

# Soldiers, Sailors, Marines: Crucial to a Communist Workers' Revolution

*General, your tank is a powerful  
vehicle.*

*It smashes down forests and  
crushes a hundred men.*

*But it has one defect.*

*It needs a driver.*

*General, your bomber is  
powerful.*

*It flies faster than a storm and*

*carries more than an elephant.*

*But it has one defect.*

*It needs a mechanic.*

*General, man is very useful.*

*He can fly and he can kill.*

*But he has one defect.*

*He can think.*

—Bertolt Brecht, 1939

In this poem you can hear the power of a single soldier. Imagine millions of soldiers, and sailors around the world, uniting with workers and students to build a Red Army and sharing the weapons the imperialists provide us for a communist revolution.

Throughout capitalist history, soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen and women have been deployed in countless wars for the benefit of the world's imperialists. We have been lied to about the reasons for going to war, or attacking our class brothers and sisters.

We have been used to put down strikes and anti-racist rebellions. We have been mistreated while being deployed, put in harm's way, ordered to kill other soldiers and civilians who are members of the working class, like us.

Soldiers are crucial for maintaining the bosses' power, both at home and during imperialist wars. Soldiers will be crucial in taking that power from them and using it for the working class.

In a capitalist society, soldiers and workers survive only as long as our work makes profit for some boss. Racism and sexism divide us and allow the

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## **A RED FLAG**

**pamphlet**

**January, 2015**



bosses to keep us under their thumb. Their cops and courts make sure that we don't challenge their system. If we can't find a job, or can't afford to go to school, we end up in the military, trying to make a better life for our families. There we realize that the bosses use military personnel as disposable game pieces, as expendable as any piece of military equipment.

We in the International Communist Workers' Party see that soldiers can mobilize to turn the guns around and fight for workers' power. Mobilizing the masses for communism is our guiding principle--now and after the revolution.

This pamphlet is to urge soldiers, sailors and marines to join ICWP to mobilize fellow soldiers for communism. It is also to urge revolutionary-minded youth around the world to join the military to help organize enlisted personnel to turn imperialist war into revolutionary war for communism.

In a communist society, soldiers won't have to fight and die for the bosses' interests—we'll fight for our own class. The working class will collectively run society and production will be for use, not profit. There will be no bosses, no money, no privileges, and no personal wealth or private property. Everyone will work for the common good, and share in the results of the collective labor. Communism will free the masses to make the decisions that affect us all.



We know that to achieve a communist society we must organize a mass international Party. It is crucial to organize soldiers, sailors, marines and air force men and women into a Red Army made up of working-class men and women who deeply grasp the meaning and need of communism.

In a revolutionary situation, the bosses will call out the military to try to crush any uprising. Soldiers will either obey orders to attack their class brothers and sisters, or join with workers and students in an insurrection and turn their guns on the bosses.

The Red Army whose seeds we are building today will guarantee the success of the revolution after the working class seizes power. Some Communist parties after the Russian Revolution concentrated on organizing the brass--this was always a tragic mistake. We, like the Bolsheviks, concentrate on the enlisted rank and file.

Building a revolutionary military organization within the bosses' military, adding workers and students to that organization, taking out or winning over the MPs and the brass, we will be able to take state power in a

revolutionary situation.

And after we take power, that Red Army, with political leadership and without ranks or privileges, will be a model of the society we endeavor to build. It will lead the defense of the revolution from external enemies and capitalists trying to make a comeback.

It is our goal to bring communist politics to the barracks so these same rank-and-file soldiers can turn the guns around and use the power of the military in a civil war against the capitalists and the officers who do their bidding.

In the current period of imperialist war, soldiers can play a decisive role when they realize that our real enemy

is not Chinese or Afghan workers and soldiers, but the US ruling class.

Workers and soldiers from every country can realize that they have more in common with each other than they do with their “own” bosses. When we all realize that, we have the basis for an international movement of workers and soldiers against the capitalist bosses of the world.

