



RED FLAG

MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM

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



EGYPT



ARAB MASSES IN MOTION: MORE CAPITALISM OR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION
PAGE 2

Sandy Hook: Mourn... but Organize!

CAPITALISM IS DEADLY FOR CHILDREN EVERYWHERE

LOS ANGELES, Dec. 14— “How are you doing?” a *Red Flag* distributor asked a transit worker as he was leaving work.

“Not good,” he said. “I just heard about all those kids being killed in Connecticut.”

Many workers expressed grief and horror at the news of the massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut.

But why haven't we heard about seven-year-old Heaven Sutton of Chicago or five-year-old Gabriel Martinez of Oakland, who are among the many black and latino/a children and youth killed by police and gangs every year?

Like thousands of youth among the 47,000 people killed with US-made weapons in Mexico's drug wars in the last five years, they remain faceless and nameless in the racist news media and therefore in mass consciousness.

Also left out of the bosses' news

media are thousands of victims of drone attacks on North Africa, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, children, men and women killed in the US bosses' fight for their empire and profits. Left out are the 15 million children worldwide who die of starvation every year because capitalism deprives them of life-sustaining necessities.

What do the rulers think about this? Last May, Obama gave the Presidential Award for Freedom to former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. An interviewer had told her, “Half a million children have died [due to US sanctions in Iraq]. I mean that's more children than died in Hiroshima. And you know, is the price worth it?” She answered: “*We think the price is worth it.*”

Capitalism Pushes Individualism, Alienation

Capitalist culture is rotten to the core. The bosses use individualism

See CONNECTICUT, page 2

“Pizza and Politics”

BOEING WORKERS, YOUTH DISCUSS COMMUNIST FUTURE

SEATTLE, WA — We've had about a dozen of these Pizza and Politics evenings. New friends usually come to break bread (pizza) with us and see what the International Communist Workers' Party is about. Last week, our neighbor invited two Community College students who came armed with questions.

In particular, they wanted to know what version of communism our party fights for. Everyone got involved in the discussion, including a Boeing friend I've know for thirty years.

First, we debated whether there was a version of capitalism that could provide a decent life for the masses. Our Boeing friend really wanted to impress upon these younger comrades that it was impossible.

“People are fed up with this system,” he insisted. “It doesn't matter who's in power or what kind of cap-

italism they use, people want something other than this dog-eat-dog system.”

“People want to work for our collective good. Wouldn't you be happier if everyone had decent food, housing and necessities?” he asked the young people. “That's more important than the crap the bosses want us to crave.”

Wow, what got into him! It must have been the presence of these involved young people, the future.

Then we got into the history of past communist parties. Even those parties that led revolutions built socialism. Socialism, someone explained, is another version of capitalism. It still has production for sale, money, banks etc. so it's not fair to call that the “failure of communism.”

What then would communism look like? A few thought we can't answer that question in any detail because we don't know beforehand

See PIZZA, page 4

IMMIGRATION REFORM: PATHWAY TO BATTLEFIELD & WAR INDUSTRY
PAGE 3

MTA & MICHIGAN: WE'RE WORKING CLASS, NOT “MIDDLE CLASS”
PAGES 3, 13

SOLDIERS & SAILORS: KEY TO REVOLUTION
PAGES 4, 15

THIS IS A 3 WEEK ISSUE. WE WILL RESUME OUR 2 WEEK SCHEDULE WITH THE JANUARY 10TH ISSUE

Middle-East Masses between a Rock and a Hard Place

MOBILIZING FOR COMMUNISM IS THE ONLY ESCAPE

“First we must get rid of Assad,” said a left-leaning Syrian refugee. “We’ll deal with religious fundamentalism later.”

“That’s what they said in Iran,” an ICWP comrade responded. “They overthrew the Shah, then Islamic fundamentalists wiped out the Left. That tragedy must not be repeated.”

“Syria is not Iran or Egypt,” our new friend replied. “We have culture, not just religion. We could be like Turkey.”

No two countries are identical, but workers everywhere must learn the bitter lesson of the twentieth-century: fighting for democracy or national liberation or socialism or anything less than communism will perpetuate our wage slavery.

Communism can mobilize the masses across the bosses’ divisions of nationality and religion because we all need the same things: food and shelter, respect and comradeship, meaningful work and a real part in decision-making. Capitalism can’t provide this; communism will. Unlike socialism, communism will end money and markets, wages and wealth, bosses and borders.

Fighters in Syria and elsewhere must seize this moment to build a mass International Communist Workers’ Party to fight directly for the world we need and which, in this epoch, is within our grasp. Otherwise, the masses will remain stuck between rising regional powers like Iran and imperialist powers like the US, Russia and China.

Capitalist-Imperialist Competition Still Shapes World Events

The Russian-backed Syrian president, Assad, is desperately trying to maintain his bloody grip in the face of mass insurgency. US capitalism-imperialism has stood aloof: Syria is central to control of the Middle East, but the Obama administration seeks to untangle itself from this region in order to “pivot to Asia” and counter China’s rise.

But China is rising globally. It became Syria’s

top trading partner in 2011, surpassing Russia and Europe. Chinese capitalists own chunks of Syria’s oil industry, and are wheeling and dealing with Assad and other forces in the Syrian turmoil to be major winners there no matter what happens.

Moreover, anti-US Islamists (tied to Iran or al-Qaeda) are the most effective fighters in the broad anti-Assad coalition. They are forcing Obama’s hand. In mid-December, the US announced that it was sending anti-aircraft weapons and 400 US troops to Turkey, on Syria’s border. They are training anti-Assad fighters in Jordan, also bordering Syria. US planes are flying more weapons into Jordan. It’s unclear whether the US will invade Syria, or continue to try to leverage the situation from the sidelines.

Some “anti-imperialists” oppose a US invasion while refusing to criticize Assad and his Soviet backers. As a disgusted activist commented, “They say nothing about the long history of brutality and repression of the Baathist government for the past 40 years or its use of aircraft and mortars against civilians, whose deaths now total about 40,000 people. There is a wide space between opposing US militarism and being neutral on Syria.”

Journalist Patrick Cockburn, who recently visited Syria, writes, “There are Syrians who claim that the people against the regime remain ... the central feature of the uprising, but there is compelling evidence that the movement has slid towards sectarian Islamic fundamentalism.” The working class is left between a rock and a hard place... unless it mobilizes the masses for communism.

