

RED FLAG

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



MTA's Harassment Intensifies; Driver Dies:

STRIKE AGAINST MURDEROUS MTA AND FOR COMMUNISM!

Los Angeles – On Friday, June 17th, *Red Flag* sellers were told by MTA workers at Division 15 that one of their co-workers had died during the night. He was 46 years old and left a pregnant wife and children.

His ordeal began when while driving a bus, he discovered a small object by his foot. He picked up what turned out to be a small radio. The bus' surveillance camera caught the scene. Accused of having an electronic device while driving, he faced assistant manager Barbara Maycott in a formal disciplinary hearing.

The operator explained that the device had been lost by another driver, who was prepared to testify to this. Maycott would not hear of it and threatened him with 30 days suspension without pay and possible firing.

“Progressive discipline is unknown to her. Her emphasis is to fire as many operators as possible. She derives special pleasure from this,” a driver told *Red Flag*.

She also said she would send the case to MTA Headquarters for the final decision. “This is a farce. She uses this to further stress out drivers. Everyone knows that she can state the decision right here,” commented another driver.

The driver, although under extreme duress, continued to work. Later, needing a Family Medical Leave to take care of the post-surgical com-

plications of one of his children, he went to see Maycott. She denied it, demanding additional paper work from the doctor.

His co-workers report that his emotional and physical wellbeing were severely impacted by the pressure and strain imposed by MTA's fascist tactics. They firmly believe these played a major role in his death.

An MTA driver explains, US imperialism is lethal for MTA workers:

“We're having severe problems at Division 15 because of MTA's inhumane practices enforcing work rules to the point of fabricating cases to intimidate, harass and fire operators. There is no Union, just a dues collecting agency! Union officials pretend to help you but they usually side with management.

“Our ratio of operators on medical leave, strokes and death is higher than at the other divisions. LA's horrendous traffic, management's constant harassments, plus personal problems and shrinking incomes place drivers in stressful unbearable situations.

“The average life expectancy of retired workers in the US is 15 years after; for us operators it is only 7 years. Because of management's fascist tactics, we are getting extremely stressed out, so that most of us no longer consider bus driving a worthwhile profession. The sense of pride in

working for MTA and being a productive member of society is no longer there. Ask operators if they hope to complete 23 years of service. Most operators are contemplating retiring as soon as possible.”

Under capitalism we can't ever really be “productive members of society” because for the bosses we are just machines to produce their profits. If we can't do this, they won't hire us. Also, capitalist production is not to satisfy human needs but to be sold for money. If one has no money, one can't have the bread, house, medicine, etc. Only under communism, a moneyless society that produces only for human needs, can we be truly productive members of society. Our labor will always be useful, appreciated and respected.

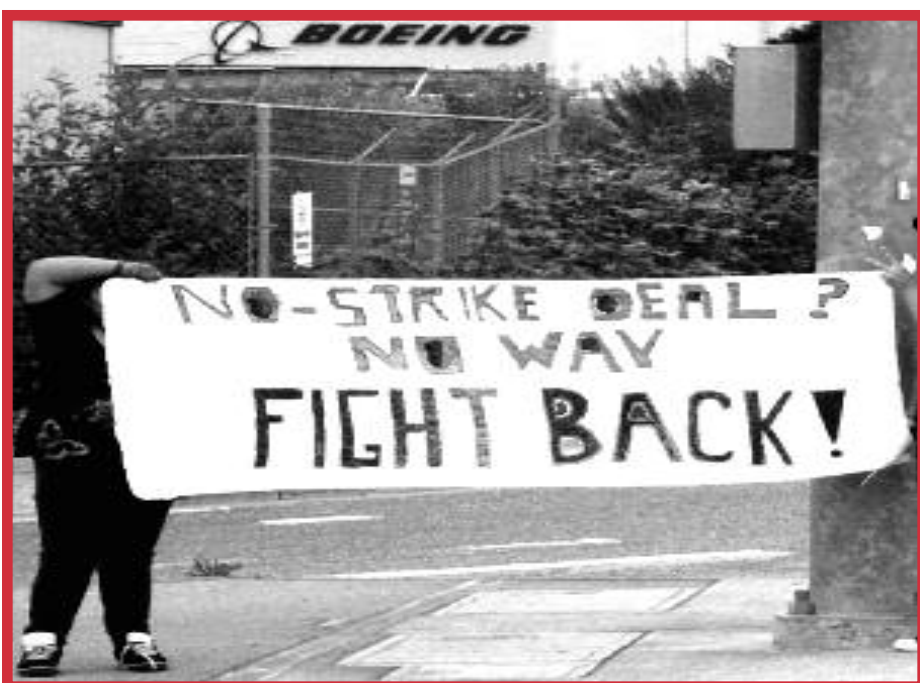
Situation calls for communist revolution, not reformist trade union ideology.

Another driver said, “The death of this operator is the straw that broke the camel's back. We must protest this murder.” Workers at Division 15 are boiling mad. The question is what action should we take and who will lead it.

We need to organize a political strike against this murder by capitalism and the MTA. We need a political strike for communism that breaks us

See MTA, page 3

LABOR LAW LEADS WORKERS INTO NO-STRIKE TRAP



SEATTLE, WA — Lawyers for Boeing and the IAM met in secret here Wednesday after the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) judge recommended they settle their dispute over whether the aircraft maker illegally shifted work to a non-union, low-wage plant in South Carolina.

All the media, from the local papers to the *New York Times* to the *Wall Street Journal* are busy floating trial balloons suggesting the shape of that compromise. Every version envisions a promise of future jobs in Washington State on some as yet undefined program a decade or so in the future. In other

words, an empty promise!

In exchange, they demand the union agree to a multi-decade no-strike regime.

This is a replay of the secret negotiations the union initiated in 2009 for a no-strike deal that caused such a furor in the Puget Sound plants. At that time, we helped scuttle the deal by organizing for mass resistance.

Now we have to up the ante. Mobilizing the masses for communism can scuttle the bosses' system and their recurring and intensifying attacks on us and our families.

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“When the rulers speak of peace, the war orders have already been written out.” – Bertolt Brecht

WITHDRAWAL FROM AFGHANISTAN: US BOSSES PREPARING FOR WIDER WAR WITH CHINA

June 22 – Two days ago, the US Conference of Mayors passed a resolution calling on the President and Congress to “speed up the ending” of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and to “bring these war dollars home to meet vital human needs [and] promote job creation.” Tonight President Obama announced that the US would withdraw 10,000 troops from Afghanistan by the end of the year and 23,000 more by next summer. That will still leave 67,000 there, almost twice as many as Bush had.

Obama speaks of peace and the US Mayors speak of peace dividends. None can deliver on their promises. All serve an empire in decline, fighting fiercely to keep its world dominance. Make no mistake: any withdrawals will not be for peace, but to prepare for wider wars and world war against China-Russia-Iran.

