

RED FLAG

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



Workers Protest Capitalist Crisis, G-20 Conference, London, Spring 2009

Behind Korean Conflict U.S.-China Clash Looming

The recent massive US-South Korean military drill raised tensions in the north Pacific and solved nothing. It was launched in response to North Korea's shelling of a South Korean island that killed 4 people – after South Korean war games crossed into territory claimed by North Korea.

The underlying cause of this conflict is the deadly struggle between US and Chinese imperialism for world supremacy (see other articles in this issue).

This struggle will inevitably explode into open warfare between the US and China, with other imperialists joining the fray.

“The accumulation of tension on the Korean Peninsula has now reached a dangerous breaking point... War is not welcome, yet it is approaching and the danger is being bizarrely tolerated. What is happening is not a game. No one can guarantee the situation will not turn into a real war.”—Global Times, a Chinese government-sponsored website.

The US and China fought a real war in Korea in the early 1950s. In November 1950, US-led UN troops had virtually annihilated the North Korean People's Army and were hoping for a quick withdrawal. Then a British soldier saw a distant hill changing color and realized that thousands of soldiers were streaming down:

“These were not defeated North Korean soldiers. This was a new enemy, heralding a new war... The struggle to come would buttress the tottering North Korean state, reverberate around the globe and announce to the world that a new superpower was striding upon the global stage.” (Andrew Sal-

mon)

China's communist-led Red Army had struck south! By the time the war ended in 1953, 5.7 million US soldiers would see combat and 36,940 would die. In all, over 4 million lost their lives, including 400,000 South Korean and 183,108 Chinese soldiers.

The conflict ended in a military stalemate, dividing Korea in two. General William Clark, US Commander in Korea, later said that he had “the unenviable distinction of being the first US Army commander to sign an armistice without victory.”

It was a stunning defeat for US imperialism and its allies. The communist-led working class had shown its power. China was then the rising center of the international communist movement, a beacon for the world's workers.

Unfortunately the Chinese Communist Party mobilized the masses for land reform, SSfor “new democracy,” for “anti-imperialism,” but not for communism. That's why China now faces the US as a different superpower: the rising center of world capitalism vying for world domination.

China Claims Southeast Asia as Its Backyard

“... along Cambodia's border with Thailand, and in Burma, Laos and even Vietnam, China is engaged in a massive push to extend its economic and political influence into Southeast Asia...transforming a huge swath of territory along its southern border.” (John Pomfret, Washington Post, 11/20/10).

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Workers Fight Racism, Show Workers' Power in Action

CALIFORNIA—Every six months where we work, we have to apply for the shift or part of the shop we want, according to seniority (time on the job). Recently there was a struggle where black, Latino, white, Filipino and Asian workers had to defend the labor “rights” of a fellow worker, who wasn't particularly well liked, because of his racist and discriminatory comments.

What happened is that this worker, who was on the night (third) shift, went on vacation before the “shake-up.” Nevertheless, he left three choices, all on the third shift, without counting on the fact that the night shift supervisor would change to the second shift and that all the workers on that shift, in reaction to this little tyrant, would change to the night shift.

When it was time for the worker on vacation to be assigned, there were two positions on day shift that would be desirable because they included weekends off. In one of the workshops the physical work is hard, however, while the other one is more appropriate for an older worker like the worker in question.

At the time for the decision to be made, the union representative, who is black, decided to send the older worker to the harder job. Immediately people began to suspect that he had done so to benefit another black worker who, everybody knew, wanted the easier job.

A black woman mechanic and *Red Flag* reader confronted the union rep and said that what he had done was wrong, and that he knew that the right job for the worker on vacation was inspection. The rep tried to justify himself, saying that he knew the worker on vacation and that he liked to work hard and that he'd be happy with the brakes assignment. Nobody believed this story, and more and more people got angry.