Class Struggle Sharpens – The World Can Change

Two years ago, Egyptian industrial workers led the Arab Spring with mass strikes and rebellions in Alexandria. Now men and women there are

rising against Morsi, his Muslim Brotherhood allies, and their new constitution. After Islamic fundamentalist forces killed nineteen protesters, thousands rallied, attacking a mosque and burning the cars of Morsi supporters.

Leaflets attacked constitutional provisions that would allow Islamic theocracy, “suppress freedoms and give absolute powers to the president.” Pro-Western forces like alBaradei share these complaints. The leaflet also criticized the constitution for not promising “social welfare, equality, social justice and a fair distribution of income.” (egyptindependent.com)

This leaflet reflects the same illusions in “democratic rule” and “human rights” expressed in Syria. There is no “equality,” “social justice,” or “fair distribution” under capitalism, whether secular or theocratic. Culture is a class issue. As global capitalism descends further into chaos and ever-larger wars, its culture inescapably becomes both fascist and decadent. Nowhere is this clearer than in the US. Meanwhile, Turkey’s “culture” reveals the parliamentary path to sharia.

No constitution will end capitalist exploitation. Millions of Egyptians, who abstained from voting in the constitutional referendum, see through the sham debate over “legitimacy.” We must mobilize these alienated masses to become communist leaders.

Communism’s “legitimacy” will come from the masses, “voting” with their feet and hands by participating creatively in building a communist society. Today, spreading *Red Flag* and building networks of readers are small steps on the long road of training millions of workers, soldiers, sailors and youth to give communist political leadership to friends, family, and co-workers. From Syria to El Salvador, from Los Angeles to Alexandria, we must massively build ICWP to break capitalism’s chains and build a communist world.

CONNECTICUT from page 1

to justify their private property: a tiny group of them own great wealth and the means of production while masses worldwide starve and die. Capitalism creates alienated people, many of whom are mentally ill, who get little or no care. It gives troubled, alienated youth examples of mass violence every day.

In China too, as capitalist development accelerates, and people leave their homes to find jobs in the city and the social safety net breaks down, there has been a series of attacks on school children. The latest was Friday morning, just hours before the attack in Connecticut. Twenty-two children and an adult were injured at a school by a man wielding a knife.

Capitalist culture in decay is preparing for war and fascism. Video games encourage youth to “kill” as many others as possible to win the game. But it’s in the real world of imperialist war that the lesson of mass violence is driven home. The assault weapons that have killed thousands in Iraq and Afghanistan are now being used to kill children in the streets of Chicago and Oakland and Sandy Hook Elementary School.

For capitalism, mass murders, big and small are “worth the price.”

The Problem is Capitalism

We all want to raise children in as healthy an environment as possible. But there’s nowhere safe. It’s impossible to escape capitalist-imperialist exploitation and culture. Therefore, objectively, putting the needs of the international working class and its children first means fighting to destroy deadly capitalist culture and the system that creates it. We must build a society based on share-and-share-alike communism.

Alienation, built into the wage system, will be eliminated in a communist society, because all our activities, from planning, producing, and distributing, to taking care of children and each other, will be based on profound collective relations organized to directly meet the needs of our class.

All will participate in collectives that will take time to understand and overcome problems. No one will be left on their own to deal with problems of mental or physical illness. Thus any mental illness will be identified and treated with all the understanding the society has learned.

Mass working class revolutionary violence—using guns—will be needed and directed only against the capitalist-imperialists and their lackeys who impose racist capitalist exploitation on the masses of workers in the world.

From Connecticut to Iraq, capitalism is a murderous system responsible for the deaths of innocent workers and children every day. If we care about all children everywhere, we must see mobilizing for communism as a life and death question for all workers.



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Transit Worker Says:

“WE AREN’T MIDDLE-CLASS. WE’RE THE WORKING CLASS!”

LOS ANGELES — A letter sent by the officials of the MTA mechanics’ union said, “We have to be united and send letters, petitions, and make phone calls, to assure that our Democratic representatives and the union fight to prevent the Republicans from eliminating the middle class.”

An MTA mechanic said, “If we stay passive, we won’t be middle class anymore.”

A young worker answered, “We aren’t middle class. The middle class are those who make \$200,000 or more a year. Some of us reach \$100,000 a year; they are the ones who practically live inside the company, working 7 days a week and, when possible, 12 hours a day. Even then, they don’t reach half of what’s supposed to be middle class. Let’s wake up: we’re workers, the working class.”

The truth is that many times I’ve heard other mechanics classify us as middle class. One day I got home and I told my wife, “We are the middle class.” She answered, “Yes, the class half dead from hunger.”

It’s very important in these moments of war, international crisis and rebellions, that we workers are very clear about who we are and what role as a class we’re meant to play in the process of social development.

The current society, capitalism, is distinguished from previous societies, from feudalism, slavery and pre-class communism in that under

this system, the society is divided into two classes, bourgeoisie and proletarians: that is, bosses and workers, rich and poor.

What differentiates bosses from workers is that bosses or capitalists own the means of production that they use to exploit the work of another. The workers are those who don’t own the means of production. The only thing that they own is their labor power, which they therefore have to sell to a boss for a wage. It can be the minimum wage or the “maximum,” but the condition of being a worker continues: they continue to be wage slaves.

The boss and the worker live in constant struggle, one to make more profits and the other to improve his or her conditions. The truth is that the middle class doesn’t exist.