Don’t let the rulers’ pacifist lullabies sing you to sleep. Workers and soldiers need to wake up and turn the guns around for communist revolution.

Chinese rulers understand that war is coming

On May 16, the Chinese state-run People’s Daily wrote an article entitled “US Needs to Get out of Afghanistan to Focus on an ‘Asia-Pacific Future.’” It contends that the US bosses are broadening and strengthening their military alliances “with their Asia Pacific partners” and that “there is no way that Obama will soften his attitude on US-China relations.” Obama, they conclude, “believes that the future of the global order will be determined in the Asia Pacific.”

“The Middle East is just a blip. The American military contest with China in the Pacific will define the 21st century. And China will be a more formidable adversary that Russia ever was,” wrote Robert D. Kaplan, a leading US imperialist strategist.

Middle East energy resources are more than a “blip” but the Pacific region has been central to US economic and military strategy for over a century. In 2009, US exports there reached \$618 billion, 58% of its total. “The US cannot afford to be marginalized in Asia,” said People’s Daily, “and will never think of making a retreat.”

China’s economic growth and rising influence threatens US decades-old dominance of the area. As China prepares to double exports globally in the next five years, US and Chinese interests will clash more sharply. Obama’s troop withdrawals aim to prepare for this inevitable clash. The Chinese imperialists are also laying their own military plans.

US imperialism’s “withdrawal” is nevertheless a major strategic defeat

The US bosses’ main objective in invading Iraq was to secure its oil fields and pump 8 to 12 million barrels a day. This would have brought market prices below production costs in Russia, Iran and Venezuela. They hoped to topple a bankrupt Iranian regime and thereby regain full control of Middle Eastern oil.

If this had happened, Russia’s aspirations for world dominance based on its energy resources

would have been snuffed. China would have been starved of the energy needed for its future economic and military growth. Upstarts like Venezuelan Hugo Chavez would have been swatted down.

But none of this happened.

Iraq turned into a fiasco. Obama escalated the “good war” in Afghanistan to rescue US bosses from their Iraqi debacle.

The Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India pipeline (TAPI) was planned to bring Central Asia-Caspian Sea energy resources to South Asian and European markets. This was meant to accomplish what the Iraq invasion didn’t. US bosses hoped to use Central Asian energy resources to roll back Chinese and Russian advances in that region. That way they might have broken Europe’s energy dependence on Russia, isolated and toppled the Iranian regime, and pacified Iraq.

But that didn’t happen either.

All that US imperialism has to show for ten years of war is ever-higher mountains of workers’ corpses and debts.

China-Russia-Iran

bosses won big from US bosses’ fiascos

Without firing a shot, Russian and Chinese bosses got the lion’s share of Iraq’s oil fields at a December, 2009 auction. Iran is now Iraq’s main trading partner. Its Shiite politicians dominate the Iraqi government.

Now Russia, China and Iran are beginning to fill the vacuum created by the US retreat from Afghanistan. Pakistani bosses, clashing with the US bosses over their exclusion from the Afghanistan-Taliban peace talks, are drawing closer to Russia and China. Also this week, the Pakistani and Afghani presidents are participating in an Iranian-hosted conference on terrorism.

The recent Shanghai Cooperation Organization’s (SCO) summit discussed membership applications from Pakistan and India. The Chinese and Russian-dominated SCO is opposed to the US and NATO. If India and Pakistan are approved, SCO member countries will have more than half the world’s population.

India’s membership would be a big blow to the US bosses. India is key to their Asia-Pacific strategy and containment of China.

China-Russia-Iran axis has big plans for Afghanistan-Pakistan

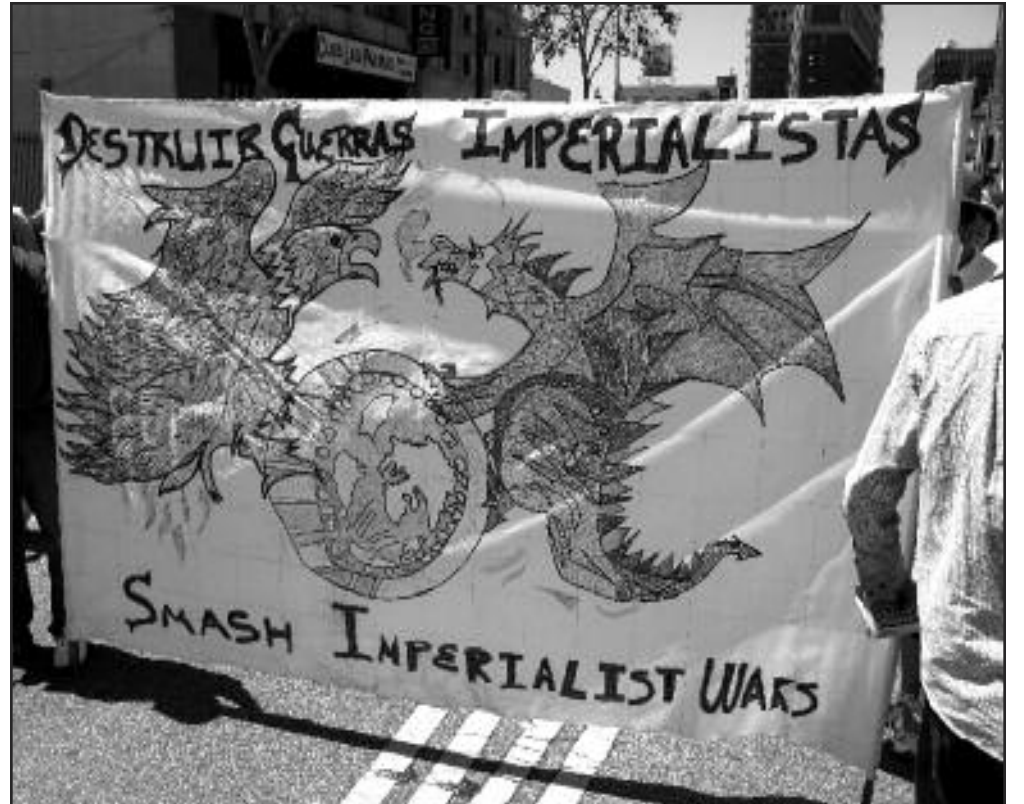
The Russian capitalist-imperialists plan to build TAPI themselves to transport Turkmenistan’s huge newly-discovered gas deposits to India, Pakistan and China. This will scuttle US

plans for a pipeline through Turkey that would break Europe’s dependence on Russia’s energy.

Iran is renewing talks with Pakistan to complete an Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline. Iran has already built nearly the whole 660 miles that will run through Iranian territory.

China plans a modern Silk Road.