When the affected worker returned, he consulted with the leader of

the *Red Flag* readers' network about what he should do. He was told to fill out a complaint, as a formality, and that, if that didn't solve the problem, we would organize more political and militant actions. But he also told him, “You know a lot of us don't really like you (because of his racist comments), but we're going to support you. What they did to you is wrong and they shouldn't get away with it, and in the long run it will affect all of us.”

That same day another black worker came to the *Red Flag* leader and asked him if he thought it was a good idea to write a petition that all the workers could sign demanding that the union take immediate action. The next day the petition was being signed by black, Latino, Asian, Filipino and white workers.

The management of the company and the local union leadership had said that they weren't going to take even one step back, but that didn't last long, because the difficulties that had seemed unmovable at the beginning were lifted like foam when faced by the pressure and solidarity of the workers.

There are some lessons that we must point out: for example, that communist consciousness raises the level of struggle of the workers and converts reform struggles into political struggles. In this example against the racism of the bosses and between workers, it was exactly the readers, supporters and distributors of *Red Flag* who helped to organize this action. Secondly, the worker who had made these racist comments learned that his position was and had always been wrong, since only multiracial unity and communist leadership could get him out of the fix he was in.

This action showed workers' power in action, without depending on lawyers, bosses' laws or sellout union leaders. That's how we'll work in a communist society.

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The Working Class Can Build a New Future:

MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM!

Our central committee met recently to discuss our work – assess its strengths and weakness – and make future plans. One of the main discussions centered on the question of how to advance the fight against revisionism – the bosses’ ideas inside us and in our movement – in order to move forward the struggle for communism.

We discussed a document entitled “Mobilize the Masses for Communism,” which put forward that the root of revisionism in the international communist movement was its conviction that the working class could not be mobilized for communism. The document rightfully says that is not enough to say, “Win workers to communism.” It emphasizes that the word “mobilize” is more than a catchy tactical slogan; it is a strategic concept around which to organize the working class.

The document proposed adopting the concept of “mobilizing the masses for communism!” as a more direct approach to put the workers, from the very beginning, into motion around the most advanced communist practices and political line possible.

Every question that arises in our political work should be addressed from the most advanced position possible: how would we deal with the issue under communism? Our tactics and strategy should then flow from this analysis. All sorts of issues that come up in our daily life on the job, at school and in social interaction – not necessarily related to bread and butter issues – could be dealt with in this way.

Such an approach would not only limit reformist tendencies and errors, but would serve as the best teaching tool. Workers would see in practice how the Party will rule under communism and what communism would look like. They will see how they will be able to participate in deciding and administering every aspect of their lives in a communist society. It is the best way to combine theory and practice, while winning workers to dedicate themselves to a life-long struggle before, during and after the revolution by constantly mobilizing the working class for communism.

The history of past revolutionary movements was

reviewed to show that our predecessors, under certain conditions, were forced to put this concept into practice, but quickly abandoned it as soon as material conditions improved.

For example, in Russia the Bolsheviks organized for socialism. They thought the working class was too backward to establish communism right away. When they took power, however, they were almost immediately attacked by the world’s imperialist powers. They were forced to mobilize millions of workers and peasants (small farmers) under a system called “war communism”. Under war communism the Bolsheviks fielded a Red Army, without privileges or ranks, of over 5 million that defeated the imperialists and established the Soviet Union.

Nevertheless, after the civil war, believing that these millions of communist worker-heroes were too tired or backward to live under communism in peacetime, they demobilized the army and ended war communism. Soon after, they instituted open capitalist practices and by the 1930’s socialism (not communism) was the official goal of the Soviet Union. This was a disaster, because socialism is state capitalism.

The Chinese revolution followed the same route. During the 20-year civil war, the party organized millions under the communist “supply system”. But after victory in 1949 they adopted Soviet style socialism with the same end effect. The Cultural Revolution was an unsuccessful attempt to move to communism and stop socialism’s inevitable transformation into open capitalism.