In this pamphlet, we will lay out the argument for mobilizing the masses of enlisted personnel to join with the rest of our class for communist revolution. We’ll discuss the lessons we have learned from history and those we are currently learning while organizing in the military.

## **The Bosses Have Their Wars of Necessity—We Have Ours!**

We need to fight for a communist world where we produce and fight only to meet the needs of our class, the international working class. We don’t need to compete with other workers to control the world’s resources.

We need to and will share the world’s resources and what we produce so we can all have what we need to live collectively, without imperialist wars. Workers and soldiers all over the world really have the same interest: getting rid of capitalism and building communism.

Before the existence of class society, people lived cooperatively. Everything was shared. Wars were for survival, taking resources for immediate consumption. The invention of agriculture created the conditions for a

surplus, where a small group of people used their control of religion and arms to keep the masses of people under their control and working for them. This was the beginning of class society, which we still live in today. In class society, wars are always for domination.

Capitalism is based on competition for maximum profits. The capitalists slash wages and super-exploit workers to cut costs to beat their rival capitalists.

For the same exact reason, groups of capitalist bosses need to fight rival capitalists to control the territory, resources, labor and markets of rival capitalists. For them, imperialist wars are wars of necessity: the necessity to amass huge wealth to stay on top or to get on top in the deadly competition with their rivals. If they don’t fight, a

rival capitalist-imperialist will take over the factories, workers, markets and resources.

Capitalist and imperialist competition for profit makes wars and world war inevitable—it's built into the system. Class society always leads to war, the need to dominate workers and to control what they produce. These wars will never end until capitalism and all of class society is wiped off the face of the earth.

But it's workers who build all the factories. Workers produce all the products sold by the capitalists. Workers bring the oil and all other resources to market to be used in production and transportation. Soldiers, the sons and daughters of workers, are the ones who fight other workers when the bosses need wars over markets, factories and resources. The bosses have their wars of necessity—we have ours.

Soldiers and workers have in the past fought our own wars of necessity to end slavery and made revolutions to get rid of the bosses' domination over us. But none of these wars have

yet abolished the capitalist system, with its dog-eat-dog competition, exploitation, and wars for domination.

That's why we soldiers and workers have our own war of necessity today, a war to take back the cities and factories our class built as well as the earth's resources. We need a war to get rid of capitalism so that soldiers and workers can build a society without competition, profit or money. We need millions of soldiers, fighting consciously for the first time, for our own needs and the interests of our class.

To win this war of necessity for our class, we need to build a workers' Red Army and our own party, the International Communist Workers' Party, to fight for power and get rid of the capitalists. Soldiers, sailors and marines in the bosses' armies need to and can be won to join the Red Army, along with workers and youth.

The Red Army won't have pay grades, bosses or ranks. We'll all share the risks and the responsibilities and help make and carry out the plans.

We'll be fighting for our own class, not for the profit-hungry bosses. It will be a standing army of a new type to fight for, defend, and expand communism. Everyone will get continuous part-time military training while continuing to work.

This is not a perfect world; there will always be problems, but we'll deal with them in a completely different way, based on working class collectivity rather than capitalist exploitation.



**National Guard reinforces police during Ferguson protests over murder of unarmed black teenager Michael Brown. Guard troops should support the protests.**

## **Know Your History:**

# **Communist Soldiers & Sailors Have Turned the Guns Around**

### **Communist Soldiers and Sailors: Key to Bolshevik Revolution, Still Key Today**

During WWI, workers and soldiers organized the Russian Revolution. One of the most important victories for workers around the world, it was the first time workers led by communists took power in a country. The Bolshevik (Communist) Party, which organized and led the revolution, was founded in the early 20th century.

The Bolshevik leader Lenin saw the need to consolidate masses of workers, soldiers and their peasant allies into one revolutionary force that would concentrate its power and ideology in the fight to overthrow the tsar and capitalism. This would not be possible without winning the masses of industrial workers, soldiers and sailors to revolution. So how did they do it?

