

RED FLAG

NEWSPAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST WORKERS' PARTY * ICWPREDFLAG.ORG



Bangladesh: Women garment workers lead massive rebellion

NEED TO BUILD A COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

Capitalism-imperialism's constant need to extract maximum profits from the working class has just resulted in the murder of at least 25 more Bangladeshi garment workers who jumped to their deaths when the 11-story building they worked in caught on fire. Hundreds more were burned or injured.

This cold-blooded murder will undoubtedly add fuel to the mass revolt that started on December 10, when thousands of Bangladeshi workers – mainly women – demanded an increase in the miserable minimum wage. These workers, however, like workers worldwide in open rebellion against the capitalists' unrelenting attacks, need to destroy predatory capitalism with a communist revolution.

Fires due to short circuits and substandard electrical wiring – amounting to murder -- are common in Bangladeshi garment factories. But, the bosses also murder in other ways. Their minimum wage of 12 cents an hour (\$25 per month) can only mean a slow insidious death for 3.5 million Bangladeshi garment workers – 80% women – and their children.

The minimum wage--unchanged since 2006--was raised to \$43, but the garment bosses' refusal to grant all workers this meager increase has triggered mass rebellions. Workers have marched in the streets, battled cops, set fires, destroyed equipment and garment factories, blocked freeways and held sit-ins—mainly in the port city of Chittagong.

As the bosses enforced their dictatorship over the workers, on Sunday the police killed at least four people and wounded over one hundred. On Monday, however, the protests had spread to many other of the

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Boeing Workers Must Decide:

MOBILIZE FOR WORLD'S WORKERS, NOT RACIST BOSSES

SEATTLE, WA, 12/9 — International Association of Machinists (IAM) district president Tom Wroblewski claimed a “great victory” at tonight’s union meeting. The organizers of the MexicoNow conference, meant to showcase the Mexican aerospace industry, canceled their meeting at Seattle Hilton.

Wroblewski asserted that the union’s threat to mobilize caused these bosses to back down. Workers need a different mobilization: an international mobilization that smashes the bosses’ system that pits worker against worker while impoverishing us all.

Wroblewski planned a peculiar protest. It featured capitalist politicians from the Governor to representatives from the U.S. Senate and Congress. These are the same politicians that stepped in to delay our strike last contract after we voted to hit the bricks. The same politicians that have voted billions of dollars for the US-Mexican bosses’ phony “War on Drugs”, in reality to militarize Mexico to control its natural resources – especially oil – and keep it as a haven of low paid labor for US companies like Boeing.

“We stopped them from ‘stealing our jobs,’” he crowed. “And we’re going to build the same types of movements wherever they try to set up in the U.S.” Obviously, he is not talking about stopping the big

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Mexican Students see:

YOUTH WELCOME RED FLAG

We ended up with a double load: the weight of almost 250 *Red Flags* that we carried on our backs on the one hand, and on the other, that we were a few days behind schedule in selling them. Our regret was momentary, once we began selling the papers in the university classrooms, the horizon started to brighten.

Soon we verified how important it is to sell our newspaper and the importance it has and will have in massively organizing the working class for our International Communist Workers’ Party.

A student told us, “Hey, friend, in the last edition, I was reading an interesting article and it sent me to a page that didn’t exist, so I don’t know how it ended.”

In another class, a young woman gave us back the paper that we’d just given her, telling us, “Thanks, someone just gave this to me. I already have it.” We soon understood that she’d gotten it from a friend who takes 5 copies of each edition. Our enthusiasm was growing.

In another classroom, at the end of class, as we finished selling, a youth stopped us and asked several questions. “You talk about revolution. Is this revolution ideological or armed? If you’re talking about an armed revolution, does the end justify the means?”

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Wikileaks, Iran and Nuclear War:

MOBILIZE WORKERS TO BUILD A NEW WORLD ON THE ASHES OF THE OLD

Wikileaks founder Julius Assange has been released from jail but he's still facing deportation to the US on espionage charges. Meanwhile the rulers' mass media are happily publishing "leaked" diplomatic cables to push for expanded wars on Iran and Pakistan.

"These are the cables revealing the secret pleas of top Arab leaders for Washington to take action against Iran's nuclear program," reported the *Christian Science Monitor* (11/29/10).

These leaders included Saudi Arabian King Abdullah, Bahrain's King Hamad, and the Abu Dhabi crown prince, Mohamed bin Zayed al Nahyan, who "requested in 2005 that America attack Iran with ground forces."

Even as the Obama administration prepared for the recent negotiations with Iran, it readied a strike on Iranian nuclear facilities. "We've actually been thinking about military options for a significant period of time," Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told CNN. (Quoted in *CSM*, above)

India-Pakistan Tension Could Explode into Nuclear War

In 2004, India's "Cold Start" doctrine began consolidating its armed forces for a quick offensive mobilization against heavily-armed Pakistan. US diplomats admit they don't know what might lead India to attempt such a major non-nuclear attack.

"Although Cold Start is designed to punish Pakistan in a limited manner without triggering a nuclear response," says one cable, "they can not be sure whether Pakistani leaders will in fact refrain from such a response." (*Guardian*, 11/30/10)

To counter China's rise in South Asia, the US and India agreed in 2008 on a qualitatively new nuclear policy. India promised (!) not to build more nuclear weapons. In return it can now buy nuclear fuel and US dual-use nuclear technology "including materials and equipment that could be used to enrich uranium or reprocess plutonium, potentially creating the material for nuclear bombs." (Jayshree Bajoria, "The U.S.-India Nuclear Deal," www.cfr.org, updated 11/5/10)

China is now helping Pakistan build a fifth nuclear reactor. Wikileaks reveal US and British intelligence claims that Pakistan is rapidly expanding its arsenal of 70-90 Hiroshima-type nuclear warheads. India has

almost as many available to attack a much smaller nation.

START: Imperialists, Choose Your Weapons!

These developments make the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) negotiations look like a sick joke. However, the US imperialists are mostly united around ratifying a new START treaty to replace the 1991 agreement that expired in 2009.

This would let them openly monitor Russia's nuclear arsenal. They hope Russia will help prevent Iran and other countries from developing more nuclear weapons. The Russian bosses threaten that, without a new treaty, there could be a new arms race like that of the Cold War.