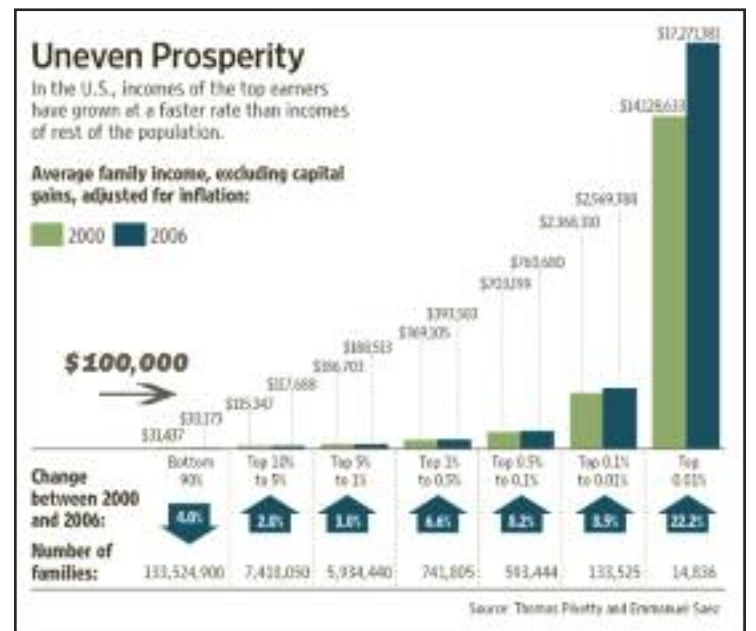
We MTA mechanics have gone on strike at different times, trying to gain a few pennies extra or to at least keep what we already have. However, in the current crisis, day in and day out, contract after contract, we’ve lost benefits or we have to pay more for them.

The myth that “we are middle class” is only to divert us from the revolutionary role that we are destined to play. It’s to deceive us into thinking that we are not part of the main contradiction in society

between the bosses and workers.

Fellow workers, we are exploited workers and, because of that, our task must be to lead a communist revolution. We are the most revolutionary class, we’re not an appendage of the bourgeoisie, who portray themselves as democrats, but who are really wolves in sheep’s clothing, reformers of capitalism, a system soaked in the blood of the indigenous, of African slaves, Latin Americans and thousands and thousands more workers.

We workers of MTA must join ICWP. This is our Party, because it represents the interests of our class. To do otherwise would be to continue marching into a dead end.



US Immigration and Education Reform:

PATHWAYS TO WAR INDUSTRIES AND BATTLEFIELDS

The fight for world domination is propelling the big imperialists, especially in the US and China, toward an inevitable military clash. The present and future needs of US imperialism demand millions of workers and soldiers technologically prepared, physically fit, and ideologically won to slave and die for “America.” Immigration reform is crucial to winning the huge immigrant community to these lofty-sounding but deadly ideals.

The DREAM Act targets 2.1 million undocumented youth brought to the US as children. Sixty five thousand of them graduate from high school each year, but struggle to go to college and can’t work legally or join the military.

The imperialist rulers and their Democratic politicians are pushing this Act as their “humanitarian” solution to help these youth fulfill their educational and US citizenship dreams.

It would give them six years to complete a two-year degree or equivalent units in a four-year program, or serve two years in the armed forces. Then they will be able to apply for a green card,

another five-six year process. If granted, the immigrant must live in the US five more years before becoming eligible to apply for citizenship.

Failure to complete these requirements will mean immediate deportation.

The similar but more restrictive Republican “Achieve Act” demands four years military service, and working four more years before applying for a green card. Peter Skerry from the influential Brookings Institution proposes granting all undocumented immigrants “permanent non-citizen residency.” Only those brought to the US as children would be allowed to become citizens.

“Path to Citizenship” Means “Path to War”

Getting a college degree now takes longer to complete and is ridiculously expensive. It doesn’t even guarantee anyone a job or a better life. The deepening economic crisis, and their ineligibility for college grants under any of these Acts, will force most of these undocumented youth either into vocational/technical programs or into the military.

Many will end up working for aerospace companies and US manufacturers like Caterpillar and Apple, which are coming back to the States now that low wages are being imposed on US workers. Young communists need to be there with them, and with those forced into the Army, to organize to destroy this deadly, hypocritical system.

Millions of US Citizen Youth Will Be Forced to Follow This Path

Pathways to Prosperity, a program founded in 2008 by the Harvard Graduate School of Education, called in 2011 for a “National Effort to Get Millions of Young Americans onto a Realistic Path to Employability.”

Despite decades of effort and spending billions of dollars, 30% of college graduates aged 21-24 are either unemployed or underemployed. *Pathways* now claims that

“college for all” is both unattainable and economically unsustainable. Bad debts on US student loans now exceed those on all credit card debt. Of 47 million jobs expected to open up by 2018 (including those of 40 million retiring baby-boomers), only 30% will require a bachelor’s degree and another 30% a two year or vocational degree.

Education Reform: Economic Competitiveness and Rebuilding War Industries on the Cheap

The bosses claim their education reform will give the youth an education that will serve them for life. Capitalist schools have always pushed the bosses’ poisonous ideology and prepared young people to accept racist exploitation. Education reform today is demanded by the rulers’ need to remain economically competitive while preparing to eventually fight rising powers like China, Russia, and Iran.

This requires a low-paid, loyal, patriotic workforce. The US bosses hope to get some of these workers from among these undocumented youth. Their next target will be the 11 million undocumented workers here and their over 4 million US born children.

But, eventually, as the conditions for World War III continue to mature, millions more US youth and young adults – black, latin, asian and white – will be inducted into this workforce and the armed forces, eventually through a new draft.

The slave-like and fascist conditions the bosses will need to impose on the job and in the military will inevitably create explosive rebellious situations. To be in the position to win soldiers and workers to turn the coming world war into a civil war for communism, we must orient our youth work towards the industries and the military.

“Turn the guns around” is more than a slogan. It’s a strategy that must be raised constantly with the masses to steel them and our Party to act boldly on it when world war breaks out.



Communist Soldiers and Sailors:

KEY TO BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION, STILL KEY TODAY

One of the most important events for workers around the world was the Russian Revolution of 1917. The Bolshevik (Communist) Party, which organized and led the revolution, was founded in the early 20th century. At that time, Russia was going through a transition from feudalism to capitalism.

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 not only the tsar but capitalism. Lenin emphasized three main pillars to win the battle for workers' rule: the need for a Communist Party; the need for a communist newspaper; and the need to win masses of industrial workers, soldiers and sailors to revolution.

The attempt to unite the working class proved demanding. The first task was to consolidate these forces into one party around the most advanced line. The Social Democratic Labor Party was created to focus on this task. Lenin also knew that the working class communist ideology had to be consolidated through a newspaper, *Spark (Iskra)*. Even this process faced opposition from opportunists who wanted to organize the working class for reform.