The Bolsheviks began their work in the armed forces in 1903 with limited distribution of communist literature to soldiers and sailors. With the transition from feudalism to capitalism and the resulting unemployment, starvation and chaos, discontent was increasing among angry workers and soldiers.

A mass rebellion by sailors on the battleship Potemkin in 1905, during the Russo-Japanese war, showed the tremendous revolutionary potential of masses of workers, peasants and sailors. Workers at the

port of Odessa demonstrated in support of the sailor mutineers who took over the battleship.

When the tsar sent his Cossacks to quell the demonstration by killing many workers, the sailors pointed their gun turrets in defense of the workers.

As inspiring as this event is, sailors rebelled against the brass without sufficient Bolshevik leadership. The Bolsheviks realized that soldiers and sailors could and must be won as soon as possible to revolutionary ideas and the Bolshevik party. They created the Bolshevik Military Organization (BMO) in 1905 for this reason.

This collective organized leafletting and distribution of newspapers. It agitated and organized, and politicized soldiers for revolution. Communist soldiers led discussions and struggles in the barracks and trenches leading up to and during World War I.

Without this bold decision to organize massively in the military, the upcoming revolution of 1917 would not have been successful.



**The Potemkin Mutiny**



**Workers' and Soldiers' Soviet  
St. Petersburg, 1917**

By 1917, a Russian general estimated that there were 2 million deserters. Soldiers left the German front in WWI to join with workers and peasants to collectively make the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution a success, responding massively to the call to turn the imperialist war into a revolution for workers' rule. Within a year, the Red Army was created with the most class conscious and organized elements of the toiling class.

The Bolsheviks believed in the dictatorship of the working class, with a communist party mobilizing workers to build a socialist society where production benefited the whole working class, not the bosses' profits. The Bolsheviks demonstrated that the masses of workers, soldiers and sailors can be won to revolutionary ideas, to making a revolution and taking power for the working class.

Their fatal error was their lack of confidence that workers and soldiers could understand the need to fight directly for communism, instead of socialism.

Today we know that soldiers,

sailors and workers are capable of understanding communist ideas and fighting directly for communism. We are building an international party, to unite soldiers and workers of the world in one mass communist party.

### **The Chinese Revolution**

The lessons of the Chinese Revolution are crucial as we fight to build a Red Army and mobilize for communism today.

In 1927, the Chinese Red Army, led by the Chinese Communist Party (CPC), started with 1200 fighters. As they fought the landlords and big capitalists and marched, they also grew their own food and recruited peasants and soldiers from the capitalists' armies to join them. Those who joined were attracted by the fight against capitalism and by their egalitarian living. There were no privileges, ranks or pay scales. All fought and produced, side by side.

By 1949, the Red Army had 4 million soldiers and another 20 million in militias. They had defeated wave after wave of attacks by the Chinese bosses and Japanese invaders and in 1949, they took power.

During these years, millions of Chinese peasants, workers and soldiers lived under the supply system. They had no wages and very little money. They were motivated by the fight for liberation from capitalist exploitation, for communism. They had a communist life style and system of organization.

Along with the equality of the sup-



**Chinese Red Army, 1930**

was eventually crushed by the army and the revisionist (capitalist disguised as communist) CPC leadership including Mao.

But the lessons of the supply system

ply system, however, the CPC made alliances with well-off peasants and “good” capitalists that undermined communist relations and the success of the fight. Even in their revolutionary headquarters in Yan’an (formerly Yenan), there were struggles about whether privileges should be allowed.

After they took power in 1949, the CPC abolished the supply system and set up a wage system with large inequalities. The party set up socialism with its wages, ranks, inequality and money—state capitalism—rather than communism.

They betrayed the desires of the masses for communism. However, the masses of soldiers went back to their villages after the war, where many implemented the supply system in massive People’s Communes.

These communes were later disbanded by the leadership, but millions learned from their experiences with the supply system that communism was not only possible, but the only goal worth fighting for.