"The 1,550 warheads we [the US rulers] still retain are enough to destroy India, Pakistan, Iran, North Korea, China and Russia," says the liberal group Physicians for Social Responsibility.

But time is not on the side of US imperialism.

"A Russian state-owned company is set to control up to half of US uranium production by the middle of the decade," says *Financial Times* (12/6/10) Russia's ARMZ is purchasing 51% of Canada One, which controls uranium mines in Wyoming, Canada, Kazakhstan, Australia and South Africa.

"Eighty percent of uranium used in the U.S. is imported and Russia is one of the biggest suppliers," the report continued. "The deal is the latest sign of how the US has lost control of key components of the nuclear supply chain."

That makes "arms control" strategically important for US imperialism. It also increases the likelihood of the US resorting to world war – complete with nuclear weapons – sooner rather than later.

Turn Imperialist War into Communist Revolution

The rise of imperialism ushered in an era of increasingly deadly wars. Workers – whether civilians or in uniform – have paid the price. Civilians were about 40% of those who died in World War I, 65% in World War II, and – according to information from Wikileaks – about 80% in Iraq.

World War III will certainly involve more than the two nuclear bombs the US dropped the last time. The international working class can't stop this war before it starts. But the more effectively we mobilize workers and youth – especially soldiers! – for communism now, the sooner we'll be able to turn World War III into communist revolution.

Communist victory will let workers rapidly dismantle nuclear weapons and other imperialist technologies that serve mainly to destroy our class brothers and sisters. We will defend and spread communism worldwide by continuing to mobilize the masses militarily and in production in a world devastated by imperialist war.

Communism won't have secret diplomacy. We don't, and won't, negotiate with our class enemies. Our policy will be exactly what it is today, boldly proclaimed: Smash all borders! Workers of the world, unite! One world, one class, one International Communist Workers' Party!



Rebellious Russian Soldiers Join the Revolution

REBELLION OF WORKERS AND YOUTH SHOWS REVOLUTIONARY POTENTIAL

Rome, Italy, Dec. 13— Anti-fascist protesters fought riot police as mass demonstrations swept Italy after the hated Prime Minister Berlusconi defeated (barely) a parliamentary no-confidence vote. Workers joined youth in more than a dozen cities, mobilizing against cutbacks to universities and social services.

In Rome, one hundred youth disrupted the Stock Market with posters attacking the capitalists as "racist

Mafia thieves." In Palermo, a dozen briefly shut down the airport.

The defiant spirit of these militant protesters – like that of the British youth who attacked Prince Charles' limousine – hints at the revolutionary potential of the European working class.

But even the most militant reform doesn't lead to revolution. If it's not Berlusconi, it will be some other capitalist boss – maybe even a socialist one, as in Spain – who

leads the attack on the workers. Even the angriest anti-capitalist slogans don't by themselves lead to communism.

Red Flag readers in Europe and everywhere need to mobilize the masses of workers and students who hate the bosses' racist system, but to fight for communism, not reform. An important step is to get this paper into the hands of friends and relatives far and wide.



Rome-Italy--December 14--Workers and students beat a racist cop.



JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST WORKERS' PARTY (ICWP)

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WHAT WE DO COUNTS

Recently we wrote a letter about a driver who was helping distribute *Red Flag* and with whom we've developed a patient, but persistent, political struggle. Following a plan made in a meeting, we met with him again, together with a mechanic who's distributing 10 papers, and a driver from another shop invited by the first driver.

The discussion centered on the need to expand communist ideas and that any other type of struggle without this goal is a betrayal of the working class.

The invited driver turned out to be a worker who was very advanced politically and said he agreed with many of the conclusions of our party, because he had come close to these conclusions.

He mentioned quotes from Lenin and showed a lot of loyalty to his class. He told us that he had had disagreements with groups who condemn the Russian Revolution without rescuing the great lessons of this

achievement. He also mentioned that this great revolution crystallized all that should be appreciated and learned, as well as what should be rejected.

This new worker represents a great potential, and we're convinced that with study groups, very soon he'll be an eloquent proponent of our political line with other workers.

During the conversation our old comrade driver brought tamales, and we ate them. Then he asked our opinion about their flavor since he's thinking about bringing them to the New Year's Party that the workers are organizing. This party is to create more unity among the workers in this shop, and the company is not participating.

We felt proud and optimistic that we're advancing, not in the reformist struggle, but in recruiting to communism. These workers in the meeting have a wide base of friends. They're not isolated, they are respec-

ted and liked for their militancy, and the most important thing is that they have confidence that ICWP and *Red Flag* will give them the understanding of how to fight more effectively to politicize more workers.

Then as we said good bye and thanked them for the delicious tamales and the meeting about communism that was so enjoyable, one of the comrades gave *Red Flag* to the new driver. He asked, "Can you give me another for my cousin?" "Of course," we answered, "that was precisely going to be our next question, if you wanted to take more."

The driver mentioned at the beginning took out his wallet and said, "Here are \$100, my contribution for this month and next month too, because I'll be on vacation." We thanked him, and we all said good bye. Going to our cars, we thought with a lot of satisfaction that the giant is awakening. Forward, comrades, what we do counts.

Winter Freedom School:

MAKE COMMUNIST EDUCATION COME ALIVE

How can the principle of "mobilizing the masses for communism" be used to guide our political work? (*Red Flag*, v. 1 #21, p. 14). Our campus club discussed, as an example, our "freedom school."

When summer session 2009 was cancelled due to budget cutbacks, Party members led in organizing our first "freedom school." We weren't very clear on the concept, but we got a dozen students to meet and make a plan. Twice a week for most of the summer, students volunteered to lead the study of political economy, philosophy, and world relations. There was also some math tutoring and creative writing. By the end of the summer, fifty people had taken part.

There was a lot of struggle to raise communist ideas. For example, some philosophy sessions were led by a non-communist student. Others contested his bourgeois ideas and assumptions. Other sessions read parts of *The Communist Manifesto* and struggled against the false ideas about communism that students had learned in regular college and high school classes.