“If there were no wars in the region, tens of thousands of trucks and buses would transport cargo and people every day among the three countries,” writes the Chinese state website www.globaltimes.cn. It proposes immediate cooperation between Afghanistan, Pakistan, and China “to realize the tremendous potential of the



legendary medieval Silk Road” with intensified Chinese investment in roads, energy pipelines, electric grids and other infrastructure.

Red Flag has written before about China’s war preparations. These include by-passing the US-controlled Malacca Straits, through which 80% of its exports must pass. We have written about US efforts to destabilize the region by fomenting Islamic fundamentalist uprisings in Central Asia, Iran, Russia and China. The US bosses’ isolation and desperation is speeding up the drive toward World War III.

There can be no “peaceful rise” of China, nor peaceful decline of the US, nor peace of any kind under capitalism.

We must see the potential, in this period of looming world war and massive international workers’ uprisings, for communist revolution in our time. Instead of vain hopes for “peace,” we must welcome this struggle.

Communism will end nations and borders. Communism will end profit-driven production and the competition that leads to imperialist war.

The masses, organized into one International Communist Workers’ Party, will learn to make all decisions about the world’s resources based on our own collective best interest.

We are beginning to build this Party today. Join us and let’s get to work!



**JOIN THE
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HONDURAS: MASSES NEED TO FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM

In the last three years, hundreds of thousands of workers, students, farm workers and teachers have been in constant mobilization in Honduras. An estimated 2 million people marched throughout the country on May Day in 2011, out of a population of around 9 million people.

Their demands for better living conditions, wage increases, land, jobs, etc have been rejected, met with police brutality, disappearances, and executions of leaders of the mass organizations. The government has mobilized the army and death squads to terrorize the masses of workers. But these masses have confronted them in bloody battles in the streets and universities. The repression hasn't stopped the drive of the masses in struggle.

The liberal bosses led by ex-President Manuel Zelaya, with the support of the reformist, socialist, and revisionist leaders, have succeeded in bringing together the discontent and fury of the masses, through their National Front of Popular Resistance (FNRP), and their new Broad Political Front (FAP-FNRP). In this, people from Zelaya's Liberal Party (the right and those who organized the coup in 2009) to the militant teachers' union and "left" groups can all participate. In a speech by Zelaya in an assembly of the FNRP on June 19, 2011, he said, "It's true that I came in with the right, but I governed with the left...What democracy is it when we can't sit down with a capitalist, a socialist, a communist and a liberal to discuss the problems of Honduras?" This is a murderous mix for the working class.

His appearance of being pro-worker fools many. But the main problem are the leaders of the supposed "left" who follow this game, putting the life and future of the working class in the bloody

hands of the liberal capitalists, with the demand of "participatory democracy." There are many recent examples of this kind of deceit worldwide, like struggles in Oaxaca, Mexico, the FMLN in El Salvador, the FSLN in Nicaragua, 21st Century Socialism in Venezuela, and the mass struggle in Egypt where Mubarak has been replaced, but repression continues. In all these places, exploitation, wage slavery, racism, unemployment, and

complete needs of the working class. In a system like this, we'll all participate to abolish private property (private ownership of factories, mines, land) and we'll struggle to end racism and sexism that are rooted in exploitation.

To win, we need to destroy the bosses and their capitalist ideology, not ally with or depend on them. Zelaya and his game of elections are part of capitalism. The reformist union leaders and other organizations, honest or not, are taking the masses to the slaughterhouse along a dead end street of elections or negotiations with the bosses. For example, to believe that the recently ended hunger strike of the teachers would create

pressure, compassion, or respect by the bosses is a fairy tale. The bosses kill thousands of workers and their families everyday through hunger, unemployment, and diseases. They wouldn't care about a few more.

We workers must take political power by force: the bosses will never give up their power through the trickery of elections. To accomplish this goal, we need to build the International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP) and develop our base for communism in the factories, mines, schools, neighborhoods, and in the army among rank and file soldiers. These rank and file soldiers are the children of workers from the cities and the fields. We need to win them to fight on our side and to use their weapons against the officers and the bosses.

Even though it's a contradiction, we should work inside the FNRP, not to build the bosses' plans of Zelaya and his capitalist system, but to win the masses to mobilize for communism. We should struggle and plan how more workers can read and write for *Red Flag* and convert it into their banner of struggle for the goal of free workers in a new communist society.



poverty continue attacking the workers.

Honduran workers, like workers around the world, need to struggle for communism, not more "democratic" capitalism or a "better constitution," which only allows freedom for the bosses to exploit us, but not for any worker. We're fed up with the destruction and death caused by the system of exploitation and wage slavery. We need to destroy this capitalist way of living. We can and must build a new communist system where production and ideology will be to satisfy the

MTA from page 1

out of trade unionism's reformist boundaries that may mitigate our exploitation but can never end it.

ICWP members and *Red Flag* readers and friends should be at the forefront of this organizing effort. We should spread it to all the divisions. Such a strike by all MTA workers would be an inspiration to workers nationally and internationally who are under similar attacks and are looking for real solutions.

Many workers will call for the firing of Barbara Maycott. If achieved, it can serve to show the power of a united working class and its revolutionary potential. But it would be in no way an enduring accomplishment. Her job is to enforce MTA's rules and guarantee our exploitation as wage slaves. Whoever occupies her position will be the same or worse.

Calling on MTA to follow "progressive disciplining" and stop its fascist attacks is like calling on a leopard to shed its spots. MTA's fascist drive against us is dictated by a capitalist-imperialist system in deep economic crisis bent on world war to salvage the U.S. bosses' profits and empire. For this, they are slaughtering millions of workers worldwide while wrenching from our hides the cost of their imperialist adventures. Millions of us are paying with foreclosures; unemployment, speed up, cutbacks in wages and benefits, and many, like our brother, with their lives.

The only way to end this capitalist slaughter house is for us to mobilize the working masses for communism, for a world without bosses and money, where workers' lives and needs will be first and foremost. Join us!

"Thumbs Up For Communism"

Red Flag got a warm welcome from MTA transit workers today at a couple of divisions where we don't usually go. We were giving out the ICWP flyers (see article) along with the papers. "Do you see what's on the front of my bike?" a worker asked. It was a red star.

Another said, "Oh, communism. It's for the people?"

And another: "Thumbs up for communism!"

A comrade mentioned to one worker that drivers from Division 15 had suggested we come to this division because "that's where the revolutionaries are."

"I'm one of them," the worker replied.

One driver said she would post the leaflet on the bulletin board. Another said she would make copies of the leaflet and bring them to the workers the next day.

After reading the leaflet, a driver said, "It's so sad."

A comrade answered, "People should do something about it."

"But they won't," the driver said, "people are too busy trying to take care of themselves."

It's up to *Red Flag* readers to prove her wrong.



Questions for Red Flag Study-Action Groups

1. Comrades in letters on pages 14 and 15 talk about mistakes they and others made in the past when they thought they were fighting for communism. In what ways do we need to improve our practice to avoid making similar mistakes? How can we guarantee that a sharp struggle against revisionism continues?

