struggle resolutely to eliminate them.*

*There remains an important question about the way revolutions occur that seems to be lurking beneath the comrade's letter. The PLP believes that a disciplined revolutionary party with the openly declared goal of advanced communism must work closely in mass organizations to win the working class to this revolutionary perspective. We have*



learned of the many pitfalls of the old movement, and these lessons need to be spread far and wide so they are not repeated, as they are even now being repeated in the brave but misdirected work of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) who are now on an open coalition with the bourgeois parties after years of "People's War." Revolutionary ideology does not spontaneously emerge among workers simply due to their exploitation; the PLP must bring such consciousness to them in the midst of common struggle against the capitalists. A larger, disciplined PLP has never been needed more than now, in the aftermath of the reversals of the old movements.

Marx was deeply involved in the practical political movements of the mid to late 19th century. In the Communist Manifesto of 1848, he advanced a 10-point program for the practical movements of the day, later played a leading role in the Communist International (the 1st International) and was thus deeply engaged in the Paris Commune of 1871. Marx felt that the lessons learned through that great upheaval were critical for the future communist working class movement,

even though he felt that the actual fight by the communards for political power was premature. His participation in many European struggles included his support for democratic movements against autocratic, feudal dictatorships. At times he urged the socialists to focus their energy on the democratic struggle rather than the struggle for socialism, feeling that those societies were not yet ripe for socialist slogans. So when we ask the question, what would Marx have done in the Russian and Chinese revolutions, we might be correct in saying that he would have supported a series of consolidated stages much as Lenin and others did. (An excellent account of this aspect of the struggle is contained in Alan Gilbert, *Marx's Politics: Communists and Citizens*, NJ: Rutgers University Press (1981)).

Hindsight is 20/20, and we have seen where the stages theory has led back to capitalism time and again. We build on the great advances of the past. The PLP says to rely on the working class to adopt advanced communist ideas, build PLP into a mass communist party, and make revolution throughout the world that cannot be reversed.

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**A Second Reply from the Editors:** *The letter writer says that for Marx and Engels, 'communism' and 'socialism' were just two words for the same thing, and denies that they believed in a "two-stage" revolution. The conclusion the writer implies is that we only need to get back to the ideas of these original Marxists, rather than developing communist theory and politics on the basis of the experience of the communist movements of the past and present. Unfortunately, the writer got his history wrong, so his conclusion is also a mistake.*

*By the time they wrote the Communist Manifesto, Marx and Engels were attacking a whole series of views called 'socialist.' These socialists proposed various crackpot schemes to improve society, while opposing revolution and trying to make peace with capitalists. Marx and Engels exposed these socialist theories in the Communist Manifesto (Part III) and in their books *The German Ideology* and *The Poverty of Philosophy*. Modern communists don't use 'socialist' in that sense; instead they mean a system in which the working class has power, but the wage system and inequality remain as a transitional stage supposedly leading to communism. Marx and Engels did advocate such a two-stage scheme, which they outlined in the Manifesto (last 6 paragraphs of Part II). Marx developed it more fully in his *Critique of the Gotha Program*. There he used the term 'first phase of communism' for what is usually called socialism, and defended the idea that the wage system is necessary in this phase because people will be*

*"economically, morally and intellectually, still stamped with the birth-marks of the old society." Only in the "higher phase of communist society," he wrote, can we have "from each according to his abilities [or as we say now, his commitment], to each according to his needs!" The communists of the USSR and China were profoundly influenced by Marx's wrong view and often cited it in their own arguments that socialism has to come before communism.*

*Marx and Engels learned vital lessons from the revolutions of 1848-9 and from the Paris Commune of 1870, but PLP has been able to draw on the experience of three more revolutions, the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, the Chinese Revolution of 1949, and the Proletarian Cultural Revolution of 1966. Analyzing this wealth of experience, the PLP has been able to understand that socialism is a fatal compromise with capitalism. Socialism's wage system, material incentives, class structure, and inequality undermine workers' power and allow capitalism to make a comeback. Wages always mean material privileges for some people, people who then have an interest in fighting against communist equality. Wages intensify the contradictions between mental and manual labor and perpetuate the racial and national inequalities of capitalism. That is why we fight for political incentives and for communism directly, and use the slogan "Fight for Communism" in all our literature and especially when we march on May Day. We invite the letter writer to continue to discuss how the working class can win communism.*

# CHINA'S IMPERIALIST DREAM TO BE NUMBER ONE – ONE POSSIBLE SCENARIO TO WWII

## Communist Revolution Will End This Nightmare

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### ECONOMY

1. Primitive Accumulation; Reversal of Socialism in CHINA and Road to Imperialist country
2. Over-production; Capitalism on Steroids, China out produces almost everyone in the world
3. Oil & Investment; China needs independent source of energy, resources and military technology

### MILITARY

1. Modernization, Preparation & Expansion

### POLITICS

1. Internal Situation (Class Struggle and Nationalism, Pseudo Anti-Imperialist Rhetoric a Preparation for War)

### US BOSSES

1. Inter-Imperialist Rivalry Defines the working conditions (Conditions will worsen for workers as US tries to compete with the China price and the world) Expect more anti-communism within the unions as the AFL-CIO is no more and is no longer the main Trade Union in the US. (Specifically China Hating)
2. US military (Draft is necessary in the long run) Demoralized Public – Need more nationalism trying to build a patriotic “anti-racist” pro “humanitarian” imperialist movement a revamped “white mans burden.”
3. US bosses’ ties with China

### CONCLUSION

1. Opportunity
2. Work harder in developing networks based in the military and basic industry!! Workers have the greatest necessity to Change the World, no body else has that need like us!
3. The current situation always changes from day to day and from month to month, but we must view these changes as an evolving process. Our position is clear, Imperialist war is an inherent aspect of capitalism, and the current imperialist battles reflect this evolving process to world war.

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### Introduction

The current world situation always changes from day to day and from month to month, but we must view these changes as an evolving process. Our position is clear. Imperialist rivalry and war are inherent aspects of capitalism, and the current imperialist battles reflect this evolving process to world war. Inter-imperialist rivalry is the main contradiction in the world today. It affects all workers in the world, leading to attacks on living conditions, death from racist terror, hunger, and war.

Some members of the US ruling class think that

China can be a junior partner. This reflects short term thinking. In the long term, it's a pipe dream. While in the short run, US bosses reap huge profits from investment in China and Chinese bosses export massively to the US market, in the medium and long run, the US and Chinese bosses will be in sharper contradiction with each other over access to oil, other resources and markets. China needs more and more oil for industrial production. This puts them in conflict with the US rulers' drive for control of Middle East and world oil. The Chinese rulers are skillful at making alliances with other imperialists in their search for resources and

markets. There is much money to be made in China from the exploitation of low paid workers. The US is not so omnipotent that it can scare away other imperialists who are investing in China and making deals with China over oil pipelines and access to oil. Chinese rulers will use nationalism to mobilize the working class to fight for them. Therefore most US ruling class thinkers, while profiting from China in the short term, see China as a strategic enemy in the medium and long term.

This draft focuses on the developing battle between China and the US for control of the world, but that doesn't mean that other imperialists like Germany, France, Japan and Russia are not part of this dog fight. More will be written about these powers later. This report is not making exact estimates about timing, but attempting to describe a key part of the sharpening inter-imperialist rivalry.

## **ECONOMY: Primitive Accumulation; Reversal Of Socialism In China**

### **What Is The Chinese Miracle?**

The Chinese Miracle was born out of the defeat of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. The GPCR described in the Communist Critique of the Wage System the Political Economy Pamphlet

“...Was a bitter and often violent fight for political power and control of the state. It was in every sense a political revolution—and the most advanced the world has yet seen. While it took a variety of forms, the battle was essentially over commodity production and wage slavery, neither of which had been eliminated in China under socialism. The main questions were: Should production be driven by **exchange value** (sales and profits) or **use value** (communist planning for need)? Will people only work for individual needs (wages), or will they work out of a feeling of responsibility to the whole working class (political/class consciousness)?

The line was drawn in this battle between socialists and “capitalist roaders” on one side, and communists on the other. Socialists and capitalist roaders, who both favored profits and wages, though with different justifications, controlled the government. The socialists justified profits and wages as a transitional stage to communism, necessary for the foreseeable future. The capitalists justified them as the best way to organize society now and forever. The communists in

this battle were represented by the Red Guard, which was made up primarily of students and workers. They favored the immediate replacement of commodity production and wages with communist planning and free distribution based on need, with no need for any transitional period. But the Red Guard was undermined by its own ideological weaknesses, including believing in the “cult of Mao”, being unable to follow many of their ideas to the logical conclusions.

During the Cultural Revolution, the very idea of capitalism was under siege in China. Humankind was on the verge of releasing **unheard-of forces**. China was about to organize production **solely** for use. Work was going to be direct—**valued** exactly for what it was. The responsibility of the whole society would rest on the collective will of the workers, who would hold all power. A revolutionary world was about to be born.

Unfortunately, the battle proved more complicated than that. Socialism—led by Mao and the “Gang of Four”—came to the rescue of commodity production. They said that direct social production (communism) and commodity production (capitalism) could exist side by side. They said that the “law of value” (by which they meant exchange value) could operate alongside direct, planned exchange. And they said that socialism—this mixture of capitalist and communist organization of production—would be a “long historical period,” in which the transition to communism would be achieved step by step.” The Red Guard was hampered by their lack of clarity about the need for an all out fight for communism.

Once the Red Guards were defeated by the PLA led by Mao, the capitalist roaders were now completely in power paving the way to capitalist restoration and counter-revolution. When Mao died in 1976, they turned against their former allies in the Gang of Four and returned Deng Xiaoping to Power. Deng began dismantling the commune system and opened the doors for imperialist investment (and the super-exploitation of Chinese workers). Communes were handed to commune leaders or CCP officials in what may be said as the biggest robbery the world has ever seen, or as we like to call it *primitive accumulation*. Peasants were forced from the land, from the communes, with nothing to sell but their labor power.

## **Capitalism On Steroids, China Out Produces Almost Everyone In The World; How Does China Out-Produce Everyone?**

The working class and the reversal of the GPCR are the basis for the outstanding growth and rise of the Chinese Imperialists' economy. Capitalist development in China has led to one of the largest migrations in human history forcing close to 200 million agricultural workers off the land to find work in the factories. At the same time, throughout China there are some 100 to 150 million unemployed workers.

Factory conditions: Paying wages of 40 cents an hour, Working 12 hours a day, seven days a week.

The China price is 30% to 50% less than the cost of many products around the world. The advantages of state capitalism have also contributed to the China price. As was reported in Business Week "Almost every chemical, component, plastic, machine tool, and packing material...is available from thousands of suppliers within a two-hour drive of the site. That alone makes most components 20% cheaper in China than in the U.S."

The abundance of low paid labor coupled with state capitalist planning has allowed China to out produce almost everyone and saturate the world with its commodities taking market share from other imperialists along the way. "Last year Americans spent \$162 billion more on Chinese goods than the Chinese spent on U.S. products." (U.S. News and World Report). China is already the second largest economy on Earth measured on a purchasing power parity basis—that is in terms of what China actually produces rather than prices and exchanges. It's number one in industrial production.

## **Oil & Investment; China Needs Independent Source Of Energy, Natural Resources**

Oil is the lifeblood of every imperialist state and China is willing to do whatever it takes to get it. Since the war in Iraq, the Chinese ruling class was forced to look else where for oil. Their aim is to have a secure and independent supply of oil, natural resources, and an independent source of Military technology. Their reach is global, going from Africa, Canada, Latin America, and Asia. Europe, the Middle East, Central Asia, and even on US soil such as CNOOC's proposal to buy Unocal, making all kinds of deals almost on every level.

The Strait of Malacca is the lifeline of Chinese imperialism where 80% of its imported oil is transported, and 90% for Japan. The US National Energy Policy of 2001 and a report from the Center

for Strategic and International Studies also in 2001 both estimated that the Gulf would provide up to 67 per cent of the world supply of crude. By 2015, according to the CIA, three-quarters of Gulf oil will go to Asia, principally to China. (Jane's Online: Jane's Information Group is a world leading provider of intelligence and analysis on national and international defense). It therefore makes sense for the US to try to control Gulf oil supplies as much as possible and avoid them falling into the hands of hostile regimes (Jane's Online)

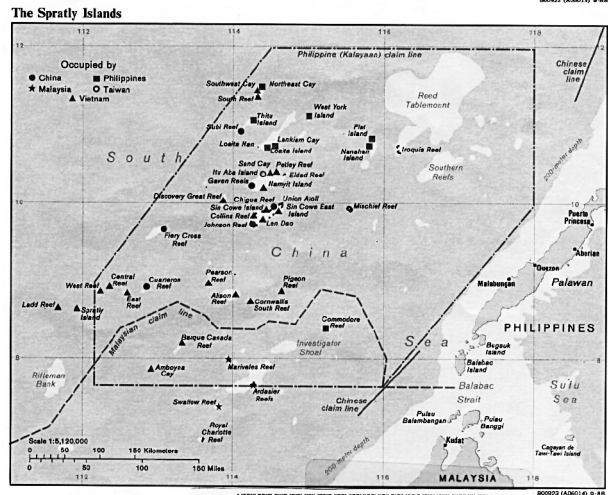
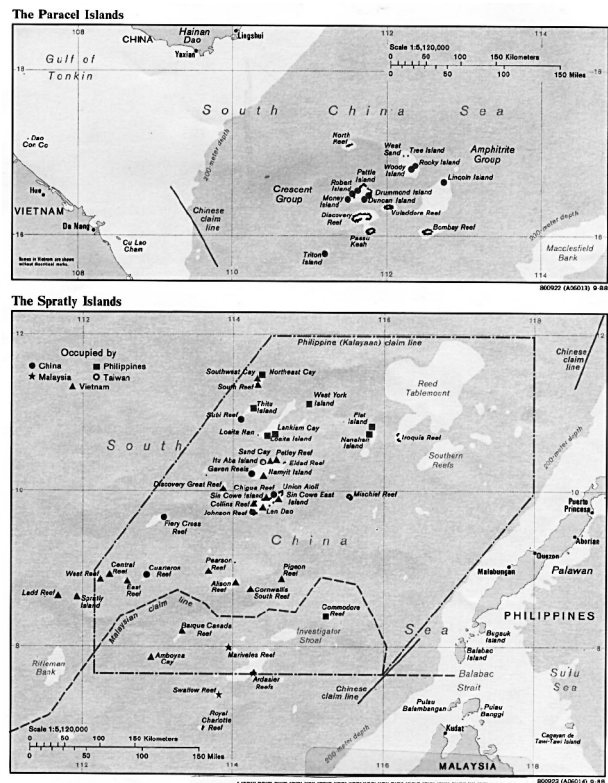
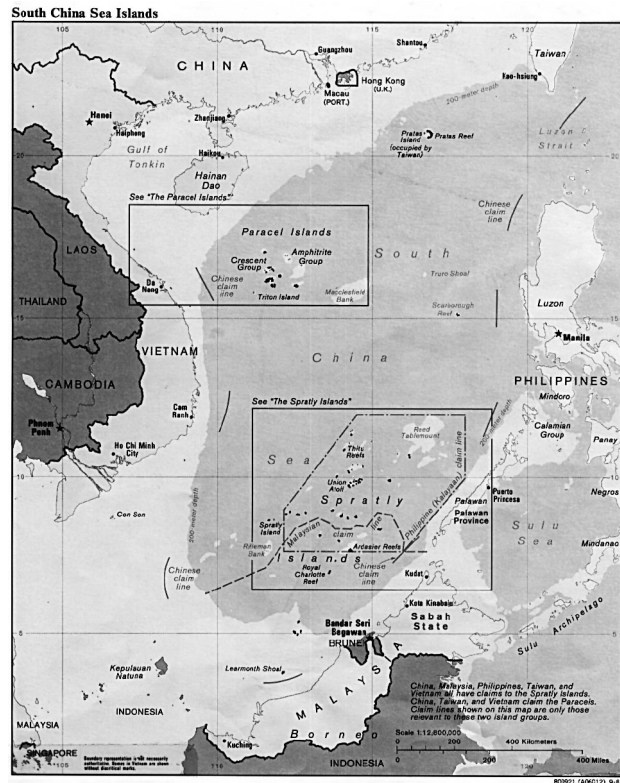
China needs oil to produce and sustain it's ever growing military, its factories, its commercial and consumer vehicles, basically its entire economy. Access to oil strengthens its political and military potential as well. If it's not using oil then it is using gas, electricity, or coal, but it seems that oil is the primary concern (what a coincidence, oil seems to be the number one priority of the U.S. too). Since the U.S. secured the two largest sources of oil for itself through military force and political friends in Iraq and Saudi Arabia draining much of it's own resources, China's old view of putting all their eggs in Iraq's basket has changed. China has expanded all over the world economically by making deals with Russia, East Asia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Kazakhstan, Nigeria, Angola, Qatar, Yemen, Tunisia, Indonesia, Venezuela, Brazil, Canada, and even on U.S. soil with CNOOC's attempt to buy El Segundo based Unocal.

China has taken advantage of the U.S.' unwillingness to make economic ties with countries they label "Pariahs" such as Iran and Sudan. In Iran "Beijing...sealed a \$70 billion agreement giving Chinese companies a 51% stake in the huge Yadavaran oil field, Iran's largest onshore oil field."

More friction surfaced between the U.S. and China when China's state owned China National Petroleum Corp. acquired a "41% stake in Petrodar, a major Sudanese oil consortium." China's bosses have used their veto power as a permanent member of the UN Security Council to court these nations. "China is also taking advantage of tensions between the Bush administration and Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez to wrest oil from one of the U.S.'s largest suppliers."

"Beijing has won friends in Africa with big gestures, including a \$1.2 billion continent wide debt forgiveness program." "In Angola, which is China's second largest supplier after Saudi Arabia and accounts for about 300,000 barrels per day..., Chinese-built roads, bridges and railroad installations are on the drawing board, part of a \$2

## A growing thirst - China Seeking Oil Abroad



billion infrastructure loan program Beijing signed with the country last year in return for oil."

China is in talks with Russia for a 1,500 mile, \$2.5 billion, pipeline to supply 700 million tons of Russian crude over 25 years. Beijing and Kazakhstan recently reached an agreement for a \$2.5 billion pipeline connecting that country with western China. That pipeline, scheduled to be completed this year, will be able to transport 20 million tons of oil each year to the manufacturing giant. China's economic position has enabled it to move into the backyard of the U.S. without receiving immediate retaliation.

Within a week of an invitation from Alberta's premier Ralph Klein to visit the Canada province's oil sand deposits, Chinese executives were making their rounds in Alberta. "Three of China's state owned oil firms have since poured huge investments into the oil sands, including a 40% stake in a \$3.6 billion project that will be able to send oil via a pipeline to Canada's west coast for shipment to China and elsewhere." Not only did China go to the backyard of the U.S., it went to the front door. CNOOC's unsolicited bid of \$18.5 million for Unocal raised controversy between the Bush administration and congress. A few voices in the U.S. supported the bid by China based on the fact that Unocal only accounted for 0.23% of the

world's oil production, "not exactly Saudi Arabia size" said Jerry Taylor of the libertarian think tank, the Cato Institute. Many fear it is yet another step in an attempt to "supplant the U.S. as the world's premier economic power," said Frank J. Gaffney Jr., president of the Center for Security Policy.

China's recent surge in demand has driven up costs of the materials themselves as well as the transport of these materials. Ships that chartered for \$25,000 less than a year ago now go for about \$75,000. Metals prices have increased by 23% and non-food agricultural items, by 28%. China's auto production exceeded one million units in 2002 and in 2003 it increased 81% to 2.07 million units. China is expected to be the third or fourth largest market for autos due to its emerging "middle class".

Of course to produce these cars they need iron and steel. "Chinese imports of iron ore have increased 33% in the last year to an annual rate of 40 million tons." China has turned to Brazil to partially satisfy its demand for steel, becoming "Brazil's third largest export market, after the U.S. and Argentina." "China's...Shanghai Group is teaming up with Brazil's Companhia Vale do Rio Doce to build a \$1.5 billion mill. All that from "the world's leading steel maker since 1997..." "China's steel production in 2003 (about 220 million metric tons [mmt]) was more than the U.S. and Japan combined." "China's

steel production since 2000 has increased 73%." "China's steel production is not expected to peak until at least 2010." Because the steel industry is a major user of refractories (60-70% of the annual market), refractory production in China has increased 51% since 2000. In 2003 it was 14.4mmt, which is more than four times the U.S. refractory tonnage of roughly 3mmt. The average refractory consumption rate by the Chinese steel industry is about 20 kg/ton of steel, which is more than twice the U.S refractory consumption rate. In 2003 China imported more than \$1 billion of metal scrap from the U.S., raising the price of scrap steel to about \$300/ton compared to \$77/ton at the beginning of 2001. China is the world's largest consumer of zircon at 21% of the world's total. China is also the largest importer of Alumina. Related to the demand in China, nickel and copper are selling at eight-year highs. As said by Dr. Charles E. Semler in Ceramic Industry, " if the 20th century is considered to be the century of the U.S., then the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be the century of China and Asia."

## **MILITARY; Modernization, Preparation & Expansion**

### **Modernization**

They are modernizing their armed forces, preparing them in exercises with Germany, Russia, France and others. They are building what will be a world-class navy, to protect its shipping lanes, and to exert its power. Increasingly they are vying for the same resources the US has always had the luxury of taking (like Venezuela and Russia), while seeking sources that are not in the sphere of the United States, such as Dubai and Sudan.



A trials launch of a JL-1 SLBM made from a 'Xia' class boat

The intense competition with other imperialist rivals has been met by China with an extensive hardware and software modernization effort by the Peoples Liberation Army, Navy and Air force, mainly aimed at the US. Directly challenging previous views that China will remain 20 years behind the US military, China is investing heavily in its armed forces, where official defense spending has increased 300% from 1996 to 2005, total expenses according to the Department of the Defense range

between \$50 billion and \$70 billion. (Jane's Online)

"Most of China's seventy current submarines are past-their-prime diesels of Russian design; but these vessels could be used to create mobile mine fields in the South China, East China, and Yellow Seas, where, as the Wall Street Journal reporter David Lague has written, "uneven depths, high levels of background noise, strong currents and shifting thermal layers" would make detecting the submarines very difficult. Add to this the seventeen new stealthy diesel submarines and three nuclear ones that the Chinese navy will deploy by the end of the decade, and one can imagine that China could launch an embarrassing strike against us, or against one of our Asian allies." (Atlantic Monthly)

China is currently modernizing its submarine warfare capabilities, building four to six Type 094 XIA Class submarines in 2006/2007, three of which will be operation by 2010. That carry up to sixteen Intercontinental submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles known as the JL-2 guided by inertial guidance systems and updated with GPS, which are estimated by a US report in 2004 to have a maximum range of 12,000 km, and an accuracy of up to 150m. This single nuclear warhead is believed to have a yield of 1 million tons. (Jane's Online)

### **Building Weapons**

Weapons and defense equipment are mainly being imported from Russia totalling \$2 billion for 2005, with Germany and France playing smaller roles. China's goal of becoming a self-sufficient innovator of high-tech weapons is being helped by the transfer of these weapons. China is learning to design and integrate foreign made components to make their own technologies. This goal would be further helped by the EU's decision to lift the embargo.

While it is not likely that Europe will gain many major weapon system sales once the embargo is lifted, what is expected is that many European and Chinese defense concerns will enter into cooperative or investor relationships. The October 2003 move by European aerospace concern, EADS, to buy stock in a company owned by China's AVIC-2 aerospace concern offers a preview of this kind of cooperation. The prospect of a significant deepening of EU-China defense industry cooperation would serve to advance their goals, to include an acceleration of high-technology weapons development to remain competitive with the US, and to increase their respective independence from US policy demands." (Jane's Online)

“Construction of China’s largest shipyard kicks off in Shanghai”

China State Shipbuilding Corporation (CSSC) has started on Changxing Island in east China’s Shanghai the construction of its Changxing Shipbuilding Base, inaugurating China’s largest shipyard with an annual shipbuilding capacity of 12 million tons. According to plan, the project will be completed in 2015. The base will become the largest, most advanced and most competitive one in China, as well as one of the largest in the world. *(People’s Daily Online)*

**Galileo:** The world GPS system built by the EU and China will be the most advanced in the world. This will greatly enhance their military capabilities, in precision-guided weapons.

**Preparation:** With its economic strength China has been able to improve its blue-water, submarine, and amphibious navy, air force and missile capabilities. China develops and produces nearly all of its weapons domestically, although it relies heavily on Russian technology. These efforts are in essence an escalating war against the US and in particular a battle to prevent Taiwan from claiming independence. In addition China is extending its power in the Pacific to protect the Strait of Malacca which is an oil choke point for China.

### Conducting Exercises

Below the commission level, Germany has traditionally maintained close relations with China (German engineers and technicians have been

active in China since the 1800s), while France has been involved in technology transfers to China, especially of helicopters and their weapon systems. In the 1970s and 1980s this involved the licensed production of naval and battlefield types, although France was also a major arms supplier to Taiwan. European states have notably been more willing to bow to Chinese pressure on issues related to Taiwan. Neither Germany nor the Netherlands, for example, agreed to support US plans to construct diesel-powered submarines for Taiwan in 2001, for fear of offending Beijing.

Exchanges on security also take place, at a level insulated from politics - such as the high-level defense and security meeting between senior officers of the People’s Liberation Army General Staff and the German Federal Defense Forces in May 2002. France even carried out joint naval exercises with the PLAN in the run-up to Taiwan’s 2004 presidential elections.

Over the course of 2004, as well as high-ranking diplomatic visits, multilateral cooperation between China and EU member states took place at all levels. In January 2005, British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw announced, despite strong objections from the US and Japan, EU intentions to lift a 15-year embargo on arms exports to China, established after the Tiananmen incident in 1989. If the embargo is eventually lifted, China is likely to relish the opportunity to have an alternative to Russia as the backbone of its military modernization program.” *(Jane’s)*

“Russia’s president, Vladimir Putin, reacted to

COUNTRY	TOTAL ARMED FORCE	MAIN BATTLE TANKS	COMBAT AIRCRAFT	MAJOR COMBAT VESSELS
China	2,950,000	6,990	2,497	147
Japan	234,880	1,100	512	109
Mongolia	7,650	650	21	None
North Korea	1,173,000	3,150	862	31
South Korea	672,000	2,253	688	55
Taiwan	306,500	964	676	43

COUNTRY	ARMED FORCES STRENGTH <sup>1</sup>	ARMORED VEHICLES <sup>2</sup>	COMBAT AIRCRAFT <sup>3</sup>	MAJOR NAVAL VESSELS <sup>4</sup>
US	1,396,800	29,712	2,684	193
Canada	52,300	2,351	122	20

**NOTES:** 1 Excluding reserve. 2 Estimates total number of armored vehicles in service. 3 Estimates dedicated combat aircraft in service. 4 Estimates submarines and surface vessels armed with missiles and torpedoes.