"We take apart capitalism, communism, socialism and what we think is right and wrong to the point of what works," a student reflected.

We each brought food when we could and everyone shared. Other times, we all got hungry. "That was like communism on a very small scale," a student commented, "but we've got to be convinced that it could work on a larger scale, like for the whole world."

Four of the students involved have since joined the International Communist Workers' Party.

Now winter session 2011 has been cancelled and another "freedom school" is planned. Our club has started to talk about what to do differently, based on our experience and on "mobilizing masses for communism."

First, we are already relying on a group of *Red Flag* readers to give leadership.

We are asking all our *Red Flag* readers to participate in Freedom School and to invite their friends (including unemployed workers and others who may not be college students).

We are explaining to them, in advance, that our main goal is to get a little practical experience of how we will collectively organize education in communist society. This is part of our "six months plan" to double Party membership and expand the circulation of *Red Flag* on this campus.

We'll make copies of the "communist education" articles previously published in *Red Flag* to share with everyone at the start. Near the beginning of Freedom School we will lead a discussion of communist vs. capitalist education. That way, we will try to frame the project as a small example of "mobilizing masses for communism."

We will also mobilize Freedom School students to



bring *Red Flag* to workers, as a few of us already do.

At the same time, we will show the limits of this work under capitalism. For example, education under communism will be closely tied to production. We have a plan for students to get industrial training. But we can't link education to industrial production because the bosses own the means of production!

Large-scale true communist education will become possible only when the working class, mobilized through the Party, rises up in armed insurrection and smashes the bosses' rule. Then, the Party we are building today – exploding into a mass Party of millions and more — will use our armed state power to mobilize the masses on a worldwide scale to build a fully communist society.

This is the vision, the goal, and the plan we hope to make real for students in Winter Freedom School.

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transnational companies from moving to where they can squeeze higher profits from our brothers' and sisters' labor. Only a communist revolution can do this.

Anything short of it is an unmistakable appeal to nationalism: not a word was uttered about organizing with our brothers and sisters in Mexico, where aerospace workers are forced to slave for an average of \$3.50 an hour. It's no wonder that the number of foreign aerospace companies there has shot up from 61 in 2005 to 193 in 2010 – all this while the "War on Drugs" was intensified and the heavy presence of the Mexican army on the streets has meant higher homicide rates, rampant tortures, rapes and disappearances.

No, Wroblewski's mobilization is not the kind of mobilization the working class needs. This is a mobilization that builds capitalist illusions, helping the US bosses institute fascism to impose their austerity (war economy) on us to wage wider wars for oil and eventually World War Three for world domination. In the end, not only will such nationalist mobilization abandon the world's workers to the bosses' fascism and bloodbath but also it won't even save the kind of jobs we have now.

These nationalist mobilizations are part and parcel of the "International" union's plan for a U.S. re-industrialization policy in the "national interest." Supporting and funding Democratic politicians is central to their strategy.

The last contract at Pratt and Whitney in Cheshire, Conn. shows what that policy really looks like. The union offered a 10% pay cut to keep two plants open in Connecticut. In the end, they lost those plants anyway.

In contrast, we need political rallies and protests that spread the understanding that communist revolution will eliminate the dog-eat-dog nature of this system.

Capitalism not only pits boss against boss, but also worker against worker. Producing what we produce for sale, not for need, inevitably drives the boss to seek the lowest labor costs.

Communism is a system that produces for the needs of our class, not for sale. Under communism we will welcome the extra hands of the international working class. We can use the extra time to advance the cultural and educational needs of all workers and their families.

Uniting with Mexican workers now, for instance,

can give us a taste of how a communist society will organize production. We can start by distributing the stories of international communist struggle in the pages of *Red Flag*. We can follow up with personal contacts and support for each other's struggle against an increasingly crisis-prone system.

As the bosses' crisis continues, the logic of capitalist trade unionism drives the union leadership more closely into the arms of the bosses. The logic of communism means our readers must become sellers and financial supporters of *Red Flag*-organized in networks, study groups and fighting fractions.

For the last few years, we've fought for our union to endorse May Day demonstrations on the basis of building a movement against anti-immigrant racism and international solidarity. We have to expand that fight starting with our May Day dinners in the beginning of the next year. Now is the time to mobilize our networks to build dinners that feature the power of the international working class.

We urge workers to join ICWP and engage other workers politically with the goal of recruiting them to the only Party of the working class. This and only this will guarantee our victory. We have a great responsibility. History demands it. Let's step forward!

ALL TO THE FACTORIES AND THE BARRACKS!

“Now it’s our turn. Since the first shots of World War III have already been shot, we will make the next great revolution. Just like the Chinese and the Russian workers did, so will we,” said a young man.

“I’m scared to think that the Third World War is coming,” added a young woman with deep black eyes.

“Do not be afraid,” another young man answered

“The working class will control everything when the war is over.”

These comments, among others, were made in a group of about 30 young people. The group had read, studied and discussed the *Red Flag* article, “Prelude to Third World War has begun.” The session included a brief explanation of the falling rate of profit and overproduction, and how these aspects represent the main reasons why world war was drawing closer.

As a result, more youth have committed themselves to distributing *Red Flag*. It is important that all of us recognize that reading, studying and discussing the nature of the current time period, analyzed in the pages of *Red Flag*, will make it clear for

the base of the International Communist Workers Party (ICWP) which road to take.

That road consists of taking heed of the necessary task of building an international, mass, communist party based in the factories and in the barracks to mobilizes the masses of workers to communism and prepares the necessary bases for insurrection and the eventual triumph of the revolution.

After years of struggle and organization inside the key sectors of the military and industry, Lenin was correct when he declared in the mist of insurrection, “We must *dispatch* our entire group to the *factories and the barracks*. Their place is there, the pulse of life is there, there lies the source of the salvation of our revolution.”

He then added, “Placing the question in this manner, upon concentrating our entire group in the factories and the barracks, *we will be able to determine the precise moment in which to start the insurrection.*”

As the young man declared with light in his eyes, “Now it’s our turn!”

RED FLAG WAVES IN OAXACA

Oaxaca—Wednesday, December 1, 2010—We distributed *Red Flag* in the protest of workers and teachers of Section 22 during the inauguration of the new governor of Oaxaca, Gabino Cue.