2. MTA workers are facing sharp attacks on the job. This is also happening to teachers, postal workers, and others. Why do you think these attacks are taking place now? We have called these attacks fascist. What do you think fascism is?

GREECE: WORKERS MUST SOLVE “DEBT CRISIS” WITH COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

**We must have no illusions
about these rescue plans.**

Greek dockworkers joined a 24-hour general strike on June 15 against “austerity” measures imposed by the country’s Socialist government under pressure from international creditors.

“Austerity” means salary cuts, tax hikes, and a massive reduction in jobs, pension plans, health care, and schooling for the Greek working class. Over two out of every five Greek workers are already unemployed.

Further actions are likely to protest the planned privatization of Greece’s publicly-owned ports. The sale of state assets is meant to reduce Greece’s \$500 billion debt.

It’s time for the working class to prepare for a battle to bury all the capitalist bosses, their banks and their money once and for all.

Recently the Greek bosses selected Evangelos Venizelos as the new Finance Minister to negotiate a rescue plan for the previous rescue plan, now on the rocks. Venizelos is the darling of the German banks, as he was the head of the Greek Olympics that awarded huge infrastructure development projects to the German banks.

German bosses are squabbling with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the European Central Bank (cornerstone of the Euro) over which bosses will dominate and which will take the losses in the latest round of the Greek debt crisis. French banks have the greatest exposure, and US banks the second-greatest.

They – and the Greek bosses — all agree that the main losers will be the Greek working class. Workers elsewhere in Europe will also be taxed heavily to pay for any bailout of Greece.



**Workers fight cops in general strike
in Greece.**

They are prelude to world war. It’s not just the European and US bosses fighting over Greece. The Chinese bosses are embarking on their own “rescue plans.”

Using the China Development Bank, they are buying ports, highways and airports in Europe. They are snapping up banks, shipping companies, and energy resources. The China Development Bank has now given more loans than the World Bank

The bosses in China are sitting on a huge reserve of over 3 trillion dollars while the US is sinking deeper into debt. They are using these reserves to buy more debt in Europe. This means more Chinese trade in Europe at the expense of the US.

Moreover, Chinese bosses are determined to undermine the US-led NATO alliance. The Chinese Vice President, visiting Europe, warned last week, “China’s vital interests are at stake over Greek crisis. It is time for NATO to rethink its strategy in Libya, North Korea and Iran.”

**Greece: key strategic investment for
Chinese imperialism**

The Chinese company COSCO took over management of Europe’s largest port, Piraeus (just outside Athens) in 2009. This, too, sparked a series of dockworkers’ strikes.

Together with purchases of Greek railways and unused Olympic stadiums, Piraeus is helping China to expand and consolidate its huge European trade. An influential Dutch newspaper calls Greece the first Chinese colony in Europe.

The Chinese see Greece, too, as an entry point to North Africa and Middle East, directly challenging US interests. According to a Chinese official, “Europe is both a big market for Chinese exports with many great opportunities for ‘exploitation,’ but also a type of ‘insurance’ in case the U.S. market collapses.”

The Greek deputy prime minister said, “The Chinese want a gateway into Europe... They are not like these Wall Street f****s, pushing financial investments on paper. The Chinese deal in real things, in merchandise. And they will help the real economy in Greece.”

But the US bosses still have a major Navy base at Souda Bay on the Greek island of Crete. They used it to coordinate Navy/Air Force operations in Iraq and are now using it as a base against Libya. Don’t expect them to let China dominate Greece without a fight.

**The intensifying inter-imperialist crisis
leads to wars and more wars for profit.**

It is time for the working class to think about a different society, a communist society without money, banks, profit.

The reformist Greek Communist Party has a mass base and is a leading force in the protests. It recognizes that the contradictions of capitalism are behind the increasing misery of the masses. But its reformist program is “to quit the EU and default on international debt.” The contradictions of capitalism cry out for a mass struggle for communist revolution and nothing less. That should be the goal of this summer’s political strikes in Greece and of all our work everywhere.

It is a difficult struggle but the times are changing. The world’s bosses can’t rule in the same old way. The future is in our hands.

Red Flag is our most powerful tool to lead the working class. We have to build networks of **Red Flag** readers and distributors.

Millions of workers around the world are ready, willing and eager to create a true communist society without money and without the bosses. We must recruit these workers to ICWP to fight for communist revolution. Dare to struggle, dare to win.



**Dockworkers in Athens demanding an end
to austerity programs.**

WE CAN BUILD A WORLD WITHOUT MONEY

The international capitalist system is gripped by crisis. Every week brings news of mass demonstrations. One week a million workers and students demonstrate in Greece. Another week (June 30th) close to a million public sector workers plan to strike in Britain.

Two contradictory forces are at work. On the one hand, the overproduction of goods for sale (and the money-credit system that goes with it). On the other hand, the fact that each of us needs money in our pockets or purses. We have to act as if we were all accumulators of private wealth.

This need for money consumes us. What happens to us or our kids if we can’t pay the rent or mortgage or buy food for the family? It’s the sort of worry that wakes you up in the middle of the night. It feeds both the anger and the fear in these demonstrations. It adds to our desperation.

For something that demands so much of our psyche, too many of us remain ignorant of its nature and origins. Our lack of understanding is no accident. Capitalist culture consistently hides the function of money. However, our need to understand it is pivotal to advancing the revolution for communism (as opposed to socialism) that **Red Flag** is organizing.

Money is No Longer Useful

Humans emerged from the animal world at least two million years ago. The earliest civilizations developed about six thousand years ago and money began playing a significant role in these civilizations about 2,500 years ago. Money, then, represents only a small period in the history of humankind. Fundamental achievements – like the development of language, the wheel, controlling and using fire, pastoral farming, agriculture, mining and smelting metal, village life and so on – proceeded without the need for money.

It’s useful to recall this because money is now so central to our lives we tend to think it’s something we can’t live without, like oxygen. In fact it’s more like carbon monoxide, something that kills us. While it divides and weakens the working class, it empowers and enriches the capitalist.

It plays many roles (which we will examine in later articles) but the main one is as a medium of exchange. Things are exchanged by buying and selling them with money. While this played a positive role in Ancient times, encouraging isolated communities or localized civilizations to interact, now, in modern times, it is totally

destructive.

We Make Things, They Make Profits

For the capitalist everything is produced so it can be exchanged for money. What is actually produced becomes a matter of indifference to them as long as they can sell it. In fact, if possible, they would rather make money without having to produce anything at all. Money dominates their lives. Its accumulation measures their wealth and their wealth defines their self importance.