US support of "democracy" in Ukraine by agreeing to "massive" joint air and naval exercises with the Chinese, scheduled for the second half of this year. These unprecedented joint Russian-Chinese exercises were held on Chinese territory. (Atlantic Monthly)

### **Expansion Of Political Ties**

Shanghai Cooperation Organization; Pakistan, Iran and India have become observers and seek membership. They have recently announced that the US should Get Out of Central Asia. Waking up the US to the new Axis. South East Asia is fighting to control up to 50% of all shipping. The Chinese have been mapping out the Seas in the Pacific Ocean and taking islands in the South East China Sea.

### **POLITICS; Internal Situation (Conditions Of The Working Class, Nationalism And The Preparation For War)**

#### **High Unemployment & Mass Protest**

Unemployment is 9.8% in urban areas but up to 20% when including rural areas. "Between 1997 and 2004, 50 million Chinese workers lost jobs in state-owned and collective firms. The result has been major gains in market-based productivity and income increases. The cost is anger, social tension, demonstrations and riots."

The government has acknowledged that more than 50,000 demonstrations take place each year -- many of them large and violent. That is well more than a hundred a day. Many demonstrations are labor actions, protesting unpaid wages, poor working conditions and plant closings."

Beijing (Reuters) - About 2,000 disgruntled farmers have clashed with hundreds of policemen in China's northern region of Inner Mongolia in a land dispute that injured dozens with one government official calling the situation "anarchy."

The July 21 clash in Qianjin village, a part of Tongliao city about 450 miles northeast of Beijing, was one of a growing number of protests across China, most of which go unreported in the tightly controlled state media.

"We're ready to risk everything. If one government official comes, we'll take on one. If several come, we'll fight it out with several," the farmer told Reuters.

The farmers had refused to turn over their land and had blocked construction of the highway for two months, he said.

"The entire village is in a state of anarchy," Han said.

He dismissed accusations by farmers that the government had hired thugs to break into villagers' homes in the middle of the night and assault them. He also denied corruption allegations.

"Please trust the party and the government," said an official. The government may grant minor reforms to try to co-opt this movement. In the absence of a mass PLP, this will be effective.

### **Nationalism And Preparation For War**

CHINA condones and even pushes anti-Japanese sentiment which mobilizes thousands to protest. "Last April, there were anti-Japanese riots in China, followed by a "write-in" campaign where millions of signatures were gathered against Japan. The antagonism was generated primarily at Japan's "war-time past." In appearance the protests were about the atrocities but in essence it was a mobilization to make Japan back off islands that Japan has occupied and has been tapping for oil.

CNN.com from an article titled "China readies for future U.S. fight"

"What is China doing to forestall the perceived U.S. challenge?"

Firstly, the CCP leadership is fostering nationalistic sentiments, a sure-fire way to promote much-needed cohesiveness.

While not encouraging anti-U.S. demonstrations, Beijing has informed the people of what the media calls "increasingly treacherous international developments."

Beijing scholars considered the unexpectedly virulent official reaction to the start of the Iraq war.

Foreign Ministry & National People's Congress said the U.S.-led military campaign had "trampled on the U.N. constitution and international law" and that it would lead to regional and global instability.

Major official media such as Xinhua and People's Daily have run dozens of articles and analyses whose gist is that the invasion of Iraq had "damaged the international order."

In an apparent departure from Beijing's cautious attitude at the beginning of the Iraqi crisis, authorities last weekend allowed a group of nationalist intellectuals to hold a conference condemning U.S. "hegemonism."



## US Bosses Prepare For War

Inter-Imperialist rivalry is redefining the working conditions (Conditions are Worsening for Workers as US Tries to Compete with the China Price and the World) Expect more anti-communism within the unions. It's capitalism not China! This is the way capitalism works. Andy Stern may sound progressive but isn't.

The US ruling class must intensify its fight for the world's limited resources, cheap labor and markets in response to the world crisis of capitalism. Mao once said that for the US ruling class to attack workers around the world it must first attack the workers within its own borders. This remains true today. Inter-imperialist rivalry is redefining working conditions within the borders of the US. The rise of capitalist China as an imperialist power, and the accompanying world capitalist crisis has forced US bosses to minimize the cost of production in order to compete, especially in industries vital to the bosses' imperialist war agenda. Outsourcing in defense related industries, such as Boeing's subcontracting strategy in which 7 of every 10 subcontracted jobs are outsourced to companies within the US, has meant that aerospace workers now face longer hours, lower wages, fewer benefits, speed-up, and no job security. In these non-union subcontractor factories workers are facing fascist working environments so that U.S. imperialists can wage **war** militarily and economically against rival imperialists. The Delphi bankruptcy filing shows that unionized workers also face severe attacks related to inter-imperialist rivalry.

What will be the role of trade unions in the current round of attacks on workers? The leaders on both sides of the divided AFL-CIO would have you believe that they are going to lead a renaissance in the labor movement, but as a veteran PL industrial worker put it "Perhaps we make a minor mistake in believing that labor leaders are 'sellouts.' They aren't. They never represented us. They have always served the bosses' interest, never ours." This is clear to many workers facing this increasing exploitation. This is a big reason that 93% of American workers in the private sector are non-union. Still the bosses will attempt to use these unions to mislead workers by promoting nationalism and anti-communist sentiment among workers. They are already doing this by calling China a communist state and blaming Chinese workers for job losses in the US. The truth is that China has been capitalist for many years and workers in the US and indeed all over the world are under attack not from China, but from capitalism. Fights between imperialists have always been paid

for in sweat and blood by the world's working class. This is the way capitalism works.

The US is losing the war in Iraq. Retention of soldiers is declining. Coupled with the capitalist murder of "Katrina victims" the US ruling class is a long way from completely winning the hearts and minds of the working class. Trying to convince workers with tricks and subversions such as the Dream Act, Amnesty and other crumbs and including force will be necessary to sustain a military. This means a draft in one form or another, possibly called "national service".

Liberals pave the way for fascism. The big bosses are using liberals and politicians to cover up the profit systems racist nature. They are calling for an expanded homeland security and an expanded role for the military in so called "disaster" situations. Pushing a fake anti racist humanitarian face to rebuild the New Orleans and the South the US ruling class like in Sudan can't hide its racist nature for seeking to maximize profits.

## Are The US And China Too Inter-Dependent To Go To War?

There are some in the US ruling class who, seeing that US corporations make huge profits off the exploitation of Chinese workers, think that the US can continue making money by producing in China and not face war against China. Add to this the fact that China buys US treasury bills and makes lots of profit selling goods in the US. In the short run, any sudden collapse of the dollar hurts China's exports to the US. There is merit to this picture in the short run. But, just as US companies like Ford produced cars and then tanks in Germany before and during World War II, imperialists can be in cut throat competition and at the same time do business with each other. Investing, especially if it involves technology transfer, strengthens China's economy and it's military. So the bonanza of the Chinese investment opportunity will turn into its opposite, a powerful rival scrambling to get on top. China plans to secure independent sources of oil with an independent military. China skillfully seeks alliances with other imperialists who do not want US imperialists to control the entire world's oil. Chinese rulers have learned from the negative (for them) example of a weakened and (temporarily at least) dependent capitalist Russia. They do not intend to remain subservient to US imperialism. The US rulers note China's fight for independent sources of oil as well as their developing alliances with other US rivals. The long range thinkers in the US ruling class know that while they can make lots

of money in China in the short run, in the medium and long run China is a strategic enemy.

### Conclusion

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution shows the power of the Working class with Communist Ideas. PL learned the pitfalls of socialism

This revolution proves to us that masses of workers can be won to aspects of communist ideas without having to go through the stepping-stone of socialism. In fact, RRIV is directly based on that mass experience of the fight against commodity production and wage slavery. The working class can't afford to bet on the errors of the old communist movement. PL has committed itself to leading this fight against commodity production and wage slavery in any form and for the complete liberation of the working class. The Chinese miracle was based on the old communist movement's reliance on socialist practice of commodity production and wage slavery, socialism always leads back to capitalism as the Chinese miracle proves.

The brutal exploitation workers face, coupled with lessons learned by the Chinese workers in the GPCR, as well as the lessons that PL has learned from it to build a communist revolution enable us to build a movement that will destroy imperialism.

International Unity between Chinese, European, African, Latin American and US soldiers and workers led by PL can build a fight to destroy imperialism and fight for communism.

Our own experience shows that workers and soldiers can be won to Communist leadership.

Experience here: We had a great response at Ft. Lewis, and Boeing as shown in Challenge. Our work must be based on base building with workers, Challenge sales and communist networking.

We must use these experiences to prepare and build a deeper and wider base among soldiers and workers developing our communist networks within the military and basic industry. Challenge is the key in all of this.

Again we don't have a crystal ball. But, imperialist war is an inherent aspect of capitalism. We must prepare for what may be the biggest change in our lives, WW3, whenever it comes. We must prepare by developing deeper networks, a wider circle of friends and contacts. This must be done by committed communists. It will not happen spontaneously. It will require hard work over a long time. We need a lot of patience and persistence to keep focused on our goals. We have a lot to learn, but we know where to begin.



# WAR ON DRUGS EQUALS A WAR ON THE WORKING-CLASS

Fascism is the openly brutal stage of capitalism. The ruling class moves to this stage when they have big economic problems and their system is in crisis. They do this because they don't want working class people to make a revolution and overthrow the capitalists and other rich people who have been destroying our lives with racism, sexism, unemployment, cutbacks, layoffs, low pay and other things. To prevent us from fighting back against these problems, the ruling class needs more police, soldiers, laws and other methods of control. Their goal is to terrorize and brutalize us so that we will not organize marches, protests, rebellions and other actions. Their goal is a fascist society much like Nazi Germany during World War II, but with some differences on the surface.

Most of us would not welcome fascist oppression. Most people would organize against it if it were too obvious. So how does the ruling class get away with such an attack? They make us want it! They tell us lies about other people and how those people are making society unsafe or sneaking into the country. They make us worry about gangs, serial killers, immigrants, and all kinds of criminals. They make us believe that the answer to these "problems" is to have more police and soldiers to "protect us from such evils." They have changed the law to include the three strikes law. This means that if a person has three felony convictions they would go to jail for life. Sounds like a good thing right? So more jails were built, but once the jails are built they can throw anyone in them. Now there are thousands of people who have been wrongly convicted or never convicted but are serving indefinite time in these new jails. Many other laws like this have been enacted which look good on the surface but are deadly to the working class. In another example, no weapons of mass destruction were ever found in Iraq, nor was Iraq ever connected to the attacks on the World Trade Center, but how many laws were passed and lives lost since Bush and company started the Middle East war "against terrorism"?

In recent times, the ruling class and their media have told us that there is an epidemic of drugs and drug dealers ravaging our children and our society. They claim to have launched a "war on drugs" to rid our communities of this menace. To wage this

war they have hired more cops, prosecuted more supposed criminals and built more jails.

So, how is this war on drugs going? Are these cops really stamping out drugs and drug dealers, or is this war on drugs actually a justification for the increasing of ruling class forces in preparation for more fascist control?

In the following pages, we will examine whether there is actually a drug epidemic in our society and what role the police and other forces are actually playing on the road to fascism.

Many in our society believe or have been won to the idea that massive police intervention is required to diminish the use of "illegal" drugs in our society. This essay will attempt to show that the war on drugs was and is principally an attack by the ruling class on the working-class. The intent of this attack is to win the working-class to a reduction of civil liberties and the building of a police state (fascism).

Currently there are more than two million people in prison in the US and six million under the auspices of the criminal justice system. This incarceration rate is the highest percent per-capita in the world today. Ostensibly, the reason for this huge prison population is the "War on Drugs." Below is a chart of the incarceration rates in the US beginning in 1925 until 2000.

In 1986, Ronald Reagan, president of the United States, declared a "War on Drugs." Reagan, as had many other politicians that predated him, proclaimed an end to the scourge of illicit drugs. With increased funding of law enforcement and mandatory drug sentencing, Reagan would save our youth from drug addiction. The immediate result of this endeavor was an increase in the prison population. A second and more sinister effect was the expansion of police powers that curtailed the civil rights of a huge portion of the American population. Many subsequent laws allowed police to search individuals at police discretion, seize property if suspected to result from drug trade, stop vehicles for not having passengers belted, arrest teenagers in Chicago for gathering on a street corner and many other civil liberties abuses.

## Why Is There A War On Drugs?

The War itself was built on the false premise that illegal drugs are the major problem in our society (At the time of the initiation of the "Drug War" less than 1% of the population were addicted to drugs) and illegal drugs addict our innocent children our young children are being lured by degenerate thugs into lives of drug addiction and dependency. All aspects of the society either benefit the ruling class or the working class. These two classes are combatants in a struggle for control of the earth and its resources. These claims were examined in an essay by Bruce Alexander called "The Myth of Drug-Induced Addiction"[i]. Alexander examines the phenomenon of drug addiction and its causes. He exposes the hysteria-producing claims of the anti-drug pundits as falsehoods. These claims are that all or most people who use heroin or cocaine beyond a certain minimum amount become addicted and that no matter what proportion of the users of heroin and cocaine become addicted, their addiction is caused by exposure to the drug.

Alexander points out that the use of opiates in the US and England during the 19th century was enormously far greater than it is now, both through physician-prescribed injections and ubiquitous patent medicines which were used as tonics and for recreational purposes. The incidence of dependence and addiction never reached 1% of the population and was declining at the end of the century before the restrictive laws were passed (Breecher, 1972[ii]; Ledain, 1973[iii]; Coutwright, 1982[iv]). Alexander also points out that British physicians routinely prescribe 29 kilograms of heroin, millions of doses each year (?), to medical patients. A major portion of this heroin is sold in cough syrup. There is a virtual absence of addicts being created by this medical practice. While heroin is a staple of British medical practice, fears of addiction by British physicians are minimal (White, Hoskins, Hanks, & Bliss, 1991)[v].

In a study reported on by Bennet et al, (1982)[vi], fifty American patients using a self medication machine developed by the Canadians, self-administered 1mg opiate drug doses. The amount self-administered was considerably less than the maximum allowed despite the fact that the patients were attached to the drug delivery machine for one to six days. These results suggest that, in general, people don't want to be exposed to opiates and that exposure to the drugs does not cause addiction. If exposure to the drugs does not cause drug addiction and people in general don't desire the drug euphoria, prohibition of drugs seems on the average unnecessary.

Alexander also reports that nasal surgeons routinely apply cocaine to the nasal mucosa in the same area as cocaine snorters, but in higher doses (Johns & Henderson, 1997[vii], Erickson et al, 1987[viii]). Doses at these levels will result in a "high" in experienced users. A survey of plastic surgeons revealed five deaths and thirty-four severe but non-fatal reactions resulting from 108,032 medical applications of cocaine (Feenan and Mancusi-Ungaro, 1976[ix]) but not a single case of iatrogenic addiction!

In addition, Alexander also reports on the results from an American national survey conducted annually in the U.S. since 1975. In the study, two groups were identified: high school seniors and high school graduates up to age thirty-two. In 1990, 8.6% of high school seniors used cocaine (other than "crack") at some time in their life, 1.7% reported using it once or more in the month that they were interviewed, and 0.1% reported using it at least 20 days in the month that they were interviewed. Therefore less than 1 in 80 students that admitted to using cocaine could be considered to be an addicted if addiction is assumed to require use on at least 20 days out a month (Johnson, O'Malley, Bachman, 1991) [x]. In this same report, it was reported that the likelihood of a high school graduate cocaine user becoming an addict is even less likely – 41% of high school graduates reported using cocaine at some time in their lives; 3% reported using cocaine at least once in during the month of the interview; and less than 0.1% reported using of cocaine at least 20 days in during the month of the interview. Of this cohort, less than one in 400 could be considered an addict. These same investigators conducted a survey in 1990 of crack users. American high school graduates between the ages of 19-32 reported that 5.1% had used crack at least once in their life, but only 0.4% had used it once or more in during the month of the interview and less than 0.05% had used cocaine 20 or more days in during the month of the interview. This suggests that "the most addictive drug on earth" caused persisting addiction in no more than 1 experimental user in 100 (Johnson, O'Malley and Bachman, 1991). This Moreover, these results indicate that the addiction problem is not as bad as depicted by the liberal news media and the national politicians. Less than 1% addiction seems to be the results of all of the studies described in this paper suggest that cocaine use yields addiction in less than one percent of users at best.

According to the office of the National Drug Control Policy[xi], there are 10 million casual drug

users in the US. Three million people are frequent users and less than 1% of the society is clinically addicted to an illicit drug. The demand for "illegal" drugs in our society is small and constant. Ten million people use marijuana, two million use cocaine in some form and 0.5 million use heroin. The numbers go up and down from year to year, but vary between 5 and 20%. The numbers never change by more than 50% in either direction. According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy the proportion of drug addicts before the war on drugs and currently is less than 1% of our society. The "war on drugs" has not diminished drug use in our society!

We all know individuals whose lives have been wrecked by drugs and some who may have died as a result of drug use. Almost all of the "facts" we know about drug addiction are anecdotal. The question is: does the "evil" of illicit drugs play a significant role in the degradation and death in our society?

Each year in our society approximately 1% of the population dies. At the time that the war on drugs was launched, deaths from tobacco were estimated at about 300,000 (~18%) a year. Another 100,000 (~4%) of deaths were due to the complications of alcoholism. Deaths from illegal drug use cause about 3500 deaths a year, according to the Center for Disease Control about 0.7% of all the deaths in 2000. A similar number can be obtained from their web site [xii] for the year 1990. Deaths from drugs use are constant and a very minor contributor to the mortality rates in this country. On the other hand tobacco and alcohol contribute significantly more to the US mortality rates. In 2000, tobacco caused 18.1% of all deaths and alcohol caused 3.5% of all deaths. Billions are spent to "control" illicit drug use!

In an essay by Richard Vogel (2003)[xiii] in the *Monthly Review Magazine*, a more sinister reason for the war is described. Vogel suggests that the War was instigated to house the army of unemployed workers resulting from the "de-industrialization of the US during the past twenty-five years and the consequent social and economic dislocations that disproportionately impact minority Americans." He concludes "the prison system now holds enough of the reserve army of wage laborers for extended periods to actually keep the official unemployment rate down".

Support for this argument is found in a paper by Mark Thornton[xiv] entitled "Alcohol Prohibition Was a Failure" in which he describes the failure of alcohol prohibition in this country. Due to the

prohibition of alcohol, the price of the drug went up and the availability, after taking an initial dip, surpassed pre-prohibition levels! The use of hard liquor increased as the use of beer decreased in order to get more "bang for the buck". A direct comparison can be made between cocaine and "crack".

The Volstead Act, passed to enforce the Eighteenth Amendment, had an immediate impact on crime. According to a study of 30 major U.S. cities, the number of crimes increased 24 percent between 1920 and 1921. The study revealed that during that period more money was spent on police (11.4+ percent) and more people were arrested for violating Prohibition laws (102+ percent). But increased law enforcement efforts did not appear to reduce drinking: arrests for drunkenness and disorderly conduct increased 41 percent, and arrests of drunken drivers increased 81 percent. Among crimes with victims, thefts and burglaries increased 9 percent, while homicides and incidents of assault and battery increased 13 percent [xv]

Before Prohibition and the Harrison Narcotics Act (1914), there had been 4,000 federal convicts, fewer than 3,000 of whom were housed in federal prisons. By 1932 the number of federal convicts had increased 561 percent, to 26,589, and the federal prison population had increased 366 percent. Much of the increase was due to violations of the Volstead Act and other Prohibition laws. The number of people convicted of Prohibition violations increased 1,000 percent between 1925 and 1930, and fully half of all prisoners received in 1930 had been convicted of such violations.[xvi]

The lessons of prohibition could not have been lost on the Reagan era administrations! Prohibition did not and could not work! The immediate result of such prohibitions was the development of an underworld that would supply the prohibited substance at an inflated cost and deliver questionable and sometimes dangerous/lethal products. Direct parallels can be made to the rise of crack cocaine and many dangerous synthetic drugs.

The prohibition of Marijuana adds fuel to the argument that the "War" is not about saving our children, but about introducing police terror. Marijuana is a plant that has at least 60 compounds of therapeutic value. There have been at least three major government sponsored studies on the effects of marijuana. All of the studies concluded that marijuana should be legalized. In 1968 the Veterans administration hospital in Palo Alto concluded a study on marijuana that found that

the substance was non-addictive and only made the study subjects 'happy'[xvii]. In 1972 the Shafer Commission report on Marijuana and Drug Abuse urged that the use of cannabis be re-legalized[xviii], but the recommendation was ignored by Nixon who threw the report in garbage without reading a word and proclaimed, "I know it's dangerous".

A report released in March of 1999[xix] by the National Academy of Science's Institute of Medicine, the end result of two years of government-funded research, concluded that marijuana has beneficial medical effects, ranging from pain reduction, particularly for cancer patients, nausea reduction and appetite stimulation. The report strongly recommended moving marijuana to the status of a schedule II drug, available for prescription by doctors. It also stated that many of the drug's supposed ill effects are false or unsubstantiated by scientific evidence. Among these are:

- the supposed anti-motivational or anti-social affects of the drug;
- that legalizing medical marijuana will increase overall use of the drug;
- the drug is more addictive than other drugs available for prescription;
- its side effects are more harmful than those of other drugs;
- marijuana serves as a gateway drug;
- marijuana causes brain damage;
- marijuana causes fertility problems; and
- marijuana shortens life expectancy

*Source: National Academy of Science's Institute of Medicine 1999 report: "Marijuana and Medicine: Assessing the Science Base" and the Marijuana Policy Project.*

At best the danger of marijuana is questionable, but the results of its illegal status are not. In 2000, 46.5 percent of the 1,579,566 total arrests for drug law violations were for cannabis, a total of 734,497. Of those, 646,042 people were arrested for possession alone. This is an increase over 1999, when a total of 704,812 Americans were arrested for cannabis offenses, of which 620,541 were for possession alone[xx]. If the war on drugs is to protect our children from the addictive grasp of illicit drugs, why are we arresting over a half million people a year for a non-addictive substance? These arrests are going on against the will or favor of the majority of the American people. When California passed its medical marijuana initiative in 1996, the

federal government responded by threatening to arrest doctors who recommended the drug to their patients! A 1999 Gallop Poll[xxi] found that 73% of Americans favored legalizing the prescription of marijuana by doctors.

If the drugs that the war on drugs protects us from are not the cause of addiction, and if drugs are not a major cause of mortality in our society, and the "War" increases the availability and potency of the drugs, why should the war be continued?

The main reason that the ruling class and its media allies continue to push the war on drugs is to ensure social control. Drugs have a twofold role in the social control of our society. On one hand, drugs are used to pacify the most rebellious segments in our society. As pointed out in the autobiography of Malcolm X, after the Harlem riots a drug plague ensued. This relationship was not unique to Harlem in 1954-1964. In many urban centers after rebellions, drug availability increased. On the other hand, drugs are used as the super boogiemer, from which the government must protect us. In order to receive that protection, civil liberties must be curtailed by the empowerment of the security forces like the police establishment.

What will be the ultimate outcome of this war? Abraham Lincoln, when trying to grapple with the question of prohibition, said, "Prohibition will work great injury to the cause of temperance. It is a species of intemperance within itself, for it goes beyond the bounds of reason in that it attempts to control a man's appetite by legislation, and makes a crime out of things that are not crimes. A Prohibition law strikes a blow at the very principles upon which our government was founded."

A police state is not a problem for the ruling class. It is what they need to control the working class and to prevent the development of class consciousness, the first step on the path to the overthrow of the capitalist system.

The Progressive Labor Party must oppose the "War on Drugs" because it is a war on the working class and an entrée to fascism.

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[i] Bruce Alexander [www.parl.gc.ca/37/1/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/ille-e/presentation-e/alexander-e.htm](http://www.parl.gc.ca/37/1/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/ille-e/presentation-e/alexander-e.htm)

[ii] Brecher, E. M. (1972). *Licit and illicit drugs*. Boston: Little, Brown.

[iii] Ledain, G. (1973). *Final Report of the Commission*

of Inquiry into the Non-medical Use of Drugs. Ottawa: Information Canada.

[iv] Courtwright, D. T. (1982). *Dark paradise: Opiate addiction in America before 1940*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

[v] White, W. D., Hoskin, P. J., Hanks, G. W., & Bliss, J. M. (1991). Analgesics in cancer pain: Current practice and beliefs. *British Journal of Cancer*, 63, 271-274.

[vi] Bennett, R., Batenhorst, R., Graves, D., Foster, T. S., Bauman, T., Griffen, W. O., & Wright, B. D. (1982). Morphine titration in postoperative laparotomy patients using patient-controlled analgesia. *Current Therapeutic Research*, 32, 45-51.

[vii] Johns, M.E. and Henderson, R.L. (1977). Cocaine use by the otolaryngologist: A survey. *Transactions of the American Academy of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology: Section on Ophthalmology*, 84, 969-973.

[viii] Erickson, P. G., Adlaf, E. M., Murray, G. F., & Smart, R. G. (1987). *The steel drug: cocaine in perspective*. Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath.

[ix] Feehan, H.F. and Mancusi-Ungaro, A. (1976). The use of cocaine as a topical anesthetic in nasal surgery. *Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery*, 57, 62-65.