Lenin proved correct in seeing the need to organize the masses of workers, soldiers and sailors for revolution. This is the only way revolution can succeed. All communist revolutionary struggle needs to steadfastly fight for the correct political line and plan, which should include the creation of an ideologically advanced Communist Party to mobilize the masses, including the military, a centralized newspaper that politically educates all workers with communist ideas, and the need to organize for a violent revolution for communism, which doesn't sell the working class short.

The Bolsheviks knew that the nature of capitalism made imperialist wars and world war inevitable. They insisted on political work both among industrial workers and the armed forces to win the troops and workers to turn the imperialist war into workers' revolution. While the Bol-

sheviks began their work in the armed forces in 1903, other groups also had influence among the troops.

A mass rebellion by sailors on the battleship Potemkin in 1905, during the Russo-Japanese war, showed masses of workers, peasants and the sailors themselves the tremendous revolutionary potential of sailors and soldiers. But these sailors rebelled against the brass without sufficient Bolshevik leadership, showing the Bolsheviks that soldiers and sailors could and must be won as soon as possible to revolutionary ideas and the Bolshevik party.

This realization led to the immediate creation of the Bolshevik Military Organization (BMO) in 1905. This collective organized leafleting and distribution of newspapers. It prepared communist soldiers who 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.

Soldiers left the 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.

Lenin's views were disputed often. The Mensheviks wanted to align the needs of the working class with the needs of the emerging capitalists. The result was the split between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. The Mensheviks saw the capitalist class as a revolutionary force against the feudal system. This new rising capitalist class would supposedly lead the entire working class to fight for democracy, which meant power for

the capitalists.

The Bolsheviks saw things differently. They believed in the dictatorship of the working class, which meant a communist party giving workers advanced leadership. The Bolsheviks demonstrated that the masses of workers, soldiers and sailors are winnable 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.

This article was written by the ICWP military collective. We urge all **Red Flag** readers to get this paper to more soldiers and sailors, and we urge communist youth to join the military to mobilize for communism.

(Reference: *The History of The Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Bolshevik*, available on line at <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1939/x01/index.htm>)



PIZZA from page 1

what workers will decide to do.

Others thought that we actually do know a good deal about what communism would be. To tell the truth, you either have communism or you have some version of capitalism.

We talked about what Boeing and other workplaces would look like under communism. They could become the centers of learning, as opposed to the sterile universities we have now. They could produce a new consciousness among millions of workers as well as airplanes and other needed goods.

Communities would be organized around our collective good, not the rat race to keep your house and car as it is now. Supermarkets would be there to get healthy food to the people, not col-

lect as much profit as possible.

We have learned through bitter experience we have to eliminate money, banks, and the separation of mental and manual labor. We talked about how production for need would lay the material basis for ending racism, sexism and imperialist war.

Our new friends took extra Red Flags and our manifesto *Mobilize the Masses for Communism*. They are going to read the manifesto and we'll discuss it at the next Pizza and Politics in January.

As we were breaking up, a modest comrade had a criticism. "It was a good meeting, but I'd like to talk more about what we are doing now to advance the revolution. I particularly like the report on Central America and how it was linked to

our need to develop a collective of new workers just entering industry."

Let's do that!



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Communism is Our Heritage and Future – Part IX

MUNSTER, GERMANY, 1534: RELY ON THE MASSES!

In January 1534, Dutch Anabaptist preachers in the city of Munster announced a new “prophet,” the 34-year-old baker Jan Matthys. An Anabaptist convert, Matthys won over thousands. He rejected the pacifist theology he’d been taught, preaching instead that oppression must be met with resistance.

Within a month, Anabaptists expelled Bishop Waldeck from Munster and took control of the city. They attempted to establish a society based on all things held in common.

However, the rebels made the serious error of installing Bernhard Knipperdolling, a wealthy merchant’s son, as mayor. They thought he would win broad support. Knipperdolling had the financial and political support of the guilds. But his personal interests stood against the most radical of Matthys’ policies, such as dissolving the guilds and confiscating private property.



This mistaken policy of a “united front” (as it would later be called) with so-called progressive capitalists would have sold out the interests of the masses, had Munster held out. But without mobilizing the masses for communism, even that was impossible.

Waldeck raised an army to besiege Munster. Matthys, confused by his religious outlook, prophesied that God’s judgment would come on Easter Sunday. That day he led thirty followers in a hopeless foray against Waldeck’s army. They were cut off from the town, Matthys was killed, and his severed head placed on a pole for all to see.

Still the city held out until June 1535.

As Engels noted in 1850, parallels between the German revolutions of the 16th century and the uprisings of 1848-49 were “too obvious to be altogether ignored at that time.” He attributed the failure of both revolutions largely to the fact that the masses aligned themselves behind the burgers (bourgeois, rising capitalists). The lesson he drew for the 19th century was that urban workers should ally instead with the working peasantry.

We must question another conclusion Engels drew from the German peasant revolts. “The worst thing that can befall a leader of an extreme party,” he wrote, “is to be compelled to take over a government in an epoch when the movement is not yet ripe for the domination of the class which he represents What he *can* do is in contrast to all his actions as hitherto practised, to all his principles and to the present interests of his party; what he *ought* to do cannot be achieved.”

Engels was clearly right that the work-

ing class was too weak to seize the leadership of society in the 16th century. In particular, 16th century communism was still rooted in religion, not science. Capitalism itself wasn’t developed enough to create a strong working class.

By Engels’s time, however, it was. We now know that we *can*, and *ought* to, mobilize the masses for communism under any and all circumstances, even when the communist goal cannot be immediately attained. That’s the only way to build the movement that will one day win the communist world of which so many have dreamed.

The Anabaptist movement continued to spread. Most Anabaptists were pacifist evangelicals (such as the Mennonites) or focused exclusively on God. However, the radical tradition survived.

In England, for example, amidst sharpening class struggles, John Foxe famously interpreted Revelation to mean that the kingdom of heaven on earth was near at hand. Thomas Goodwin’s *Glimpse of Syon’s Glory* vividly expressed the masses’ utopian dreams and urged them to “take heed that you lose not this opportunity.” Thomas Muntzer, Joachim of Fiore, and the Lollards were studied carefully.

Authorities particularly hated the growing number of uneducated men and women who began to preach to their families, friends and neighbors. The most important leader to emerge in this subversive tradition was a cloth merchant named Gerrard Winstanley. Revolted by the commercial world and unsuccessful in business, he took a job herding cows as a wage laborer and began writing revolutionary pamphlets in Biblical metaphors.