This experience was crucial in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution against the “Red Bourgeoisie,” which began in 1966. This mass movement

in the massive Red Army belong to all of us as we fight today directly for a mass Red Army and a world without money, rank or bosses, a world in which the international working class will produce and fight only for the interests of our class. We point out these weaknesses so we can learn from them and improve our practice. These experiences give us confidence that the masses of soldiers, workers and our allies will mobilize, live and fight for communism.

### **The Vietnam War**

During the US ruling-class war in Vietnam, GI resistance was as decisive in the US defeat as was the dedication of the revolutionary Vietnamese fighters. Resistance began in 1966 with the refusal of three privates from Fort Hood, Texas to ship out to Vietnam. In 1968, soldiers from Fort Hood and Fort Carson refused orders to deploy to Chicago for riot control at the Democratic Convention.

By 1969, resistance had spread to the battle zone, when, for example, a rifle company from the famed 1st Air Cavalry Division flatly refused - on CBS TV - to advance down a dangerous trail. In the following 12 months



***In 1968, President Johnson ordered Ft. Hood soldiers to Chicago's black neighborhoods fearing residents there would join the Vietnam War protests at the Democratic National Convention.***

***Led by 200 black troops, the soldiers revolted, refusing to be sent to serve riot control duty.***

the 1st Air Cavalry notched up 35 combat refusals.

Between 1968 to 1970 morale rapidly disintegrated and rebellion was widespread within the U.S. military. The anti-war movement, the civil rights movement, the mass urban rebellions against racism, and Vietnamese revolutionaries reaching out to US GIs all had an impact on the growth of the movement.

Most of the resistance and the most militant revolts were led by black GI's who were fed up with the racism inherent in capitalism and its military. They saw the war against Vietnamese workers as racist as well. Many white GI's united with their black brothers and sisters in multiracial rebellion against the brass and the war. If their anger had been galvanized to fight for communism, they would have mobilized masses in and out of the military not only to end the war in Vietnam, but to put an end to capitalism-imperialism for good with communist revolution.

Initially response to mutinous behavior was swift and harsh. However,

as the war progressed, the stockades became over-crowded with AWOL soldiers and laced with political organizers. Several stateside stockade rebellions took place. In Vietnam, GIs rebelled and burned down the Long Binh stock-

ade—twice, the second time during the mass urban rebellions following the murder of Martin Luther King.

In an article published in the *Armed Forces Journal* (June 7, 1971), Marine Colonel Robert D. Heinl Jr. wrote: "By every conceivable indicator, our army that remains in Vietnam is in a state approaching collapse...The Pentagon has now disclosed that fraggings in 1970 (209 killings) have more than doubled those of the previous year. Word of the deaths of officers will bring cheers at troop movies or in bivouacs of certain units."

In the Americal Division, plagued by poor morale, fraggings during 1971 were estimated to be running around one a week. War equipment was frequently sabotaged and destroyed.

By 1972 roughly 300 anti-war and anti-military newspapers had been put out by enlisted people. Many hundreds of GIs created these papers; thousands more helped distribute them, and tens of thousands read them.

By the early 1970s the government



had to begin pulling out of the ground war and switching to an “air war,” in part because many of the ground troops who were supposed to do the fighting were hamstringing the world’s mightiest military force by their sabotage and resistance. With this shift, the Navy became an important center of resistance to the war. Black and white sailors would rebel together.

The most significant of these took place on board the USS Constellation off Southern California, in November 1972. In response to a threat of less-than-honorable discharges against several black sailors, a group of over 100 black and white sailors staged a day-and-a-half long sit-in. Fearful of losing control of his ship at sea to full-scale mutiny, the ship’s commander brought the Constellation back to San Diego. One hundred and thirty-two sailors were allowed to go ashore. They

refused orders to re-board the ship several days later, staging a defiant dockside strike. In spite of the seriousness of the rebellion, not one of the sailors involved was arrested. The *New York Times* aptly described this revolt as “the first mass mutiny in the U.S. Navy.”