This same system threatens the life of the wage worker. Without wages, it seems that there is little possibility of sustaining life. To earn wages we need a job but we can only get a job so long as our work provides the capitalist with profits (more money). Fulfillment in our lives seems to hinge around the availability, or lack of, money! The crisis that grips the world is usually described as a financial crisis, but it is also a crisis of wage-labor. Understanding it that way raises revolutionary possibilities. Wage labor (Marx called it wage slavery) needs to be in crisis. It needs to be destroyed.

We produce things socially and we produce

See MONEY, page 15

MEXICAN DRUG WARS HAVE “MADE IN USA” STAMPED ALL OVER THEM

Over 40,000 people have died in Mexico in drug-related killings since 2006. Hardly a day goes by without news of workers caught in the cross-fire between the cartels and declarations by the rulers from Colombia to the U.S. of their commitment to the “war on drugs.”

But two guns found at the December, 2010, border shootout where a US Border Patrol agent was killed have exposed these hypocritical lies. These guns were part of the 2500 weapons (including AK-47s) that the US Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) allowed to be sold to gun buyers for the drug cartels while they watched and monitored the sales in a program called “Operation Fast and Furious.” While Mexican politicians had denounced this operation, the ATF said that it was part of a sting operation to catch top drug lords using the guns in crimes. In an email dated April 2, 2010, an ATF agent said that in March, 2010, they monitored drug cartel buyers purchasing 358 firearms in the US, and 958 people were killed in drug violence in Mexico in the bloodiest month since 2005. “Preventing loss of life was not the primary concern,” said one ATF agent. This was policy.

70% of the guns used in crimes in Mexico are

from the U.S. The Mexican bosses make \$40 billion in profits a year from drugs, while the US bosses make about \$500 billion from their sale.

The U.S. Congress is now “investigating” the operation, some calling for firing the head of the ATF. But this hypocrisy should not confuse us. Fomenting murderous drug wars has been the US bosses’ policy for generations.

In the aftermath of the rebellions in the 1960s and 70s in the black communities in the U.S., crack cocaine began making an appearance in inner city neighborhoods. Older residents of South Central Los Angeles remember that when gun battles began between rival gangs over drug turf, the police facilitated the delivery of caches of guns to gang members. At the same time, the bosses’ media pushed gangster culture and narco corridos and launched the “War on Drugs,” while shutting down factories and doubling the construction of prisons. Thousands of unemployed black and latino youth, potential rebels against capitalism, were caught up in using and selling drugs, fighting over drug turf, and ended up in prison or dead.

The murderous drug wars have spread to Mexico and Central America, corridors for the transportation of drugs from Colombia to the US. Potentially rebellious youth are caught up in the drug gangs. The deaths of innocent people in these confrontations allow the rulers of these countries and their US backers to push as a solution the militarization of the society.

US, Mexican and Canadian bosses have used the drug wars as an excuse to increase their cross-border police and military co-operation. The US’ “Plan Mexico” appropriated an

initial \$1.5 billion to militarize Mexico. But the more police that are on the streets in Mexico, the more violence there is against the people, the more rapes and kidnappings there are.

The real reason for the increasing militarization of Mexico and Central America is that US imperialism is losing control of Latin America to its rivals. Backed by China, Russia, and the European Union, Brazil and Venezuela are challenging US domination of the continent. But the US bosses need Mexican oil and the manufactured goods from the 125,000 factories in Mexico City, as well as the resources of the rest of Latin America, as they prepare for wider wars and world war. These contradictions mean greater attacks on Mexican and Central American workers. The US bosses are putting into place the military power to counter possible mass rebellions against US imperialism and its local allies and to try to stop the growth of rival imperialists and guarantee oil supplies.

The US bosses have knowingly spread drugs and drug violence, high-powered weapons and the murders of thousands in Mexico and Central America to keep the masses under military control. There’s no reform, change of bosses or imperialists that will end the brutality of capitalism-imperialism, which murders workers for profit worldwide. Workers need to spread *Red Flag* and build ICWP to fight to destroy this system.

In this sharpening crisis, rebellious workers need to take the guns in their hands and use them against our real enemies—all the capitalist-imperialist bosses and their drug infested system. Communism will put an end to drugs, drug wars and imperialist wars for good. By eliminating money, we’ll eliminate the possibility of drug dealers profiting from other people’s misery. By building communist relations of cooperation and respect, we’ll eliminate the alienation and the desire for the futile escapism of drugs.



COMMUNISM WILL MOBILIZE THE MASSES, NOT KILL THEM OFF

“Maybe war is a good thing,” a worker told a comrade, “because there are too many people in the world now.”

We disagree. Capitalism is the problem – not “too many workers.” The only good war will be communist revolution.

The English economist Thomas Malthus two centuries ago was the first of many cheerleaders for capitalism who have pointed fingers at the working class to explain the failures of capitalism. They argue that there are “too many poor people” and call for “population control.” For Malthus, “overpopulation” was an excuse for allowing workers to starve when the bosses didn’t need their labor.

In the imperialist era, through World War II, population control meant “eugenics.” This racist idea had two sides. One was encouraging “white” or “Aryan” women to have more children. The other was preventing births among so-called “lower races” whether defined as black, Jewish, or southern and eastern European. The Nazis took this to the logical extreme of genocide, but their policies were copied from laws already on the books in the United States.

And the racist/sexist attacks have continued. In the late 1990s, as many as 300,000 women in Peru – mostly indigenous and poor – were pressured, bribed and/or deceived into accepting sterilization.

“The sterilization law has been arbitrarily ap-

plied to reduce the birth rate as a way to combat poverty rather than as an expression of women’s reproductive rights,” according to a 1998 report.

What kind of “reproductive rights” can there be when billions of people struggle to survive, when billions more can’t get health care, adequate nutrition or education and are terrified of what old age has in store?

The way to combat both poverty and wealth is to destroy capitalism.

Liberal Environmentalists Recycle “Population Control”

Groups like the Environmental Defense Fund and the Earth Policy Institute (EPI), both funded by old-line imperialist Rockefeller money, give “population control” a new twist. EPI President Lester Brown argues in his recent book *Plan B 4.0: Mobilizing to Save Civilization* that programs addressing global climate change must include “population stabilization.” This means restricting the growth of the working class, especially in the US bosses’ rival China.

But the real environmental culprit is capitalism itself. The accumulation process (capitalism’s built-in demand to reinvest profits) assaults the environment in uncountable ways.

Capitalists must reinvest their profits at the maximum available rate of return. They also don’t need to pay for the external costs of their investments, in particular environmental degradation.

So negative environmental consequences of investments do not enter into capitalist business decisions.

Fill the air with noxious gases — do the bosses care? Log or burn down massive forests in the Amazon — do they care? Flood the oceans with toxic chemicals — do they care? Poison the food supply with carcinogenic pesticides and additives — do they care? Increase atmospheric CO2 levels to the point that once-rare weather events, (floods, tornadoes, droughts, hurricanes) are commonplace — do they care?

