

# **BUILD NETWORKS IN THE MILITARY, NOT IN THE POLICE FORCE**

When we talk to some friends about organizing soldiers and sailors, they ask if it's the same as organizing cops. The cops are the executioners of capitalist law. They maintain capitalist class structure and protect capitalists and their private property. Cops, the national guard, and the like, have a very different mentality, receive very different treatment, and have very different social and economic motivations than most of the people who enlist into the military.

Enlisted military people are at the bottom of a long chain of command. They are disrespected, typically ordered to do humiliating tasks and receive abusive treatment. The brass know better than to trust the enlisted soldiers/sailors because, in the bosses' eyes, we are more like exploitable employees than their friends or protectors. The brass enforces strict obedience to their chain of command and to capitalist law because there's mutual distrust on both sides.

The cops, however, are a particularly selected group that enforce capitalist law. These are people who need to be far more disconnected from their own working class interests; they have been thoroughly brainwashed to believe that what is best for the capitalist state is good for its people, that patriotism and nationalism is in the interest of the working class of their country, and other such capitalist myths.

On a spectrum that measures allegiance to the bosses, enlisted soldiers/sailors are on one end and the cops on the other, like dialectical opposites. Somewhere in the middle the two interpenetrate each other (some soldiers will be anti-working class and a few cops may be sensitive to the working class) and beyond that blurry area a qualitative change occurs where reactionary ideas dominate, as in most cops, who are completely reactionary and clearly choose to be enemies of the working class. That middle point is not stationary. Depending on events in society and opportunities for realizing revolution, that blurry region shifts around to include more or less people onto the side willing to fight for the working class.

Some countries have large militaries, like the US and China, in order to continue large scale imperialist ambitions. Other countries have smaller militaries, which are more easily controlled. The revolutionary work done in those militaries may make smaller, but important, gains during more repressive times. Many of these smaller countries do not use their military primarily for imperialist wars, but rather as a repressive

apparatus, like the cops, against their own people. This type of military is close to crossing that line of being a completely reactionary force. But the soldiers remain on the side of working class because those soldiers and the brass in no way trust each other, and enlisted soldiers are primarily there for economic reasons rather than brainwashed by capitalist ideology.

Soldiers/sailors are put through basic training and provides a rushed course in patriotism and nationalism, but the brass know that this is not enough to secure the allegiance of soldiers/sailors. The military bosses insist that they want creative thinkers in the military, but actually with a severely limited range: for example, encourage creativity in finding more efficient ways of completing given orders.

The police screening process is very different from that of a military recruit. For cops, the state checks the candidates credit and interviews some of his or her family and friends. The state wants to look into the candidates personal life to get a feel for his or her politics and philosophy. This is important in maintaining a reactionary police force that would be capable of shooting their own neighbors, if ordered. They need to screen out anyone who implicitly discloses that they would put their working class brothers and sisters before enforcing capitalist law.

For military recruits, the screening is mainly a rigorous physical and psychological exam. These exams are to ensure that the recruits don't have any physical or mental health problems that could end up being an expensive liability for the bosses in healthcare or on the battlefield. In a way, enlisted soldiers/sailors need only be healthy enough to be used up or killed like pawns in chess, but the cops are thoroughly brainwashed and loyal attack dogs for the ruling class. ICWP must reach out to more soldiers/sailors and have them join us in ending class wars altogether by fighting for communism.