We had to walk a kilometer (2/3 of a mile) to get to the workers, due to intense traffic. Immediately we began offering *Red Flag* to the workers who belonged to the Triqui ethnicity and who were demanding an investigation of the murder of one of their leaders. The majority were open to our literature, which surprised us. Some 180 took the paper and all of them gave a small contribution.

Our goal was to get the paper to the teachers of Section 22, however their contingent was to the rear of where we initially joined the march. From this we discovered they had already left so that only a few of them received our paper. These informed us that another march of teachers would arrive at the Zocalo, so we went there. Unfortunately we arrived when the public rally had ended and we also offered the paper. A few took it and gave a donation. Then we went to the teachers’ union building and there we offered *Red Flag* once again.

We had more success on six of the buses on which the teachers were returning to their places of origin. We got on the buses and talked about our intention of ending capitalism by organizing internationally for communism, inviting them to get to know our work and join it. We distributed 50 more copies of *Red Flag*.

Our purpose was to take advantage of the fact that we have families and friends in this area, thus we know about the struggles of the teachers and workers, which we’ll attempt to take advantage of by organizing ICWP to advance our struggle to put an end to wage slavery. A retired teacher was contacted and we’ll make sure we don’t lose track of him.

Greetings from this corner of the world!

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4,500 garment factories in Bangladesh. Workers attacked factories and smashed vehicles, especially in the Chittagong Export Processing Zone.

Capitalist-Imperialist Competition Attacks Workers’ Lives

The garment industry is the backbone of the Bangladeshi bosses’ economy, accounting for 80% of their exports. They are the third biggest clothing producers in the world, exporting over \$12 billion a year, mainly to the US - JC Penny, Wal-Mart, Zara, the Gap, and Levi Strauss.

Their profits and competitive edge, however, are being menaced because the price of cotton they import has risen due to increasing world demand and a tariff war between cotton producers. To survive in the dog-eat-dog capitalist business world they must viciously attack the workers’ wages and working conditions. Thus, they went back on the promised wage increase with tricks, lies and mass police terror. They set up a 7-tiered wage “increase” system in which only the newest workers got the promised wage increase. When those that did not get it saw their pay checks, they broke out in open rebellion.

To further worsen the workers already impoverished lives, Bangladesh’s strategic geography puts it at the center of the increasingly sharp conflict between the US, India and China (see *Red Flag*, Vol. 1, #21). China, Bangladesh’s main investor, is building a deep water port in Chittagong and a road to link it to China’s Yunnan pro-

vince.

The port will host China’s growing blue water navy to challenge US and India’s control of the Indian Ocean. The road and projected gas and oil pipelines will allow China to bypass the US controlled Malacca Strait through which 80% of China’s imported oil and 70% of its exports must pass.

Working-Class Leaders Must Join, Build ICWP

The deepening capitalist economic crisis, and the bosses’ ever more lethal competition for markets, raw material and cheap labor as they prepare for global war will continue to grind the world’s workers’ lives deeper and deeper into poverty and misery.

The Bangladeshi women garment workers have given the lie to those who see women as weak, passive, or dependent. The courage and heroism of these Bangladeshi workers need to be channeled into what is needed by the international working class: giving leadership in the building of a massive International Communist Workers’ Party to destroy capitalism-imperialism with a communist revolution.

Only by mobilizing to destroy capitalism can Bangladeshi workers and all workers abolish racism, sexism, exploitation and wage slavery. Only communism can unite women and men to produce for the needs of all workers, not profits. Anything less will put them inadvertently in the camp of one gang or another of local capitalists and imperialists fighting for control of workers in South Asia and for world domination.

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Should we put our confidence only in a few leaders? Do we need to organize ourselves through a party to lead the revolution?”

We answered that we need both revolutions. The nature of capitalism requires an armed revolution to destroy it, and for this we need a mass communist party led by millions of workers in every corner of the world.

It was clear that the youth was open to communist ideas and wanted to quickly resolve his doubts and questions. We exchanged addresses to keep talking. He took the responsibility of writing when he can for the paper.

The sale took two hours. It took a little longer this time since the students were ending their school term and had papers and exams. We even increased the sale by 50 papers.

Three days later we came back to sell 200 more *Red Flags*, but this time we sold them at the exit where the students eat, since classes had ended. We asked for money for the printing and a student asked us, “Is this the December edition? I have the last two before that.”

Those who took the paper were the ones who were really interested in reading it since our shout was “Take your communist newspaper!” *RF* is being recognized more each time by the youth at this school. They wait for the new edition and read it.

Imperialist war is speeding up the attack on workers all the time, and we’re speeding up organizing workers, soldiers, students, teachers and farm workers so that we can convert the bosses’ wars into a communist revolution to put an end to capitalism.

Only communism will resolve the needs of all, except the bourgeois exploiters; they’ll be 6 feet under ground.



'Y CIFODIAD' IS WELSH FOR THE UPRISING!

On November 3rd, 1839, it rained furiously in the hills of South Wales, Britain. That night columns of armed men marched on Newport, Wales, to overthrow the local bosses and set up the first workers' commonwealth – a Chartist Republic. They expected uprisings in Yorkshire and Scotland, but above all they expected success in Newport. This was the first armed uprising of industrial workers.

Much work had been done among the military. In May, 120 soldiers were stationed at Newport by officials scared of the spreading revolutionary sentiment. The soldiers didn't make them feel safer. Within five months, 13 deserted. One, a Private Williams, went over to the workers, trained them, and became a leader of the assault on Newport.

In November a more politically reliable company was brought in from Windsor (where the Queen has a palace). Within a day Chartist workers – mainly miners and iron workers — were fraternizing with them. At least two deserted and joined the growing rebel army. They had a clear class line that officers and sergeants were to be killed but soldiers were our friends and brothers.

5,000 armed workers were to take Newport. Another 5,000 were to be held in reserve, to follow up by taking smaller towns. The new Republic would be defended by an armed populace and extended by uprisings in the North of England and Scotland.