In the USA in the 1930’s, the communist party put most of its effort into organizing militant trade unions. The theory, again, was that workers could not be won to communism, except through a series of prolonged reformist struggles. This strategy was a disaster, just like in other countries where communism was displaced by “national liberation”, “anti imperialism” or even “anti-fascism”.

ICWP has learned from these mistakes as well. We participate in strikes and rebellions, but we organize workers as communists. Our party is open to all workers sincerely committed to communism - whether or

not they have long experience in other forms of struggle.

It was suggested we use “working class” instead of “masses.” What title to use is one of the many topics we will discuss regarding the revision of this document. This discussion will be as wide and inclusive as possible among members and friends of ICWP to produce the finished product.

We also agreed to publish a series of supplements in *Red Flag* with related articles on important topics and burning questions of the day, some of which have already been written about in previous documents and then discussed. Those discussions have helped clarify the need to mobilize the working class for communism.

At the meeting we also discussed other important issues, but in every case our successes can be traced to the “Mobilize” principle.

For example, reports from many areas - LA, Mexico, El Salvador - showed a sharp increase in the distribution of *Red Flag*. This is due to the comrades beginning to mobilize workers for *Red Flag*: getting workers not only to read and agree with *Red Flag*; but distributing, supporting financially, and writing for it. When asked, workers are donating to *Red Flag* and taking extra copies to distribute.

The very first topic discussed was the world situation. (See article Pg. XX). We agreed that the economic crisis is deepening and inter-imperialist rivalry is sharpening. We disagreed on the proximity of the world war. We all agreed, however, that this threat will be met by mobilizing for communism. On the last day we heard about plans for a mini-school to win our youth to organize for communism.

We agreed that the future is bright! Things may look bleak economically, and war clouds may be gathering on the horizon, but there are no obstacles the working class can’t overcome. We committed ourselves to mobilize the working class for communism to eventually sweep away capitalism and what Lenin called its “horror without end”. Nothing can stop the working class now!

PORTUGUESE WORKERS SHUT DOWN THE COUNTRY

PORTUGAL—Nov. 24—A general strike of more than 3 million workers paralyzed the country which has a population of a little over 10 million. The two biggest unions, CGTP and UGT, called the strike against the government’s budget and cuts in wages and pensions.

Big factories like the Volkswagen factory with 9,000 workers, shipyards, air and city transportation, schools and universities were completely shut down. In several cities there were confrontations between workers and the police. The Portuguese bosses joined the list of European countries facing a profound economic crisis that the capitalists want to solve on the backs of the workers.

In this period of wars and fascism, the bosses are using the unions to try to calm the angry workers. A day, a week, or a month of a general strike for reforms won’t defeat capitalism, which is the source of the problem. These general strikes, if not linked to organizing an armed insurrection to take communist power, will only serve as escape valves for workers’ anger.

We must fight to convert these strikes, large or



small, into schools for communism. The most important lesson of these general strikes is to see that workers are dissatisfied with capitalism and that our role is to win them to understand that communist revolution is the only alternative to this capitalist hell.



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MEXICO: ICWP TAKES COMMUNISM TO CLASS

MEXICO—Since last August we've been reprinting *Red Flag* to distribute it to the workers and students in the area where we work.

Particularly we've done this in a high school; we distribute 800 copies of each edition, talking in the different classes when the teachers allow us to. The students give a small contribution. We take the opportunity to explain our goal of getting rid of capitalism, the dictatorship of the bosses and to substitute it with the dictatorship of the workers. We then invite them to join our activity in the ICWP.

We also ask them to take *Red Flag* to their parents or workers and soldiers who they know, since they are a fundamental force to destroy capitalism.

There is still a lot of apathy among the youth, who for years haven't received any communist literature; however we'll work hard to change this. The students in this school have in the past been very militant against the increases in school fees, wage cuts and bad

conditions of the schools; however, they were always under the influence of revisionists, followers of the old movement led by the Soviet Union, China and Cuba.