Next article: *Winstanley and the Diggers in the English Revolution*

TRADE-UNIONISM: ONCE TRAGEDY, NOW FARCE

In December 1936, the red-led United Auto Workers seized the General Motors Fisher Body plant and began the Great Flint Sit-Down Strike. This heroic struggle won union recognition, promising that industrial unionism would save US workers from the horrors of capitalist exploitation and crisis. The truth then, as now, is that workers’ only hope lies in building a huge international revolutionary party capable of mobilizing the masses for communism.

Now, almost 75 years after the Flint Sit-Down Strike, the false promise of militant trade-unionism stands exposed as a cruel hoax. But that’s not mainly because of the anti-union (“right to work”) law recently rammed through the Republican-dominated Michigan State Legislature and quickly signed by a Republican-governor.

This law was backed by \$millions from ultra-conservative Republican groups and individuals, notably Koch and DeVos (Amway) money. It makes it much harder for the UAW to help elect Democrats in the future.

That’s why Democratic Party-led organizations like liberal churches and “community” groups are joining the unions in a new coalition called “We Are Michigan.” Its stated goal is to “explore organizing and electoral options to undo Governor Snyder’s attempt to unravel the middle class.” That’s the crueler hoax.

What “middle class”? We are the working class!

UAW leaders collaborated fully with Obama’s 2009 “bailout” of the US auto industry, which included taking away workers’ “right to strike.” They had already agreed to a series of contracts, starting in 2007, that introduced a “two-tier” sys-

tem where new workers were hired in at half the prevailing wage (about \$14/hour, or \$28,000/year). After the bailout, new-hires also lost pensions, any hope of full pay, and would get no raises or bonuses for six years.

This is happening in aerospace, transit, and across the board. The answer isn’t “equal pay for equal work.” The answer is to abolish capitalism’s wage system!

The auto bailout should count as part of the US rulers’ preparations for an eventual third world war. Without domestic heavy industry, where would the Army get its trucks and tanks? Detroit didn’t produce cars during World War II! Conveniently, the US government got a 60% stake in the “New GM.”

The Democratic Party is fully in favor of squeezing the working class to make US industry “more competitive” and, even more important, to pay for present and future wars.

The UAW’s current attack on the Romneys for profiteering from the bailout is probably true but, in the scheme of things, little more than a sideshow. It’s a distraction from the ugly truth that the Democratic Party is, if anything, a more dangerous enemy of the working class than the Republicans. The “electoral options” of the UAW and We Are Michigan are a deadly trap.

What organizing?

Karl Marx once said that great events in history happen twice: “the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce.” For auto workers in the US, the tragedy was that the heroic Flint strike enshrined reform instead of revolution as both the strategy and the goal of the labor movement.



We’re seeing the farce today. A torch-light march on 100 in Detroit, a massive rally of thousands at the state capitol building in Lansing on December 11, “creative nonviolence” . . . all in the service of electing Democrats. The closest thing to a “strike” was the closure of three school districts on December 11 due to “high absenteeism” of teachers who took the day off to attend the rally in Lansing.

Some union militants call for “a general strike against anti-union laws.” This, too, is pathetic. Where is the call for a general strike against capitalism that could make a mass issue of the need for communist revolution?

The militant spirit of the thousands who have rallied in Michigan this month, and of the tens of thousands who fought similar laws in Wisconsin and Indiana, must not be squandered in trying to prop up the failed strategy of trade unionism as union officials and other misleaders intend to do. **Red Flag** readers, especially those who are themselves industrial workers, must take the lead in bringing communist ideas and communist organization to the masses.

COMMUNISM WILL LIBERATE US FROM EXPLOITATION AND ALIENATION

When we buy a pair of pants, fill our car with gas, or talk to a friend using a cell phone, we relate to these objects or commodities as if they have some value, power of their own. We might intellectually know of the horrendous fires in Bangladesh's textile factories, Middle Eastern oil wars that kill millions or the slave-like factories that produce cell phones in China. However, under capitalism our relationship with other workers is expressed as our relationship with the commodities we have. Since the value of all commodities, including our own labor power, is expressed in money, our relationship with other workers is indirect, mediated with money. Money appears to dominate every aspect of our life.

But money, after all, is an object, a piece of paper or some number in a bank. How does it have such overwhelming power to affect everything in our life? It is because under capitalism production is organized for exchange to make profit, not for the use of the workers who produce it. For example, a textile worker in Bangladesh produces about 5200 shirts a year, to be sold mainly in the US and Europe. The worker earns about \$60 a month and cannot afford to buy even one shirt. This shows the tremendous amount of surplus value bosses steal from workers.

Because of capitalist competition, the bosses speed up production by dividing the labor process into tedious, repetitive tasks that the majority of workers are forced to perform. This division of labor requires only a small group of workers to design machines, program computers, and do re-

search to produce new technology. They are trained in universities to make the production process more efficient and profitable.

Capitalist production for profit creates the material basis for the ideology of individualism. A worker's survival depends solely on the sale of his or her labor power for wages to exchange for other commodities. "My house, my car, my family, my money, my needs, etc." become the primary way of thinking. Factory workers have no interest in production except for earning wages.

Wasting the most productive part of life making profit for the capitalists alienates workers, not only from the production process itself but from each other. This alienation, in extreme cases, leads some workers to very destructive behavior such as alcoholism, drug use, depression, mental illness and violence, for which capitalism has no real solution.

Communism is the opposite of capitalism. After the revolution, we will immediately abolish money and private property. Instead of production for exchange and profit, we will organize our work for the use and needs of the working class. Production for need will require us to end the distinction between manual and mental labor, abolishing the factories, schools and universities as they exist today.

To understand how communism might work, let us take as example the production of food as it exists today. Currently, about 925 million peo-

ple go to bed hungry worldwide, or 1 in every 7 persons. One in 5, or 1.5 billion people are extremely overweight and of those, half a billion are obese. That number is rapidly increasing.

The production, processing and distribution of food is extremely dangerous to both the workers who produce and consume it. Capitalist hunger for profit destroys the environment, causing catastrophic climate changes. The use of deadly pesticides and fertilizers injures and kills many workers in the food industry. The capitalist health care system, organized for profit, looks at the epidemics of cancer, diabetes, heart diseases, addictions and depression, all caused by capitalism, in total isolation from each other.