[x] Johnston, L. D., O'Malley, P. M., & Bachman, J. G. (1991). Drug use among American high school seniors, college students and young adults, 1975-1990 (Vols 1-2). Rockville, Maryland: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

[xi] [www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/factsht/cocaine/index.htm](http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/factsht/cocaine/index.htm)

[xii] [www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00001589.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00001589.htm)

[xiii] *Capitalism and Incarceration*, Richard Vogel *Monthly Review* (March 1983)

[xiv] Alcohol Prohibition was a failure Mark Thornton [www.cato.org/pubs/pas/pa-157.html](http://www.cato.org/pubs/pas/pa-157.html)

[xv] Charles Hanson Towne, *The Rise and Fall of Prohibition: The Human Side of What the Eighteenth Amendment Has Done to the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1923), pp. 156-61. The 30 cities examined had a total population of more than 10 million. A closer examination of the cities studied indicates that the greatest increases in crime occurred in those that were previously wet; the only cities to experience a decline in arrests were already dry when Prohibition was enacted.

[xvi] Carroll H. Woody, *The Growth of the Federal Government, 1915-1932* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1934), p. 95.

[xvii] *Pharmacological Reviews of Marijuana* [www.cannabisinfo.org/documents/Health\\_aspects\\_marijuana.pdf](http://www.cannabisinfo.org/documents/Health_aspects_marijuana.pdf)

[xviii] *The Report of the National Commission on Marihuana and Drug Abuse* [www.druglibrary.org/schaffer/Library/studies/nc/ncmenu.htm](http://www.druglibrary.org/schaffer/Library/studies/nc/ncmenu.htm)

[xix] Janet E. Joy, Stanley J. Watson, Jr., and John A. Benson, Jr., Editors [www.druglibrary.org/think/~jnr/marmed.htm](http://www.druglibrary.org/think/~jnr/marmed.htm)

[xx] Office of Drug Control Policy

[xxi] [www.gallup.com/content/login.aspx?ci=6394](http://www.gallup.com/content/login.aspx?ci=6394)



# THE 1970 POSTAL WORKERS WILDCAT: First Ever Nation-wide Strike Against US Government

Today U.S. workers are experiencing an onslaught from the U.S. ruling class and its government that has been wiping out whatever gains they may have wrenched from the bosses since the Great Depression of the 1930's, and threatens to sink tens of millions below the poverty line.

While the ruling class spends hundreds of billions on wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, killing tens of thousands of workers in those two countries and inflicting tens of thousands of casualties on U.S. working-class soldiers, masses of workers are losing pensions they thought they had won; being forced off health insurance; losing jobs they thought they had "for life"; seeing their wages cut in half and worse.

Delphi auto parts workers are facing a 67% slash in wages, a preview for the entire auto industry. Hundreds of thousands of victims of the predictable Katrina hurricane are roaming the country jobless. Such is the state of capitalism in this period of endless wars and police-state homeland security.

The "answer" of the union misleaders to this catastrophe is to bend to the will of the bosses.

"What can we do?" is their plaintive cry, as Northwest Airline strikers watch their jobs being replaced by thousands of scabs while the other AFL-CIO unions cross their picket lines.

"Elect Democrats" to replace the Bush gang is their call. "We can't break the law" is their warning, in defense of the profit system.

All this adds up to abject surrender to the bosses' need to launch all-out imperialist war to protect their empire from rival capitalists.

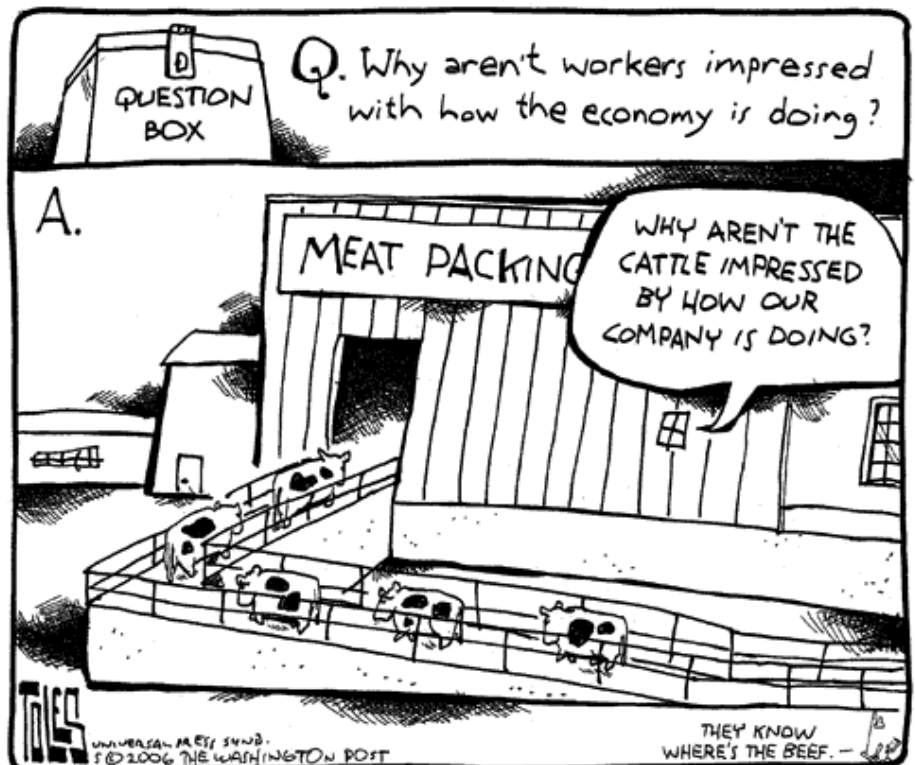
Amid such a ruling-class offensive, the 1970 national wildcat strike by 200,000 postal workers shines like a beacon about how to conduct a struggle "the old-fashioned way." Defy the bosses, the government and their anti-worker laws with massive solidarity across all lines: color, gender, union, nationality and religion.

The postal wildcat was the largest work stoppage (and first nation-wide walkout) in history against the U.S. government.

The strike occurred during a period when thousands upon thousands of soldiers and sailors, many led by black GI's, rebelled against the U.S. imperialist invasion of Vietnam — sabotaging aircraft carriers and shooting their officers. When millions marched in anti-war demonstrations at home. When hundreds of thousands of black workers took to the streets in mass rebellions in all the major cities to oppose racist police brutality and racist unemployment.

These events no doubt had a big influence on the readiness of the postal workers to launch a wildcat strike.

It was the largest work stoppage (and first nation-wide walkout) in history against the U.S. government. The workers defied President Nixon's injunctions (not too easy to put hundreds of thousands of postal workers in jail), his use of the National Guard and the U.S. Army, and the rantings of all the bosses who depend on the mails — Wall Street financial houses, banks, utilities, seasonal manufacturing industries, etc.





Postal workers had received very meager increases in their previous two contracts. In New York City, where the strike began and was its center, workers were particularly angry over the fact that they lived in one of the country's highest cost-of-living areas, but — due to the uniform national pay scale — still earned the same wage as postal workers in low-cost regions.

Fifty percent of New York's postal workers needed either a second job or welfare payments to make ends meet. The top pay of a letter carrier with 21 years of service was below the figure set by the government for a moderate standard of living.

A typical example was 49-year-old James Troupe, a letter carrier for 23 years, who earned \$8,400 per year, \$3,000 less than the government's "moderate" standard-of-living figure and needed a second job to close the gap. Troupe told the New York Times (3/18/70): "If the Government isn't ashamed to subsidize publications and advertisers when they send things through the mail that we carry, then it shouldn't be ashamed to pay us a salary so we can eat and pay our bills and put decent clothes on our children."

Postal workers nationally were seeking parity with workers in private industry. They had seen industry after industry walk out but they were being told it was "against the law" for postal workers to strike against their own government bosses. Rank-and-file pressure had been building up against their union leaders, who had been monkeying around with their demands for years.

The Post Office Committee of the House of Representatives — which governed the postal service — had approved a "reform" pay package which satisfied Letter Carrier union president Rademacher but not the rank and file. The Manhattan Branch 36 in New York City, largest local in the country, demanded a poll on a strike. Rademacher, citing its "illegality," declared he was "not prepared to call a national strike."

On March 16, over 2,500 Branch 36 carriers meeting in Manhattan, amid a chant of "Go! Go! Go!" voted overwhelmingly to defy the law and go on strike. Manhattan/Bronx Postal Clerk union leader Moe Biller was booed when he told the letter carriers he needed a "democratic" vote from his union members to join them.

The next day Biller, at a meeting of his local (also the largest in the country), said union by-laws required a secret ballot. Angry workers, demanding an immediate vote, leaped on the stage to chase

Biller, who fled through the armory's kitchen escorted by city cops. The mostly young black workers took over the mike and called for a strike. The thousands massed at the meeting leaped to their feet yelling, "Strike! Strike!" It was a stirring example of the militant class conscious leadership that black workers can give to the whole working class.

The rank-and-file's demands included: a large wage increase, an area wage differential based on the higher cost of living, government-paid health insurance, compression of top pay for length of service from 21 years down to eight years, and complete amnesty from prosecution for any workers striking "against the law." The government "offered" a 6% increase and "postal reform."

As the workers' action was to demonstrate, "Neither rain, nor sleet, nor court injunction, nor Nixon's 'national interest,' nor threats of jail terms nor U.S. Army nor National Guard scabs can keep postal workers from their right to a living wage." It was March 17, and the strike had begun.

For the first time in history, the mails did not move in New York City. "City Economy Sapped By Postal Strike," screamed the headline in the March 18 New York Times. The newspaper reported that bankers were losing credit card and other payments worth \$300 million a day normally sent to post office boxes. The New York City garment industry faced "catastrophic problems" because of orders for Easter business buried on post office floors. The telephone company said it was losing \$7 million daily in unpaid bills, while Consolidated Edison was losing \$3 million a day. The Wall Street stock exchanges were on the verge of closing and the banking system was in danger of breaking down.

The head of the NYC Commerce & Industry Association was obviously not exaggerating when he claimed that, "For big business...the mails are their life-stream." (In 1970, there were no e-mails, no "on-line" direct payments of bills.)

Seeing the power of their walkout, the strikers' confidence mounted, and with it so did the effect on their brothers and sisters across the country. Postal workers in Newark, NJ, New England, Washington, D.C., Philadelphia and Pittsburgh shut down their post offices. Then workers in Chicago, Cleveland, Denver, San Francisco and Los Angeles began voting overwhelmingly to strike. They shouted down appeals by union leaders to stay at work while these sellout officials negotiated with the government.

Within 48 hours of the New York walkout of 57,000 workers, well over 100,000 others had joined them. The union leaders had lost control of the membership. Mail delivery throughout the U.S. had come to a virtual halt.

President Nixon's answer to the workers' action was to declare a State of National Emergency. "At issue," said Nixon, "is survival of government based on law." And to show the workers whose side the law was on, Nixon ordered 2,500 U.S. Army troops and 16,000 National Guardsmen and Reservists into New York City.

However, the U.S. government was forced to back off arresting the strikers who were defying his "rule of law." The troops went in unarmed and were told to avoid confrontation with the workers, stay inside the post offices and try to sort the mail, not deliver it. No one believed that these troops could get the postal system operating again, but it was obvious that trying to arrest 57,000 postal strikers wouldn't work too well either.

Nixon said the government would refuse to negotiate until the workers returned to the job, but he also realized that the economy couldn't withstand a prolonged stoppage. His only option was to try to use the union leaders as the buffer through which the government could get the workers back. Therefore, he threatened to use additional troops and (somehow) enforce the injunction if there was no "back-to-work" movement. He wanted to "provide opportunity for the national trade union officials to resume leadership," since the rank and file was in revolt against those leaders.

So, despite the workers' continued defiance of the law, Postmaster-General Blount met with union officials. (The press reported that "Blount wasn't there" because it would have been an admission that negotiations were taking place while the workers were still on strike.) But the rank and file rejected the agreement between the government and the union leaders "to end the strike and then negotiate." Nixon had underestimated the workers' unity, militance and readiness to defy their own "leaders."

AFL-CIO president George Meany urged the workers to return, to no avail. The New York City Central Labor Council kept hands off, saying it was "watching it closely."

Then Rademacher accused the Students For A Democratic Society (SDS) of having gotten jobs at the post office and then "inflaming members" to strike. This only enraged the workers even further

since it implied that they were "dupes of the SDS," unable to decide on their own about striking. Their answer to Rademacher was to hang him in effigy at a NYC armory meeting.

By March 21, meetings nation-wide were rejecting back-to-work calls, with "No! No! No!" cries lasting three to four minutes. Angry at Congress for voting itself a raise, strikers' signs appeared saying, "Take Your Easter Recess and Eat With Your Family — You Do It On Your 42% Raise While We Starve." Signs at a NYC letter carriers' meeting on the 21st read: "We Have Them By The Throat"; "Watch Out For Tricky Dick [Nixon]"; "Rademacher Must Go"; "Dump The Rat."

Most workers were dissatisfied with a new proposal that promised another 8% wage increase (on top of the initial 6%) but tied it to Congressional action on postal reorganization. However, union leaders were reporting that "all demands were agreed to, so we should return pending a final agreement."

Most workers didn't believe this; the New York rank and file were labeling it a sellout, still demanding area differentials, longer retroactivity and government-paid health insurance. But it was here that the strikers' main weakness came to the fore.

Although the rank and file had acted on its own, and in the face of union misleadership, they had never actually seized the leadership themselves in one important sense: there was never enough organization among the rank and file to declare that negotiations conducted by union officials representing the workers were phony; that if the government bosses wanted to negotiate, it had to be with rank-and-file leaders chosen by the rank and file.

Much of the uprising had a spontaneous character to it, with the rank and file demanding a strike and over-riding their officials but never actually developing an organized leadership of their own to conduct the negotiations. The union officials were hanging on to their positions by a thread, but hang they did, their positions being boosted by the media and the government.

By the 23rd, with the strike one week old, workers in other cities began returning to work, based on the promise of "all demands being agreed to." New York City workers slowly followed suit. But the talks between the union officials and the government proceeded cautiously; they "realized that any breakdown in talks or even inflammatory

statements could ignite another strike." Nixon signed the agreement on April 15, which still made the additional 8% wage increase dependent on Congressional "postal reform."

Throughout April and May there were many threats to renew the walkout, but NYC workers feared they wouldn't get national support; there was no real organized connections between the rank and file in the major cities. However, the workers were getting impatient with a Congress that was dragging its feet.

On June 11, at a meeting of 650 members of Letter Carriers Branch 36 in New York, the rank and file denounced Congress and their own local president, Gus Johnson, banging chairs, shouting him down and demanding an immediate renewal of the strike. Johnson proposed deferral of a strike vote until July 1, at which time a July 6th strike date could be set if Congress still hadn't passed the additional 8% increase. He called for a standing vote and, although the papers reported sentiment seemed "equally divided," Johnson declared his postponement position the winner.

Immediately hundreds of workers rushed the stage, pulled down the podium and "swarmed around [Johnson] swinging fists and rolled paper." (NewYorkTimes, 6/12/70) The cops rushed Johnson down a fire escape, but the workers' meeting ended without any resolution to strike.

Meanwhile, the postal "reform" bill moved slowly through Congress and reached the White House for Nixon's signature on Aug. 12. It gave the postal workers the additional 8% increase, retroactive to April 16 (the initial 6% had been retroactive to Dec. 27, 1969), the total being twice the increase all other federal employees had received. It also shortened the time for postal workers to reach the top pay scale, now eight years instead of 21. Amnesty from prosecution had already been granted long before.

The newly-established Postal Authority (rather than Congress) would now run the post office and would grant postal workers the same collective bargaining rights as workers in private industry, with one important exception — all undecided issues would go to compulsory arbitration; there still was no "legal" right to strike.

Overall, the workers had won something

approaching a decent settlement, although it didn't include everything they had demanded. It was certainly far more than they would have ever won without such a militant strike.

However, the workers had won something that was incalculable: they had proven to themselves and to workers across the country that workers could defy a no-strike law and injunctions. In a clash between the law and workers' needs, the latter should be paramount.

The strike also proved the essential role of workers in the running of society. Without the postal workers performing their duties, the banks, utilities, insurance companies, numerous industries dependent on the mails and Wall Street were all in disarray. No amount of government troops could replace the postal workers.

Had the rank and file been able to organize complete leadership of the strike and forced the government to bargain directly with them, they probably could have won even more.

The 1970 postal workers strike set a shining example not only for themselves but also for all workers trapped by the bosses' laws, injunctions, strike-bans, low wages and lousy conditions. Reliance on the rank and file, defiance of anti-labor laws, militant direct action and unity against racism, and solidarity up and down the line are surely the way to fight the current ruling-class offensive that is enforcing fascism at the workplace.

Yet, as long as the bosses retain state power, they will have the ace in the hole to wearing workers down. The biggest weakness in the postal strike — through no fault of the workers — was the absence of communist leadership. At that point, PLP had no base among these workers. The presence of such a base could have turned the walkout into a "school for communist ideas" — recruiting to the Party from lessons learned about the workers' essential role in production under capitalism; about how class unity and solidarity can challenge the bosses' state power; about the necessity to build a revolutionary communist party that unites the entire working class around these ideas.

This is the task PLP has in becoming embedded among workers in the key industries upon which capitalism rises and falls.

# 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF KRUSHCHEV LYING SPEECH

## PLP Is Learning From Achievements And Errors Of Old Communist Movement

On February 25, one of the darkest days in international working-class history marked its 50th anniversary. That date in 1956 Soviet Union premier Nikita Khrushchev gave a “secret speech” at the 20th Communist Party Congress to denounce Joseph Stalin, portraying him as a bloodthirsty monster.

U.S. and European bosses reveled at the spectacle. Here was Khrushchev, Stalin’s successor and the head of U.S. imperialism’s mortal enemy, condemning the supposed “crimes” of the leader who had done more than anyone in the second half of the 20th century to champion workers everywhere in their fight to overthrow capitalism.

The bosses’ media, in both Europe and the U.S., have highly publicized this anniversary of Khrushchev’s notorious diatribe. From our class’s point of view as well, the event remains important, because it contains valuable lessons for future revolutionary struggle.

The rulers indeed hated Stalin but not for the reasons announced in Khrushchev’s speech or in volumes of CIA-sponsored lies about Stalin as a mass murderer. They hated him because he represented the specter of communism and the violent end of the profit system, and he symbolized the Soviet Union as the international center of the communist movement. It was those “crimes” that led the big bosses of every imperialist power to label Stalin as “worse than Hitler.”

The PLP has written extensively about Stalin’s achievements and errors. The history of the old communist movement is far too rich and complex for us to attempt a summary in one article. Nonetheless, this occasion calls for a general summary.

Young workers and PLP comrades can learn much from studying Stalin’s successes and failures. On the positive side, he led the Soviet Union in its transformation from backward nation to modern industrial giant. He built socialism, which saw the greatest pro-working class economic and political reforms in human history. He championed anti-racism and the emancipation of women. Under his leadership, the Soviet Union proved beyond a shadow of doubt that workers could rule society

in their own interests and in service of their own needs.

When U.S. and European imperialists reared Germany and pushed Hitler to destroy both the USSR and socialism, Stalin bought enough time to prepare for the eventual onslaught, stood steadfast through the havoc of Hitler’s invasion, and despite tens of millions of casualties, led Soviet society and the Red Army until the Nazi beasts had been ground to dust.

Even Stalin’s principal enemies recognized that he had no peer as a statesman and political leader. Winston Churchill, for example, admired him for taking “...a backward country with an illiterate population and turn[ing] it into a global powerhouse with a nuclear bomb” (NewTelegraph, Feb. 25, 2006).

But Stalin also committed grave errors. They were not his alone. He followed the line of Marx and Engels, the giants who founded the communist movement, and of the great Lenin, who led the Bolshevik revolution. The PLP has extensively analyzed these errors elsewhere, and once again, we urge all workers and Party comrades to study them. Stalin and his predecessors believed in “two-stage revolution.” They didn’t think that workers could be won at the outset to the politics of communism, and so they advocated socialism, which had a foot in both camps.

On the one hand, it unleashed torrents of working-class energy and creativity, producing the achievements sketched above. On the other hand, it maintained the wage system, material rather than political incentives and, inevitably, social inequalities. Infected with these poisons, the Soviet Communist Party inevitably turned into its opposite.

Although he spoke on both sides of his mouth about nationalism, Stalin basically promoted it. Nationalism is a disguise for all-class unity and therefore fatal to the principle of working-class internationalism. Stalin mobilized Soviet society to fight World War II for “Mother Russia,” rather than for international working class. T deadly results became evident shortly after Hitler had gone to his grave.

Closely related to nationalism was the fatal flaw of uniting with “lesser evil” bosses and imperialists, justifying the alliance with the illusion that the “enemy of my enemy is my friend.” Communists from post-World War II Europe to Indonesia paid for this error with rivers of blood, as the so-called “lesser evil” bosses pounced on them the moment an opening presented itself.

Khrushchev’s infamous speech did not cause the death of the old international communist movement. The errors committed by the movement’s champions and heroes, including Stalin, had made this death inevitable. Khrushchev’s disgraceful performance was merely the sign that the Soviet Union had become an imperialist country in its own right.

The rulers are celebrating Khrushchev’s speech because the spirit of communism continues to haunt them and because, despite Stalin’s faults, he remains the greatest leader the old communist movement produced in the 20th century. The bosses can never do enough to lie about him and discredit

him. We in PLP should strive to emulate his class hatred, his tactical brilliance, his resoluteness in the face of overwhelming odds and his courage. We have a long way to go before we reach hailing distance. We stand on the shoulders of giants like Marx, Lenin, Stalin and the millions who fought for a world without capitalism. But we also recognize Stalin’s mistakes and continue struggling to avoid them. It isn’t easy. Opportunism — the temptation of capitalist ideas — is the prevailing ethic in a world ruled by the values of the profit system.

But we can eventually win. Despite the obstacles we face today in the absence of a communist center with state power, dark night must have its end. Stalin, the Soviet working class, and the Red Army crushed Hitler. Inspired by that example, we can continue to build a new communist movement, which will sooner or later obliterate the profit system and replace it with a worker’s dictatorship and a decent society.



# MARCHING BEHIND LIBERAL RULERS IS DEATH TRAP FOR WORKERS

## Bosses' Goal For Immigrants: Slave-Labor Jobs, Cannon Fodder

Millions upon millions of workers and youth have been pouring into the streets in a series of megamarches for immigrant rights in large and small cities across the country. The working-class immigrants participating in these demonstrations honestly want to fight the racism they suffer in their daily lives in jobs that treat them like semi-slaves. But the leaders and organizers of these marches have something very different in mind.

The ruling class needs millions more troops to act as an oil-protecting army and millions of low-wage workers to produce the weapons of war in super-exploitative factories (and now Iran is on their hit list). They see these 12 million immigrant workers and youth as a huge source to fill their needs. So the liberal Democrats — Hillary Clinton, Ted Kennedy, Charlie Rangel, Al Sharpton, LA Mayor Villaraigosa— along with the Catholic Church, the corporate-supported Spanish-language media and union misleaders and even right-wing Republicans like John McCain who have spoken at and supported these marches are building this movement to spread pro-war patriotism (waving American flags, shouting “USA, USA.” They want to create illusions that somehow they’re less racist than the gutter racists like Sensenbrenner and the Minutemen. The only difference between these liberals and the gutter variety is over how to best super-exploit immigrant workers and use their youth as cannon fodder in the endless imperialist wars they are planning.

These liberal rulers need pro-fascist social control of this work-force and their youth, which is why they’re backing the McCain-Kennedy bill which would put the millions of undocumented workers in a state of indentured servitude and to not “make trouble” for 11 years in order to become citizens. Deportation will be hanging over their heads for over a decade.

The liberals are more dangerous precisely because many workers and youth think they are their friends. But workers and youth must understand the hard lesson that if you rely on “lesser-evil” bosses to lead our battles, we will end up dying for them.

PLP’ers were able to bring revolutionary, anti-racist, working-class politics to these workers, distributing tens of thousands of leaflets and CHALLENGES. We must do much more to win these and all workers away from the deadly illusions of relying on their exploiters. (See reports on our different activities in various articles in this issue.)



# CLASS STRUGGLE IN CHINA

The leaders of the Communist Party of China (CPC) claim to be developing capitalism under state control in order to build socialism, with the eventual goal of achieving communism. They call this project “socialism with special Chinese characteristics.” But even they admit that it will take some fifty years to complete the first stage of this process, and that it will take “several thousand years” to attain an egalitarian society. Observers across the political spectrum have sardonically observed that what is being developed in China is “capitalism with special Chinese characteristics,” and that the CPC is the “Chinese Capitalist Party.”

Experiencing an average annual growth rate of 9.4% over the past 25 years, China has emerged as a major world power capable of contesting US imperialist hegemony in many parts of the globe. China’s hunger for resources—especially oil—is already dramatically reshaping global power balances and rivalries. While many features of China’s internal growth and international positioning—financial, military, industrial, environmental—invite close analysis, the purpose of this article is to examine the nature and extent of the sharpening class struggle that has accompanied China’s rapid modernization, which has been taking place off the backs of the nation’s workers and peasants. We shall examine (1) spiraling social inequality in China; (2) recent resistance on the part of workers and peasants; (3) the historical role of the CPC in creating this inequality; (4) the current crisis facing the Hu Jintao regime; and (5) the possibilities for the revival of a revolutionary communist movement in China.

## Inequality And Exploitation In China

Government statistics show that “the lowest-income families, comprising the bottom 10 percent of all families, own less than 2 percent of all the residents’ assets in the society, while the highest-income families, or the top 10 percent of all the families, own over 40 percent of the total assets.” In 1981 the Gini Coefficient Poverty Index—a measure of inequality in standards of living—was 0.33; by 1994 it passed the critical point of 0.4 and, as of 2004, had exceeded 5.0, placing China alongside Brazil and South Africa. Annual per capita income is about \$1,000, but it averages \$354 per year in the rural areas. Factory workers make on average 45 cents per hour, while there are more than 1.2 million

households with incomes of \$100,000 or more and “thousands of Mercedes-driving, mansion-building multimillionaires in China... Forbes now compiles a yearly list of the super-rich.”

The rapid proletarianization of the peasantry, coupled with the theft of peasant lands by business entrepreneurs and agribusiness, has produced a “floating population” of some 120 million dispossessed migrant workers. “Illegal” migrants in their own country, these workers are susceptible to the cruelest exploitation, receiving less-than-subsistence wages for work days of 11 to 14 hours and at times cheated of their wages altogether. “It is largely the labor of this reserve army of unemployed that has raised the glittering monuments to progress in downtown Shanghai.” Unemployment is rampant; 20 million urban workers lost their jobs in 2001 alone. By 2001, about half the workers in State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) had been laid off as these businesses were privatized. Unemployment is particularly severe among young people: 70% of the jobless workers are under the age of 35. Women are twice as likely to be unemployed as men; the suicide rate among women is the highest in the world.