So all of the “green” capitalist schemes, such as gas efficient cars, carbon taxes, shorter showers, insulated buildings, and dozens of other programs, including solar and wind energy, are doomed to fail. No matter how extensively they are implemented, they can never cancel out the accumulation process inherent to capitalism.

And capitalist competition over profits inevitably leads to bigger and increasingly destructive world wars.

The logical conclusion is that there are too many capitalists, not too many workers! We need to cut down the number of capitalists until it reaches zero.

The Masses Will Save the Planet With Communist Revolution

Only communism can end the accumulation process and save both the planet and the working

See POPULATION, page 15

Continuous Struggle Against Revisionism and for Communism

Succeeding in making a communist revolution has never been easy. However since the last decade of the 20th century, we overestimated the influence that the break up of the Soviet Union would have on the struggles of the working class. We supposed, a decade later, that we didn't understand the "devastating consequences that this would have on the revolutionary process. And the new breath of life it would give to US imperialism."

Bad. Wrong. When we joined together to build a new communist movement (for me, in the beginning of the 1970's) we did it based on the understanding that the Soviet Union and China had returned to capitalism and had ceased being revolutionary forces. Many revolutionary groups around the world recognized this about the Soviet Union (that they no longer sought revolution) during the upsurge of the student movements of 1968. However, they followed Maoism, Che Guevara, or anarchism (Cohn Bendit in France, for example).

And the revisionists (politicians who call themselves communists while championing more "improvements" inside capitalism), diverted the workers' fury to "negotiations" in Vietnam and democracy in every country and workplace.

Our efforts in the old Progressive Labor Party were to present to workers as the alternative the "first phase" of communism. The correlation of forces was adverse to us, since millions of rebellious workers around the world were pushed into a dead end of "national liberation," "the democratic, anti-imperialist revolution," the "new democracy,"

and other forms of class collaboration.

In the decade of the 1990's we said that the brazenness of the Russian rulers in dissolving the Soviet Union didn't surprise us, that this demonstrated the truth of our analysis. The collapse of the old movement as a revolutionary force didn't mean that it disappeared. It grew as an anti-communist political movement, bourgeois and nationalist politicians championing state capitalism and the "defense of the sovereign nation" against "privatization" and "free trade" (which are also being carried out by the bosses in Russia and China.)

In the face of the intensification of the exploitation under "globalization," the working class protests grew until surpassing the number of people mobilized in the decades of the 1960's and 1970's. However, workers are being influenced (as in the 1960's and 1970's) by the revisionists and their bourgeois nationalist allies in the face of the absence or retreat of the new communist movement.

We were overtaken not because the workers were struggling less, but because of our revisionism: the indecision, laziness, neglect, indifference, abandoning the activity, distancing ourselves, taking things calmly, not distributing the paper, not building a base. One ideological deviation led to another and another.

What was and is lacking is the work of the new communist movement. Like what is happening in North Africa, in Latin America rulers were brought down in the first decade of the 21st Century: two in Ecuador and Bolivia respectively, 6 in Argentina, student strikes in Chile and UNAM (Mexico),

the huge protest in Oaxaca in 2006, that of Honduras defending Zelaya, etc. No, these workers weren't depressed by the collapse of the old movement. Some of them didn't even know of its existence.

The US Patriot Act paralyzed us in part. While we repeated that we had to overcome an employee mentality, in every region of the world where we were, what prevailed was a lack of interest in the working class and in communism. Even we members didn't read the newspaper, and we waited for the Central Committee to develop the line. We only applied it in the best cases, and many didn't even do that.

The estimate of the period by the leadership justified this, attributing it to the disillusion and cynicism of the workers after the break up of the Soviet Union, etc. The collapse of the old movement is what gave us birth. Why does its final shamelessness have to disillusion us? And the young workers don't even know what happened in Russia and China. They only need us to bring them communist ideas and build a base to constitute ourselves as a Class (that is, as a Party).

That's what we have decided to do seriously. To mobilize the working class massively for communism. Not to fight for public companies or public education, nor for the "defense of sovereignty" in the face of "liberalization," nor for "democracy," but instead for the abolition of wage slavery, the use of someone else's labor. The oppressed who don't earn wages (like artisans, and other small producers) can understand this and join us. Forward!

Comrades from Mexico



Teachers in Mexico Should Fight Against Capitalism

On June first, teachers from the National Union of Education Workers (SNTE) in Michoacán, Mexico, went out on strike, because the federal government refused to include a pay increase in the 2011 education budget. At the same time, a caravan to Mexico City, the current style among trade union bureaucrats, was planned to demand restoration of the 30 billion pesos that had been cut from the education budget. Desperate over the measly offer of a 1% pay increase by the Michoacán state

government, 300 teachers from section 18 of Michoacán went to the capital to throw eggs and bottles at the mansion of Elba Gordillo, leader of the SNTE and to demand her resignation from the teachers' union leadership.

During this action they confronted and threw eggs at the riot squad, who are there to protect those who can pay for their security. Four teachers were injured and ten were arrested. More than 50 thousand teachers in the state are waiting for the results of these

actions, hoping that the federal government will resolve this crisis in education. But education is one more business in the capitalist system; if it doesn't make a profit they can't keep offering it. The only way that they profit from the schools is by nationalism and maintaining the illusions in the youth that studying will lift them out of poverty.

The bosses all over the world are focusing more on increasing technology in certain productive areas to be able to keep up with the competition in the international markets. They are investing where they can see economic results. One exam-

ple is increasing mechanization of agriculture. But although some people have better skills it doesn't mean that they'll earn more money. The bosses all over the world are in crisis and competition brings wages down.

We, the workers, need better living conditions but to get them we don't just need a budget increase or "better schools," we need to destroy this capitalist system and fight for a new one, for communism. Under communism we won't need to demand higher pay, because there won't be paychecks. When the bosses, with their economic power, no longer exist, there won't be union leaders, because we won't need any agreements about how much they steal from us and how much they keep. Education will be an urgent need for everyone to learn and to teach how to organize the society for the benefit of the working class majority, and not to prepare us to obey our exploiters. Education will not be a luxury. We will all have access to the scientific advances which capitalism hides from us for their own benefit. Reading and writing will be especially important because they will reflect the advances of the building of the new society, a society of true collaboration and not of competition and individual or regional selfishness. Join ICWP. We have a world to build.

A comrade

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Smash Reformism!!

“Reformism is a dead end street for our class.” I like that. It’s from the very clear and compelling article from Spain in *Red Flag*.

Making this idea unequivocal with the workers is a dramatic and necessary advance, an historic departure from murky opportunism....

Reformism wasn’t just a dead end. It was our enemy. Yet, unwittingly, we aided and abetted it among the workers.

Now our sisters and brothers need to know its treacherous role and how, despite our “good intentions,” it undermined and divided our class and steered it away from communism.

If it does nothing else, the ICWP will have made a great contribution to the working class if it is merely known as ‘the party that is always warning us about the danger of reformism.’