Under communism not a grain of food will be produced for profit. This will require each and every person to be involved in the production process, determining what to produce and how to distribute it. To determine the needs of the working class, we will have to build a mass party. Such a party will collectively know each and every worker. Both production and distribution require scientific knowledge which will be contributed by all involved in productive activity.

Each person will be a worker, teacher, scientist, doctor, artist, writer, philosopher, and above all a communist. Capitalism's narrow division of labor will end, and, for the first time in human history, the full potential of humanity will shape the world. Instead of dominating us as they do under capitalism, the products of our labor will liberate us.

For the first time in human history, the full potential of humanity will shape the world.

How does money have such overwhelming power to affect everything in our life?

LETTERS

LETTERS

LETTERS

CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

El Salvador

COMMUNISM WILL COMBINE LEARNING AND WORK

At the International ICWP meeting, comrades of different nationalities took part with the goals of strengthening the struggle for communism, building new networks of distribution of Red Flag and getting closer to our comrade workers.

Debating and sharing revolutionary ideas and experiences strengthens and encourages us to carry out the struggle that we communists make every day: to turn workers, soldiers, and students to Revolution. That will only be achieved when all the workers of the world are organized into an international party, ICWP, and we're part of the Red Army that will free us from the yoke of capitalism. Our goal is to build a communist world based on equality.

Hearing the voices of comrades who work in the factories talking about the horrors that the bosses and their security system put them through, or the abuses that transport workers live daily, convinces us more each time that capitalism is not viable for the working class and must be ended.

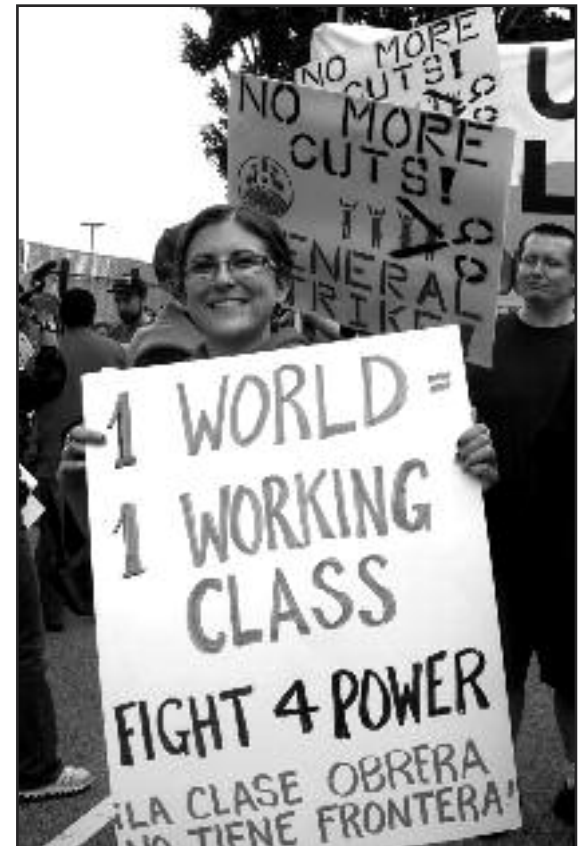
And the masses increasingly show their dissatisfaction with the system. In Europe, the Americas, Africa, and the rest of the world, workers look for answers, alternatives that will put an end to the hunger and poverty produced by capitalism and its wage slavery. On the road, they run the risk of falling into the trap of reformism, which is nothing more than crumbs produced by their own labor that the boss gives back to workers.

An important aspect of the meeting was the discussion about how the communist system

will organize education and health. The communist system will solve problems inherited from capitalism like delinquency, racism, hunger, etc. The decisions about how to do this won't be made by a small group of intellectuals or philosophers. They will be created and put into practice collectively by the workers. Only the united working class can build a world based on collectivity in which every man, woman, and child has a place to live, enough to eat, and guaranteed education and health care. They will be provided with the tools to develop all their knowledge and skills. The means of communication will be under the control of the masses. The bosses will no longer bombard us with sexist and consumerist ideas as in capitalism.

We are the workers, those who have the power to build a new education model in which the classrooms won't only be centers where the student is sent to receive knowledge but also where knowledge will be put into practice. The school won't be separate from the factory, the laboratory, the hospital. It will be in them. That is, there will be a real implementation of knowledge based on theory and practice.

We will work in community where each worker will rotate doing tasks like cleaning and distributing food. These tasks wouldn't fall on only one person or group as in capitalism. They will be collective work. And there won't be discrimination toward those who clean the facilities or the bathrooms because each of us will take our turn at carrying this out for the good of the community.



We will all be workers and at the same time students throughout our lifetimes.

We must strive so that every day we get stronger in the fight for true liberty and human dignity. That will only be achieved when exploitation of some people by others is ended, when our lives don't have a price and we aren't slaves to a wage system. And we will achieve this through a communist revolution which will be the work of millions of workers throughout the whole world.

The struggle continues... We Will Win
--A communist youth in El Salvador

THIS IS THE PAPER OF THE WORKING CLASS. WE GET NO FUNDING FROM THE CAPITALISTS, THEIR FOUNDATIONS OR NGOs. PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY TO HELP PAY FOR THE COSTS OF PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION.

Communist Revolution Demands Work in the Military

Recently I participated in a communist school, together with comrades from other countries. A comrade worker from Los Angeles made a presentation about the need to organize inside the bosses' armed forces.

She said, "A revolution can't be victorious, nor maintain itself after victory if the soldiers aren't won to communist ideas." She continued talking about the experiences of soldiers joining the revolution during the Paris Commune, the Russian Revolution and the Chinese Revolution. Thousands of soldiers turned their guns around against the bosses and, together with teachers, farm workers, students, and industrial

workers, they fought shoulder to shoulder until winning the revolution.

Comrades from the different countries were asked if they had already been working with soldiers, or if they had a plan for young comrades to join the bosses' armed forces with communist ideas.

A comrade answered honestly, saying, "We still don't have work in the military; I think we have failed to carry out this plan. But we must pay more attention, because this work is very important and we must begin to work in the military."