Work conditions even for those with steady employment are harsh, producing in 2004 some 137,000 industrial deaths, 10,000 of these occurring in China’s dangerous mines. It is estimated that 300,000 people die every year from the polluted atmosphere; there are 200,000 deaths annually from tuberculosis, traditionally a poor people’s disease. Just one worker in six has a guaranteed pension plan.

Meanwhile, China’s health care system is in free fall. The countryside barefoot doctors of the era of the Cultural Revolution have been eliminated, and the number of public health clinics in both rural and urban areas has been drastically reduced. Of the 1.3 billion people in China, one billion have no access to health insurance at all: in the cities, the population lacking such access grew from 97 million in 1993 to 300 million in 2003. Even the lucky few who have health insurance (which covers only some 70% of expenses) are subject to the vagaries of a system that requires payment up front and that rewards doctors for using expensive procedures. “Insured patients pay for everything from gurneys to emergency surgery...those without cash are denied treatment.”

China's education system—especially in the rural areas—also reflects the spiraling inequality. Fees have been reintroduced into the previously-free elementary schools, with the result that many peasants cannot send their children to school. Yet the "Law of Compulsory Education," originally signifying the obligation of the state to provide free education, has been reinterpreted to mean that it is parents who are under compulsion; "[I]n recent years the rural authorities have often arrested peasants who do not want to [because they cannot] send their children to school." Children of migrants "illegally" working in cities (there are 340,000 such children in Beijing alone) have not been allowed to attend the regular public schools. In higher education, the same conditions prevail. Tuition at most universities comes to about \$900 per year, placed far beyond the financial capacity of most families.

### **Fight-Back: 74,000 "Mass Incidents"**

As the rich have gotten richer, the poor have gotten not only poorer but also more militant. Of great concern to the government is the fact that there occurred in 2004 74,000 "mass incidents" involving some 3.6 million people—up from 58,000 in 2003. Many of these incidents have occurred in rural villages where peasants have protested the seizure of their lands and/or pollution of their water supplies by private businesses working in collusion with corrupt local Party officials. The Guardian reports, "In April [2005], villagers in Huankantou, in Zhejiang province, beat off 1,000 riot police in a dispute over pollution from chemical factories built on disputed property. In June, six residents from Shengyou village, in Bebei province, 125 miles south of Beijing, were killed by 300 government-hired men seeking to seize farmland from villagers." The violence has escalated. While in years past "even the most violent protestors have been armed only with farming tools" and police have been equipped "only with clubs, staff and tear gas," in December 2005, at least 20 fishermen protesting the pollution of their river by a local power plant were killed by police. As of October 1, 2005, 1, 826 policemen had been injured that year, and 23 killed, "trying to handle riots."

Other "mass incidents" reflect simmering anger at the glaring inequalities in wealth, status and security. In one, a mob "surrounded a police station demanding that a businessman should be handed over for beating up a local citizen." In another, villagers nearly lynched a well-dressed woman whose BMW had accidentally struck a child.

Twice in 2005 Beijing police broke up protests by disgruntled People's Liberation Army (PLA) veterans demanding better retirement benefits.

Still other "mass incidents" have been staged by workers at work sites. "On a virtually daily basis," wrote Robert Weil in 2005, "there are strikes in foreign-owned export factories of the southern coastal areas and demonstrations in the industrial 'rust belts' of the central and northeastern provinces." In 2002, there was a mounting wave of labor activism. "Approximately 50,000 oil workers marched and demonstrated in Daqing City in Heilongjiang province; more than 30,000 workers from more than 20 state-owned enterprises held demonstrations in Liaoyang City." In both cases the workers were "demanding unpaid wages, pension and compensation" and well as protesting the corruption of managers and local officials; they were put down by police and armed soldiers, but the oil workers in other provinces responded by "stag[ing] solidarity strikes and protests."

Most of these acts of mass rebellion on the part of workers and peasants have yet to be coordinated. But Public Security Minister Zhou Yongkang remarked in July 2005 "a 'noticeable' trend toward organized unrest, rather than the spontaneous outbursts that traditionally have led to violent chases between citizens and police." Moreover, modern communications technologies have enabled contact. A journalist remarked in August 2005, "[A] peasant protest leader from Zhejiang province, whose grimy fingernails and weathered skin attested to a life on the farm, remarked matter-of-factly...that he became aware of other protests after surfing the Web."

### **The Role Of The CPC**

Who is responsible for creating the Dickensian conditions of life and work being experienced by the great majority of China's people? The CPC: 100%. Here is a brief outline of its program for reinstating capitalism in China, following the death of Mao in 1976. In 1978 Deng Xiaoping ascended to power, and it was decided that the development of markets and the nation's productive forces would take precedence over any further experimentation with socialist relations of production. The years 1978-83 constituted the first stage of the "reform" process. Labor was subjected to market conditions; the door was opened to Foreign Direct Investment (FDI); and agriculture was de-collectivized. "Everyone can become rich," Deng famously declared in 1981. Stage two of the "reform" process occupied the years 1984-91, when a "planned commodity



economy” was instituted, and market forces were placed in command. By 1984, only 40% of China’s workers were employed in SOEs; there was massive loss of job security, as well as of the modest social welfare benefits widely available over the previous two decades.

Stage Three, covering the years 1991-2003, represented the emergence of an untrammelled capitalism in China. Associated primarily with the leadership of Jiang Zemin, this period witnessed the emergence of a stock market and the privatization of vast numbers of SOEs, which often were bought up at fire-sale prices by CPC members or their close relatives. The process that Marx described as the “primitive accumulation” enabling the development of capitalism in early modern Europe occurred in turn-of-the-century China as the asset-stripping seizure of the commons established under socialism. The prestigious Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) came out with a report in 2000 that reclassified social classes, determining that anyone engaged in developing the productive forces—including capitalists—could be counted as a worker. Capitalists were invited to join the CPC and were held up as heroes of labor on May Day. Jiang’s doctrine of the “Three Represents”—proclaiming as official doctrine the notion that the CPC represents the most advanced technological, political and cultural forces—formalized the redefinition of Marxism as technological determinism and the goal of socialism as—for hundreds of years to come—the development of capitalism.

Under Jiang, the CPC leadership emerged as the ruling class of China. As of 2002, the CCP is well represented among the top echelons of administrators, where Party membership varies regionally from 75 to 100 percent; almost 90 percent of Party officials have at least a college degree, as compared with 16.4% in 1981. Most of the 65 million Party members have landed in the richest 10 percent of the population, with annual incomes averaging 300,000 yuan (\$65,400), whereas the average urban worker earns some 6,000 yuan. At the highest levels, privatization has been spearheaded by the offspring of Party leaders. Jiang Mianheng, son of Jiang Zemin and popularly dubbed “China’s digital princeling,” masterminded the deregulation of the telecommunications market; Li Xiaopeng, eldest son of National People’s Congress Chairman Li Peng, is President of the nation’s largest independent electricity producer, Huaneng Power International. The children of Premier Zhu Rongji and Vice President Hu Jintao work, respectively, for Morgan Stanley and J. P. Morgan. Indeed, one observer

opines that the CCP’s elite “are preparing for the day when all hell breaks loose, trying to get foreign passports and sending their children and wealth abroad.” One of Deng Xiaoping’s granddaughters, a naturalized U.S. citizen, took a year off from Wellesley and enrolled at Beijing University as a foreign exchange student in order to “learn more about her Chinese heritage.”

When Jiang retired 2003, and Hu Jintao came to power, China was unabashedly a capitalist country, albeit one brought into being by self-proclaimed communists.

### **The Crisis Facing Hu**

Facing 74,000 mass incidents a year, Hu has had to put a kinder, gentler face on the capitalist exploitation rampant in China—or at least to gesture in this direction. Proclaiming the need for a “harmonious society,” Hu has said that the government must “pay more attention to social fairness.” In the lead-up to the 17th Party Congress in the fall of 2005, he invited a public debate over “ideology versus economics,” between self-described “socialist economists” who stress “social justice” and “redistribution” and “liberal economists” who argue for “a continuous push toward ‘kai fang,’ or opening up, of China’s economy and society along the lines of World Trade Organization [WTO] tenets.” While “development” remains “the absolute principle,” Hu maintains, this must be accompanied by a “scientific outlook on development,” one that entails “macroeconomic adjustments.” Greater attention will be paid, promises Gao Qiang, the health minister, to the “level of health support for the people,” which “must be commensurate with the level of economic development.” Some of the children of migrants “illegally” working in the cities will be allowed to attend the regular schools (though they must pay fees still largely beyond their means). Receiving particular emphasis in the rhetoric of Hu’s regime has been the need to give peasants relief from taxation and overcome the disparity between the developing cities and the backward countryside.

Hu has also tried to exert discipline within the ruling CPC and, more broadly, the professional and intellectual classes. Casting a worried eye at the former USSR and declaring that the asset-stripping by greedy Party cadre that was carried out under Jiang has gotten out of hand, Hu has initiated a “slow-down in the pace of state-owned-enterprise reform.” He has called for an “education campaign to preserve the advanced nature of Communist Party members.” Fearing an “economic melt-down” in

China—similar to that in Latin America—should neo-liberal policies be followed too vigorously, Hu has hypocritically fulminated against “Western hostile forces” and “bourgeois liberalization” as the source of China’s loss of its larger “macroeconomic” goals. By contrast with the blatantly pro-capitalist Jiang, who welcomed a certain amount of laxity as the cost of doing business with capitalists both domestic and foreign, Hu has issued decrees warning of the need to adhere to the law. He has also stepped up the harassment of intellectuals and journalists and set prohibitions on internet use.

Hu has been attempting, to bring about internal “harmonious development” and external “peaceful development” through what he calls the “five balances”: “urban and rural development; development among regions; economic and social development; development of man and nature; domestic development and opening to the outside world.” The “five balances,” some observers say, are intended to establish Hu’s legacy and replace Jiang’s “Three Represents.” Hu attempts to create for himself a return-to-socialism aura by celebrating the birthday of Mao and invoking the economic theories of Chen Yun, an opponent of Deng Xiaoping in the early 1980s who called for “proportionality” and “comprehensive balance”—that is, a degree of planning, as opposed to the free play of market forces.

But it is unclear whether even the dextrous Hu can maintain this balancing act for long. For the CPC is above all committed to maintaining its stupendous 9.4% growth rate for the next several decades, having set the goal of achieving by 2050 economic development that would enable it to be called “a modernized, medium-level developed country.” If this goal entails ever-deepening inequality, so be it.

### **Political Possibilities**

What are the possibilities for the rebuilding of a left (that is, communist) movement in China? What level of political consciousness characterizes the “mass incidents”? What changes are occurring both within and outside the ranks of the CPC? What are the limitations of the theorizing—especially as regards Maoism—that guides emerging left forces in China? What role can PLP play in helping a revolutionary left to develop in China?

While Public Security Minister Zhou expressed concern over the “‘noticeable’ trend toward organized unrest in the past year,” he added that “most protests erupt over specific economic issues

rather than political demands.” In his view, the power of the CPC was not facing a serious threat. At present he is probably correct. Some of the protests—especially in Guangdong province, where much of the FDI is located—have been characterized by a liberal rhetoric and supported by a “pro-democracy activist network” of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) that helps to confine the protests to demands for “justice, the rule of law, democratic participation” and an end to corruption. Eager to forestall militant union organizing, some multinational corporations, such as Adidas—which employs 12,000 workers producing some 1.1 million pairs of shoes per month—are happy to accede to these demands.

Posing a more substantial threat to the ruling elite is the revival of a Maoism that goes beyond the regime’s celebration of Mao as a kind of George Washington-esque founding father. In one protest in Shanghai, the center of so-called “market reform,” middle-aged residents quoted Mao’s slogan that “‘to rebel is just’” when they “denounced summary evictions to make way for high-rise developers.” Weil comments on the “widespread support demonstrated for the ‘Zhengzhou 4,’ worker activists in that city in central Henan Province, who distributed a leaflet denouncing the current direction of the party and state at a memorial celebration on the 28th anniversary of Mao’s death”:

It is Mao whom they invoked in contrast to the rampant capitalism and corruption of the present leaders, calling on them to return to the socialist path which the country had pursued while he was alive, a “crime” for which two of them were arrested and sentenced to three years in prison. But these four activists are by no means isolated. Leftists came from all over China to show solidarity outside of their closed trial, websites published lengthy discussions of the case and defenses of their actions, and more than one hundred Chinese—a very large number given the political risks and restricted communication channels—signed a petition letter protesting their imprisonment, joined by an equal number of those outside the country, an unprecedented international alliance in support of militant leftist workers there. But there are other signs as well of the ongoing refusal to let the struggles of the past die. In a park in a working class neighborhood in Zhengzhou, hundreds—and up to a thousand or so on

weekends—gather each evening to sing the old revolutionary songs and to uphold the legacy of the Mao era. In a similar, if less developed vein, workers and peasants often express the same kinds of views: life was different and better in the period under Mao, before China took the “capitalist road” that he warned against. Of course, such attitudes are far from universal. There are some workers and peasants who are “making it” under the current “reforms,” and even a few who are “getting rich,” as Deng Xiaoping urged them to do. Young members of the working classes, in particular, who do not have memories of the socialist era, are increasingly being drawn into the consumer world of China today, where individualistic economic pursuits are the overriding purpose of life. But enough workers and peasants still find in Mao the inspiration for their struggles to provoke a very harsh response—as exemplified by the case of the Zhengzhou 4—not only from party and state authorities, but from all those who fear a return to the socialist policies that he advanced, and the class struggles that he led, and above all, the Cultural Revolution, the last great campaign that he initiated to keep the Chinese from turning back to the “capitalist road.”

About four million Chinese—“from backpacking college students to bus loads of middle-aged workers on company excursions”—every year visit Yan’an, the base where the Chinese Revolution’s Long March ended. Yan’an, remarks Weil, “has remained a symbol of the spirit of sacrifice and closeness to the people that marked the revolution, standing in such contrast to the luxury, corruption and exploitation of the workers and peasants today.”

Accompanying the threat of politically informed worker rebellion is the movement leftward of significant numbers of intellectuals and students in recent years. There has been a proliferation of websites and publications critical of “market reform.” The Cultural Revolution—until very recently viewed by intellectuals and professionals as an unmitigated disaster—is undergoing review. The separation of the early Mao of national liberation from the later Mao of socialist construction is being queried. Marxist study groups have sprung up on university campuses, and radical students are visiting the countryside and industrial cities to

make contact with militant peasants and workers. Contesting the professional elitism fostered by the policies of the CPC from Deng onward, one such group calls itself “Sons [sic] of the Countryside.”

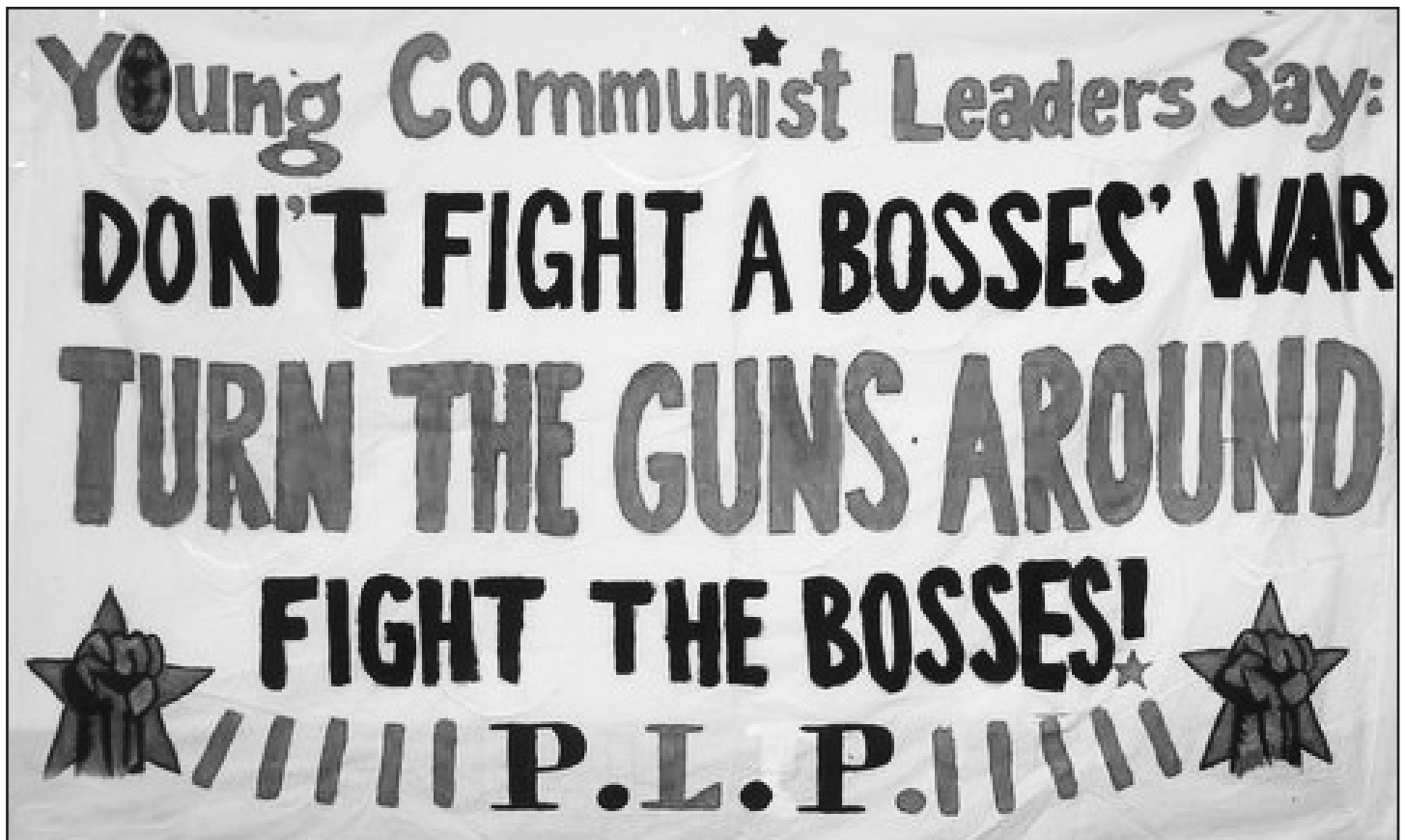
At this point, there are no public indications that this leftist activity is taking a revolutionary form. The CPC is doing its best to co-opt these developments; indeed, about 25% of CPC cadre describe themselves as leftists. CPC cadres of the “Old Left” undertake public criticism of consumerism and corruption, within the party and society at large, but their goal is to moderate the excesses of market “reform,” not to abolish it. A more diverse group—usually claiming the name “New Left,” though sometimes repudiating this label for its Western associations—is located both in the CPC and outside it. Some of these New Leftists describe the policies of the Hu regime as “capitalism with a human face”; others are taking a “wait and see” attitude. Hu’s government is doing all it can to keep this discussion and debate within the reach—and control—of the party. If there is serious revolutionary organizing going on in China—that is, organizing for a new communist party—this activity is, and will have to remain, clandestine. There is no question that, should such an organization begin to exert significant influence, it would be violently crushed.

Whether public or secret, however, the current criticisms of China’s voyage down the capitalist road will be limited if the Maoist legacy itself is not subjected to critical scrutiny—not from the right (as has been the case in China until very recently) but from the left. For—as was pointed out by PLP as early as 1971, in “Road to Revolution III”—even the most revolutionary aspects of the heritage of Mao were negatively shaped by the nationalism and productive forces determinism that guided the theory and practice of the Third International from the 1930s through the 1960s and beyond. The heroic struggle against the Japanese was undertaken largely as a nationalist resistance. The wartime alliance of the CPC with the Guomintang was rationalized by a cross-class doctrine of “New Democracy” that encouraged the development of a progressive home-grown capitalism. Mao’s theorization of “non-antagonistic contradiction” provided ideological grounding for these class-collaborationist moves. The era of socialist construction—including the commune movement—of the 1950s and the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s significantly advanced revolutionary theory and practice, breaking with the “goulash communism” of the USSR and positing the need to fight elitism and overcome the division of mental

and manual labor. But the left was defeated in the Cultural Revolution, and Mao ended up playing a centrist role, keeping those who were acting on the conviction that “to rebel is good” within the compass of a party that had become—even before the ascension of Deng—decisively revisionist.

What is needed in China—as everywhere in the world—is the growth and development of a revolutionary party, rooted among the masses of workers, peasants, intellectuals, and professionals, that is committed to the struggle for communism. Despite all the heroism, creativity, and sacrifice that went into struggles for egalitarian societies during the past century, these struggles were fatally flawed in large part because they took as their goal the building of socialism, and not communism. Were it

not for these struggles—particularly in China, where the greatest primacy was placed upon politics and consciousness as material forces—revolutionaries at the beginning of the 21st century would not be able—in all humility—to formulate this criticism of the limitations of socialism. But the greatest homage we can pay to revolutionaries of the past is to learn from both their achievements and their errors. The real communists in China—and there must be millions of them—have before them the task of critically evaluating the heritage of the CPC, from Mao onward, if they are to defeat for once and for all the ruling elite that has forced China’s masses, eating the bread of bitterness, on a long march down the capitalist road.



# INDUSTRIAL WORKERS AND THE LIVES THEY LIVE

I spent this summer doing ironwork as a rodman, working on a retrofit on a major bridge between Memphis and Arkansas on Interstate 40, and on a bridge deck on Interstate 235 which runs through Des Moines, Iowa. The retrofit job was to strengthen the bridge by drilling into the huge columns and beams, putting in dowels and building new columns and beams around the old, along with building a new base for the columns on top of the old. All this is done with iron rods and dowels (made of iron), all tied together by tie wire. The bridge deck was straight forward packing (carrying out the bars), laying out the bars properly and tying them in place. Working on the bridge deck is constant and nonstop with no shade. Bridge deck is among the hardest jobs one can do in terms of physical labor. The oppressive heat made many sick and most people did not last more than a few days. In the end only the Mexicans and I (I am not Mexican) and one other worker lasted for the duration of the job. This situation was due partly to the fact that the foreman constantly yelled and pushed for everybody to speed up, eventually pissing-off even the Mexicans, who they were the only ones left on the job, because they were already working at breakneck speed. The foreman was white and made racist comments frequently. Due to the nationalism of the Mexican workers and racism of the white workers, there was little chance to unite against the speedups. In Memphis there were many Black workers and the Mexicans had amicable relations with them. As a result, the bosses, some of whom were not white, were more timid about yelling at the workers, though in Iowa, the carpenters, who were a mixed group, caught hell from their bosses all the time.

I got to do a lot of traveling and to meet many workers. Particularly during the weekends in Illinois, I spent with landscaping workers from Mexico. They live twenty to thirty men in a house, spread out throughout the St. Louis area. They are housed by the company (MUNI) they work for and make abysmally low wages. Unfortunately the weekends revolved around drinking non-stop. But these are not the only workers who are caught in the alcohol deathtrap set by the bosses. When I first did ironwork in the summer of 2000, an old ironworker, who had worked in the coal mines when ironwork was scarce, told me that if you meet an ironworker who says he doesn't drink he is

lying. This may be true; the ironworkers with whom I spent time with drink constantly. Many times they drank from the moment they got off the job. We as a crew would finish three beers apiece even before getting in the car to drive to the motel. Often, back at the motel, the drinking would continue and we would eat a crappy meal due to the lack of cooking facilities. The weekends were consumed in alcohol. The alcohol provides relief from the physical stress of the job and the stress of being on the road away from one's family. Many ironworkers' family life is nonexistent due to the fact that relationships are difficult to maintain.

I also visited workers in Mississippi. These workers live on a ranch in squalid poverty. In one town there is a chicken plant in which workers are paid incredibly low wages. The poverty is in your face.

Although working with iron is hazardous, the bosses have little concern for the safety of the workers. One day in Memphis, they called an emergency safety meeting and some of us thought it was to tell us not to come to work with a hangover. It was to inform us that two workers almost died the day before and that we should work safely. But since it was the head foreman speaking, he could not resist making a speech about the need for more production. He said, "I want production, and you've been giving it but we need more." Then he said it should be "safe", but concluded by saying that he wanted more production. After the meeting I pointed out to the workers on my crew, already upset about the meeting, that the bosses care only about maximizing profits. Unfortunately some workers did not speak English and I don't speak Spanish so we did not understand each other. In Iowa the foreman called one safety meeting and didn't even attempt to pretend that the meeting was about safety. He just exhorted us to increase production!

While out there one friend got a letter from the Mar Mac Wire bosses which he picked up in Illinois on a weekend off. He can't read (as is the case with many workers in America). (Others who can read don't read anything important anyway.) He asked me if I would read it to him. The first paragraph was standard fare about how grateful we should be that the soldiers dying in Iraq are defending our "freedom". The second paragraph described the rising price of wire rod (from which tie wire is

made) and the rising price of other construction supplies. This paragraph ended with the sentence, "When prices or supplies change people scramble to preserve their profits and way of life." The Mar Mac bosses want ironworkers to join with them in their scramble for profits. The next paragraph of the letter made no bones that the "enemy" is the Chinese bosses who do not have a "democratic" government and treat their workers badly. The next paragraph says that the American government should be working on methods of becoming energy independent. In Mar Mac's words, "If something does not change, we are going to have to send our soldiers to fight and die to get us oil." The letter continued by attacking Chinese and Indian workers saying that American companies will have to be price-competitive with the competitors overseas. The letter is intended to prepare workers for wage cuts. There are not enough construction supplies (tie wire, nails, steel, and other material) and tariffs are not sufficiently high so it would be cheaper to move production overseas. In the next paragraph they boast that they are heavily invested in the manufacturing sector within the United States, particularly South Carolina. The last paragraph asks the rodbuster to look for new merchandise at the local concrete construction distributor. The letter is signed "keep tying and go hard—or go home" this obviously alludes to the speed ups which must be common nationwide.