Chartist Organization – Reform and Revolution

Chartism was a gigantic social and political movement of mainly industrial workers. Its main weekly newspaper, the *Northern Star*, had a circulation of 50,000 (greater than the main capitalist paper, *The Times*). It was read aloud in small meetings, reaching even more people. It had two wings. The 'moral force' aimed at petitioning the Government. The 'physical force' stood for overthrowing it.

Leaders of the Newport Uprising came from the 'physical force' group. The two main leaders were Henry Vincent and Mad Edwards the Baker (so called because of the fury of his speeches). Their work centered on mass meetings and their own local newspaper, *The Western Vindicator*, published in Welsh (the workers' main language) and English.

At first they organized Chartist lodges, and by the summer of 1839 a rebel directorate was established. They organized mine by mine and plant by plant into sections of 10, each headed by a captain. Each five

sections were grouped together, led by an officer of their own choice. Three such groups formed a company, and three companies formed a brigade.

The arming of a revolutionary working class had begun in earnest and in secret. Hopes were high. But things went disastrously wrong.

In early May, Vincent, Edwards and two other leaders were arrested and jailed. A demonstration of 30,000 demanded their release, and money was collected for their defense. The secondary leadership made two decisions. The first was to spend some of the money raised on arming the working class. This kept the movement on the offensive.

Unfortunately, the next decision was disastrous. They called in the nationally-known Chartist and ex-mayor of Newport, John Frost, to lead the insurrection.

Revolution not Reform!

From the start, Frost wanted to postpone the insurrection. Instead, he wanted to use the organized workers in his run for political office. As late as October he tried to tell workers to wait. "Now!" they shouted him down, "Tonight! Tonight!" But they thought they needed Frost because he had revolutionary contacts in England and Scotland.

Frost never seriously struggled with the leadership in England and Scotland. He disrupted the plans for the insurrection, making new ones at the last moment. And, on the day of the march, he delayed the attacking column from advancing for five long hours. Instead of arriving at Newport on Sunday evening when the soldiers were drinking, the rebels arrived on Monday morning when the soldiers were on guard. The rebels were tired, and the powder for their muskets was soaking wet and useless.

The insurrection was quickly routed. Six months of intense work and a decade of struggle was wasted in twenty-four hours of reformist leadership. Frost himself has a lot to answer for, but the most important mistake was to recruit him in the first place.

The mistake was not just the weakness of the rebel directorate. It was the general weakness of the Chartist movement. They thought revolution could grow alongside reformism. They failed to realize that revo-



lution can only succeed by defeating reformism in the movement.

Perhaps, too, an earlier mistake had been made in thinking that both Vincent and Mad Edwards could conduct open revolutionary agitation forever. We should never underestimate the power of the State, at least in the short term.

Once Government secured the area with a massive military presence, they followed up with investigations. A secret one made by a London Civil Servant concluded that English newspapers had virtually no circulation in the working class communities and that the uprising should be seen as a result of ignorance. Wales could be pacified more completely, it recommended, through the schoolroom rather than the barracks. And schooling would be in English. "Y Cifodiad" was going to be forgotten!

Another report proposed "[providing] the Church with the means of sending her ministries with messages of peace and Ambassadors of Christ among them." In other words, schools, Churches and anti-revolutionary newspapers were the rulers' key ideological weapons to consolidate the military victory.

Just a few years later, in 1848, the *Communist Manifesto* became the workers' key ideological weapon in the struggle against capitalism, reformism, and electoral politics.

(Information from "The 1839 Uprising in South Wales" by Ivor Wilkes.)

British Industrial Workers:

FROM CHARTISM TO COMMUNISM

Industrial workers and soldiers are key to the victory of communism: the liberation of the working class from capitalist slavery. They are also the key to the future of humanity.

In early nineteenth-century Britain, mechanization of the textile industry and the development of the steam engine quickly increased the demand for coal and iron-making. As production soared in all sectors, an industrial working class emerged.

Increasingly wealthy industrial capitalists fought with landowning aristocrats for a bigger share of power. They got it with the 1832 Reform Act, which extended the vote to 10% of the adult population (one in five males) and increased Parliamentary representation for the rapidly growing industrial centers. They consolidated their victory with the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846.

Chartism was the radical wing of the bourgeois (capitalist) reform movement. It demanded votes for all men and other electoral changes. In 1852, Marx wrote that achieving the Chartist demands would mean "the political supremacy of the working class." He was wrong. Most of the Chartist demands were met in 1867 and 1884, but the capitalists remained more fully in control than ever. We now know that

reform never leads to revolution.

In 1848, revolutions broke out against the monarchies in Italy, France, the German states, and elsewhere in Europe. In the midst of these insurrections, the international working class stepped forward for the first time in history as a class in and for itself. The *Communist Manifesto* gave it a voice.

Chartism died a quiet death after its attempted mass mobilization in 1848 was squashed and Parliament rejected its third petition. The best of the Chartists – notably Ernest Jones– allied with Marx and Engels.

Jones, who did hard time for sedition, said upon his release: "In the speech for which they arrested me I spoke of a green [Chartist] flag waving over Downing Street. I have changed my colour since then. It shall be a red one now."



Join International Communist Workers' Party

NY GARMENT WORKERS 100 YEARS AGO AND BANGLADESHI WORKERS TODAY: REBELLION AND DEADLY FIRES SHOW NEED FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

One hundred years ago in the U.S., garment workers, mostly Italian and Russian Jewish immigrant women, worked in garment sweatshops, suffering from long hours, low wages, brutal exploitation and unsanitary and dangerous working conditions. In November, 1909, women at the Triangle Shirtwaist Company walked out. Knowing they could not win alone, a mass meeting called for a general strike, which soon involved twenty thousand workers, mostly women, citizen and immigrant, black and white, facing police provocation and fighting the bosses' thugs. The strike ended with a union contract in more than three hundred shops, but conditions changed very little.

On the afternoon of March 25, 1911, a fire broke out at the Triangle Factory, where factory doors were locked shut, and workers worked on the eighth, ninth and tenth floors, too high for fire ladders to reach. 146 Triangle workers, mostly women, were burned to death, jammed against the locked exit door, or leaped to their deaths. The militant strike had left the murderous capitalist system intact. And here we are, a hundred years later, with the same conditions in sweatshops from Los Angeles to Bangladesh. Garment workers now, more than ever, need to put an end to this murderous system with communist revolution.