Now these revisionists, allied with bourgeois politicians, rule the city and advocate a capitalism of a "welfare state," even though it was always combined with an open market economy. Consequently, they've abandoned their "revolutionary" declarations and pursue a "democratic" capitalism, sympathizing with Hugo Chavez and the other supposedly "left" governments in Latin America.

The students, like all the workers, win nothing by supporting this band of capitalists, who are allied with the Chinese and Russian capitalists to fight with the US imperialists over the profits they extract from the working class.

In this way, we've reinitiated the struggle to create a working class consciousness with the goal of abo-

lishing wage labor, which the Russian and Chinese revolutions put off. Several teachers have allowed us to speak with their student. Some of them are young teachers who can be interested in our politics.

It's still too soon to have results in recruiting; however, we're convinced that by overcoming the laziness into which we had fallen in the past, being persistent and patient, we'll begin to recruit.

Here, in the last 20 years, protests have grown; Mexico City has a huge number of marches against the rulers, however, all up until now have been led by capitalist politics by union negotiators who are called "leaders."

Therefore the work of our ICWP is urgent to win these masses of workers dissatisfied with the influence of the bourgeois politicians of the "left". JOIN US!

CAMPUS RALLY HITS IMPERIALIST WAR, RACISM, AND BUDGET CUTS

Southern California, Nov. 10. Students and faculty rallied today at a California State University campus against the imperialist wars in the Middle East, including Iraq, Afghanistan, and against U S support for the Israeli occupation, along with the budget cuts made in order to pay for US wars and economic crisis. (At the same time the rally was taking place, the CSU administration decided to raise student fees another 15%).

Speakers at the rally explained the history of the group and its anti-imperialist perspective, laying the blame on capitalism for imperialist wars and education cutbacks.

Another speech attacked "Islamophobia," the racism, fear, and religious intolerance against Muslims that is a key part of the US capitalists' pro-war propaganda. This anti-Muslim agitation included a column in the campus newspaper that denounced a young Muslim worker at the Disneyland Hotel, whom it called "selfish" and

"naïve" because she wanted to wear a headscarf at work.

Another speech rejected the "Dream Act," a capitalist scam to get undocumented youth to join the military to get a Green Card, which seems likely to be passed by Congress soon. A summary of the recent revelations of civilian killings and complicity in torture by US troops that was recently published by the Wiki leaks website was part of another speech.

The speeches had clear anti-capitalist politics that were collectively decided in advance, and the speakers did well, including a student who had never spoken before. An important weakness, however, was the small attendance. Ways to help the movement grow larger were discussed in a later meeting. One result has been planning for further events for next semester against "Islamophobia," jointly sponsored with other cam-



pus organizations. The potential is clear to win more students and faculty to understand that imperialist war and racism can't be ended without communist revolution.

Factory Workers Build Multi-Racial Unity Led by Red Ideas

Before understanding communist ideas, I also didn't understand the concept of racism, but I was infected with it. For me, everyone who was white was responsible for what happened in El Salvador and I didn't trust anyone who was white, especially if they were from the US. It's obvious that I didn't understand class divisions. A class understanding has made me hate racism and today, with communist ideas, I fight all expressions of racism.

In the factory where I work, my black co-workers took their breaks at the allotted times and went to the restroom when they needed to. One day a latino worker, full of sarcasm, said, "They are all lazy and they don't think anything about leaving their work posts."

I told him, "That's not true. What they're doing is right."

He answered, "They're used to easy money in the streets and the managers don't say anything. If it were one of us, the bosses would attack us."

I said, "What's happening is that you're a racist and that's why you think the way you do." Blushing, he denied his racism and lowered his head, offended or embarrassed.

I told him, "Tell me something. Is it that we latino workers in reality are harder workers than the black workers or is it that latino workers have less class consciousness or more fear of being oppressed?"

Unfortunately, he continued with his racism, but after this discussion, he no longer expresses it openly—because he knows it won't be tolerated.