Another youth said, "It's true that we still haven't done this work, but I promise to work on it and to carry it out."

A comrade worker from the maquilas said, "I have a son who wants to join the army. He doesn't know about communist ideas. But I agree that the youths from ICWP should visit him and can win him to the Party."

Another comrade remarked, "I met a group of soldiers who came to the place where I live. At first it was a little difficult to establish a relationship and talk to them about communist ideas, but I've since

broken the ice and I've started giving them *Red Flag*."

It was remarked that this work isn't easy, but if we're persistent and if we fight heroically to overcome the obstacles of security and anti-communism in ourselves, we can do it.

I think that until now this is one of our biggest weaknesses. The left in Latin America hasn't seen soldiers as our allies. This has helped to create a negative attitude and one of rejection of the urgent need to build a political base in the bosses' armed forces.

However, with the line of *Mobilize the Masses for Communism*, and under the leadership of ICWP, there is no room to ignore, avoid, or postpone the building of a communist base among the soldiers. I think that little by little we are advancing in this direction. We must struggle politically with all the members of ICWP to make lists of people they know who are in the military and for comrades in the different countries struggle with youth to join the army to organize with communist ideas.

Also, where it's possible, we should form Military Committees to help the youth prepare politically to win their friends to the ideas of communist revolution. These committees must write their experiences in the process of the development of this political work.

--Comrade Worker in Los Angeles



Rebellious US soldiers in Vietnam

Communism In Words and Actions

"Why don't you sweep the school? If you say you're a communist?" A student asked me this when we talked for the first time about communism.

I responded that now, under capitalism, my work and his work is to study. That's why they pay us with the taxes of many workers in Mexico. And the janitor's work is to sweep and clean, but it wouldn't be a problem for me to do it right now, and that I would gladly do it.

I commented that in communism, each one will serve the rest of the people with the activity that most pleases him or her. If someone liked agronomy the best, that person would contribute knowledge and work in the field of agronomy, but would also have to carry out other activities, like sweeping, working in industry, etc.

The student also commented that the area where we live is not pleasant. Many students don't want to live here because they consider themselves middle class and therefore choose other areas to live. I responded that capitalism divides people on different levels, but that we communists say that under capitalism, there's only the working class and the bosses.

To think that there's a middle class is only a capitalist illusion. In the end such people continue working and defending the boss to keep their jobs. They themselves fall into the illusion of imitating the boss, behaving like a boss, and feeling superior to the rest of the people. For that reason many of their behaviors are racist.

We discussed some other issues and finally I gave him *Red Flag*. He took it but remarked that he was afraid because he never thought that I was a communist. I told him that he had nothing to fear. We are only seeking a world in which each person receives according to his or

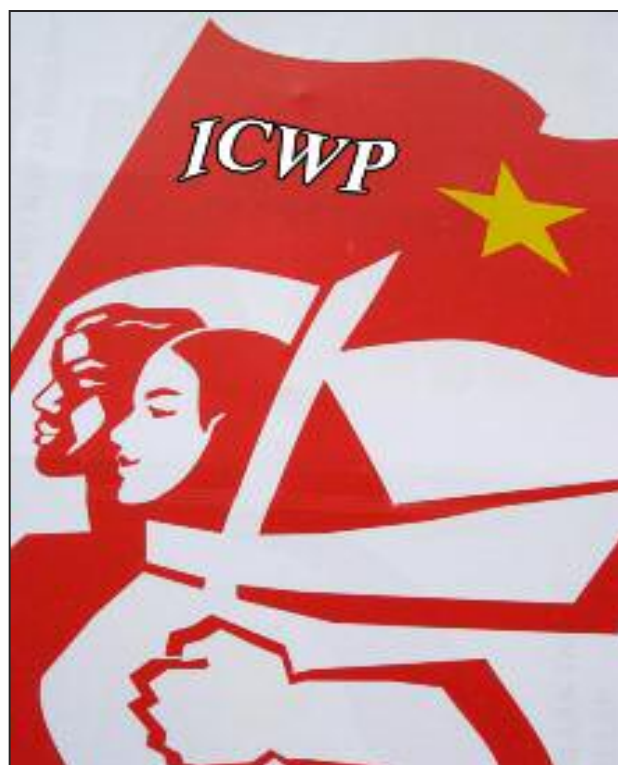
her needs and contributes according to his or her commitment, in which there is no money, nor sexism, nor racism, nor people pressuring the rest to defend the boss.

We ended our conversation and agreed that I would give him the newspaper every two weeks. An international meeting of the Party discussed how to get communist ideas to the people. The simple answer to this is to talk about communism in daily life with our actions and our words, because the workers are our neighbors, relatives, friends, fellow students, taxi drivers, and many others.

--Young comrade in Mexico

Dialectical Materialist Philosophy Helps Advance Struggle

This continues the story of two Mexican comrades' experiences in the week of the Day of the Dead.



We also had a study Group in which six people participated, including Party members and *Red Flag* readers. We started a discussion with a *Red Flag* reader. We insisted on the need to build the Party and that he actively participate.

It became clear that he still doesn't want to join. He argued that for him it's better to listen to us and other political groups, and support them from the outside. He commented that if he joined he would be limited in learning many things. He said that he mostly agreed with the Party but that he still wasn't ready for it. We were actually pushing him to see his contradictions.

After a few minutes of this, we began to study dialectical materialism. We mentioned that it is the science that helps us to understand the nature of capitalism and to come to scientific approaches in order to build a society without classes, communism. We analyzed and discussed the law of the Unity and Struggle of Opposites. As the discussion advanced, we realized that our reader friend whom we had invited to join the Party understood his contradictions that kept him from making a bigger commitment.

We advanced more with him by discussing this law than by directly confronting him. Another reader understood the analysis very well and commented to a comrade as the meeting ended that he disagreed with the other reader about not wanting to join the Party. In reality, for the good of the whole working class, we should all join the Party. The discussion was very good. We agreed to read the other laws for the next study group over winter vacation. Afterwards, we took part in a family meal with a comrade, exchanging ideas with his family. This day was very helpful.

--A comrade from Mexico

CAPITALIST CULTURE FROM A COMMUNIST PERSPECTIVE:

Please send in drawings, photos, or written contributions (no more than 300 words).

Capitalist Lies

Each issue will be discussing one of these "Top 10 Lies."