***Read, Write,
Distribute and
Contribute to
Red Flag***

GEORGIA: PRISON REBELLION SHOWS NEED TO SMASH PRISON LABOR, WAGE SLAVERY

GEORGIA, US, Dec. 9. Thousands of prisoners in Georgia went on strike in what is said to be the largest prison strike in US history. They are refusing to work, stopping all other activities, and locking down their cells in protest against the racist conditions they face.

The prisoners are currently forced to work for no pay—to be slaves. They are demanding to be paid for their work. They are also demanding improved living conditions, access to their families, and "just" parole decisions.

There can be no "fair wages" whether inside or outside prison because capitalism can't pay the working class the full value of what it produces. There can be no "justice" under capitalism because the criminal system exists to force workers to submit to this racist exploitation.

One strike leader announced from behind bars: "Brothers, we have accomplished a major step in our struggle...we must continue what we started...On Monday morning when the doors open, close them. Do not go to work...Don't give up now. Make them come to the table. Be strong. Do not make money for the state that they in turn use to keep us as slaves."

The strike was organized inside the prisons using contraband cell phones. It has united black, latino and white prisoners—in a prison system that constantly tries to divide them.

The prisoners have vowed to be non-violent, but the Georgia department of corrections has attacked them, ripping some prisoners from their cells and beating them, trashing prisoners' property, and turning off heat in some prisons.

Obviously prisoners would need to ally with masses of workers and especially soldiers in order to have any chance of fighting back against the prison guards without getting massacred. However, the pacifist ideology of "non-violence" disarms the working class by taking armed insurrection off the table.

Reforming the racist capitalist prison system to be humane is not possible. It's an important part of the bosses' state apparatus to maintain racist exploitation and keep the entire working class in line as the US rulers attack every aspect of workers' lives. Even

in prisons that "pay" prisoners for their work, the "pay" is usually about 10 cents an hour for the prisoner, the rest paying for the prisons.

Georgia has 53,000 men and women inmates in its prison system, 5th largest in the US. One out of every 13 adults in Georgia is in prison, on parole, probation, or some form of court or correctional supervision. This is one of the highest per capita rates in the US.

Capitalists use prisons to terrorize all workers, especially black and latin workers. The US prison population has increased 450% since 1981. While 5% of the people in the world live in the US, 1/4 of the prisoners in the world are in the US. Black people are 1/8 of the US population, but almost 1/2 of the prison population. This exposes the racist nature of capitalism.

Georgia prison slaves clean roads, make furniture, garments and road signs. In a program started this year, prisoners clean and landscape foreclosed homes and abandoned properties, saving banks and the state an expected \$250,000 a year. "The only costs to the county are for the use of additional corrections officers overseeing the work and any necessary equipment," stated the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*.

As the US rulers struggle to compete internationally and prepare for wider wars, prison labor and other forms of intensive super-exploitation will become more common.

Most prisoners are in jail for non-violent drug offenses. Millions of dollars in workers' taxes go into the prison system. More black men are in prison than in college. The latino prison population is growing. The prison system is key to enforcing racist super exploitation of black and latino workers and the exploitation of all workers.

The courageous prisoners in Georgia deserve the support of the whole working class. That support includes spreading Red Flag and the fight for a communist future to all workers, including those behind bars. In fighting for a communist society, workers' power will identify and deal with the REAL criminals, the racist bosses who are responsible for this system of exploitation and imperialist war.

Questions for Red Flag Study-Action Groups

1. The Dialectics column (p.16) distinguishes between generalizations and theories. It's a true generalization that the great workers revolutions took place in the crucible of imperialist war. Are there also theoretical reasons to believe that our communist revolution will not prevent WWII but instead will grow out of it (see editorial p. 2)? Can nuclear war be prevented?

2. We have several good examples of effective mass distributions of *Red Flag* among workers and students in key concentrations. Where else can this be done and how can we build on our current successes?

SUBSCRIBE TO RED FLAG - \$20/YEAR

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Asking for Money

Red Flag is vital to making revolution. This is the paper of the working class and recently people in the Party have been struggling with anybody who distributes the paper to ask for money to maintain the paper. For someone like myself, asking for money is an issue. I don't have a problem asking for money from the people I personally know but I do have issues asking for money in public sales. I know it is important to ask for money but there something in my head that really holds me back from asking for money. Stories like our comrade's in Mexico really inspire me and I know I can and have to push through this and really begin to raise more money for the newspaper. My question now would be, if they cannot give us money for the paper, do we give them the paper?

Student Comrade

Red Flag responds: Yes!

Homeless Vet Donates to Red Flag

I joined the International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP) after last May Day. In that time, I have learned so much and grown in so many positive ways. I want to thank all my comrades for their wisdom, criticism, kindness, and patience.

One thing my comrades struggled with me about was my reluctance to ask for a donation whenever someone took a copy of **Red Flag**. I had reservations with doing this which, self-critically, I now see were clearly wrong. The fact of the matter is that it costs money to put out **Red Flag** twice a month. Furthermore, the paper is supported through workers' donations. I have been working on asking for donations and have found that workers give happily. They do this because they know how important our ideas are and understand that getting out **Red Flag** is a vital tool in our efforts to mobilize the working class for revolution.

I never miss a chance to share our ideas with any workers I know, or meet, and always have extra copies of **Red Flag** to give them. One person I always talk with is a homeless Viet Nam veteran I met a few years ago at work. He knows the U.S. government used him and spat him out when he came back home. He was politicized by the events of September 11th and all the war, overt fascism, and lies that came out of it.

After I left my job, we maintained occasional contact. One of the last times I saw him, I shared **Red Flag** with him and we discussed an article that touched on something he was talking about. He expressed great interest and I extended an open invitation to my house for further discussion. He stopped by a few days ago to ask for another copy of **Red Flag**. I handed him the paper and he immediately handed me a rolled-up five dollar bill. This must have been a lot of money for him, but he said, "This is a good paper...more people need to read it...everyone needs to be reading it." We talked for about two hours.