The House Armed Services Committee summed up the crisis of rebellion in the Navy: “Recent instances of sabotage, riot, willful disobedience of orders, and contempt for authority ...are clear-cut symptoms of a dangerous deterioration of discipline.”



Off the USS Constellation, 1972

## It's not just the USA

It's not just in imperialist armies that we need to organize. We're building ICWP around the world. This pamphlet includes sections from Mexico and El Salvador where we're beginning to organize enlisted personnel as well. The essence of the military's role is the same in every capitalist country.

The role of soldiers around the world is changing. The contradictions are intensifying. The capitalist crisis around the world has submerged the

working class into a deep misery that cannot be reversed, driving millions of workers to the streets into ever increasingly massive protest against capitalism. These protests are increasing and there are not enough police to deal with them.

No longer is the primary role of these capitalist armies to invade or defend another country. As this worldwide crisis increases, bosses around the world must resort to the use of the military to try to repress angry workers

trying to get a “better life under capitalism”. The bosses have no choice. They know that when masses of workers rebel they must call on the military. Youth, mainly from the working class, are trained in the army to follow orders to repress their own class. What should a communist soldier do when given orders like this? The articles from Mexico and El Salvador deal with this question.

### **Mexico:**

The massacre of Tlatelolco in 1968 was the most brutal example of how the Mexican army has been used as a repressive force against the working class to keep the bosses in power.

The Tlatlaya massacre as well, in which 22 supposed criminals were massacred by the army in the summer of 2014, exposed a power struggle between groups of capitalists fighting for control of certain areas in Mexico.

In these wars among capitalist bosses, the workers and soldiers have nothing to gain. Soldiers must understand that they have more in common

with the working class than with the bosses. The only way to change their lives for the better is by mobilizing for communism and destroying capitalism.

Crime, corruption and poverty are the inevitable products of capitalism, governed by money and private property. The bosses accumulate profits without caring how, with their State apparatus (including police, Army, jails, and judicial system) in the service of capital. They try to make us lose class consciousness, either out of fear or through their racist, nationalist, and sexist ideology. They want us apathetic or terrified so we won't organize and destroy their system.

Some say that the army supports the population in disasters. Actually, during disasters, the bosses fear the anger and possible rebellion of the workers against the system. The army serves at the same time as a symbol of help and an instrument of repression.

Soldiers, as part of the working class, must understand that the solution is not to blindly obey the bosses' orders but to build communist consciousness and unite with their class brothers and sisters to destroy this system and build a communist system, where the priority will be the well-being and security of the whole working class.



**Fresco painted by Diego Rivera in 1928  
“Distribution of Arms”**

## Ex-Guerrillera from El Salvador Writes:

### **Survival and Success Depend on Organizing Soldiers for Communism**

During the pseudo revolutionary war in El Salvador I learned how valuable it is to have soldier friends inside the army. Now as an ICWP member, I have learned about the great revolutions and the vital role that revolutionary soldiers have played.

Therefore, I am convinced that a communist revolution of the magnitude and importance that ICWP is organizing could not triumph and maintain its forward march if today we do not struggle sharply to organize communist consciousness inside the bosses' armies.



One of my experiences took place in the village where I, a young woman at the time, lived with my family. Since the invasions by the army were frequent and savage, we had already set up posts with guards who warned the residents when an invasion was coming. There were two guard posts. One was a little close and the other farther away.

In August 1980 it happened that the guards farther away fell asleep and when the closer ones gave the warning, the army was already at the entrance to the village. Our house was one of the first, so they took us by surprise.

I left running as well as I could and

zigzagged through some small bushes, but the soldiers were already coming behind me. I could see and hear them. Worse still, I was dressed in bright orange and I heard when an official or commander ordered the soldiers to kill me.

A soldier answered, "It's just a cow that's moving."

The angry commander yelled, "how could it be a cow you stupid idiot. It's a guerrilla."