Unfortunately I did not have a collective to help me and I did a poor job spreading the communist ideas that workers need to fight back and to organize around. Challenge was nearly useless because the majority of the workers did not read at all and those who did were intimidated by the length of the articles. All the organizing had to be done orally. Because of the language barrier I could not reach out to many workers. Sometimes I relied on a translator to communicate communist ideas which are difficult enough to explain in English! Maybe I should have read the Challenge/Desafio articles to them out loud. A collective would have helped me stay out of the pitfall of alcohol as well as provide other viewpoints and ways to express communist ideas. I would not have been the only person expressing them. I have discovered that a communist attempting to organize without a collective is very much the same as a human trying to live underwater. You drown!

Despite these limitations, the correctness of the Progressive Labor Party's ideas enabled many workers to begin to grasp them. The Party's ideas are consistent with their experiences on the job.

For example the idea of inter-imperialist capitalist competition as the reason for speed-ups resonated with some workers. The idea of destroying racism was popular with the Mexican workers even as they accused white workers of being lazy. The racism of the white workers did not help their cause. The idea of workers control of the production process was popular although many doubted that this could be accomplished. Of course it can only be accomplished by organizing workers everywhere and having an organization like the PLP that will lead the workers and be made up of the great mass of workers. The idea of a society without wages was not popular.

Although I did a bad job organizing and drank way too much, further hindering my organizational ability, there was one bright spot. My friend and I quit tobacco together. A comrade suggested I set an example for my fellow workers. I urged my friend to quit with me and we did!

These workers with whom I spent the summer are an essential part of the working class. They are constantly on the move. Many of them are immigrants and in the South, both black and white. The instability of the lives of the workers as well as the widespread illiteracy makes organizing a difficult task. The consequences of not organizing these workers are devastating. The bosses are working double-time to stir up racism, and, in opportune situations, nationalism. These workers make the economy run by building all the transportation routes (vehicles and trains), as well as all new buildings. Many of these workers have nothing that could reasonably be called a home. Some have a "home" base but, for the most part, they travel widely so the work of organizing is not easy.

Our ideas can travel far and wide if we find a way to reach them in a consistent way. If a team of two or three ironworkers, laborers, or carpenters can travel together or get on crews together, the long-term political work will be possible. No widespread movement among workers will accomplish much if the construction trades are not involved. During the Vietnam War (known in Vietnam as the "American War"), construction workers were given a day off to go and beat up anti-war protesters. This could only happen because there was very little to no organizing going on amongst those workers. While the bosses need ironworkers, they are forced to intensify their exploitation by speed-up and wage cuts. The workers will be fair game if there are no communists actively organizing within the ranks of the construction trades.

# NOTES FROM THE BOEING STRIKE

We often refer to strikes as “schools for communism.” I’ve been in four so far at Boeing. I’m still not certain what making strikes “schools for communism” means. I do think, however, part of the answer revolves around Challenge networks.

The strike wasn’t a week old before I started to complain how tired I was of talking. I was in scores of discussions every week, one-on-one and in groups of various kinds. Other comrades added significantly to the total. Union meetings, picket lines, churches, beauty salons, taverns and restaurants: it didn’t seem any place was free from debate. My wife was less than sympathetic. “Oh, PI-e-e-e-ase! The day you get tired of talking is the day you die,” was her answer to my whining.

Out of the hundreds of discussions our Party was involved in during the duration of the 28-day strike, two stand out. The first was with a close friend during a breakfast meeting with a half-dozen strikers. He was worried about scabbing. He thought we had lost the “fight and fire” of past strikers. “I hate to say this,” he said, “but I think your fellow workers are too fickle.” The ensuing discussion inspired a front-page Challenge article on the contradiction between capitalist individualism and communist class consciousness.

The other was with a Boeing comrade on the way home from one of the endless meetings with strikers. She told me how much more the Party pamphlet “Jailbreak” meant to her now than when she had originally read it six years ago. She began to see how dialectics applied to the development of her friends, church, family and co-workers.

At the very least, you could say that these two knew that our future hinged on what ideology the working class embraced. Challenge has played a central role in this battle to win Boeing workers for a number of years now. It is the “paper of record” in a few areas. Mobilizing Challenge readers and sellers gave life to communist ideas during the strike.

## **Challenge Networks: The Seed Corn Of Our Political Work**

Workers and allied students distributed 5,000 flyers and nearly 3,000 Challenges during the strike and the preceding summer project. The Party published half these flyers directly. The other half came from meetings involving dozens of strikers.

Although the latter did not contain the whole party line, nobody could deny that they represented a left position. All flyers and papers were distributed publicly and through hand-to-hand networks in and outside the plants. The ratio of public to network depended on the nature of the literature, the objective political opportunities (like the huge, centrally-located strike sanction vote) and the forces available.

At one strike check dispersal location, one out of every five strikers took the paper. We sold out in less than two hours. Most of these workers had seen Challenge before. They knew what they were getting and why they were getting it. “Let’s see what the ‘commies’ have to say,” said one of a group that interrupted their conversation to line up for a copy.

We figured we would have sold about 1,000 Challenges per issue if the strike had continued. That number—in and of itself—would have been significant among a group of 16,000 strikers in the local area.

We also organized breakfast and lunch meetings from the get go. Last strike, we waited until the fourth week to do so. These meetings grew to include two dozen Boeing strikers, retirees and guests from the NWA strike every week. Everyone in attendance was a reader and/or distributor or was invited by one.

Guaranteeing these meetings was a priority. Comrades even put off “union work” to allow time to build for these meetings, alongside key members of our base. The war, imperialism, Katrina, racism on and off the job, the need for class-consciousness, solidarity and the prospects for revolution were all hotly debated between mouthfuls. By the third week, these working breakfasts and lunches organized “independent” activities. For instance, one group planned to invite over 400 strikers, families and friends to an anti-racist, pro-working class movie and discussion. This, in fact, did happen, albeit in a much more modest fashion, even after the strike was settled.

In all likelihood, these meetings and the Challenge network from which they sprang would have been the hub of any attempt to sharpen the struggle, like mass picket lines to stop scabs. Strike breakers have historically become a real problem at the beginning of a walkout’s second month, when

our medical benefits run out. The union misleaders and the company rushed to a deal on the 28th day, before our plans for mass pickets could be put to the test.

The struggle at these meetings had a particular character precisely because they sprang from the Challenge network. The demise of the old communist movement has led to anti-communism and cynicism about revolution and workers in general. We've already had to deal somewhat with these issues or workers would not have continued to read and sell the paper all these years. Indeed, the very process of reading our paper, issue after issue, meant that most workers at our strikers' meetings had confronted these bad ideas before. Not that all were diehard reds, but Party members knew we were not starting from scratch. We were less likely to bait ourselves because we knew that the key organizers and most attendees were readers.

### **Political Life And "Live" Challenge Networks**

Maintaining a Challenge network is not primarily an organizational problem. To be sure, one must make lists and get the paper to every reader and seller every issue. Yet, to maintain these sales, one must engage in collective class struggle, fight for the left in an appropriate mass organization and analyze these fights from a communist perspective in the pages of our paper. Networks require long-range ideological and practical struggle with readers and especially sellers. Such give-and-take requires time spent off the job with your Challenge base. That's a lot of work. At some point, you have to organize a collective to make sure it happens. In short, maintaining a Challenge network is a living process. Too often, we let these networks die—or at least they become so small that they might as well be considered on life support.

A "live" network gave us courage. Without it, the strike meetings would—at the very least—have been smaller and less political; the potential for recruitment nonexistent. This strike wasn't the first time we asked our Challenge base to "up the ante" in class struggle. Many years ago, we convinced an African-American reader to come to his first union meeting to support our resolution against the KKK and the Nazis. Many were surprised to see him there. He started working at Boeing when blacks were not allowed in the union. Today, he's retired, but he still sells 10 papers.

The communist politics in our paper prepares our base to advance the class struggle. Shortly after 9/11, we had a contract battle. The union leaders couldn't

win union members to march through the plants—a tradition here. Our Party, on the other hand, could and did by mobilizing our network. Nobody carried U.S. flags during that march of 150, a rarity at the time. Steady reading of Challenge helped our base develop the political savvy necessary to overcome the reactionary ideology that flooded the workplace during that period. They were not to be cowed!

Over the years, we've been involved in a number of union elections. Our readers not only provided a distribution network for campaign literature, but also gave public political testimonials. These precedent-setting endorsements got better each campaign, raising anti-racist, anti-imperialist, class-conscious politics among tens of thousands of Boeing workers in a moving, personal way. These readers and sellers held their ground even when threatened by the union hacks—relying, as one said, "on the potential power of the working class."

There are many things we must do to build a communist base for the Party. Some are more important than others. We want to be more involved in class struggle and in the everyday lives of our co-workers. We want to make politics primary, but not just any politics. We want to put communist politics in command. Challenge networks and mobilizing these networks in the class struggle is central because political leadership is key.

Central does not necessarily mean first. At the risk of stating the obvious, making friends usually comes first. Friends are crucial, but it's hard to talk about a base for the Party without counting Challenge sales.

Selling our paper does not stand opposed to class struggle or base building. On the contrary, a large network, built by ones and twos, over a number of years, opens up possibilities to influence class struggle and sharpen our base building.

Further, building a base around our paper expands the potential for Party growth. A relatively high percentage of readers at any concentration creates a more favorable climate for recruitment. Our closest friends on the job see their co-workers debating communist ideas and analysis. Revolution becomes less abstract, more real.

As to permanently increasing sales, we have to be self-critical. We didn't spend enough time guaranteeing a larger network after the strike. Although many young comrades did help with the summer project, we didn't act fast enough to get them involved visiting and selling our paper during the strike. Nonetheless, the network grew a little,



probably in response to the morale boost that often accompanies class struggle. Can these young people help expand the network now?

The Boeing strike was led by pro-capitalist union leadership. As a result, the reform struggle took a particular form: a form we are all too familiar with. Not all reform struggles in industry will look like this given the expansion of non-union plants, but the political content of our job remains the same. The form of the class struggle has a lot to do with the nature of the historical period. Our job is to bring communist ideas into that class struggle whatever the period. Challenge networks are central to this task. The bigger and more robust these networks, the greater the potential for us to fulfill our mission.

Our successes were modest during the strike, but even work like this can't be pulled out of a hat. We've been at it a good number of years, with many ups and downs. Recently, we took a big hit when the company laid off 80% of our base and some of our comrades. Nevertheless, throughout it all and despite many weaknesses, we've sustained a Challenge network. Without it, we would have been sunk. Now we have a shot at rebuilding the network to the three-figure size it was before the layoffs.

### Hard Work; Modest Results

After all this, two additional friends attended some expanded party meetings we held every other week during the strike. One—the striker that brought up the problem of “fickle workers”—has begun to distribute the paper. A few others have attended party sponsored forums. More still, but not a huge number, have expressed interest in coming to other party events. All told, very modest progress!

Recruiting to the party is difficult in this period. Even our closest friends find it hard to see the possibility of revolutionary change. To be sure, our immediate base is older and change may come harder to this group. I suspect the problem is more widespread.

The comrade that liked “Jailbreak” is more optimistic. She is heartened by the wide circulation of communist literature and the mobilization of the Challenge network. She appreciates how quantity (of sales) turns into quality (recruits and close supporters), albeit not spontaneously. She understands that her fellow workers are struggling with contradictory ideas and hence resists the temptation to pigeon hole them.

The demise of the old communist movement has given ammunition to those who would mislead us to think everything revolves around immutable personalities. “You can't change human nature,” the ruling class tells us to justify their dog-eat-dog society. Making politics primary, on the other hand, shows us change is possible.

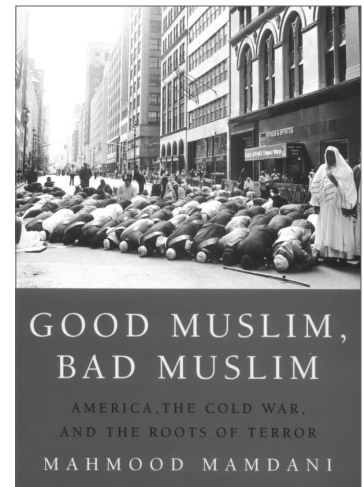
We saw a little of this during the strike. First came the communist politics contained in the pages of our newspaper, delivered week after week. Next came the collective struggle based on those politics in a month of intensified class struggle. The result: workers, who never thought they could lead, organized center-left meetings, distributed large amounts of left and openly communist literature, struggled with their fellow strikers and prepared for even bigger battles. In the course of these activities, their previously held ideas about human nature were challenged.

We are now holding a series of expanded party meetings to analyze the strike. We will focus on how societies and individuals change through internal contradictions. We'll talk about the limits imposed on us by the historical period and how those limits can change as well. We want to show how fighting for communist politics among our fellow workers can change everything. Central to this task is expanding and mobilizing our Challenge network for the inevitable class struggle ahead.



# REVIEW OF **GOOD MUSLIM, BAD MUSLIM: AMERICA, THE COLD WAR, AND THE ROOTS OF TERROR**

BY MAHMOOD MAMDANI  
PANTHEON BOOKS, NEW YORK, 2004



Let's start with a little quiz. Of the following countries — U.S., Britain, France, Russia, Germany, Japan, Italy, China, North Korea, Iran, Iraq, Cuba — which one's ruling class

- Was the first, and only, to use nuclear weapons against a civilian population?
- Committed the first "ethnic cleansing" (genocide) of the recent era?
- Organized and built al-Qaeda?
- Recruited Osama bin Laden to lead al-Qaeda?
- Organized the Taliban?
- Supplied and encouraged the use of chemical weapons in the Middle East?
- Trained those who bombed the World Trade Center?

*For the answers read on...*

## **Introduction**

Educated as a political scientist and anthropologist, Mahmood Mamdani is a Ugandan of (East) Indian descent. He now lives and teaches in New York City at Columbia University. He has written a number of books on the politics and history of various continents and countries. He is staunchly anti-imperialist and a thorough researcher.

His current book bears this out, though he denies that it contains any original research. Nevertheless it contains a rich factual history about events leading up to 9/11 and to the U.S. assault and occupation in Iraq that is extremely useful for the working class, and particularly for the Party.

This review begins with a description of the book and concludes with a criticism of its weaknesses.

## **The U.S. Government Is The Founder Of Modern Terrorism**

While many U.S. scholars habitually confound them, Mamdani draws a sharp and valid distinction between the political and religious aspects of

Islam. Political beliefs and actions, he points out, derive not from rigid, unchanging, age-old patterns of thought, as is claimed by U.S. ruling class think tanks and media, but rather from responses to current realities imposed in part from the outside. The prevailing U.S. outlook, subscribed to and spawned by the ruling class, is that terrorism, for example, derives from Muslim religious doctrine, unchanged for a millennium and a half. Mamdani, on the other hand, analyzes the modern day roots of terrorism in the world and finds it not in Muslim religious doctrine, or even in Muslim political movements, but rather squarely within U.S. Cold War policy. This is the main point of his book, as the subtitle suggests.

Furthermore, as he shows, it is not merely that the U.S. has set an example for terrorists with such notoriously criminal actions as the nuclear holocaust against Japanese civilians in Hiroshima and Nagasaki near the end of World War II or the napalming of millions of Vietnamese and the destruction with chemical warfare of the Southeast Asian jungles, as well as many other genocidal

activities that he lists. More directly the U.S. CIA actually trained and organized the current terrorist organizations like al-Qaeda and the Taliban, as part of its reaction to the 1980 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Figures such as Osama bin Laden were recruited by the CIA to build these as anti-Soviet organizations (p. 133).

More recently bin Laden, scion of a billionaire Saudi family, wants to loosen the U.S. ruling class's grip on Saudi oil and on the Saudi ruling family. His alliance with the Taliban was the pretext for Bush's attack on Afghanistan, but the attack had more to do with gaining control of oil pipelines from the Caspian region to the Indian Ocean for the U.S. ruling class.

So now the CIA-trained al-Qaeda and Taliban are aligned against their mentor, the U.S. government. Furthermore, because of the universally indiscriminate anti-working-class nature of terrorism, they are also aligned against the U.S. working class, as well as against the working class of many countries around the world, from Spain to Israel to Iraq and far beyond. The 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center towers and the Pentagon, popularly known as "9/11," grew directly out of U.S. Cold War policy.

To cover the crimes committed by the U.S. ruling class against the world's working class, the U.S. government, media, schools, and various cultural outlets continually foster the illusion that the U.S. occupies the moral high ground in the world. Mamdani's entire book is an attempt to dispel this illusion. He begins by pointing out that the very foundation of U.S. society rests firmly on two monumental historical crimes: "the first recorded genocide (or, in current terminology, 'ethnic cleansing') in modern history" against Native Americans, or Indians (p. 6), and 250 years of African slavery.

He also cuts through the illusion that Israel occupies a moral high ground by firmly placing the Israeli ruling class in the same category as its U.S. benefactor. It was, for example, the Israeli government that encouraged and aided Hamas during the first intifada (Palestinian uprising against oppression) seventeen years ago, only to face it as the leader of the second, current intifada (p. 121).

Mamdani describes the cooperation throughout the 1980s between the Reagan/Bush administrations and the Israeli ruling class in fomenting, encouraging, and supplying the rulers of Iraq and Iran so that they could carry on a deadly war against each other and hopefully (to the U.S. and Israeli ruling classes)

weaken and exhaust each other. Such an outcome would, it was hoped, allow the U.S. ruling class to fill the power vacuum as it saw fit. Israel supplied the Iranians and the U.S. the Iraqis with all sorts of weapons, including the very chemical weapons that the second Bush administration now uses as part of the excuse and cover to invade Iraq and seize control of its oil fields, the second largest known oil reserves in the world (pp. 111-112).

### **The Development Of Political Islam**

Mamdani contrasts the development of fundamentalist Christian political movements in the U.S. with those of political Islam. In the U.S. it was clergy such as Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson who developed political Christianity, while political Islam was mainly the work of non-clerical intellectual Muslims, of which five were the most influential: Muhammad Iqbal and Mohammed Ali Jinnah in colonial India, Abul A'la Mawdudi in post-colonial Pakistan, Sayyid Qutb in Egypt, and Ali Shariati in Iran (p. 47).

Incidentally, only Qutb was an Arab. According to various sources, Islam numbers over 1.2 billion members worldwide, the vast majority of whom are not Arabs. Yet the U.S. ruling class has managed to focus racism against Arab people by burying this distinction.

Mamdani attributes the development of radical political Islam to Mawdudi and Qutb. As the British were dividing Pakistan from India after World War II to better rule both, one as a Muslim state (Pakistan) and the other as a Hindu state (India), despite significant mixing in both, Mawdudi called for armed rebellion against such a political state division. He envisioned an Islamic ideological state rather than a political or geographical state, and called for the seizure of state power "to abolish the lordship of man over man and bring him under the rule of the one God."

Qutb, who suffered extreme oppression in Nasser's Egyptian jails and ultimately was executed, called for armed rebellion against such oppression, and for bringing in "democracy, or socialism, or communism." But both called for armed jihad against oppression, whether by Muslims or by others (pp. 53-56).

The word "jihad" has become a commonly heard term in the U.S. in recent years. It means effort or struggle. Islamic scholars distinguish between greater and lesser jihad, the former being a struggle within self against personal weaknesses, the latter being outwardly directed collective self defense.

Western scholars commonly and incorrectly relate jihad to “holy war” against unbelievers, taking their cue from the Medieval Christian crusades of the first several centuries of the last millennium. In contrast, says Mamdani, lesser jihad is rebellion against unjust rulers, whether Muslim or not, and is therefore not really “holy war” at all, but rather “just war” (p. 50).

In examining the various tendencies within Islam, Mamdani identifies four historically widespread jihads that preceded the Afghan jihad against the Soviet Union in the 1980s: a) in the 11th century against the First Crusade, led by the Kurd, Saladin, b) in the 17th century against the African slave trade and its participants, including the U.S. purchasers and the Islamic vendors, c) in the 18th century against the Ottoman (Turkish) rulers of the Arabian peninsula, led by Ibn Wahhab, the founder of Wahhabism, identified with the modern day Saudi ruling family, and d) in the 19th century against the Turkish and Egyptian rulers in the Sudan. Except for the first of these, the targets of these jihads included Muslim rulers, thus confirming that jihad is not a “holy war” against infidels (nonbelievers in Islam) (pp. 51-52).

When the attacks on the World Trade Center towers occurred, the Bush administration and the media were quick to present this “jihad,” not as a “just war” against oppressors, but rather as an act of jealousy or irrational hatred of freedom and everything good in the world. That is, it was presented as a religious action, rather than a political re-action.

Of course, al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden are anything but “just.” They merely use the Muslim working class’s need to put an end to its oppression at the hands of the U.S. ruling class as an excuse to attack and murder primarily U.S. workers. Indeed, as the son of a Saudi billionaire family, bin Laden’s desire is the same as that of all major capitalists in the world, to control the oil of the Middle East.

The key point is the reality of the Muslim working class’s just need to end oppression. And it has been the Muslim, and particularly Arab, working classes who were blamed for 9/11 by the Bush administration, by the media, and by the think tanks. Just as al-Qaeda and bin Laden use the Muslim working class for their own capitalist ends, the Bush administration and the U.S. ruling class use the U.S. working class’s justified anger to mobilize workers to fight for the ruling class’s control of oil in the name of a “war on terror.”

## **A Major Turning Point In The Cold War And The U.S. Recruitment Of Terrorists**

From his second chapter to the end of the book Mamdani identifies and discusses a major turning point in U.S. foreign policy with the Reagan administration’s turning away from the Cold War policy of containment in favor of a new policy of “rollback.” When the Soviet Union began to back rebellious forces against oppressive reactionary dictatorships in Africa, Latin America, and Asia, regardless of how reactionary the rebel leadership might be themselves, Reagan’s response was to attempt to roll back rebel victories in such countries as the Congo, Nicaragua, and Iran. He justified it on the grounds that these rebel governments were Soviet proxies and the main goal of the U.S. in the Cold War was to defeat the Soviet Union, as well as China. Thus the U.S. turned from counterinsurgency, such as the war in Vietnam, to rollback, i.e., from preventing non-ruling rebels from seizing power to overthrowing rebel governments who already had seized power.

In part this arose as an executive branch response to the Clark Amendment of 1976, in which Iowa’s Senator Dick Clark proposed and won passage of an amendment calling on the administration to refrain from direct war against popular organizations. Congressional passage of the Clark Amendment was in part an attempt to recover some of the U.S.’s prestige among the world’s working class that it had lost with the genocidal war in Vietnam.

The executive branch found its hands tied with this legislative branch amendment and turned to fighting wars secretly by funding and helping to organize proxy rebel groups as well as governments. Examples include Hmong tribesmen in Laos, Mobutu in the Congo, the contras in Nicaragua, and the apartheid government of South Africa in Angola. This indirect form of war was termed low intensity conflict (LIC).

Because of the Clark Amendment, the executive branch, in order to garner the funds to carry out such wars, could no longer turn to Congress for passage of funding bills. Instead it was driven to jump with both feet into the only other available source of billions of dollars, the international drug trade. Thus opium growth in Afghanistan and cocaine growth in Columbia, for example, became a source of money for the CIA.

So not only did the CIA train terrorist organizations to fight the Soviet Union and those groups and governments that the U.S. saw as Soviet proxies, but the CIA became the top drug dealer in

the world. Thus, adding to their other war crimes, the U.S. government criminally ruined the lives of millions of workers around the world, including workers in U.S. "inner cities".

The 1990s scandal over the Italian Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) centered on the revelation that the BCCI had laundered CIA drug money to hide the CIA's complicity in the international drug trade (pp. 146-149). The Iran-Contra scandal was another revelation that the Reagan administration was funding its war against the Sandinistas in Nicaragua through its own terrorist proxy, the Contras, by hidden deals with the U.S. ruling class's ostensible enemy, the Iranian ruling class (pp. 112-115).

Nor was BCCI the first bank found to be laundering money for the CIA's drug trade. While Mamdani doesn't mention it, the scandal surrounding the Nugan Hand Bank in Australia preceded the BCCI revelation by more than 10 years.

Jeanne Kirkpatrick, a member of Reagan's cabinet as ambassador to the U.N., distinguished between two types of repressive governments, left wing (which she called totalitarian) and right wing (called authoritarian). She arbitrarily proposed that authoritarian governments were capable of change and totalitarian governments were not. It followed that the proper U.S. approach to authoritarian right wing governments, such as South Africa's apartheid regime, was "constructive engagement" to urge them to change, while the proper approach to totalitarian left wing governments, such as Cuba's or Nicaragua's, was to overthrow them by any means necessary.

The latter phrase included, of course, genocidal bombings against civilian working class populations, such as the U.S. is doing today in Iraq. The U.S. war against the Iraqi people is a return to the pre-Reagan policy of direct U.S. war against a population. This policy had been rejected following the widespread opposition to the U.S. government's genocidal assault on Vietnam. The pendulum is swinging back.

The U.S. ruling class, government, and media have exhibited a consistent outrageous and criminal disregard for the life of civilians during the waging of war. They excuse themselves from fault with the phrase "collateral damage," as though the killing of hundreds of thousands of civilians among a population they claim to be liberating was not only unintended, but actually a surprise to them for which nothing more than an occasional apology need be offered. Mamdani shows how the

modern origins of such war criminality are rooted in racism. He refers to a book by Sven Lindqvist called *A History of Bombing*, a worthy subject for another review. Bombing, according to Lindqvist, "originated as a method of war considered fit for use only against uncivilized adversaries." The Italian armed forces were the first to drop a bomb from a plane in 1911 outside Tripoli in North Africa.

The first systematic bombing was by the British in Somalia in 1920. In World War II the Nazis observed the "laws of war" even less against Russian soldiers and civilians than against British and U.S. soldiers and civilians. While only 3.5% of British and U.S. prisoners of war died in Nazi captivity, 57% of Soviet prisoners died. Russians were the first to be gassed by the Nazis, paving the way for the extermination of European Jews. The Nazis planned to keep only a certain number of Russians alive to be used as slave labor (p. 7).

Mamdani's book consistently points the finger at the real criminals and, as such, is a partial antidote to the illusion that the U.S. government is the moral colossus of the world. Such illusory, if not delusional, mass doublethink is tantamount to regarding the Nazis as the keepers of the ethical keys, to be emulated by all humanity. Indeed, the very reason the U.S. government and media continue to ostentatiously vilify the Nazi holocaust is in part to mask their own criminality.