In particular, we discussed the idea of joining the military. He says he counsels young people about enlisting because he wants them to avoid service to a country that "does not care about the people living on the streets...or the people that work for a living". I told him that "soldiers are vital to our goal of smashing capitalism" and replacing it with a system in which we produce, not for the bosses' super-profits, but directly for the needs of our class. Workers can join the military and fight to advance our communist line on the inside – to convince workers to turn the guns around and, at least to refuse to fire upon their working class brothers and sisters in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, or Iran.

History has shown that this can work. It begins

with increasing **Red Flag** readership, building study-action groups, and asking workers to donate what they can to support the paper – and even join the party – that fights for the international working class.

Signed, bella ciao

Political Struggle with Garment Workers

I'll tell you a story. This happened in a very enjoyable social setting with a lot of workers, women and men, talking and learning together. One woman drives 18-wheel trucks. She had an accident last year and her drivers' license was suspended. She had to go work in the garment factory American Apparel.

We started talking about how dangerous Mexico is. Another friend said that the government is involved in the drug wars, that they are part of the rulers' plans. I agreed. We related it to today's capitalist crisis, about the crisis of overproduction, that this was the prelude to World War III.

We also discussed that another aspect of the preparations for WWII was the DREAM Act. Many people don't look at what's behind things like the DREAM Act that appear to be good. I explained that it was a question of pushing the youth into the army. And the garment worker said, "I also hadn't seen this side of the DREAM Act but you've made me think about it."

And it's the same with nutrition in the schools: they want children to eat better. They don't want obese youth, but only healthy ones, all for the military. I used the example of water: From afar the water looks blue, but close up, tell me what color it is. Her 15-year-old son was listening very attentively.

I commented about the example of American Apparel. I said that the boss appears to be a good person, but his production methods were the most exploitative because he avoids a lot of costs including the cost of a henchman to speed up production because the workers carry out this function, speeding up production themselves. She said, "Oh really? That's where I work."

I commented that I worked there for two weeks and I didn't like it. She told me that she was someone who liked to work fast—at work, in her house, etc. She feels bad if a worker is slow, so she helps them get the work done. But the managers scolded her, saying that she shouldn't help the other workers.

She answered, "It's not so much that I want to help, but I want to learn to do everything." So I told her to be careful with the speed-up because I've seen people die from speed-up in the garment industry. And so she told me, "I can't do anything else—that's the way I am." But I also told her that her attitude was wrong because it pressured other workers to speed up the process and this only benefits the boss.

I asked how many people are in her module. She told me there were 36 people who produce an average of 500 shirts that sell for \$50 each in a store. It was interesting that her son began calculating the value of the clothes the workers produce. And also how little the boss invests in wages to produce \$25,000 worth of shirts. She replied that she hadn't thought about how much profit the boss was making.

We also talked about the massages they give. They don't give them because they're good guys, but to get the workers to work faster. Talking about super-exploitation she told me that it's the same all over and that we can't change it. I told her that individually it wasn't possible, but that she has good qualities and that she can understand what I was

explaining and she could help change this situation.

When she told me that this was impossible, I told her that it's not easy but to think for a moment about what Villa and Zapata achieved in organizing the Mexican revolution. I wanted to show that movements start small. I also gave the example of the Bolsheviks—who went much further than Villa and Zapata, and who also started with a small group. They took power for the working class. Other friends were participating in the discussion. We agreed to continue and deepen the discussions.

A worker

Plan Mexico 2030: Part of Bosses' Plans for World War Three

Plan Mexico 2030 is well prepared by the US bosses, together with Calderon and a group of Mexican bosses. It consists of privatization, eliminating any obstacle that would prevent the take-over of natural resources and putting down any opposition to those plans.

Its principle rests in the transnational corporations which are companies which appear to be Mexican, but, in reality, are controlled by foreign companies, and that's the way they want to take control of the oil, services and properties that are in the hands of the government. Even if they were Mexican-owned companies, they would still be companies based on capitalist exploitation.

The electoral game of the two parties helps other parties like PRI and PAN to make changes to the Constitution that will permit the mixing of private funds with public funds, like in the construction of highways, health facilities, electrical plants, as well as putting "natural protected areas" in the hands of private individuals. These parties are controlled by the Mexican bosses and can be sold to an imperialist like that of the United States.

Militarization is the response of the ruling class to try to put the brakes on the rebellions that arise in response to these thefts, although what they are stealing has never belonged to the workers. The fight against drugs is the excuse to make a crime out of any strike or demonstration that opposes these plans.

These are some of the first steps that the US bosses are carrying out in preparation for World War III. They are trying to guarantee their supply chain of food and raw materials, since their factories will be concentrating on producing the arms that they need.

The bosses all over the world have a plan—war. The workers must have our own plan. Our plan must be to organize ourselves under communist ideas and a communist flag to make a revolution and fight for a world without bosses.

In a communist world, there will be neither bosses nor millionaires who decide our lives and make decisions that benefit only a few.

The workers need to win the soldiers to our side so that they see that the enemy is capitalism. Under this system of exploitation, money is worth more than the life of a worker. Under communism, there will be no property, neither public nor private. We will simply share abundance and scarcity. Everyone will have what we need and we will work for it, and not for someone who makes himself rich at the cost of our sweat, because there will be no money or any form of accumulated riches.

Workers of the world: let's organize ourselves under the leadership of ICWP and distribute Red Flag.

A reader

THE COMMUNIST PHILOSOPHY OF KNOWLEDGE: PART II

“Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement.” – V. I. Lenin

The previous column discussed the most important idea of the communist view of knowledge, that knowledge derives from practice and provides a guide to practice. Practice includes many activities: work, raising your family, class struggle, war, scientific experiments, etc. This column is about two different kinds of knowledge: generalizations, and theories.

Generalizations collect specific cases together and combine them into single statements: “Women usually get paid less than men,” “Inspecting a bus is an easier job than fixing its brakes.” “More *Red Flags* are sold at factory A than factory B.” “There are no construction jobs in this city.” “Most revolutions take place during or after a major war,” etc.