Finally the soldiers shot but they shot in the air. This gave me time to run and hide in a lake full of aquatic flowers.

In February, 1981, I was in the house recuperating from an illness when I was surprised by a military contingent. The interrogation was intense, like "why is a guerrilla here? Where are the weapons?"

I thought that I was safe until a soldier who I knew very well came into the house. He had participated in meetings and political activities carried out in our house. When I saw him, I thought that he was going to denounce me, that this was our end.

However, he looked at me and left the house without saying a word. To this day I am very grateful to this soldier because he saved my life and that of other members of my family.

These soldiers reacted out of class consciousness. They knew they had more in common with me than with the bosses. Incidents like these were common. It was also common for soldiers to desert the army with their weapons to join the guerrilla. Also, when others were captured, they decided to stay to fight along with the rebels.

Why do some soldiers fight to defend the government which is the enemy of the working class to which they themselves belong? In some countries they are volunteers forced by the illusion that in the army they will learn a skill or that the army will help them financially with their studies.

In other countries they are recruited by force. From the first day they are threatened that any act of rebellion will be paid by being whipped or killed. There are other physical punishments to keep them terrorized.

In times of war the bosses recur to drugs to keep soldiers fighting. In spite of all this there are rebellions because of the lousy food, mistreatment, and the horrible poverty wages they receive.

When they are sent into combat

the majority would avoid it if they could. Or if there are alternatives, they would be to desert as an individual or as a group, or political alternatives in which the soldiers believe or have been won to side with the rest of the working class to fight against the bosses' system and for communism.

Fellow Party members, let us not be afraid to send our youth to organize in the army. There are infinite possibilities. If we do not do it, we are jeopardizing the victory of communism.

As an international communist Party we have the historic responsibility to secure communist political work that will lead to recruiting soldiers to our Party in the USA, Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras, South Africa, Spain and all countries.

## **The International Communist Workers' Party Organizes Soldiers, Sailors, & Marines**

The capitalists have their plans to wage more wars, including World War III, to maintain their power and empires. We must have ours!

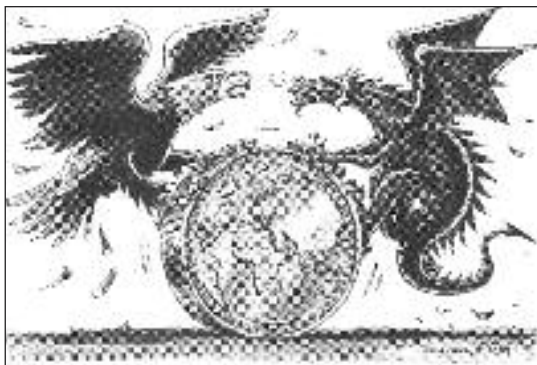
The world is dividing into two competing capitalist blocs, the US and its allies on one side and China, Russia, Iran and their allies on the other. As a declining power, the US is being forced to focus on its main rivals, the

Chinese and Russian bosses. That's why they're concentrating their navy in the South China Sea.

As the contradiction between the two competing blocs finally intensifies into world war, every capitalist will have to choose a side. The potential for revolution will increase in every country.

We must have our plans to strip the capitalists of their power, to take power and build a communist society to meet our class' needs, not the socialism that our predecessors built. Soldiers are crucial to any revolutionary strategy. In the current period of imperialist war, soldiers play an especially decisive role.

With the ongoing occupations



in Iraq and Afghanistan and looming wars with Russia and China, US capitalists need a military they can count on. Today the most influential imperialists, the US, Russia, and China, are investing massively in their armed forces. The US and Russia are modernizing their lethal nuclear arsenal. US imperialism has enjoyed hegemony since World War II, but its power is declining. Iranian bosses trading oil in the currencies of China, India, Japan and Europe creates panic among US imperialists who have profited from oil being traded only in US dollars.

For the coming wars, US imperialists need a motivated standing army. And that is the bosses' Achilles' heel. They will be forced to institute a military draft. They need to rely on the most oppressed working class youth to fight their wars for them.