### **The Major Weaknesses Of The Book Derive from Mamdani's Theoretical Idealism**

The book is recommended reading for anyone who wants a deeper understanding of the various political tendencies within Islam and of the U.S. ruling class's responsibility for terrorism in the world today. However, at least as important, and perhaps even more important for the future, is that Mamdani is not a communist in action, or even a Marxist in ideology. Rather than having an historical dialectical materialist approach to his subjects, he is basically an idealist, even if not consistently so.

On the one hand, he explains political outlooks and actions of various Islamic movements as a reaction to the material reality of political oppression. On the other hand, he fails to relate the outlook and actions of the oppressive U.S. government to the material class relations of capitalism. He even calls on the U.S. government to change its oppressive ways (p. 260), though he does not distinguish between the government and the U.S. as a whole. In other words, he fails to see the class nature of the U.S. and, by extension, of capitalist societies in general.

Insofar as his approach is idealist Mamdani leaves the reader without material explanations for the beliefs and actions of the U.S. government. A materialist explanation starts with the class nature of U.S. imperialism. The U.S. consists of an exploitative and oppressive ruling class of capitalists and an exploited and oppressed working class, as well as potential allies of the working class among students, professionals, and intellectuals, based on their own exploitation and oppression. A materialist approach further relates the oppressive actions of the U.S. government to competition among capitalists.

The material roots of Mamdani's idealist beliefs lie within the prevailing capitalist ideology reinforced by the schools, think tanks, media, culture, churches, and every other part of the superstructure of capitalist society. To his credit, Mamdani argues against the many manifestations of capitalism. However, the absence of an historical/dialectical materialist (i.e., Marxist) view of the world weakens his contribution.

For example, he weakens his case by claiming that the reason the U.S. supports the Israeli ruling class lies in the affinity between two settler nations, who committed genocide against earlier occupants of the land — the U.S. against Native Americans and Israel against the Palestinians, working class and otherwise. Because of his idealism, he completely misses the practical reason for U.S. support of Israel: namely, as a proxy policeman within the Middle East, so that the U.S. can divide and conquer Arab ruling classes for control of as much oil as possible. Of course, the desire to control oil is also an idea and does not constitute a materialist explanation until we explain the source of this idea. Indeed, many bourgeois sources, including even the New York Times, will grant that the Gulf wars were and are a struggle for control of oil. The conclusion they do not draw is that the struggle for control of resources is a direct product of the capitalist/imperialist system in the U.S.

Mamdani fails to understand that the U.S. ruling class' drive to control oil is part of its imperialist goals of preventing competing ruling classes from having access to this source of industrial and military energy, thereby safeguarding its position as the ruling superpower of the world, economically, politically, and militarily. Once again, however, the statement is still subject to the criticism that the desire to rule the world is an idea still requiring an explanation based on material reality, i.e. facts.

Mamdani fails to analyze the fact that the

dynamics of capitalism requires that it grow and maximize profits regardless of the cost to the working class. The result is intense competition, life and death competition among capitalists organized into nation states absolutely requiring war, genocide, racism, sexism, and any other tools available to achieve global domination.

This is the materialist explanation of the phenomena so well described by Mamdani. The economic and social organization of capitalism, and particularly the competition among different capitalist enterprises that results from the need to grow and maximize profits, inexorably produces the world picture described by Mamdani. Capitalists have no option but to increase and maximize their profits. This is an absolute necessity born of the reality that any firm that fails to maximize its profits and grow will be put out of business by its competitors either within the same nation or abroad. It will cease to exist.

While capitalists struggle within a nation to protect themselves against each other, they also band together as a national class and utilize the state (government) both to protect themselves against foreign capitalists as well as against rebellions, strikes, and other forms of working class struggle to lessen exploitation and oppression. The nation states then vie with each other for colonies, markets, raw materials, and cheap labor. This competition on an international level is the essence of imperialism, which is the inevitable outcome on that level of the needs of all capitalists to maximize profits in the face of both domestic and international competition.

For a thorough discussion of the inherent dynamics of capitalism see the PLP pamphlet Political Economy: A Communist Critique of the Wage System – particularly Section II, "The Wage System and Commodity Production" and Section VI, "Imperialism, Crisis, and World War."

While the reader will not find this explanation in Mamdani's book, this is the underlying material reality of capitalism. As the PLP pamphlet explains in detail, the very survival of capitalist concerns (corporations, businesses, companies, etc.) requires this maximization of profits, from which all else, on up to genocide at the hands of the capitalist governments, follows. This is a materialist, rather than idealist, explanation because it does not depend on any capitalist's ideas or desires. Even if the directors of an exceptional capitalist firm might desire to serve the working class and "do good," acting on this

desire would render it helpless in the face of its competition. That is, the “good” firm would not be able to afford to stay in business long as its competitors grew in size and could afford, for example, to lower prices temporarily below what the “good” firm requires to keep going. Self preservation in the face of competition requires a willingness to do whatever is necessary to preserve self.

Not only the U.S. capitalists, but capitalists all over the world have the same needs and therefore goals. In today’s world the U.S. is in the strongest position to carry out those objectives. In fact, the U.S. has been the strongest imperialist state since World War II. It has become even more markedly so since the dissolution of the Soviet Union into nakedly capitalist, rather than ostensibly communist, states in the late 1980s. The U.S. ruling class’s supreme position among competing imperialists, of course, could change drastically in the coming decades, particularly with shifting alliances and uneven development among capitalist ruling classes.

The real needs of the U.S. working class, of the Muslim working class as a whole, and of the working class all over the world can only be satisfied by the overthrow of all capitalist exploiters and oppressors. Because the capitalists are protected by their various states (governments) through courts, police, and the military, this requires the international communist leadership of the PLP to unite the entire international working class around this goal and to lead the class warfare that can achieve it. Then and only then can the working class, under the leadership of its Party, organize an egalitarian society based on need rather than profit. Again see Political Economy: A Communist Critique of the Wage System, particularly Section VIII, “Communism.”

### Conclusion

Without a historical dialectical materialist outlook the working class and its potential allies will be severely limited in their ability to rid the world of capitalism. That requires understanding a) that ideas and ideologies derive not just from other ideas, but from material reality, consisting in the first instance of the form of social organization, b)

that the main aspect (contradiction in dialectical terminology) of the world today is world-wide capitalist-imperialist rivalry, c) that this rivalry consists of competition among capitalists and capitalist nation states and forces all of them to maximize profits to survive, and d) that capitalist survival means “by any means necessary,” including racism, sexism, and genocide, and e) that to maximize profits the capitalists must intensify the exploitation and oppression of the working class, further intensifying the class struggle that will ultimately smash the capitalist system itself.

Without appreciating these relationships the working class and its potential allies will remain trapped in an endless series of reforms and wars – trapped in the deadly illusion that the capitalist state (government) shares with them a common morality and can be appealed to, or forced by popular demand, to bend to the will of the working class.

Capitalists don’t merely want to murder, and indeed some may not, but for their very survival as capitalists they must be willing and able to murder, or have others do it for them. Since they rarely kill directly, they have their state either hire mercenaries or recruit the working class as proxies to do it for them. Therefore they must fool the working class with such ploys as patriotism, racism against workers of other countries, and the macho competitive desire to win at all costs. Since idealist anti-imperialists like Mamdani, valuable as their contributions may be, do not yet recognize this materialist reality, members of the working class, for our own survival, must learn it from Challenge-Desafio and the PLP.



# THE WONDERFUL CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

By Carl Wüsthoff

In 1910, when I was a child, there were still dukes and barons and a grand duke in Mecklenburg. The farmhands, hired men and farm workers didn't have any rights.

My parents were hired hands on Gramelow, a big manor. But my mother was a good housekeeper, so we were not by any means the poorest people in the village. On holidays there was always something special on the dinner table and under the Christmas tree.

But in the Fall of 1910 a pig had died, and we had more worries than we had causes for joy. There weren't a lot of provisions in the house for the Christmas celebration.

One evening, my father was sitting with a piece of paper in front of him, writing down what mother dictated.

So much for gingersnaps. So much for Christmas cookies. So much for sweetbread. Everything for the Christmas celebration.

We children weren't concerned by our parents' worries. If there weren't any gingersnaps, then there weren't any, and that was all. We weren't spoiled. We took things as they came, day by day and season after season, licking our plates clean no matter what was put on them.

Now my father was saying, "Come here, my son, and listen carefully." The next morning, before sunrise, I was to set out for Stargard, the closest town, and buy the things that he had written down on the list.

That frightened me. I looked at father with fear in my eyes. Now, in winter, with the snow piled high, I was to go to the far-off town. Father noticed my fear. He stood me between his knees and talked so much courage into me that my fear disappeared. I whispered to myself before falling asleep: "Don't stand around in the road. Don't sit down in the snow. Give Jakob the merchant the list. Buy two sweet rolls for strength to resist the cold."

At noon I was to go to the carpenter who had often visited us. My father had written a separate note for the carpenter, who would also give me a

little package. I was to put that in my bag, too, and then come home.

I had been trudging through the snow for an hour. It had grown light, and the blanket of snow sparkled like a mirror. The snow on the road was undisturbed. As I entered the forest, I thought of little Red Riding Hood and the wolf. Then I heard sleigh bells and I really did see the wolf.

The Count's coachman, whose name was Wolf.

He was coming down the road with the two chestnut horses pulling the sleigh. I got off the road. The sleigh rushed past me.

The Count was sitting in the sleigh behind Wolf.

A hundred yards father on the sleigh stopped.

Wolf, who was sitting up on the coachman's seat, turned around and called to me: "Come along, and hurry up."

My heart leapt to my throat. Father had said I was not to speak to anyone.

But coachman Wolf! I knew him, after all. His daughter sat next to me in school. And after all, the Count was sitting in the sleigh as well. Yes, yes, the Count was there, too.

"So, where are you going?" the Count asked. "Has your father sent you out in this cold weather?"

He turned back the thick fur blanket and said "Get in."

I was so frightened I forgot to say: "Thank you, my gracious lord."

Before I knew what I was doing, I had sat down right next to the "gracious lord," who was feared by us children.

It was splendid dashing through the snow with the crack of the whip and the tinkle of the sleigh bells. The Count asked me in a very fatherly way why I was going to town in such weather.

I had collected my thoughts by then and I freely told him that it was for the gingersnaps, because the pig had died, and that father had written everything down for me.

Then he wanted to take a look at the list.

I gave him the list, and also the note for the carpenter.

When he had the little note for carpenter in his hand, he ordered Wolf to stop the sleigh.

He wanted Wolf to read the little note to him.



Wolf checked the horses, pulled off his thick gloves, and read.

“Dear Emil,” my father wrote, “Can you give my son the thick book by August Bebel? I’d like to read in it over Christmas. Newspapers too, if you have any. Best thanks in advance. Ernst.”

Wolf and the Count looked at one another.

“I could tell your lordship a bit more about that,” Wolf said.

“Later, in town. Drive on!” said the Count.

The sleigh rushed on through the white forest, and I was happy to be sitting next to the Count and that he was speaking kindly to me.

When I got back to the village, I would tell everyone how nice he had been to me.

Once we had arrived in town, I went to Jakob, handed him the list over the sales counter, packed the things in my bag and then strolled through the streets, observing town life.

There were lots and lots of sleighs. Each one more magnificent than the other. A particularly magnificent one came by. Four glistening black horses. Each horse had a bell that sounded a different note. That was Baron von Schomburg. He drove his sleigh himself. People hurried to put themselves out of reach of his whip. It was well known that he snapped his whip at anyone he could reach.

Four black horses. Each horse with a bell that sounded a different note. What music!

I couldn’t see and hear enough.

And then there were the shop windows with the Christmas displays.

Oh, there was so much to see and hear in town.

But it was cold, too. You could see your breath hanging in the air.

I hurried over to the carpenter’s.

There, they praised me and saw to me. I was allowed to eat lunch with them, and the carpenter prepared the package and tied up my bag with cord, and they sent me off with best wishes and warm greetings to everyone at home.

Wolf had ordered me to return to the Hotel Grand Duke when I had finished my errands.

He was standing in the hotel door as I approached, and said, “Give me your packages. The Count isn’t ready yet. The two of us are going to go to a shop. You’re to choose a Christmas

present for yourself. The Count wants to give you a present.”

He took my bag and laid it in the sleigh.

I looked in bewilderment at Wolf.

“Yes, yes,” he said, “The Count wants to give you something for Christmas. Come on, come on. You’re to choose something for yourself.”

Oh, how grateful I felt!

The Count wanted to give me something. Wolf went into a shop with me.

Oh, all the wonderful things that were on the shelves! A train set, herds of sheep and pigs and cattle. With the shepherd and his dog. Dolls with glass eyes and real hair.

“Choose something for yourself,” Wolf ordered.

Shy and overwhelmed with all the beautiful things, I chose the doll with hair. My sister just had a rag doll. Its eyes were old pillowcase buttons and it had tow for hair.

The people in the shop laughed at me, but I was so elated at the big doll that I didn’t even think of choosing a present for a boy.

Then we had to hurry back to the hotel.

The Count allowed the hotel servants to pack him snugly in his sleigh. When I wanted to thank him for the gift, he said, “Go on, go on, get up on the seat with Wolf.”

He was all red in the face and spat over the edge of the sleigh. “Let’s go, Wolf, let’s go,” he shouted, and drummed with his fists on the leather cover and sang the song about the blue dragoons.

The sleigh sped over the snow. The sleigh bells tinkled. Wolf only spoke to the horses: “Giddy up there, giddy up,” when they no longer wanted to trot.

The Count seemed to be asleep.

I was thinking that we would arrive in the village when it would still be daylight. The other children would certainly still be sledding on the Pumpenberg, and they would see me getting down from the Count’s sleigh. Surely, none of them had ever ridden with the Count in his sleigh.

It was like in a fairy tale. In fairy tales, the poor were often treated by kings as I had been treated today.

Now Wolf was stopping the sleigh. “Get down,” was all he said. And then he drove on before I could say thank you.

Although my schoolmates were calling to me, I ran home as fast as I could. What would my mother say to the doll! And to the two sweet rolls, which I also had in my bag, and to my having ridden in the sleigh with the Count.

Mother was very happy with the doll. She was happy with everything I had done and said: "Fine, fine, you've done splendidly."

When father came home, she showed him the doll. Father listened to the story and said: "Who ever heard of such a thing?"

But he went straight for the newspapers. He put the book under his pillow.

It was a happy evening. Mother stirred the gingerbread batter, and we got to lick the spoon.

Completely worn out from all the day's impressions, I quickly fell asleep.

The next day was Christmas Eve.

Mother and my sister were already bustling about the kitchen and out in the stall when I awoke. The first thing I did was to think back on the town. The Count and coachman Wolf. The four black horses and wonderful sound of the bells.

And I would be a carpenter when I grew up. With baggy pants and a broad hat. With a ruler and a pencil in the little pocket on the right pants leg.

And now, out into the street. To tell the other boys about everything that had happened with the Count. The bigger boys scoffed at me. They asked if I hadn't noticed that his gracious lordship was stewed. That he had spat all over the leather cover.

I retorted and defended the gracious Count. He had sung "The Blue Dragoons" and had drummed on the leather cover. And they were just jealous that they hadn't been taken along. Basta.

In the afternoon the house was filled with Christmas spirit. Mother was happy that she had been able to prepare a proper Christmas celebration.

As it grew dark, we were washed and combed, and dressed in our Sunday best. Father would come home an hour early from work. The men also had to be present at the presentation of gifts.

The manor house was all lit up on Christmas Eve. At the presentation of gifts, the Countess stood in the middle of the great hall by the Christmas tree.

The children of the village lined up along the left-hand wall, and the adults along the right-hand

wall. When the schoolteacher raised his baton, everyone sang a Christmas carol. Then the head shepherd gave a speech. About the Christ child, God, and how very good the Count and his wife were.

Then every child got a present. Either an apple or some Christmas pastry. Go up to her on the left-hand side and say thank you using the words "May God reward you, your ladyship." The adults didn't get a present. They had to kiss her hand.

Every year she wore new gloves that went all the way up to the elbow. Sometimes black ones, sometimes white ones, sometimes red ones. The Count never came to the celebration.

We sat in the room and waited for father. It was high time for him to come home if we were not to be late for the presentation of gifts.

Now we heard his steps.

When he entered the room, mother cried out.

How father looked! He was bleeding from his mouth and nose. He had black and blue weals across his face. His left hand was cut, his cap was gone, and his jacket was torn.

We children cried out, too. Then we rushed up to him.

He pushed us to one side and walked up and down the room. Then he wiped the blood from his face and sat down. We thought something must have happened with the team of horses that he drove. An accident.

Mother was already sitting next to him and trying to stop the blood. She tried to find out how the accident had happened.

We sat quietly in the corner by the stove and stared at father. We had never seen him like this before.

The right front horse was a devil, mother said. And this had to happen on today of all days, on Christmas Eve. She tried to put father to rights.

"Come," she said, "I'll wash you up quickly, otherwise we'll arrive at the manor house too late."

She rustled briskly and lovingly about father. Talking and cleaning.

And then father smiled.

And then the smile became a laugh. He pounded his fist on the table and roared with laughter.

At the same time he looked at us and there

was something dreadful about him. His wounded face and the laughter on top of that.

"It's just exactly like they say in Emil's newspaper, it's exactly the same," he said. And the blood was still dripping from his nose. "Red bastard," is what he called me. From now on I'll be one! He can count on that. The fine Count. He took the boy with him yesterday in order to pump him for information. He opened the package and snooped into everything. The lickspittle Wolf had to go into town with the boy, and the doll is his "sin gift." He was well informed. The fine Count. When I brought my team to the manger, he was standing there. He shouted at me. I was a red bastard. A Socialist. A criminal who had to be driven from the manor like a mangy dog. Fired on the spot. Get OUT!

I didn't remain quiet. I didn't beg.

Then he called the coachman and the servants. They were already standing at the ready. They fell upon me with riding whips and horse whips.

"Come here, my son, and look at your father. Fix this in your memory. This happened on Christmas Eve, while they're getting ready to sing about peace on earth. Never believe what the bosses and their lickspittles say."

It was totally silent in the room.

Mother stood in the middle of the room. Her had her hands on her hips and she was breathing loudly.

Her eyes were very bright.

She went to the drawer, got out the marches, and began lighting the candles on the Christmas

tree. Then she went to the cupboard and got out the Christmas presents. When she got to the doll, she hesitated and said: "I won't put this sin gift in my daughter's hands. I'll sell it. With the money I get, the two of us will pay the dues to join Emil's party. You and I. And we're going to move into town. We're not going to be part of the slavery on the farms any longer."

As she said that, she looked into father's eyes and took his hand.

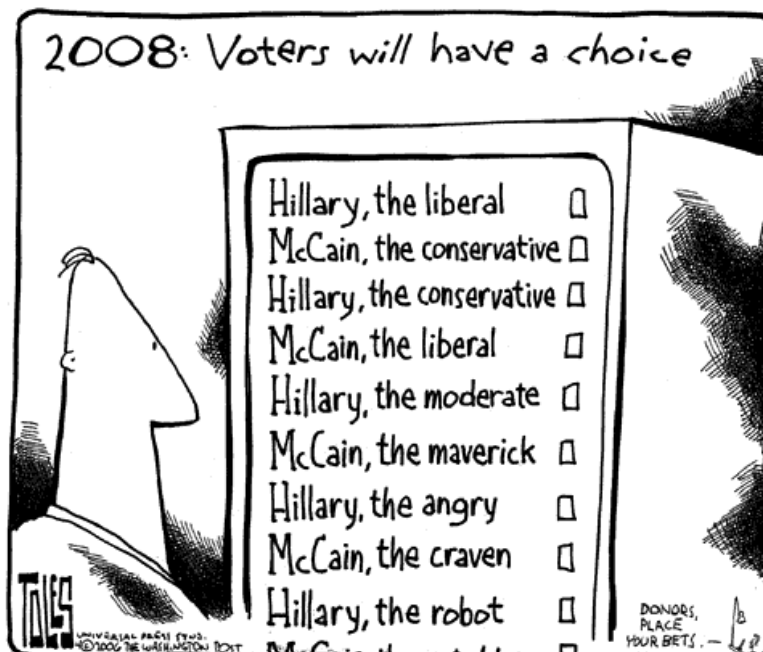
It was a very peculiar Christmas Eve, with father and mother standing before the flickering candles on the Christmas tree and swearing to each other that they would join Emil's party.

The following day mother marched away. To Emil's, of course.

She returned on the second day of Christmas. She had found a home for us. And work for father, too. The carpenters had seen to that. When the coal merchant came on New Year's Eve to haul our things away, several hired men came to say goodbye. The journeyman cartwright, who had bought the doll from my mother, said "Now I know the whole story concerning the doll. And now I want to give it back to you, as a present." And he gave it to my sister.

My mother made a red dress for the doll. In stood on the little cabinet in our house for many years. Every time someone came to visit, we talked about the doll.

Most of the visitors who came to our house were also "red bastards" like my father and my mother.



# PRELUDE TO SPANISH CIVIL WAR: THE ASTURIAN MINERS INSURRECTION

July 18 marked the 70th anniversary of the fascist uprising begun by Franco and other generals against Spain's Republican government. The Spanish Civil War was the first harbinger in Europe of World War II (along with Mussolini's invasion of Ethiopia and the Japanese fascist's attack on Manchuria in the early 1930's).

Even though Spain was a weak capitalist country, its banking system was very strong (as it is now). And the banks extended its capital to all branches of production. Spain's colonies in Africa and its neutrality during World War I helped create huge financial institutions like Hispano Americano Bank, Bank Vizcaya and Bank Bilbao. The merging of finance capital with the landed aristocracy created a financial oligarchy, turning Spain into a small imperialist country (so labeled by Spain's Communist Party in the 1920's and '30's).

But this capitalist development also sparked a very militant and class-conscious working class. In Oct. 1934, the fascist CEDA party entered the government. CEDA didn't hide its sympathy for the Nazis. It was widely expected that CEDA would follow Hitler's example in using parliament to introduce an authoritarian regime. But many Spanish workers were determined not to fall prey to the disaster that had divided the German labor movement.

Following the heroic February 1934 uprising of Austrian workers in Vienna, in a vain attempt to stop the semi-fascist Dollfuss from entering the that government, the watchword of Spanish anti-fascists had become "Better Vienna than Berlin." Nowhere was the radicalization of the Spanish workers movement clearer than in the ranks of the Socialist Party (PSOE). Under rank-and-file pressure, its strategy of reformist gradualism was being replaced by calls for revolution.

A general strike was called. In Asturias, in northern Spain, miners rose in armed insurrection and formed militias which laid siege to most of the province's Civil Guard (police) posts. In the mining town of Mieres, the Provincial Revolutionary Committee announced to a wildly enthusiastic crowd the founding of the Socialist Republic.

The local Workers' Alliance Committees organized every aspect of life, from food distribution and hospitals to transport and communications. A makeshift war industry was rapidly established. Factories began to turn out armored vehicles, weapons and ammunition. The workers even produced a benzol substitute for petrol, made from coal. "Red Guards" were organized to ensure revolutionary order, looters were strictly dealt

with and well-known right-wingers were arrested.

Women were heavily involved at all levels, many joining the militias. The miners had few arms and relied on those captured from government forces or arms factories; they suffered from a chronic shortage of ammunition. The insurrection's principal weapon was dynamite; its adept use enabled the miners to inflict humiliating defeats on the opposing army.

In the mountain passes, giant catapults hurled the dynamite at the enemy. In the cities, the dynamiters crept forward while smoking cigars, using them to light hand-held explosive sticks. Once the mining areas had been secured, a column of 1,000 militias was sent to seize the provincial capital of Oviedo. Here, where the local party and union bureaucracy was more dominant, the workers had been slow to rise, but the miners' arrival established revolutionary power in the city's streets. The government forces were quickly driven into a few isolated strongholds.

Meanwhile, troops sent from the capital in Madrid to deal with the rebels met stiff resistance in the region's southern mountain passes. Several hundred miners, armed mainly with dynamite, pinned down one such government force for 12 days. However, the Asturian Commune remained isolated. Much of the Socialist leaders' new-found militancy was only hot air.

Elsewhere in Spain the general strike soon collapsed due to the passivity of the PSOE leadership and the lack of anarchist union federation support. Only in Catalonia, under revolutionary socialist influence, did the strike begin to take on insurrectionary proportions before being undermined by the half-heartedness of the left nationalists and anarchists.

Such was the optimism of the Asturian workers that news of the failure of the movement elsewhere in Spain was dismissed as government lies. After ten days of desperate resistance, gradually the enemy forces pushed back the 20,000 militias. The government soon decided to smash the movement at all costs. Franco's advancing troops, who had experience crushing colonial revolts in Northern Africa, used prisoners to form human shields and bombed food lines. On October 18, after protracted negotiations, the revolutionaries surrendered. Many workers refused to hand over their arms, either hiding them or fleeing to the mountains to begin a guerrilla struggle.

*For a complete analysis of the Spanish Civil War and a critique of the anti-fascist People's Front that ruled from 1936-39 (which included the CP), read [http://www.plp.org/pl\\_magazine/pws.html](http://www.plp.org/pl_magazine/pws.html)*

# BLACK CAPITALISM WON'T END RACISM

WASHINGTON, D.C., Oct. 15, 2005 — Today PLP greeted thousands of participants in the Millions More Movement (MMM) rally on the mall here with the message that only building a mass revolutionary communist movement will answer the attacks on workers by the racist capitalist system (such as the bosses' response to Hurricane Katrina). Four thousand leaflets were distributed along with 1,000 CHALLENGES. Its lead article showed the crucial role industrial workers play in the leadership of social movements, providing the power to advance the interests of the entire working class and its allies. We were able to spread our communist politics during a PLP bullhorn rally held on the edge of the MMM rally during the afternoon speeches.

The contrast between the MMM and anti-Nazi rebellion which took place the same day when the fascists tried to march in a black neighborhood of Toledo, Ohio, is illuminating. At the MMM, sponsored primarily by the Nation of Islam (NOI), tens of thousands of black workers, students and professionals heard Louis Farrakhan, Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton propose a ten-point conservative black nationalist reform program that stresses building black businesses. It relies on self-help activities, resembling the tradition of Booker T. Washington who, at the end of the 19th century, encouraged such "self-help" and discouraged any activities challenging the bosses. Most MMM rally participants we spoke to showed little interest in these proposals, and were much more interested in PLP's strategy: building a revolutionary movement to destroy capitalism and its government, and replacing it with an anti-racist workers' state. They were also attracted to PLP's militant local anti-racist campaigns — against racist police brutality, the AIDS epidemic, relief and support of Katrina evacuees, the struggle against the racist reconstruction plans for New Orleans and on-the-job fights against the bosses.