On the other hand, the friendships with a group of black workers are deepening. Once, I asked a black worker if he had goals in his life and he said no. I told him that I have a goal in my life, and that is to make a communist revolution.

So he told me, "It's not easy, friend, it's not easy."

I said, "It's not easy but we don't have any other choice." I said, "Look at the conditions we work in." Later I asked, "Do you think communism is good?"

He told me yes. So I said that we workers are one class, no matter what color our skin or where we're from. I said, "We're brothers." He smiled.

After this, I first brought him an ICWP leaflet about the police murders of Manuel Jamines and Oscar Grant and the need for communist revolution. Seeing how he read it with great interest, I later gave him the newspaper. And we'll continue the struggle. I also continue to talk to his friend and there's now more friendship between the black and latino workers at work.

The managers seem to be afraid of the black workers. And more than anything they're afraid of the unity between black and latino workers. They told the latino workers not to be involved with the black workers—but most latino workers aren't buying their racism. I've explained to other latino workers about the history of the militant mass struggles against racism by black workers in the US. This, combined with



the history of mass, militant struggle against racist imperialism by many immigrant workers, means a very powerful potential to unite the working class for communism. To mobilize workers for communism, we have to confront racism, building multi-racial unity led by communist ideas.

US Bosses Worry About Educational System: EDUCATION REFORM FOR WAR AND FASCISM BE ALL YOU CAN BE: FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM!

The latest issue of the bosses' policy journal *Foreign Affairs* has an article from Obama's Education Secretary (and Chicago crony) Arne Duncan entitled "Back to School: Enhancing US Education and Competitiveness." Readers of *Red Flag* will quickly realize that there's nothing new in what Duncan has to say: the U.S. is slipping behind its competitors; we spend too much money on the schools but too many students are failing; science and technology education must be strengthened, we need to use more technology, including replacing teachers with online instruction, the Federal Government has an important role in pushing for national standards.

What's new is that the Council of Foreign Relations has invited Duncan to write this article, showing that the ruling class needs unanimity on the question of education reform. Duncan's article accompanies the lead article, "The Future of American Power: Dominance and Decline in Perspective" by Joseph S. Nye, Jr., which also calls for improving the U.S.' K-12 educational system as part of the way of stemming the U.S.' relative decline.

Both articles have the same theme: the U.S. has to

build alliances with other capitalists to maintain its power at the same time as it improves its academic and technical performance. Both articles emphasize the need to improve U.S. competitiveness, while denying that there is an inevitable confrontation with China ahead.

It is no coincidence that this article came out at the same time as Obama's trip to India, Indonesia, Japan and South Korea. Educational reform, portrayed as competition with China, and, at the same time, cooperation with China's rivals, shows the US bosses' sharpening need to increase their abilities in the so-called STEM fields: science, technology, engineering and math, at the same time as it builds alliances. For a declining US power to prepare to take on its rising rival China, the US needs better-prepared inventors, engineers and machinists, as well as allies in Asia. Duncan's article, with its finessing of competition and cooperation, is designed to get the US ruling class behind both projects.

Obama and Duncan's sales pitch to working-class parents is that education reform is designed to help students "Be All You Can Be." This pitch (actually

the U.S. Army recruiting slogan of the 1980s and 90s) is meant to cover the reality, made clear in *Foreign Affairs*, that education reform is about global competition and preparation for global war. The Federal Reserve expects unemployment in the U.S. to be officially 9.6% for a decade or more. The unemployment rate for recent college graduates is exactly the same, 9.6%, about triple what it was at the beginning of the current "recession."

Real unemployment is probably about double this, but these figures still make it clear that education reform is not going to provide decent jobs for anybody any time soon. Working-class parents, students and soldiers should shed their illusions about education and careers. The real future of our class is world war. It's up to us, and the seriousness with which we organize in the schools, factories, and barracks whether that war can be turned into a revolutionary war for communism, the only system in which workers and their children will be able, collectively, to be all we can be.