The myth back in the day was that if we started at reform we would ultimately arrive at communism.... Looking back it seems a little like believing you could throw a burger on the grill and come back for a steak ten minutes later.

In twenty years or so of on-the-job organizing, I don’t remember hardly any plans for making communist ideas primary. ... Instead, we shoved communism to the back and helped to train the workers to ‘fight’ for a deal for themselves (reformism).

Meanwhile, we were reinforcing the capitalist division between the insiders (those who had jobs and benefits and status) and the outsiders (those who had nothing, except resentment for the seemingly callous insiders).

Then we expected to wake up one morning in a communist world where the same formerly smug and secure workers were now looking after their sisters and brothers and harmony prevailed.

Now that reforms aren’t being handed out to anyone anymore, are we seriously expecting the disgruntled and cynical workers to wake up and join the fight for equality for others?

Life (change) doesn’t work that way. These right-wing ideas have to be challenged by communist ones. ...

Many workers will recognize the truth when they hear it... that the working class needs an inclusive, communist, and revolutionary movement devoted to equality and nothing less, not a stupid lottery run by capitalists and reformers in which some of us are allowed to survive while others suffer.

This is the idea we need to be spreading. The absence of this idea - and the constant reinforcement of selfish capitalist-promoted ideas such as trade-unionism, nationalism, racism, sexism, etc. -

is what is holding workers back and keeping us under control.

The ICWP and *Red Flag* seems to promote the ideas we need.

—Transit Worker

[This is the first excerpt from a long letter. More next issue.]

US imperialism uses video games to prepare for future wars

Watching TV the other day, I came across a commercial for a video game.

In this commercial you see tanks with red stars roaming through abandoned US towns and suburbs. The next scene is of white Americans all coming together in order to plan an attack against the invaders.

All this really caught my attention so I decided to look further into it.

The video game is called “Home Front” and what you see inside of the letters is the American Flag of course. The premise is that you’re in the year 2027 and the US’ “infrastructure” has been “shattered” and its military is in “disarray” due to a “savage occupation by the nuclear-armed Greater Korean Republic.”

The game then asks you to join “the Resistance, stand united and fight for freedom” against the “Asian enemies.”

What’s probably most shocking is that towards the end of the game’s description, it admits that this war is coming by saying “action all set in a terrifyingly plausible near- future world.”

This game is just one of many games out there preparing today’s youth to fight the bosses’ wars of tomorrow. Not only are they trying to brainwash the youth into thinking that war is “cool,” but they’re also creating future nationalists.

By creating hatred against the Asian workers, the bosses are trying to secure the loyalty of their future soldiers.

Although the game portrays these Asian workers as our enemy, the reality is that we have more in common with these workers than with the supposed leaders of the countries we live in.

As communists we need to help those around us to understand this concept.

Aside from talking to them (and since we aren’t at the level of making video games yet) getting them to read, write for and distribute *Red Flag* will help spread the word that workers around the world are our friends and that our real enemies are the bosses.

Red Youth

Positions on How Things Change

This summer we organized a reading group that discusses material dialectics. Many of those who show up to the meetings are also *Red Flag* readers, but there is a small group who are uncertain of dialectics.

The idea of finding contradictions in everything and understanding the world dialectically is an unusual idea to this small group. For example, I suggested that the current international developments occurring in the world are best explained through the contradictions between imperialist rivals. The contradictions imperialists struggle with, such as energy resources for their economies, leverage over other resources to control the growth of their rival imperialist powers, are important aspects that drive the development of uprisings, wars and even bigger global wars.

The small group proposed that events in the world, like China’s decision to build a major sea port in Gwadar, Pakistan, cannot be explained through “isms” like capitalism or imperialism. They insist that events do not conveniently fit into such grand theories. The implication is that events are random with no method to their madness.

I think the small group’s major problem is that, thinking undialectically, they are really left with only two positions: to reduce all events to some arbitrary unchanging facts about the world; or to be idealistic, by thinking of the world as “one” that harmonizes and finds balance. The small group seems to prefer the reductive choice. They want to collect facts about the world and also reduce political and economic theories to a big mess of facts. Not only is this impractical and unhelpful, but these basic facts imply that facts don’t change, and that facts are independent of each other. A dose of dialectics, however, teaches us that the stability of facts is always temporary and that there are no cleanly separated facts isolated from other facts.

Dialectics is a philosophy of change that responds to those failures of attempting to reduce everything to basic facts, but at the same time, it

also rejects idealistic traps of supposing that the world is a harmonizing, balance-seeking “one.” I hope as the reading group progresses that the readings and discussions convince them of the superiority of dialectics, and its importance for understanding change, so we can ultimately change capitalism into communism.

An Emerging Dialectician



MONEY from page 4

them so they mutually complement each other. Auto workers produce cars, refinery workers turn oil into gas, construction workers build roads and bridges and so on. We no longer need money to regulate, or mediate, this activity. Conscious human control – the working class and its allies – organized in a new way, as a mass communist party (the ICWP) can mediate it.

In this way our labor can be valued for the usefulness of its product, for the way it helps or sustains others. Instead of building profit, banks and individual wealth, work would directly expand mutual human relations. What a world that would be!

This emancipation from wage slavery is the revolution the ICWP is preparing. Communism is a world where men and women are liberated

from the dictates of money and private property, whether administered by a capitalist or socialist state. It’s a system that allows the development of our full potential as co-producers of human society. The abolition of the money system will produce a world of unimagined social riches. Why wait?

POPULATION from page 13

class from the wars, famines, and diseases which capitalism will inevitably spawn until this destructive system is finally ended.

The earth doesn’t have a fixed “carrying capacity” as many environmentalists argue. Throughout history, social and technological changes have made it possible to support increased numbers of people. Communism will unleash the labor power and creativity of the

masses. Production will be for use, not for accumulation of profit.

We will have a huge amount of very difficult work to do in the decades after communist revolution, and even longer, cleaning up the terrible mess that capitalism has made. But “many hands make light work.”

How much easier it will be to feed and shelter everyone when all can work to their full potential and we’re not supporting the capitalist parasites!

No capitalist will admit this. You’re not likely

to hear it from capitalist academics or media. Instead, they need to find another culprit for the injuries which their beloved economic system inflicts on mankind. They blame the masses.

Whether it’s wars, booms and busts, recessions and depressions, poverty amid plenty, famine in one country while next door people jump from one diet to another, or preventable and curable diseases, reforms like “population control” are the rulers’ “fix.” Let’s kick the habit!

ICWP SUMMER PROJECT — CAPITALIST CRISIS MEANS COMMUNIST OPPORTUNITIES

Workers' mounting anger over the growing capitalist crisis around the world and their courageous responses to it reveal a real opportunity to spread our communist ideas as workers look for an alternative to capitalism. The bosses' politicians and their agents in the trade unions are pushing reforms—a dead end. In a few areas, however, we have been able to bring communist ideas to workers and have seen a significant response.