Top 10 Lies We R Taught

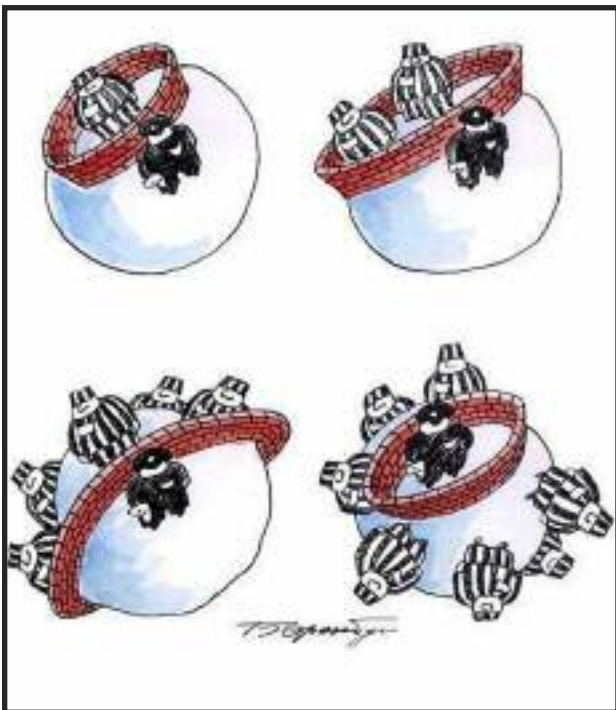
1. Communism is dead.
2. We have "freedom" of speech, beliefs, expression
3. Cops are your friends/only bad people go to jail.
4. We have "equal opportunity"
5. The U.S. smashed the Nazis
6. Bad people go to jail
7. We need to vote to change things
8. Capitalism runs on "supply and demand"
9. The government checks and balances ensures that nobody has too much power and our government works for the people
10. Slavery ended because of "anti-racism"

The Truth of the Matter:

Workers sometimes respond to us by saying, "communism failed," which isn't true. They usually follow with references to failures in the Soviet Union and China. What they are actually referring to is the failure of *socialism*, which is a form of capitalism. Many thought, and many still think, that socialism leads to communism, but it can't because it keeps key capitalist features like money, wages, production for exchange, and social classes, in place. We now see that socialism is a dead end for workers.

We know that, even though the bosses also try to tell us communism failed, the *real failure*, for billions around the world, is capitalism! Of what use is a system that must be maintained through racism, sexism, exploitation, police violence, etc.? And what do they maintain, if not our wage slavery for the bosses' maximum profits? In the current crisis, the bosses increase their attacks on us by beating us, trying to scare us, forcing us to work overtime, stripping our pay and benefits, gutting education, etc. As was shown on the cover of *Red Flag's* December 6th issue, more and more workers are looking for solutions outside of capitalism. We must advance the line that this system can't liberate us, only communist revolution can!

We have learned much from our predecessors' setbacks and victories about how many aspects of communist society will function. We know many of capitalism's social ills will be gone, or greatly reduced. We know that we will finally have the opportunity to develop to our highest potential. Although we believe in building the clearest possible vision for our new communist society, we don't have all the answers. This is why we need you to join the ICWP! We need your ideas, your energy, and your comradeship!



We Are Going to be Soldiers

We are going to be soldiers
'neath the red flag we will fight
With these guns tucked in our shoulders
We will crush the bosses' might
Join the ICWP
Let us break these chains that bind
Workers of the world unite
And put an end to wage slavery

They're spending billions every year
On drones and ammunition
Their smart bombs and surveillance gear
To keep in good condition
While billions live in misery
And millions die before us
Don't sing "my country 'tis of thee"
Just sing this little chorus

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They've killed millions overseas
To keep their pipelines flowing
And they'll kill a million more

With warplanes built by Boeing
They're sending troops to the Pacific
To attack their Chinese rivals
We'll turn their fascist guns around
And put an end to their life cycle

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'neath the red flag we will fight
With these guns tucked in our shoulders
We will crush the bosses' might
Join the ICWP
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Workers of the world unite
And put an end to wage slavery

A communist consciousness is the way
To shed all our illusions
That there's nothing wrong with capitalism
It just needs a little fixin'
For the toiling masses around the world
We have the real solution
Reforms won't lead to workers' power
We need communist revolution

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Television Review:

SURVIVOR

The television reality game show *Survivor* debuted in the United States in 2000, however, the first version of *Survivor* aired in Sweden in 1997. Today *Survivor* continues in at least 16 different countries/regions (*La Isla* in Mexico). The show consists of contestants who are on an island with some basic items for survival and are to "Outwit, Outplay, and Outlast" their competition for a large sum of money that only one contestant can win. The show follows the contestants through a series of challenges; however, the focus of the show is on the cutthroat competition that ensues to win the money. The game show is a swamp of capitalist ideas.

The show demonstrates how competition brings out the worst in our humanity. Rather than promoting our collective good and humility, it promotes individualism and greed. Contestants spend most of their free time plotting against each other, forming "alliances," lying, and backstabbing. Many are amused and entertained by this. However, the harsh realities of capitalists' competition is not amusing.

Capitalist competition creates illness, poverty, and imperialist wars. We are told that we too can be "winners," and many are fooled by this. We are told that those who do not "make it" were inherently not "fit" enough, smart enough, or ambitious enough to win.

What is the political message of the show *Survivor*? The show makes it seem that individualism and greed are traits that help you get ahead and are necessary for survival. However, the contrary is true. Humanity could not have survived without our ability to look out for one another. During crises most people will pull together and do great things for others – oftentimes helping total strangers; however, our capitalist media will mostly focus on the exceptions as during crises the bosses are more concerned with increasing police forces to protect private property such as banks and stores even as food rots on shelves.

The International Communist Workers' Party's political message is that workers are capable of running a communist society collectively without money and humanity will flourish. However, there are many questions to be asked and debated now and after a revolution. For example, will we have game shows on television under communism? If so, what kind? How would we create shows that promote what we want mirrored in society? Will we create "laws" to regulate this? Will we encourage the masses to protest shows that promote individualism and greed? What would a show that promotes the goodness in humanity look like? Send in your ideas and/or any answers.

The class that rules determines a society's culture...