### **Can we win soldiers to our ideas?**

During deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan, some soldiers refused to go on "suicide" missions and stood up to "gung ho" brass and anti-Arab racism. One soldier explained to his friends that "hajji" was being used as a racist term to dehumanize Arabs, to justify attacking them. Many agreed.

Some soldiers have distributed communist literature to their fellow soldiers. Many agree that the main enemy is the capitalist-imperialist bosses who put soldiers in harm's way for their profits, not workers of other countries.

Youth and other members of ICWP have taken our communist newspaper



*Red Flag* to soldiers and marines near military bases. Many have gladly taken the paper and supported the idea of fighting for a communist society that meets the needs of the workers, instead of fighting for the bosses' profits and empire. They're open to talking about the real reasons they're being sent overseas and how communism will work.

Recently, a red soldier overheard a conversation between other soldiers about communism. They said that communism would be the best way to organize society, except most people are greedy, so it wouldn't work. The soldier joined in and asked each of the ten people if they were too greedy to live in a communist system where everyone shared what there was. Each one said, "No."

"Well, if among all of us, we all could live in a communist system, I guess it shows that it's possible," he said. They agreed.

There's crucial work to do now. Soldiers are sons and daughters of workers. They can be motivated to fight for their class, not the imperialists. We need more communists mobilizing their fellow soldiers to stand against racism and nationalism, for internationalism and communism.

## A Red Sailor Reports:

*For me, enlisting in the Navy as a communist is a fulfilling experience. I am making a contribution to an important cause. On one hand, I have influenced a lot of sailors' lives, and most respect the struggle for the working class. On the other hand, I never anticipated how much the Navy and other sailors would affect me. I never thought I would make so many life-long friends while I was enlisted. I have grown leaps and bounds by becoming a sailor and struggling with sailors to advance communism.*

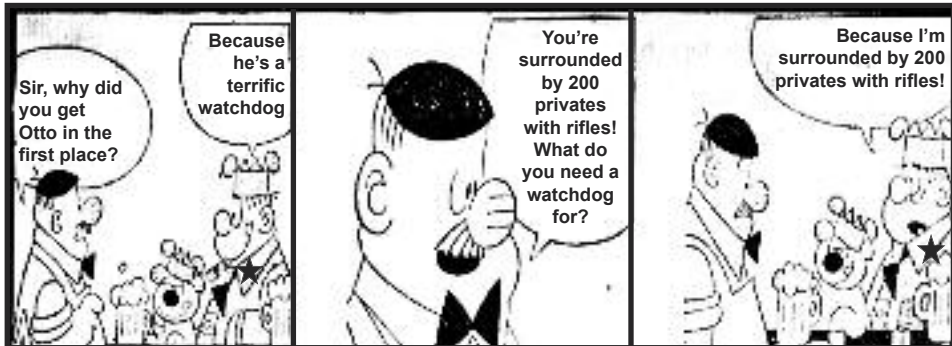
*Our military brothers and sisters share a concern for our working-class interests. We come from working-class families, and we live in working-class neighborhoods. Sailors know there is a unique connection among all people who go out and earn a living. We don't respect the lifestyles of capitalists, who live off of the work of other people.*

*There are a few sailors who cling to the capitalist myth that they can join the ranks of the elite if they just work hard enough. While hard work is essential to making a difference in the world, we don't need a college degree to realize that capitalism doesn't offer an even playing field. Upward social mobility, even with endless effort, is a*

*rare exception rather than the rule.*

*The US Navy at the moment is not on the mutinous edge, as Russian sailors were right before they took control of the Potemkin in 1905 or as the sailors on the USS Kitty Hawk and the USS Constellation were during the Vietnam War. But circumstances change quickly and in some cases revolutionary opportunities arise fast. This is why it is essential that we work in the military. Communists need to be in the right position when a revolution begins. A serious party must always have comrades influencing and organizing soldiers and sailors inside the military.*