Knowing generalizations is essential to plan and carry out all kinds of practical actions, including political organizing. But for many kinds of practice, from building a T.V. set to communist revolution, another kind of knowledge is necessary: theoretical knowledge. Knowledge of theories makes it possible to understand what lies behind events and makes them happen. For example, the statement “A capitalist economy goes into recession or depression roughly every eight years” is a true generalization, but it doesn’t explain what causes these economic crises to happen or whether they must happen. Only theoretical knowledge allows us to do this.

Theories differ from generalizations in two ways. Every theory must have its own categories, the things and quantities that the theory uses to explain events. The categories of economics include price, value,

labor, profit, wages, surplus value, etc. Categories of physics include force, energy, mass, atom, electron, etc. Categories of political theory include communism, socialism, capitalism, revolution, opportunism, revisionism, agitation, reform struggle, etc.

Some categories describe things that are easy to see or measure, like price in economics or weight in physics, but often categories describe things that are not obvious. Categories can describe aspects of reality that lie below the surface. Things like viruses, surplus value, atoms, or revisionism can’t usually be seen, but they can be detected indirectly or figured out.

The second way that generalizations differ from theories is that theories have laws and principles that describe the connections between categories. For example, it is a law of physics that the rate at which an object speeds up is proportional to the force applied to it. It is a law of economics that the average price of something is proportional to the amount of human labor necessary to make it. It is a biological law that you can’t get tuberculosis without being exposed to a certain kind of bacteria.

Laws like these have to be tested and confirmed in practice, but they can’t always be formed the way that generalizations are, by summing up particular cases. Often the particular cases of theoretical categories can’t be seen at all. Even when they can be seen, individual cases only tell us what has happened, not what can happen.

To prove that a theory is true, it is necessary to compare it to alternative ideas, test it in practice, and accept it only if it gives the best explanation of the



Bangladesh, 2005--Garment workers on strike

facts. For example, capitalist economic theories claim that crises are not inevitable under capitalism, but can be prevented by government regulation. The communist explanation is that economic crises result from the rivalry between capitalists, which means they can’t carry out a common plan to control their own markets. This means that crises must happen and can never be ended under capitalism.

Economic theories are certainly not the only ones we need in the fight for communism. We must extend and improve our political theories about the fight against revisionism and the mobilization of the working class to create and maintain communism. We must not only understand how to create theoretical knowledge and apply it in practice, we also need to learn how to modify theories that practice shows to be wrong. This “dialectic of theory and practice” will be the topic of our next column.

SUDAN REFERENDUM: INTER-IMPERIALIST RIVALRY SHARPENS

A referendum on whether or not to split Sudan in two, planned for January 9, 2011, is the legacy of forty years of civil war between the Arab/Muslim north and the Christian/animist south. It also shows the sharpening inter-imperialist rivalry over oil.

Sudan is sub-Saharan Africa’s third-largest producer of crude oil. 82% of the oil comes from the South, with another 13% coming from disputed regions along the North/South border. Currently that oil goes through a pipeline to the northern city of Port Sudan on the Red Sea, and 65 to 80% of it goes to China, whose growing economy needs massive amounts of energy. China is Sudan’s largest foreign investor, drilling for oil, building pipelines and other infrastructure (roads, railways, dams, bridges) and housing. China is also a large supplier of arms to the Sudanese government.

The US imperialists have been pushing for this referendum. They hope to counter the Chinese by opening their own oil concessions in the South, sending the oil through a pipeline under construction through Kenya to the Indian Ocean. The US government has offered to take the (North) Sudanese government off its international terrorist list if it cooperates in the referendum and subsequent division of Sudan. Basketball player turned celebrity John Prendergast and movie star George Clooney have helped to build publicity for South Sudanese independence, and were featured in a long article in the *New York Times Magazine* (12/5/10).

The U.S. government has openly provided communications and other “nonlethal” equipment and training to the South Sudanese army. The *New York Times* this week printed Wikileaks cables showing that Washington has done more than that, looking the other way when 100 Soviet-era tanks were “secretly” sent from Ukraine to Kenya to be shipped overland to South Sudan. All this was being done secretly, but the

secret was out in 2008, when Somali pirates seized the ship, and found the last 32 tanks, 150 grenade launchers and 6 anti-aircraft guns, and accepted a payoff of \$3.2 million dollars for turning over the ship to the Kenyan government. The last group of tanks is still sitting in storage in Kenya, but US imperialism has bigger problems.

China, which up to this point has advocated keeping Sudan together and maintaining the smooth flow of oil through Port Sudan to Chinese tankers, has begun to hedge its bets. In August, Beijing hosted South Sudan’s minister of agriculture, Anne Itto, to discuss the expansion of oil drilling in South Sudan, and offering a \$16 million grant to help in the building of the pipeline from South Sudan through Kenya. A Chinese delegation to South Sudan was assured in October that Chinese investment would be protected in case of separation.

Things are unfolding daily as the countdown proceeds toward the referendum. What is clear is that the US ruling class does not have a lock on the outcome of this or any other development in the world. In spite of US diplomatic pressure on the North and financial assistance to the South, Sudan’s new government will make its own deals. Aware that the US is a declining power, the Sudanese capitalists are building alliances with neighbors Kenya and Uganda, and taking advantage of Chinese cash to sell their oil to the ascending capitalist power.

US imperialism’s continuing worldwide decline, illustrated by its being outmaneuvered by China in East Africa, makes the world a more unstable place. Today’s oil wars are no longer proxy wars like the four-decade long Sudanese civil war. Now the US imperialist’s must intervene directly, like Iraq and Afghanistan as well as the upcoming invasion of Iran. These wars are the beginning shots of World War Three.



Sudan’s oil has done its workers no good. Sudan is one of the poorest countries in the world, where 27% of the population has no access to safe water, and 34% of the children under five are underweight. Sudanese workers have a rich history of communist organizing, especially among railroad and cotton plantation workers. The industrial workers in the oil refineries and infrastructure, armed with communist ideas, have the potential to build a new communist movement in Sudan. Sudanese workers have nothing to gain in fighting for any boss: Sudanese, Chinese, Kenyan or US. Their only future, like that of workers all over the world, is to turn the bosses’ imperialist wars into a revolutionary war for communism. Then we can build a world where the natural resources and the fruits of our labor are shared among the working class of the whole world, rather than being a source of profit and conflict for the capitalists.