The NOI attempted to stifle such discussions and our rally by calling the cops, who insisted we move or be arrested. So we moved — across the street! — and continued the rally and discussions.

Ever since the 1972 Gary Conference, black nationalist strategies for black progress have

been exposed as incapable of meeting the needs of black workers. The MMM simply continued this dead-end approach, which at best will help a handful of African Americans to become wealthier on the backs of the working class.

The choice is clear: revolutionary mass action against racist capitalism, or following capitalist politicians to our doom. Choose life and join the PLP!



# BLACK NATIONALISM: BANKRUPT STRATEGY BUT WITH STRONG APPEAL

## —FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM TO END RACISM INSTEAD!

### THE MILLIONS MORE MOVEMENT (3M) PROGRAM: DESIGNED TO FAIL

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In October, 2005, a broad array of black leaders organized a 10th anniversary march to commemorate the historic Million Man March (MMM) of 1995. At that latter event, over 1 million participants came to the mall in Washington, DC, and heard Louis Farrakhan, leader of the Nation of Islam, tell black men to atone for their misdeeds and to move forward in a responsible manner for the future. While many recalled this event as a great act of racial solidarity and uplift, it led to few concrete improvements, even at the reform level, for African Americans, and was a source of considerable controversy. At the 1995 Howard University Conference entitled, "Race and Inequity" shortly before the march, supporters and critics of the march almost came to blows over the political direction of the MMM.

The organizers of the Millions More Movement (3M) coalition which organized the 10th anniversary march consciously injected more reform politics into the event to attempt to provide some post-march political direction. The organizers issued a 10-point program which was much more political than the simple atonement theme of the earlier march, but

which nevertheless represents a failed, misleading strategy for black progress in the midst of capitalist America. It is reminiscent of the goals of the failed Gary Black Political Convention in 1972, as well as of the 1966 Black Panther Party program.

Thus far, there has been no discernible ongoing movement launched by this march, just as happened after the MMM. Still, it is still useful to critique the elements of the program because these elements appeal to many youth who are just becoming politically conscious and are influenced by nationalist impulses. The goals and ideas of the 10 point program will appear again and again as the bourgeoisie continues its efforts to blunt class consciousness and prevent serious revolutionary unity under communist leadership to emerge, both by using violence and direct attacks and by sponsoring misleading nationalist and reformist leaderships.

Here is the program, with a critique of each of its 10 points following each point.

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## THE TEN POINT PROGRAM OF THE MILLIONS MORE MOVEMENT AND A CRITIQUE

### 1. UNITY

*We call, first, for the unity amongst Black peoples and organizations. We call for unity amongst all African peoples and peoples of African descent worldwide. We call for unity with our Brown, Red, disenfranchised and oppressed Brothers and Sisters in America, Caribbean, Central and South America, Asia and all over the world. "The Power of One" is the synthesis of men, women, youth and elders working in unity for our total liberation.*

The 3M calls for the wrong unity, attempting to bring together all classes and organizations of black and other peoples of color. Black capitalists,

politicians, entertainers, and professional athletes who have a big stake in capitalism are enemies of the working class, and will mislead such a united group into the arms of the bourgeoisie. Instead, the PLP calls for the total unity of the working class—red, yellow, brown, black and white, male and female, oppressed as they are by every ruling class in the world, to unite against fascism, imperialism and racism, which are integral elements of the ultimately oppressive system of capitalism. Class interests in building unity against capitalism, not racial or gender identity, must be primary, with aggressive anti-racism and anti-sexism a leading edge of this class interest. Class, based on our relationship to the means of production, is what

brings us together objectively; class consciousness of our common need for communism is what brings us together consciously. Racial and ethnic identity categories are created by capitalism and its national entities, and reinforced daily by the ruling class which seeks to perpetuate our divisions. Not just black people, or African people, but all working class people must unite to smash capitalism.

## 2. SPIRITUAL VALUES

*We call for Atonement, Reconciliation and Responsibility. We organize in the name of our God (The One Creator) and on sound ethical, moral principles and values. Our Movement affirms the rich legacy and diversity of our spiritual traditions and calls for unity and understanding among our religious faiths and spiritual traditions.*

Wrong again. The working class has nothing to atone for, should never reconcile with the capitalists of any "race," and is responsible for making revolution and liberating all of humanity. We organize in the objective interests of the international working class, not on the basis of religious principles. Religious principles, while often appealing, are essentially arbitrary because they are based on unprovable and untestable belief systems which function in today's world as extensions of capitalist ideology and hegemony. Religion often tries to justify to our class the trials and tribulations we suffer everyday due to capitalist exploitation. These trials are not an extension of some devil or spirit, but a system of devils, THE DEVILISH RULING CLASS, hell bent on exploiting and raping workers for every drop of blood from the Mississippi gulf to the Persian Gulf.

We struggle for a society where workers throw off the yoke of religion and philosophical idealism of all forms and study the scientific development of society. Only the science of dialectical and historical materialism (the material development of society and culture) can fully explain why workers suffer all over the world; this scientific approach leads us to formulate a clear and ultimately successful strategy for our liberation from racism and capitalism.

People of diverse faiths may very well join the communist movement because their beliefs intersect with ours, and we strongly encourage this, but their faith will hinder their full development as scientific revolutionaries.

## 3. EDUCATION

*We demand an end to substandard education in our community. The Millions More Movement advocates, and will develop, a new, independent educational paradigm for our people. We must have knowledge of self, our history, and the best education in civilized society. We will build a skills bank, the talent of which will be used in the development of our people.*

The "our people" referred to in this plank refers back to Point 1, unifying people of color world wide, including its rich and poor, its exploiters and exploited. "Our people" should be the international working class, those whose labor and lives are exploited by a ruling class, and should exclude all exploiters and parasites. Substandard education is the rule for the majority of black people in the U.S., but the rest of the population also often suffers from the same "substandard" education. Even the "better" schools in rich suburban areas are destructive through their promulgation of individualist, competitive, inaccurate and biased bourgeois ideology. Most working class people suffer throughout the public school system, a system that is used as a recruiting station for prison and the military.

But should we abandon the public schools as venues for struggle in setting up an "independent educational paradigm for our people"? No! We must struggle within the public school system to demand more resources, challenge the curriculum with its focus on fascist ruling class history and mindless rote discipline, and turn these schools into training grounds for working class revolutionaries as part of the general revolutionary struggle.

Building an independent black school outside of the public schools does not challenge the capitalist system. It validates identity politics, weakens the unity of the working class, and runs counter to building the multi-racial class unity needed to win power in teachers' unions, the PTA's, and every parent/teacher organization within the public school system. Our class is already inside the capitalist school system. We must fight to transform this class "within the fascist school system" into fighters "against the fascist school system". There is no refuge "outside the system" because there is no "outside the system"!

#### 4. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

*We will establish a Black Economic Development Fund, with the support of millions, to aid in building an economic infrastructure. We will also offer housing ownership opportunities to check the adverse tide of gentrification. The Millions More Movement will produce and distribute its own products and supports "Buy Black" campaigns.*

Capitalism, the exploitation of the working class through its wage system, cops, courts and military, will never be fair or just merely by putting on a black face. Colin Powell as the Secretary of State did not make the Capitalist system just; he was, however, willingly used to justify the occupation of Iraq and the killing of thousands of workers both in Iraq and in America. Black economic development has proven to be simply more capitalist exploitative development wherever it has succeeded on its own terms.

Gentrification, the process of bringing in those with money and resources at the expense of poor residents, will not be just if black upper middle class people push out the black working class. The issue is class and living in a system based on capital.

Poor, impoverished workers are a permanent feature of capitalism. "Buying Black" will not liberate the black working class but enrich a select few blacks to become members of the propertied ruling class and assimilate ruling class values against their poorer so-called black brothers and sisters. Since the Civil Rights Movement, we have seen more black businesses and yet blacks are the poorest in the country with 24% living under the poverty line. Why? Capitalism. The solution is multi-racial unity to smash class exploitation, not building up a black economy on capitalist principles.

#### 5. POLITICAL POWER

*The Millions More Movement is the political voice of the poor and disenfranchised. We are resolved to take an independent political path in order to achieve political power. The Millions More Movement will be an organized political force of consequence in America and all over the world.*

While claiming to be the political voice of the

poor and disenfranchised in point 5, the 3M has already indicated that it seeks to serve rich black people as well as poor, and to promote black capitalism through Buy Black campaigns. Thus, it is the political voice of a segment of the black bourgeoisie, cynically attempting to use nationalist feeling to gain leadership of poor working class blacks. The only independent political path for working class people is to build the Progressive Labor Party which is independent of the economic/political system of capitalism and relies on the working class and its allies to make revolution against capitalism.

Building an independent electoral political party within the current order validates the system and seeks to reform it with the illusion of making it work for black people. This attempt was tried with the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party in 1964 which challenged the all-white-male Democratic Party. The result was a Democratic Party in Mississippi with large numbers of blacks which now, over forty years later, validates the current order with racists Trent Lott as senator and Haley Barbour as governor. Mississippi remains one of the poorest states in the country and was the last state to ratify the 13th Amendment to the constitution abolishing slavery in 1995.<sup>1</sup>

Building an independent political party within the current order was also tried in 1965 in Lowndes County Alabama with the Lowndes County Freedom Organization with a black panther for its symbol. The result was a black man, Huett Long, being elected Sheriff in 1970 and arresting Imam Jamil El-Amin (formerly H. Rap Brown) in 1999 for supposedly killing a cop. The irony is Rap Brown was one of the original organizers of the Lowndes Country Freedom organization! You may think that you can change the system by getting position in the system, but the system actually changes you. It must be destroyed and replaced with a new system of communism.

This independent political movement was tried once again in Gary Indiana in 1972 at the calling of black politicians, black nationalist organizations and black labor leaders such as former Detroit Mayor Coleman Young. The keynote address at this convention in 1972 was given by a young Jesse Jackson who brought the crowd to its feet with the call of "It's Nation Time". The result was Jesse Jackson running for President in the 1980s

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<sup>1</sup>The Amendment was first ratified in 1868 by 27 states. The recent purely symbolic resolution in which the Senate chided itself for not having opposed lynching in the 20th century passed the Senate with only 80 votes. Not only did Mississippi Senators not vote for it, they were not even present for the resolution!



as a Democrat and leading black workers down the dead end road of electoral politics and entrenching them deeper within this racist decadent system. Jesse Jackson is now a Democratic Party operative whose son, Jesse Jr., is a typical congressman while his son Yusef is a Wall Street banker.

The only independent political movement for black workers and all workers is to build a movement to smash capitalism and build a system run of, for and by all workers.

## 6. REPARATIONS

*We demand full and complete Reparations for the descendants of slaves. We demand that America take the appropriate steps to help in the repair of the damage done from 300 years of slavery, 100 years of segregation, and 50 years of the misuse and abuse of governmental power to destroy Black organizations and leaders.*

The tortuous trans-Atlantic slave trade, the barbaric chattel slavery system, followed by the virtual slavery of share cropping, Jim Crow, lynching, and today's continued racism, dealt and deals horrible psychological, political, and economic damage to black workers. Slavery and its sequels set the stage for what the U.S. observed dramatically in New Orleans—grinding racist poverty and neglect verging on genocide.

However, these economic and psychological damages are not limited to black workers, but affect the working class as a whole. Racism, the super-exploitation of black and Latino workers plus the ruling class ideology to support it, hurts all workers. It falsely blames blacks and Latinos for the problems of poor white workers. Racism within the capitalist framework falsely blames white workers for the problems of blacks. Racism hurts the wages and basic necessities needed for survival for all workers as bosses use divide and conquer tactics such as nationalism to divide workers and keep them from uniting against their true enemy- the bosses.

As documented by the Counter Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO) of the FBI during the 1960's, much was done to destroy black leaders and organizations. However, this destruction was not limited to black leaders and organizations but extended to any and all who would dare challenge the American ruling class during the height of the Vietnam War. Anti-Vietnam protestors, American Indian organizations, anti-war veterans groups, women's groups, and revolutionary groups that fight

capitalism, particularly the Progressive Labor Party, were targeted. This targeting of anti-oppression groups did not start in the 1960's but dates as far back as the Palmer Raids in 1919 and goes back to the targeting of anti capitalist fighters such as the Haymarket Martyrs of 1886. The government has a long history of targeting and attempting to destroy anti-oppression movements. This targeting is not limited to blacks but affects anyone who dares to challenge the capitalist system. We are reminded that the Haymarket martyrs of 1886, Sacco and Vanzetti of 1927 and the Rosenbergs of the 1950's were not black but were falsely accused and executed by this government for being fighters for the working class.

Racism prevents most Americans from knowing that Kentucky has the largest percentage of Americans under the age of 26 with less than a ninth-grade education or that West Virginia has the nation's largest lowest median household income. Kentucky and West Virginia are majority White states where black and Latinos are not in large number. The only way to truly repair the damage done to all workers as a result of racism is to smash racism and the construct of race. The only way to smash the construct of race is to destroy the system that created it--capitalism!

Reparations for slavery, called for by the 3M, can never create equality under capitalism. Reparations are inadequate to solve the historic and ongoing challenges of capitalism's racism. Only the thorough destruction of capitalism through revolution will allow us to establish communism and systematically repair the damages inflicted by capitalism on the working class, and rapidly bring all workers to equal condition and quality of life.

## 7. PRISON INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

*We demand freedom for all political prisoners held in U.S. prisons and detention facilities, both foreign and domestic. We demand an end to police brutality, mob attacks, racial profiling, the herding of our young men and women into prisons and the biological and chemical warfare perpetrated against our people.*

Within capitalism, every incarcerated prisoner is a political prisoner because of the fundamental injustice of the system<sup>2</sup>. All incarcerated prisoners in the U.S. are victims of the capitalist system whether or not they engaged in direct and conscious political activity against the capitalist state. The U.S. has the

largest number of incarcerated prisoners in the world numbering over 2 million and disproportionately black and Latino. Disproportionate numbers of these incarcerated prisoners are imprisoned for low level drug activity or drug usage due to the racist Rockefeller drug laws which ensures a large group of low-wage prison labor that can be used to replace workers in the private and public sector. The psychological trauma and problems endured by these incarcerated prisoners is a direct result of living in a society where men and women do not have a right to the basic necessities of life. We stress “incarcerated prisoners” because all workers within capitalism are prisoners to the wage system that forces our class to sell its labor and “labor power” for wages while the bosses reap mass profit.

Racist police brutality is necessary to capitalism. Without it, there would be ever greater and bolder challenges to capital. In order to end police brutality and all vestiges of this racist/capitalist system, we must smash capitalism and build a new order based on our class.

## 8. HEALTH

*We demand an end to the lack of adequate health care in our community and we demand free health care for the descendants of slaves in this nation. The Millions More Movement will present a Preventive Health Care Plan to our people that will begin with a campaign to educate our people on healthy dietary, eating and exercise habits.*

Within capitalism, health care is not a right but a privilege for those that can afford it or who have gotten their bosses to give them some limited coverage. 47 million people are without health insurance, and coverage gets more restricted every month. All workers in this society suffer inadequate health care. The capitalist system generates ill health by its demands on workers’ time, money and the stress of alienated labor. In fact, the capitalists only care about the health of workers insofar as it aids their profits. With unemployment, losing workers to ill health may well be cost-effective! As long as we have capitalism, health will suffer under whatever structure is created.

All workers need better exercise and diets, but they need the time and incentive to do so. Good

health cannot come about in a system where good health and training is owned and controlled by private companies such as Bally’s and the New York Sports club. Workers are working more and spending less time with their families causing bad diets, lack of exercise and lack of sleep. Before we can realistically present a preventive health care plan for all workers as advocated by the 3M, we must first build and develop a movement to destroy capitalism, a system that is very unhealthy to all workers.

## 9. ARTISTIC/ CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

*We demand a greater accountability and responsibility of our artists, entertainers, industry personnel and executives, for them to commit to the redevelopment and upliftment of our people. We demand an end to the exploitation of our talent by outside forces. We will make strides in obtaining greater control over the means of production and distribution of our immense artistic talent and creative genius. We advocate for cultural development, and for the knowledge of our original culture to be used as a model for future advancement.*

Within the economic system of capitalism, there are only two ways to make money. You either sell your labor and power as a class to the bosses or you exploit the labor of the working class. Artists, entertainers, industry personnel and executives all strive to make money; it is their bottom line. Making money and committing to the redevelopment of your so-called people is a contradiction. In any event, we do not strive for charity for our class, but solidarity within our class. The only way to redevelop “the working class” is to destroy the system that rapes our labor and our talent. The outside forces that rape talent for exploitative means are “the bosses” and they must be smashed. Therefore Russell Simmons, Sean “Puff” Daddy Combs and Kanye West are music executives who make mass profit at the expense of their working class brothers and sisters. Ultimately they must be smashed along with the rest of the ruling class for this talent to be fully liberated and used for the upliftment of all workers. The only way to gain control over the means of production over this talent is to fight for the dictatorship of our class ensuring that all

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<sup>2</sup>Some prisoners did, in fact, commit heinous acts against fellow workers, although most did not. Even the most heinous acts of such individuals, however, pale in comparison to the wholesale brutality of the system of wage slavery and racism that destroy countless innocent lives every year. Why are not the purveyors of such brutality and deprivation jailed?

art and music is used for the people's interest. The only proper original "culture" and history to be taught and used for the future development of our class is the history of working class struggle, especially against racism, linchpin of capitalism. Until the capitalist control of society and its culture is destroyed, we cannot effectively create a mass working class culture that advances our interests.

## 10. PEACE

*We call for the establishment of peace in the world. We demand an end to wars of foreign aggression waged by the United States Government against other sovereign nations and peoples. We demand an end to senseless violence, and advocate peace amongst street organizations (gangs) and youth.*

True and everlasting peace will not occur until all bosses, ruling classes and their system of capitalism are abolished from the face of the earth. Peace will never exist for long between competing

bosses or between bosses and workers. As long as there is capitalism on the earth, there will be wars for profit at the expense of the working class. Foreign wars of aggression will continue to be fought and waged by the United States and their rival ruling classes and imperialists. Inter-Imperialist rivalry, wars between ruling classes of different nations, is a permanent feature of capitalism. Workers of the world have no nation and no loyalty to any ruling class. Our loyalty is to our class to smash all imperialist towards building a better world.

The violence in our streets and among our youth is an extension of living in a decadent capitalist society that puts profit over people. We must turn the violence among our youth into an organized class war against the bosses. For instance, the French youth who rebelled throughout Paris and other major cities, must be united with the industrial workers to create a militant force for revolution. In order to ensure real peace among our youth, we must smash capitalism which will help all workers obtain a better peace of mind!

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## THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY PROGRAM: MILITANT BUT MISLEADING

The 3M Platform in many ways is an echo almost forty years later of the 1966 program of the Black Panther Party. Here is a similar critique of that program, seen with the hindsight of many years of revolutionary struggle.

### The 1966 Program of the Black Panther Party

#### What We Want

#### What We Believe

*1. We want freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our Black Community.*

*We believe that black people will not be free until we are able to determine our destiny.*

Freedom can only come from the total abolition of capitalism and the creation of a society run by the working class under communist leadership. It is not merely rhetoric! Freedom for black workers cannot be gained by allying with black exploiters and opportunists, implied in the construct, "Black Community". A dictatorship of the working class will bring freedom to black workers and all other non-elites. The destiny of the black working class

is mutually tied and connected to the destiny of the working class as a whole. The black working class will not be able to determine its own destiny as long as capitalism and a ruling class exist. Therefore, we advocate for the unity of our class, red, yellow, brown, black and white workers, to smash capitalism and build a society based on our interest. Only then will black workers and ALL workers be able to determine our mutual destiny. The BPP's call for black community empowerment obscures the class question—the black community includes a wide array of classes, even though it is primarily made up of workers--and opened the way for the BPP to embrace black capitalists and politicians as allies in the struggle for revolution as they explicitly did in the cover article in their newspaper in 1969. The BPP later endorsed Shirley Chisolm for President, a continuing rightward shift away from the militancy exemplified by marching on the California state assembly with guns with fascist Reagan shocked in awe in the background.

*2. We want full employment for our people.*

*We believe that the federal government is responsible and obligated to give every man employment or a guaranteed income. We believe that if the*

*white American businessmen will not give full employment, then the means of production should be taken from the businessmen and placed in the community so that the people of the community can organize and employ all of its people and give a high standard of living.*

Capitalism can never provide full employment; it requires a reserve army of unemployed labor to keep wages down, just as it requires racism to keep wage differentials in place and provide downward pressure on the entire wage structure. Community control over capital also cannot provide full employment, as the community development corporation movement has demonstrated since its launch in the 1960s<sup>3</sup>. Until capital/wage labor relationships are abolished, capitalism's laws of motion will generate unemployment automatically, and no federal program will transfer capital out of the hands of the ruling class to anyone.

Forty years later after this demand, black unemployment remains 2 ½ time that of white unemployment. The economic structure being the same as it was in 1966, based on profit and racism! It is naive to believe a federal government which serves the interest of the bosses will grant full employment and a guaranteed income to black workers no matter how much mobilizing pressure is exerted upon it. Ultimately, the federal government of the United States must be smashed and a workers government installed for all workers to have a guaranteed job and income. Finally, not just white businessman, but all businessmen must be liquidated and have the means of production taken from them. This can only take place under a workers state where we have the power to run the means of production in the interest of all workers.

*3. We want an end to the robbery by the white man of our Black Community.*

*We believe that this racist government has robbed us and now we are demanding the overdue debt of forty acres and two mules. Forty acres and two mules were promised 100 years ago as restitution for slave labor and mass murder of black people. We will accept the payment as currency which will be distributed to our many communities. The Germans are now aiding the Jews in Israel for the genocide of the Jewish people. The Germans murdered six million Jews. The American racist has taken part in*

*the slaughter of over twenty million black people; therefore, we feel that this is a modest demand that we make*

The black working class is robbed by capitalists of every so-called race, determined to keep the black working class divided from their red, yellow, brown and white class brothers and sisters and repressed as a source of super-profits. Nationalism and racism, two ruling class ideologies, are tools to keep oppressed people away from class struggle and class consciousness. Nothing short of the complete expropriation of the capitalists, the destruction of the capitalist state, and the empowerment of the working class can make up for the robbery that the capitalist system has visited upon the working class with special vehemence against black workers. Forty acres and two mules could never suffice for over 300 plus years of the slave trade, chattel slavery, lynch terror, Jim Crow and the decadent condition a disproportionate number of African Americans live in today including high levels of imprisonment, unemployment, substandard housing/education and a basic substandard way of life. Accepting two mules and forty acres of land (even with interest!) is reprehensible and disgraceful to the struggle of those who fought against slavery and all forms of racism in this country. Nothing short of the total destruction of the capitalist system, a system that constructed race, slavery, class divisions, and wage slavery, which is the current raping of our class, could ever begin to repair the damage done to black workers and the working class as a whole.

It is important to clarify the genocide of World War II as well. Eleven million workers, including six million Jewish workers were murdered by the Nazis and their allies, with tens of millions more dying in battle against them. The Nazis had been nurtured by western imperialism and capitalism as a battering ram against the then-socialist Soviet Union! The Nazis killed Jewish workers, black workers and communists, gays, gypsies, and many others in their death camps and by their murdering armies. Western imperialism-capitalism aided the Zionists in 1948 in the illegal theft of Palestine and currently still aids both Zionist Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in ensuring Israel as a military front against its Arab neighbors in the interest of U.S. imperialism. Therefore, demanding forty acres and two mules for every African American in comparison to the

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<sup>3</sup>F. Campbell & R. Green, "The Jesse Jackson Economic Platform of 1984: A Critique and An Alternative", in L. Morris, ed., *The Social and Political Implications of the 1984 Jesse Jackson Presidential Campaign*, NY: Praeger, 1990.

illegal theft of Palestine is wrong and indefensible. Black workers cannot use an injustice and imperial ideology, such as Zionism, in its freedom struggle. Class consciousness must be primary.

Finally, the millions of black workers murdered due to racism is beyond 20 million if we count from the trans-Atlantic slave trade, through the Civil War, through the years after Reconstruction, the Jim Crow era, lynch terror, the Civil Rights and Black Power movements, to the current struggles today against the prison industrial complex, police brutality, death penalty and all the current manifestations of racism. Twenty million is well below the number of black workers who have suffered and died due to Racism. Forty acres and two mules could never be a just payment. There is no payment under capitalism that can repay or repair the damage done to black workers. Only the destruction of the Capitalist system, and the creation of a system based on the needs of all workers, will suffice for over 400 years of capitalist oppression of black workers within America.

*4. We want decent housing, fit for shelter of human beings.*

*We believe that if the white landlords will not give decent housing to our black community, then the housing and the land should be made into cooperatives so that our community, with government aid, can build and make decent housing for its people.*

Housing for all people is a basic right, and a revolutionary workers' government will provide it. Trying to create islands of housing cooperatives in the midst of capitalist exploitation is, however, a daydream and a misleading, doomed, effort. Advocating for government aid and cooperatives under capitalism will not lead to the liberation of the working class and its black workers. Utopian socialist communities in the 19th century (like New Harmony) tried to establish exemplary workers' cooperatives which would attract, by example, the masses. It didn't work because the masses were bound up with the major economic structures of the society, and could not simply withdraw from them.

Since 1966, in an effort to subvert the Black Panther Party's Free Breakfast programs and the black freedom struggle as a whole in the aftermath of the ghetto rebellions, the federal government started free breakfast programs and other federal

initiatives to pacify the militancy of black workers. Forty years later, we have seen many of these federal programs reduced, and in the case of welfare, virtually abolished by the ruling class, facilitated by black workers' militancy being channeled into the fascist Democratic Party. The attack on welfare was led by a Democratic party President name Bill Clinton. Nothing short of militancy and the overall destruction of the ruling class will bring about livable housing for all workers. Finally, not just white landlords, but all landlords will have their property seized under a workers state. Land ownership and private property, instruments of the ruling class against workers, will cease under a workers' government.