This summer, students, young workers and teachers in ICWP have the opportunity to bring *Red Flag* to industrial workers and soldiers and



to help make breakthroughs in areas where we are already active in mobilizing the masses for communism. This is why ICWP's Summer Project is so important. Throughout July and into August, the International Communist Workers' Party will have sum-

mer projects in Los Angeles and Seattle.

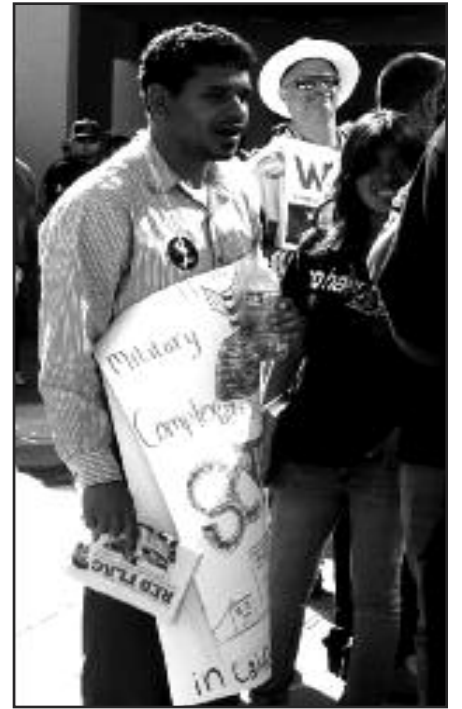
Planning for this year's Summer Project is under way! The planning committee had its first meeting recently to hammer out the major details. Everything builds upon the theme of mobilizing the masses for communism. We first discussed goals for the project and how we measure success. Primary among these goals is developing youth leadership. We can do this by encouraging our young comrades and friends to attend and lead distribution of the newspaper, study groups, forums, planning sessions, and actively seeking their thoughts and opinions on all matters.

Other goals are better understanding communism — its history and our historical task — and how we go about mobilizing the masses for it. We also want to learn how workers will plan and run society when we win. Other topics are understanding the current capitalist crisis and the meaning of "the state," discussing *Red Flag*'s role in our work, building readership and developing networks, and, of course, recruitment.

To meet these goals, we developed ideas for study groups and forums. Some of these include dialectical materialism; communist centralism; and distributing *Red Flag*, which will include role-playing through various scenarios and should prove informative and fun. We will need everyone to pitch in to make this project work; whether it's running errands, making copies, raising money, hosting out-of-town guests, cooking,

giving rides, going on distributions and visits, contributing to and producing *Red Flag*; participating in and leading discussions, study groups, and forums, and coordinating various social activities, such as barbecues and beach or park days.

We are also presently developing a master schedule. We want each activity to lead into the next, which will enrich each participant's experience and help them to continuously develop politically. We still have to plan distributions and social gatherings. We are trying to plan activities to accommodate different work schedules so we can invite more of our family, friends, and co-workers. Putting our Summer Project together is a challenging task, but we're the planning committee is working hard to make this project a great one!



WAS SOVIET "WAR COMMUNISM" REALLY COMMUNISM?

NOTE: This is the second in a series on the political economy of the new Soviet Union during the first years after the 1917 Bolshevik revolution. The first (available at www.ICWPRedFlag.org) described the communist policy of "the dictatorship of the working class" combined with "transitional state capitalism" during the first six months of the revolution.

Part II: "War Communism" as a Response to Crisis

By the summer of 1918, efforts to build a Soviet economy based on "transitional state capitalism" had stalled. Counter-revolution and invasion intensified the crisis, and the policies of "War Communism" developed as a response.

In June 1918, all large-scale enterprises were nationalized. Smaller ones soon followed. All agricultural surplus (beyond the peasants' need for food and seed) was requisitioned, to be allocated between industry and the army.

The system was still essentially capitalist, relying on money to conduct transactions among enterprises and the Soviet state. Workers sold their labor for wages and used them to buy commodities.

As the Soviet government took over more enterprises, it needed more money to buy raw materials and to pay workers. It imposed some taxes on the wealthy, but mainly relied on its ability to print currency — as is common during wartime.

A Money-Less Economy?

Printing money allowed the value of the ruble to depreciate. The same number of rubles bought decreasing amounts of goods. By 1920, the ruble's value was only 1% of what it had been in 1917.

A positive result was the expropriation of the former moneyed classes, as their hoarded wealth became useless.

But depreciation also acted as a tax on the masses. It was mainly their decreased purchasing power that allowed the government to get a larger share of available resources.

The Soviet government relieved the pressure on industrial workers by compensating them increasingly "in kind" (mainly food). About half of the wages were "in kind" in 1918, three-fourths in 1919, and over 90% in 1920. This wasn't communism ("to each according to need") but socialism ("to each according to work").

The role of currency also decreased as book-entries replaced money in transactions between state enterprises.

The Worker-Peasant Alliance and the Fight for Grain

The Soviet government tried to mobilize working peasants to requisition grain from rich peasants. But they hadn't built a base for this, and it mainly didn't happen. "War Communism" threatened to break the worker-peasant alliance.

The Soviets developed a complicated agricultural program in which some crops had to be delivered to the state, while others could be sold privately. They hoped to maintain a working relationship with politically unreliable middle peasants.

Currency depreciation hurt the peasants, because prices of manufactured goods increased faster than agricultural prices. In 1918, peasants held back grain rather than selling it for paper money they considered worthless. They shifted production into crops that could still be sold on the market.

By 1920, peasants had reduced the area under cultivation by 50-75% or more, driving up agricultural prices. As their income increased, they spent money instead of saving it, since its value was clearly declining. This increased the demand

for factory-made goods and caused prices to rise further.

Within the market economy it had created, the Soviet government had little choice but to print still more money.

Contradictions between industry and agriculture sharpened to the breaking point. As peasants figured out ways to evade the requisitions, authorities responded by increasing bureaucracy and coercion.

Wartime "Command" Economy Is Not Communism

"War Communism" was a command economy under Party leadership, but it wasn't communism.

In the factories, wartime working-conditions and labor discipline increasingly came to resemble Army life. Party leaders justified top-down appointments of union officials in the same way they justified rank and privilege in the military.

In the command economy, state monopolies replaced free markets. Trade relationships were no longer mainly based on commodity exchange, but on government policy. Workers' cooperatives lost their independent status. Centralized administration mushroomed.

The appearance was communist: a planned economy in which money played little or no role. But the essence was anything but communist. The social relations of production remained fundamentally capitalist, even under the workers' dictatorship.

The last article in this series will describe the contradictions of "war communism" and how they were resolved by a return to the state-capitalist policies prescribed by the mistaken communist theory of the time. What have we learned from the mistakes of the "war communism" period?