"Inside Job" Shows Bankruptcy of Capitalism WILL STUDENTS RESPOND WITH COMMUNIST ACTION?

Eight of us went to see "Inside Job." This well-made documentary exposes the contradictions unleashed by deregulation that led inevitably to the present financial crisis.

It explains very clearly how banks and investment firms profited hugely by pushing shaky securities on clients and then betting they would fail.

The film shows graphically how top financial officials in every US administration for the last 30 years – including Obama's – helped them do it.

However, it only hints at how this crisis reflects the long-term decline of US capitalist imperialism and why it's leading toward world war. (See *Red Flag*, Vol. 1 #19, p. 16)

None of this was a surprise to most of us. "So the banks sold garbage to unsuspecting customers to make a quick buck," someone commented. "That's what capitalist companies do all the time."

Most of the students were surprised to learn that academic economists – like the head of the Columbia University Business School – not only praised deregulation but profited enormously from it as Wall Street consultants. They took the lesson that universities are

an integral part of the capitalist system.

Another friend who saw the movie said that she'd gone home and looked up the word "fascism."

"Fascism means a corporate state," she said. "Isn't that what we've got?"

"Inside Job" producer Ferguson is himself a capitalist "insider." He was a senior fellow at the Brookings Institute and a consultant for companies such as Apple, Intel, and Xerox. So the only solution he can suggest is more regulation. That will just mean more fascism.

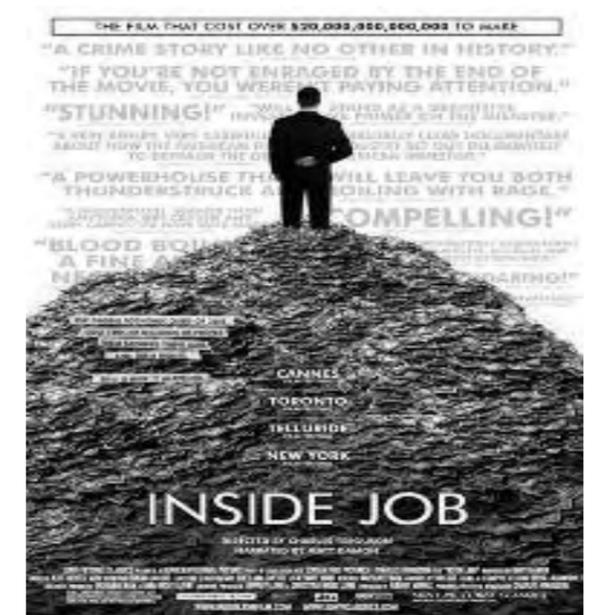
The rulers need to discipline their own class (reining in "excess" personal wealth for the good of the capitalist empire) while they impose "austerity" (extreme hardship) on the working class.

The students – led by several *Red Flag* readers – drew the plain conclusion: "It would take a revolution to end all this." Most are not sure that the revolution must be communist. But everyone took *Red Flag* and eagerly read "Bosses' Money Wars" and "Communism Will Abolish Money."

The next day, in a campus club meeting, a student posed the question: "Is currency compatible with democracy?" This led to another lively discussion.

These same students are mobilizing their classmates to protest expected fee hikes and cuts in class offerings. They understand that these attacks are caused by capitalist crisis but most are reluctant to raise this in a mass way. ICWP comrades are struggling to get our friends to mobilize around communist revolutionary ideas.

This is crucial. For example, some student leaders are responding to class cuts by urging students to "register early." But that just pushes the burden onto other students (especially those whose financial aid



checks still haven't come) who will try to register later.

If student activists register early and get the classes they need, will they still organize as enthusiastically to fight back? If they take advantage of "inside information" they get at meetings with the administration, aren't they imitating the Wall Street insiders exposed in "Inside Job"?

We need to fight capitalist ideas and ways of organizing and learn to "serve the people" as communist revolutionaries.

