

### More on the Debate over the Euro

Concerning the debate about what is primary in the contradiction between the US bosses and the European Union (UE), here are a few examples which support that the conflict is primary:

To win the EU's support on international issues and the coming global war, US bosses have been trying to break the EU's reliance on Russia's energy. They have been prodding, with no success, to get them to negotiate energy contracts with Russia as a block.

Instead, Germany helped Russia build a pipeline under the Adriatic Sea which delivers Russian gas directly to Europe. It bypasses the Ukraine where some Ukrainian bosses, supported by the US, used to hold hostage 80% of Russian gas flowing to the EU.

Now, Germany, France and Italy have joined Russia in building another pipeline to transport the rest of Russia's gas to the EU completely bypassing the Ukraine. Because of cost, it might never be built. It is, however, being used, with these EU bosses' knowledge, to force the Ukraine to completely sell its gas infrastructure to Russia.

When the US wanted the Ukraine and the Republic of Georgia inducted into NATO, Germany and France opposed it. Without the Ukraine, Russia could never be the superpower it aspires to be. US and pro-US European bosses use Georgia to transport Caspian Sea energy to Europe bypassing Russia. The 2008 Georgia-Russia war showed how easily Russia can block this route, especially without NATO's protection.

Lastly, German Chancellor Merkel's fifth visit to China early this month highlights the EU tilt towards China. Besides "discussing" the Eurozone crisis, both countries pledged to increase bilateral trade from \$170 billion last year to \$280 billion by 2015. Currently, the EU is China's biggest trade partner, while China is the EU's second largest.

Red debater

### Soccer: Passion or Fanaticism?

Soccer is known throughout the world as the sport of passions. To be a fan is to follow your favorite team closely, and to delight in a classic game, which today you can see more often, whether due to advanced technology or because every day games are converted into big profits for the mega businesses in Europe, Asia, Latin America, North America, and Africa.

There's a popular adage that says, "Soccer unites people," but in reality it divides them. The capitalist system specializes in creating divisions among the working class using fanaticism, nationalism, racism, and patriotism among others. Recently, 73 people died in Egypt after a soccer game. In Mexico, El Salvador, Argentina, England and others there are constantly huge confrontations in the stadiums. These only benefit the big companies and the

capitalist system.

To feel a passion for sports doesn't have anything wrong with it, as I understand it. What's bad is when this becomes fanaticism, when we lose respect for our same friends or family members making jokes, mocking, even humiliating each other just because some one's favorite team lost. Many times, whether intentionally or accidentally, we hurt the feelings of people with comments that can be offensive, damaging our opportunity of discussing with them how to put an end to the capitalist monster.

Let's remember that the teams don't belong to the working class. They're the property of the capitalists who are those who manipulate and orchestrate this dirty game. They pay multimillion dollar salaries to their sports stars, and it's really us who pay these salaries, buying tickets, and attending the games. Ironically, we're paying all this from our poverty wages based on the bosses' exploitation of our daily labor.

In a communist system, certain savage sports will be abolished, like boxing and bull fighting. The other collective sports will be practiced with the goal of objectively enjoying them and without the need of making them into an individual competition or for personal benefit or to push competition between different areas.

The majority at one time or another have been victims of this evil, but what's important is to know how to distinguish what the objective of this is and to begin to work with those who we can show that fanaticism only separates us in-stead of uniting us.

Therefore, comrades and friends, let's build consciousness and let's begin to enjoy sports in a healthy way without getting into heated discussions, much less idolize certain athletes. In reality the best people to admire must be those who dedicated and those who are dedicating their lives to the liberation of the working class!

--Comrade Athlete

### Communism and Christianity

At an anti-war rally with some Christian buddies, I summarized the *Red Flag* letter about religion and asked their opinions.

"We Quakers like the Epistle of James," said one. "Faith without works is dead. You're supposed to stand with the poor, feed the hungry, clothe the naked."

"Isn't that charity, not solidarity?" I asked.

"Some people read it that way," he admitted, "but to me it says that Christians should side with the poor against the rich. James tells the rich to 'weep and howl' because they've got it coming. And Acts describes early Christian communism."

Later I read the text (James 5:2-4): "Your gold and your silver are rusted; and their rust shall be for a testimony against you, and shall



eat your flesh as fire. ... Behold, the hire of the laborers who mowed your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth out."

A Methodist friend agreed that the Bible equates wealth with evil and the poor with righteousness.

Her Christian study group is reading a new book that interprets Jesus' last week (according to Mark) as a protest against the Roman Empire. He launched it at Passover, celebrating the liberation of Jewish people from Egyptian slavery. While Roman soldiers rode into Jerusalem on horses, she explained, Jesus symbolically rode in from the opposite direction on an ass.

"Don't people find the lessons in the Bible that resonate with whatever political and social views they already have?" I asked. She agreed. We need to remember this. Simply quoting Bible passages, and arguing about their meaning, doesn't get us very far.

Sometimes it seems that religion is the main thing standing between a friend and communism. I don't think that's usually true. People who embrace conservative interpretations of religion usually have other issues, like not trusting other workers or themselves.

We must figure out the main contradictions between our religious friends and capitalism, and how to sharpen them, just as with anyone else. Listen to their main questions and objections to communism and try to answer them. Of course it's helpful to be able to use cultural "language" that's familiar to them – including the Bible—but it's secondary.

Party members work to be better communists while struggling against the habits of work and thought that capitalist society drills into us. Our friends' religious ideas are no greater an obstacle than many other things (like nationalism, sexism, individualism, mechanical thinking) that we have to deal with. But we shouldn't ignore or hide the fact that religion is a form of idealist thought inherited from class society, and it contradicts communism's scientific philosophy of dialectical materialism.

--Red Church Goer

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