*The more influence we have on the inside, the more power we will have when qualitative changes present themselves. These big changes build up in time and when the proper circumstances are set, it only needs to be ignited by a seemingly random event. For the Potemkin mutiny, the conditions had been brewing for a while and the rotten meat that was fed to the crew was just the spark that started the fire. But the mutiny would never have succeeded if the sailors had not previously planned and organized a course of action. The real rotten meat has always been--and is today-- capi-*



*talism. That's why I'm organizing in the navy and talking to soldiers about communism.*



### ICWP Takes Communist Ideas to Soldiers, Sailors and Marines

The bosses' army brings working class young people together, white working class youth from rural Arkansas and Idaho, immigrant youth from Haiti and El Salvador, black youth from the inner city Detroit and East St. Louis. All of them are faced with the reality that capitalism in crisis has nothing to offer any of them but more racism, more war, more unemployment and more exploitation. When communists in ICWP reach out to these young soldiers, sailors and marines, we find them open to our ideas.

Our experiences outside Joint Base Lewis-McCord, Washington are typical. One summer day, dozens of GIs lined up waiting for a traffic light to get onto the base gratefully took

copies of **Red Flag**; several gave us donations.

When we said that we're building a movement of soldiers and workers against the rich who put us in harm's way for oil profits, a soldier gave us the fist and said "I want that paper." As we explained that this is a communist paper, and that we need to organize a revolution, he and his friend each gave 50 cents and sincerely thanked us.

Outside Camp Pendleton, California, one autumn weekend, we had other interesting conversations. "We're building a movement to unite workers, soldiers and Marines to get rid of the system run by the rich who send us to kill and die for their profits and empire," said a **Red Flag** distributor to a group of Marines. They took the paper. Many, especially those who had already been deployed, showed a deep-seated anger and mistrust of the officers and the government.

Four black Marines gladly took **Red Flag**. They are angry at the Marine brass and hated being in the Marines and the racism they encountered. They said that the government lies about their real reasons for sending troops to Afghanistan, Iraq and, in the future, to Iran. "We talk about this stuff all the time," said one. "We'll share your paper with other Marines."

"Being on the outside, you don't know the level of anger and resentment that many of us have. You would be surprised," said a three-year veteran Marine. He also said that Marines are open to revolution.

Another Marine thought the invasion of Iraq was all about control of

oil but questioned why the US was in Afghanistan. When we said it was the fight between the US, China and Russia for control of oil pipelines, he wanted to read more. He said communism sounded good but never worked. As we explained that it was socialism that failed because it kept too many features of capitalism, he took our newspaper and promised to read it.

We all saw that many Marines and soldiers are open to communist ideas. The ideological struggle with them must be sharp and consistent so their justified anger is taken out against the bosses, not against other workers. Communist ideas of workers' international unity against the bosses are the key.

## JOIN US!

They send us to kill and die in their wars for profit. Once at home, we reflect back on the service we provided and realize the world is not safer. Our medical needs are not met, and we are forced to join the unemployment lines along with our brothers and sisters. But the most daunting fact is that our fellow soldiers, friends, and family members have given their lives to perpetuate this capitalist system that wages wars for the bosses' interests.

Everywhere we turn, we witness racism, sexism, and oppression that we all hate. It is time to concentrate this hatred on the real enemy. We need to take this anger to a revolutionary communist level where soldiers, sailors, workers and students prepare for the day in which we can wage a communist revolution for the benefit of the entire international working class.

It is a challenging task, but everyone must guarantee that soldiers in the barracks, trenches, tents and motor pools are discussing communist ideas



and reading and writing for *Red Flag* newspaper. As communist soldiers, workers and students, we urge youth to join the military to mobilize their fellow soldiers for communism. And we urge all soldiers to join our movement and fight for the communist future workers around the world need.

Together we'll build a red army that will defeat the bosses and end wars for profit once and for all. We'll free our class to build the society that is dedicated solely to meeting our needs. Join us!

**JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST  
WORKERS' PARTY**

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