*5. We want education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present-day society.*

*We believe in an educational system that will give to our people a knowledge of self. If a man does not have knowledge of himself and his position in society and the world, then he has little chance to relate to anything else.*

Education for the working class must expose the true nature of this vicious capitalist society and world. We fight to educate workers to their history, successes, and challenges of class struggle, and to our responsibility to wage struggle and ultimately warfare against the bosses with a multi-racial, anti-racist, working class revolution. Alternative schools cannot work in this setting, because in practice they represent a strategy of withdrawal from the system, something that simply cannot be done and engage the enemy in struggle at the same time.

In many cases, alternative schools that want to emphasize black history and culture do not address the challenges black workers face, but instead present a black bourgeois version of the "great man" theory of history. Thus, black history months often are little more than adding additional heroes to the history, rather than emphasizing the heroic role of the masses in fighting and defeating racism, slavery, and imperialism. The educational system must serve the needs of all workers and help all workers understand the universality of their struggle, rather than merely focusing on the history of struggle of one group of people.

In order to ensure class solidarity, we must smash the ruling class borders which prohibit our

linking up with working class struggle locally and globally.

*6. We want all black men to be exempt from military service.*

*We believe that Black people should not be forced to fight in the military service to defend a racist government that does not protect us. We will not fight and kill other people of color in the world who, like black people, are being victimized by the white racist government of America. We will protect ourselves from the force and violence of the racist police and the racist military, by whatever means necessary.*

Today, political deception and economic hardship press workers to sell their labor to the ruling class in the form of military service to defend capitalist interest and the profits of the bosses. This is the current situation workers experience, with jobs and wages being downsized/eliminated and economic opportunity vanishing in their neighborhoods. No worker's blood should be shed for the profits of bosses whether it is a worker in Iraq, Bosnia or the United States.

Exemption, refusal and conscientious objection from military service, however, will not stop imperialist war and the drive for more profits by the ruling class. As exemplified by the Bolshevik Party in the October Revolution of 1917, workers within the military must be won to class war against the bosses in order to smash the Capitalist state. The only way to protect ourselves from the force and violence of the racist military industrial police complex is to educate our class to turn the guns around and shoot the down the capitalist system through communist revolution.

*7. We want an immediate end to police brutality and murder of black people.*

*We believe we can end police brutality in our black community by organizing black self-defense groups that are dedicated to defending our black community from racist police oppression and brutality. The Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States gives a right to bear arms. We therefore believe that all black people should arm themselves for self defense.*

Violent revolution requires armed struggle against the police and the state apparatus.

Communists work for the immediate end of state repression and murders of members of our class. Such murders take place in many forms including police brutality which overwhelmingly and disproportionately affects black and Latino workers. The role of police under capitalism, since the slave patrols during chattel slavery, is to protect the bosses' assets and to discipline our class to serve their interest. But, while armed self-defense is a bold strategy, it will take aggressive revolutionary action, not merely defense, to defeat capitalism.

We should not try to appropriate the Second Amendment to the constitution, as the BPP did in this point, to justify our plans for revolution. The constitution was not written for the benefit of workers against their ruling class enemy. No law under capitalism is written to defend the interest of working people; it is naive at best to rely on these laws in our struggle. We believe all workers should arm themselves first with Marxist analysis towards taking pro-active steps against the elimination of the bosses. While power may ultimately come out of the barrel of the gun, the holders of the gun must have the scientific knowledge to build the better society or the revolution will not succeed.

*8. We want freedom for all black men held in federal, state, county and city prisons and jails.*

*We believe that all black people should be released from the many jails and prisons because they have not received a fair and impartial trial.*

We need freedom for the working class, whether its members are incarcerated in prison or enslaved by the wage system which rapes our labor for maximum profit. Although black and Latino men constitute a disproportionate share of incarcerated prisoners, the working class includes women and workers of other "races" and nationalities; no worker receives a fair and impartial trial under a system built to protect the interest of bosses. Freeing black working class men from prison will not free them from the exploitation of capitalism. Once freed from prison, they must enter a racist society that will super-exploit their labor if they are fortunate enough to obtain a job, racially profile against them, segregate them in substandard housing and provide inadequate education to their children. This does not equal freedom but continual enslavement. The only way to end this oppression is to build a working class movement towards a working class society.

*9. We want all black people when brought to trial to be tried in court by a jury of their peer group or people from their black communities, as defined by the Constitution of the United States.*

*We believe that the courts should follow the United States Constitution so that black people will receive fair trials. The 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution gives a man a right to be tried by his peer group. A peer is a person from a similar economic, social, religious, geographical, environmental, historical and racial background. To do this the court will be forced to select a jury from the black community from which the black defendant came. We have been, and are being tried by all-white juries that have no understanding of the "average reasoning man" of the black community.*

It is an illusion that black juries would be able to consistently deliver fair verdicts. Reliance on capitalist laws is detrimental and harmful to workers. The constitution and the laws passed by Congress have always been written to protect the interest of the United States ruling class, not working class people, and the ensuing legal system has developed to ensure the sanctity of private property and capitalist profits. Ensuring a jury is all black will not guarantee justice to black defendants in capitalist courts; juries have to function according to capitalist laws and regulations! Moreover, black workers, just like all workers, are injected with ruling class ideology which can lead them to act against their class interest. Many middle and upper class blacks actually agree with the suppression of working class blacks that is enforced by the courts. While blacks in America have historically been in the vanguard of working class struggle and warfare against their class enemy, many blacks have internalized ruling class racist ideology.

The best example of this cooptation was the imprisonment of Imam Jamil Abdullah El-Amin, known as H. Rap Brown during the 1960's. Rap Brown historically is a folk hero in many sectors of the Black working class. His fearless stance against racism in places such as Lowndes County Alabama, Danville, Virginia and Eastern Shore Maryland endeared him to many black workers and white allies and made him the enemy of the ruling class including Maryland Governor Spiral Agnew. Despite his history of struggle, he was arrested in Lowndes County Alabama (a majority black county) in 1999 for supposedly killing a black Atlanta police officer (the same Lowndes County where he and others fought against Klan terror

thirty-five years prior). He was arrested by a black Sheriff name Huett Long, the same Huett Long who worked in the struggle against Klan terror with Rap Brown in Lowndes County back in the 1960's! Rap was charged by the black States Attorney General, Paul Howard, and was convicted and sentenced by a black jury in Atlanta Georgia, a city that is 70 plus percent African American and known to the world as the center of the civil rights struggle which gave birth to its most prominent leader, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Therefore, the reliance on a black jury to defend black workers is false if it cannot be relied upon to defend a folk hero and anti-racist fighter such as H. Rap Brown.

The cops, the courts (black juries or not!) and the Klan are all apart of the bosses plan!

*10. We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace. And as our major political objective, a United Nations-supervised plebiscite to be held throughout the black colony in which only black colonial subjects will be allowed to participate for the purpose of determining the will of black people as to their national destiny.*

*When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.*

*We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly, all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But, when a long train of abuses*

*and usurpations, pursuing invariable the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security.*

Land, clothing, housing and all the essential needs for life will not come about under the system of capitalism nor with the help of the United Nations. The United Nations, historically and today, is a tool of imperialism against the international working class. As we witnessed under the current march to war in Iraq, the United Nations is the forum for imperialist rivals such as France, Russia, China, Germany and the United States to fight over their profits at the expense of our class. Currently, the expense to our class has meant hundreds of thousands of workers' lives in the Iraq war.

The United Nations is powerless to work on the behalf of oppressed people and black workers. Throughout history, we have seen black leaders attempt to use the United Nations with no results in their freedom struggle. In 1947, the NAACP took a petition before the United Nations on behalf of oppressed Negroes in America. In 1950, Communist party leader William Patterson led a petition titled "We Charge Genocide" to the United Nations on behalf of oppressed blacks in America. Malcolm X championed going before the United Nations to advocate for the freedom of African Americans and link their fight to the struggle against colonialism in the world. Haile Selassie, former Emperor of Ethiopia, attempted to persuade the old League of Nations, the predecessor to the United Nations, to military intervene in Ethiopia in 1936 and stop the invasion by Italy under the leadership of fascist Mussolini with no results. As recently as 2001, the United Nations hosted a World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa to attempt to deal with this global problem. Historically, there have been no results from the United Nations due to lack of power to compel imperialist and capitalist

nations to respect the rights of workers. The United Nations is simply a debating society among capitalists from different parts of the world. Power for our class must be won in the barracks and in the streets, not in the suites of the United Nations. We fight for a united world of workers not fascist capitalist nations. Fascist, capitalist nations could never defend the rights of working people.

The Declaration of Independence cited by the BPP program calls for citizens to abolish their system of governance if it no longer meets the people's needs. But the framers meant this about as much as they believed that all men are created equal while slavery dominated the land! Thomas Jefferson, a slave owner who presided over the 3/5th's compromise (which counted enslaved Africans only for census purposes for southern slave owners) wrote this phrase to advocate for independence of the colonies so that a domestic class of capitalists and slaveowners could rule and create a U.S. ruling class. Jefferson et al. stood idly by and offered no assistance to Toussaint L'Ouverture and the revolution in Haiti against Napoleon and the French ruling class. Thomas Jefferson was once quoted saying "he trembled for his country" when thinking of the hypocrisy of slavery existing in a so-called free nation. May the rulers continue to tremble!

During much of the 20th century, workers of the world made the bosses tremble in fear at the thought of a communist world. The fear of a world run by workers still haunts the bosses. Our job is to continue this work towards transforming workers from a class within itself to a class that advocates and fights for itself. Black nationalism, as demonstrated above, has never challenged the capitalist system per se, and instead diverts many honest potential revolutionaries from the right line of march in the struggle for communism. Reject this reformist, nationalist, misleadership -- join us and help build the Progressive Labor Party to create a world run by and in the interest of all workers.



# FROM LEBANON TO IRAQ: IMPERIALIST DOGFIGHT LEADS TO ENDLESS BLOODY WARS

In attacking Hezbollah, Israel's fascist leaders further intensified both regional conflicts and the global rivalry among imperialists. The Israelis bit off more than they could chew. Having underestimated the resiliency of Hezbollah's underground network and the size of its arsenal, Israel's top brass now know that they need a ground war, not just air strikes, and have called up thousands of reservists.

Bombing Lebanese civilians has only inflamed hatred of Israel and its U.S. backers and built pro-Hezbollah sentiment from Gaza to Indonesia. [Supporting Hezbollah, however, is a grave political mistake. Hezbollah is a racist and fundamentally capitalist organization that takes orders from Iranian oil billionaires cloaked as ayatollahs.] In addition, with arms flowing from the U.S. to Israel and from Iran and Syria to Hezbollah, the local clash is rapidly evolving into an escalating proxy war that deepens the divide between U.S. imperialists mired in Iraq and a host of challengers. At stake in the broader struggle are control of the entire Middle East and its oil and the lives of millions — as cannon fodder or "collateral damage."

"The United States is already at war with Iran; but for the time being the battle is being fought through surrogates," wrote former ABC-TV news anchor Ted Koppel in the New York Times (7/21) citing, a "senior Jordanian intelligence official." Koppel and the Jordanian spy chief note Iran's gift of 12,000 rockets to Hezbollah and "more than \$300 million in cash" to Hamas, "funneled through Syria" (although they fail to mention the U.S. rulers' annual \$3 billion "contribution" to the Israeli war machine).

But the real cause of the current crisis, they say, is the botched U.S. invasion of Iraq. Failing to replace Saddam Hussein with an effective occupying regime meant "tearing down the wall that had kept Iran in check." That failure has had other destabilizing effects.

While Israel and Hezbollah were busy murdering children (Israeli planes doing most of the killings), Iraq's oil minister Husain Al Shahrastani met in Washington with executives of Exxon-Mobil, Chevron-Exaco, Shell and BP (France's oil giant Total was conspicuously absent). Assuring the U.S. and British oil barons of first dibs "in expanding Iraq's oil sector and developing new fields" (Associated Press, 7/28), he lamented that it would take at least four years to bring production even to pre-war peaks of four million barrels a day (mbd). U.S. rulers, represented by the Establishment's

Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), as well as Bush's neocons, had projected a 6-mbd post-invasion output that would help spread prosperity, tranquility and pro-U.S. politics throughout the Mideast.

Leslie Gelb, ex-president of the CFR, calls Bush's Iraq fiasco the U.S.'s chief obstacle in dealing with Lebanon. "Mr. Bush has to restore America's military credibility...[H]e is so bogged down in Iraq and Afghanistan that he cannot and will not take strong military action anywhere else." (Wall Street Journal, 7/28) Gelb says, "If Syria or Iran...stepped up unacceptable military operations in either Iraq or Lebanon, the U.S. could threaten...air attacks against Iranian and Syrian air-defense missiles and radars, air strikes against Iranian naval forces and oil depots, and cross-boarder raids into Syria to disrupt support of Iraqi insurgents."

Gen. William Odom, former director of the National Security Agency, also sees Iraq policy as key to the problem but draws a different conclusion. "It is precisely our actions in Iraq that have opened the door for Iran and Syria to support Hezbollah and Hamas actions without much to fear from the U.S." ("Nieman Watch," Harvard University, 7/17) But Odom (like Rep. Murtha) calls for a U.S. "tactical retreat" from Iraq followed by a wider "counter-offensive" in the Mid-East, uniting the U.S. and "a coalition of the major states of Europe and East Asia."

In fact, U.S. rulers may not be sure of what to do. It's not strategic vision they lack; they have oil on the brain. What's missing for them are masses of people willing to shed blood for U.S. imperialism. Israel's bosses have the same problem and hesitate to send reservists into Lebanon.

An overlooked aspect of the fighting in Lebanon is the emergence of the eastern Mediterranean as a major oil transit hub. July 13 marked the opening of a U.S.-sponsored one-million-barrel-a-day oil pipeline, originating in the Caspian region and deliberately by-passing Russia, which ends at the Turkish port of Ceyhan, directly north of Israel, Lebanon and Syria. But more important is the 1.6-mbd pipeline from Kirkuk in Iraq that also discharges in Ceyhan. Although insurgents have severely damaged the pipeline, Exxon Mobil lifted 2.1 million barrels of Iraqi crude from Ceyhan in one recent week. (Reuters, 7/29)

Washington, no doubt, expects Israel — which

now gets a fifth of its oil through Ceyhan — to increase its naval influence over adjacent shores. The Russians, however, much of whose oil exports enter the Mediterranean through Turkey’s nearby Bosphorus strait, have conflicting ideas. They’re dredging Syria’s Mediterranean port at Tartus, preparing to move the bulk of their Black Sea fleet there from Sevastopol (Kommerzant, Moscow, translated by Global Research, 7/28).

One trap for workers to avoid is rooting for the phony “anti-imperialists” like Hezbollah and Hamas, who actually abet the imperialist designs of Iran, Russia, China and the European Union (EU). Another is falling for the “peace” plans proposed at the UN. The

U.S. wants Hezbollah disarmed, and NATO to occupy southern Lebanon. The EU, seconded by Russia and China, wants a UN force, and Hezbollah retained as a foil to Israel and the U.S. All the players here are acting in the deadly self-interests of various sets of capitalists.

As we’ve constantly pointed out, the international working class has absolutely no interest in siding with any of these murderous bosses. Building a mass PLP and winning workers in our shops, unions and mass organizations to oppose the endless imperialist wars and to red politics is still the order of the day. The only road to ending these killer wars is the one leading to communist revolution. Join us.

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## **YOUNG LEADERS RAISE ANTI-RACIST STRUGGLE IN NEW ORLEANS**

Seven young Washington, D.C. students and workers went to New Orleans with a group that prioritizes resident empowerment and brings displaced residents back to the city.

We had many sharp political discussions. The highlights of the trip were the levee tour and CHALLENGE sales.

We sold CHALLENGE to day laborers at Lowe’s Hardware store, speaking to several workers about uniting black residents with super-exploited workers from Latin America. Anxieties over our Spanish skills dissolved once we began talking with the workers. Although not everyone in our group spoke Spanish, the workers still appreciated the effort and support from everyone. They were very receptive to the ideas and took about 10 papers for fellow workers. One man from Mexico said, “So how do we get together to work on this?” He gave us his name and number, as did two other workers.

The Iberville Project residents were also very receptive. Some had already seen the paper, giving us hope for sustainable Party work here. We spoke with some young men interested in the Middle East situation and in growing fascism here. They said the U.S. was trying to “take over” resources there. One talked about the cops’ harassment of black people, specifically of those in the projects. We distributed 15 CHALLENGES. Three people asked us to contact them about talking politics and taking action.

We also discussed black nationalism and fighting racism. Some volunteers we met have a black nationalist outlook. One stressed that black people should do most of the talking with residents door to door, while white workers in the group should stay in the background taking notes. Our multi-racial group was turned off by this idea. Some people thought black residents wouldn’t talk to white workers. This directly contradicted our positive experience with Latino workers at Lowe’s and black workers at the Iberville Projects.

While the group we worked in focuses on building black leadership, an important goal, and while black workers will surely be leaders of the revolutionary communist struggle, no revolution can succeed without a unified multi-racial fight against racism and capitalism. Hopefully, as the organization develops able black leadership, a sharp political struggle for communist politics within the organization will point in a winning direction.

This experience strengthened our collective and built communist ideas in the future PLP’ers who came with us. We encourage everyone considering going to New Orleans to go, not only with the idea of easing suffering, but of ending it altogether with communist revolution.

# MAY DAY 2006

## MAY DAY ARTICLES FROM CHALLENGE, MAY 24, 2006

### RED FLAGS FLY ON MAY DAY

NEWYORK CITY, April 29 — Militantly marching through the streets of New York City, friends, family and members of the Progressive Labor Party brought a communist edge to the mass anti-war demonstration today. Revolutionary politics reached thousands through the sale of CHALLENGE, T-shirts and buttons proclaiming, "We have a world to win, and nothing to lose but our chains"; and, "Workers have no borders." PL's participation spread the message that on the eve of May Day, international worker's day, we must emphasize that the only solution to racism, sexism, fascism and imperialist war is an international revolutionary communist movement.

Around 500 workers, students and soldiers gathered in Brooklyn following the demonstration. It was to be the best annual May Day celebration yet! Many young comrades played leading roles in organizing, speaking and performing at this event. Though exhausted from marching, traveling from cities as far away as the Midwest and preparing food for the standing-room-only crowd, we were energized by the well-organized program. By putting communist politics into practice, the group collectively arranged tables, chairs, decorations, food and sound equipment.

The event opened with the crowd on its feet, fists in the air, singing the Internationale in English and Spanish. A single glance around the room depicted PL's dedication to building a mass communist party and promoting leadership among black and Latin youth.

A powerful "State of the World" speech by a young Latin woman laid out the main political events of the last year including the spread of imperialism in the Middle East, growing fascism in the U.S. through targeting immigrant workers, the election of reformist parties in South America and the racist neglect of victims of Hurricane Katrina.

Personal testimonies of these struggles were given by a super-exploited Latin day laborer; a young woman arrested for disrupting a Minutemen

meeting; a young man's travels through Venezuela, Bolivia and Brazil, leading him to reject these nationalist, capitalist movements and instead join PLP; a Harlem church parishioner's story of organizing Katrina support; a riveting anti-racist talk by a hurricane survivor; and a community organizer calling for comrades to provide political leadership and support to the suffering workers in New Orleans.

There were new reports from communist organizers on building work in industry. Through stories of labor struggles in mass transit and auto assembly plants, two black workers brought to life the revolutionary potential of the industrial working class and why it is crucial to communist revolution. These reports marked an important qualitative advance in PL's work, after many long years of dedicated struggle in these industries.

An analysis of sexism under capitalism revealed it as another bosses' tool to divide the working class and described how PLers are combating it. This was followed by a moving story of a struggling working-class family who equally divide the labor in the home and on the job in order to survive. The diverse crowd was challenged to increase the fight against exploitation on the job and sexism in society in their daily lives.

A longtime unionist from Chicago related her experiences working with a reform group of "reform leaders" in her local. She explained the big picture of rejecting the accommodating reformists who are all too willing to sell out workers' struggles and the necessity of winning workers to PLP's communist understanding.

Perhaps the most impressive aspect of this evening was the effort of black, Latin and white workers, young and old, men and women who worked to make our celebration a demonstration of communist unity in action.

Filled with inspirational stories of success and set-backs, the crowd was left with the powerful reminder that as members and friends of the

Progressive Labor Party we have an important duty to continually fight for communist revolution, not reform. We must make communist politics primary every hour, every day, everywhere, with everyone.

No doubt, struggle is hard work, yet every year on May Day we take the time to celebrate our successes and watch the Party grow. So start building for next May Day, today!

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## A RED MAY DAY IN LA

LOS ANGELES, April 29 — “I’ve been to a lot of marches lately, but I really loved this one because it was against capitalism and for communism, and because there were so many African Americans and Asians marching with us,” said a young Latina worker following the PLP May Day March downtown today.

A very militant group of youth marched against the racist bosses, their borders, their war and their terror. We proudly and boldly put forward the need for a mass communist revolution to end capitalism’s racist exploitation and inevitable imperialist wars. We sold 1,000 CHALLENGES and distributed 4,000 leaflets to the many workers who lined up to support the march. Some of those watching later told friends how impressed they were by both its message and its multi-racial character.

Afterwards, we held a spirited dinner with a great skit by high school students about fighting racism against immigrants and how the bosses plan to use immigrant youth in expanded wars in the Mid-East. One speaker related the fight in his union for a resolution to make May Day a holiday celebrating international workers’ day, and to support the fight against anti-immigrant racism. He warned about the danger of the liberal bosses building a patriotic pro-imperialist “reform” movement and of the opportunity for PLP to grow into a mass party of the working class.

A young woman described the great response she got when selling CHALLENGE and talking to garment workers about why PLP was marching independently as well as participating in the big Monday immigrant marches. She urged marchers to dedicate their lives to serving the working class by building PLP to spread revolutionary communist ideas and practice, to build workers’ international unity and loyalty to the red flag, not the bosses’ flags.

Three people at the dinner did just that, and others signed up for CHALLENGE subscriptions and to sell the paper to their friends. The speaker

also invited everyone to join the Summer Project to learn from — and bring the Party’s ideas to — industrial workers.

The following are excerpts from speeches at the May Day dinners:

An industrial worker recounted his experiences in fighting for his union to support immigrant workers and May Day. He received significant backing, especially from black workers who are regular CHALLENGE readers:

“What have I learned from all this struggle over the last three weeks, other than I better bring my own lunch to work since I haven’t had time to buy it? Well, first, our job is not to be the most popular guy on the block, or in the factory. Our job is to fight like hell for the working class. That means fighting for the Party’s line.

“Second, CHALLENGE networks count. They’re no magic bullet, but it’s from among these networks that we can build and expand our political base and the numbers in our Party.

“Third, when the chips are down the internal political struggle is primary. There are objective political limits on what we can do. But make no mistake about it; our communist politics are the only ideas that can serve the working class and we can move significant numbers of workers — in this case key industrial workers — inspired by that communist vision.

“We’ll have to build on these small victories through many years of devastating imperialist wars, intensifying exploitation and racism. But never forget, the political development of our class will eventually determine everything. Long live communist revolution!”

A young industrial worker explained that the U.S. imperialists face increasing competition with China and the other imperialists, that the war in Iraq has no end in sight, and that the future of the entire working class depends on winning industrial workers and soldiers to communism. He

spoke of one dividing into two and the danger and opportunity present in the immigrant struggle: “Our role in these huge reform struggles is to strengthen the side of revolution and communism. This means, in the current immigration struggle, to fight against the bosses’ nationalism used to divide our class. We must fight for the idea that the working class has no nation or border.

“Imagine,” he said, “if black, white, Asian and Arab workers were marching in huge numbers together with Latino workers, imagine the power of the entire working class fighting for power — not for an illusory reform that the bosses are pushing.

“There are only two sides in every struggle and our side must always be the side of revolution and

communism. We have to enter the contradiction of reform struggles, unite with workers, and fight for communist ideas....” Building a base for communist revolution isn’t quick or easy. It requires patience and a long-term plan. We should aim to concentrate in every factory and barracks...The world we need for our families and our class won’t arrive by itself. A communist society in which collectivity defeats individualism has to be fought for worker by worker. But this society has its roots in every one of us, and with the Progressive Labor Party it will become a reality.”

This May Day clearly shows the development of young working-class communist leaders. They point the way forward to victory.

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## **MILITANT YOUTH LEAD PLP MAY DAY MARCH**

NEW YORK CITY, April 29 — Amid a sea of red flags and communist banners, the Progressive Labor Party marched among over 300,000 anti-war protesters to celebrate the International Workers’ Holiday — May Day. Working-class youth led the militant May Day marchers, chanting down Broadway, “Soldiers turn your, guns around, shoot the profit system down”; and “The only solution is communist revolution!”

Other marchers and onlookers welcomed an openly communist “red” contingent of over 250 workers and youth under the banners “WE NEED COMMUNIST REVOLUTION NOT LIBERAL POLITICIANS” and “WORKERS, STUDENTS,

SOLDIERS UNITE TO SMASH IMPERIALIST WAR.” We sold over 5,000 CHALLENGES and distributed over 4,000 leaflets.

Many new marchers and passers-by were ecstatic to seize the opportunity to condemn racist cops; all politicians for keeping our class on the reform treadmill; and all wars for being imperialistic and profit-driven.

While the U.S. ruling class is having a hard time meeting its military recruiting goals, the very people the bosses want to use as cannon fodder in their wars were leaders and becoming leaders in the fight to put the leeches in their grave.

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## **WORKERS HAVE ONE FLAG: IT IS RED**

NEWYORK CITY, May 1 — The anger of millions of immigrant workers against racism was misled on this May Day. The Democrats, union hacks and religious leaders are doing everything possible to ideologically disarm workers. In today’s mass marches here and nationwide, many workers were carrying the imperialist flag while chanting “USA” and “Yes we can.” The bosses’ flag has never liberated any workers anywhere.

PLP marchers tried to counter that poison. We sold over 500 DESAFIOS/CHALLENGES and carried a bilingual banner reading, “Workers’ Struggles have no Borders.” Many workers loved it and read CHALLENGE on the spot. Our presence at most of the recent marches in the immigration rights movement showed that our Party is the light that shines for the working class to see through the rulers’ lies.



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