We hope that these students and other *Red Flag* readers will join ICWP. We need their help to do an "inside job" on the bosses' armies and factories and everywhere else we can mobilize the working class for communism.

KOREA, from page 1

Pomfret describes the Chinese "takeover" of Cambodia, where it is building dams and a railway from its capital to Vietnam, "bringing China a major step closer to incorporating all of Southeast Asia... into its rail network."

While Obama failed recently to close a free-trade deal with South Korea, China has concluded one with the 10-country Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the world's third largest trading block.

US power in the region will further decline following Obama's defeat in the recent G20 meeting: "Instead of America leading the world in hectoring China,

Beijing led the world in hectoring the United States... " (NY Times, 11/28/10)

Is China Vulnerable Along Korean Border?

China wants to stabilize North Korea by opening up its cheap labor and untapped natural resources to foreign investment. This would allow China to keep North Korea as a buffer against US encroachment in the north Pacific while extending its influence in southeast Asia.

The US, however, wants to destabilize North Korea, causing it to collapse in the hopes of forcing it to reunite with South Korea. That would allow the US to fortify Korea's thousand-mile border with China in preparation for its coming war with China.

The US wants to use the nuclear issue as a pretext for war sooner rather than later. The Chinese bosses want to defuse this issue. They are not ready yet to go to war with the US. Thus their official website also asserts that "peace in North Korea is important to China's core national interests."

But rising powers do not rise peacefully. War is coming. Just as the Chinese Communist Party took power in the wake of World War II, Chinese workers today – and workers everywhere – need to prepare to seize the coming war as an opportunity for revolution. But this time our revolution, led by a mass International Communist Workers' Party, will mobilize the international working class for communism.

GENERAL CRISIS DEFEATS G20, DEMANDS COMMUNIST RESPONSE

It started as a sub-prime crisis in US housing.

From there it became a banking crisis, turned into a sovereign debt crisis, and is now showing up as a currency crisis. It is a general crisis of world capitalism and at each new phase it passes through, the dangers of world war grow.

It was the sharpening rivalry between the imperialist powers coupled with increasing fascist attacks on the workers that grew out of the general crisis of the 1930s that sparked World War II. The present currency war will likely give way to trade war and trade war to world war.

It was precisely this development that the last G20 meeting in Seoul, South Korea, hoped to halt. Before the meeting Ousmene Mandeng, a former senior official in the IMF, warned, "The G20 will have to show it can work on the currency issue or its very existence will be in question." (*Financial Times*, 11/5/10)

Well, its very existence is in question. It failed to deal with the currency issue.

The G20 is made up of 19 of the world's biggest governments plus the European Union and the heads of the World Bank and the IMF. They account for 80% of world trade. Collectively they are, rather were, the undisputed leaders of world capitalism.

Imperialist Politics Fail

China is the biggest creditor nation and manufacturer. This gives it tremendous economic clout.

The US is the biggest debtor nation but also by far the biggest military power. This gives it tremendous military clout. However, because it imports more than it exports each month, it is getting deeper and deeper in debt. In fact, it is on its way to a debt crisis that, by

2025 or earlier, could rival Greece's, unless it changes course.

So, change course it did. As *Red Flag* reported (Vol. 1, #20), the US flooded the world with \$600 billion of 'electronic' (not real) dollars. The idea was to weaken the dollar. A weak dollar would make US exports cheaper, allowing it to export its way out of the crisis.

Unfortunately for the US, China, Japan, Brazil, India and Germany (to name a few) also want to export their way out of the crisis. China, in particular, wants to keep its yuan weak and its exports high. This was the problem the G20 members faced, but couldn't collectively solve. That failure will have consequences. When political solutions fail, military options gain ground

Imperialist War Preparations

Having developed the forces of production on a global scale, capitalism has once again reached an impasse (as it did before World War I and II). Its relations of production (producing for private profit, not social needs) make it impossible to co-operate collectively and find an economic way out of the crisis.

In fact, what happened before and after the G20 meeting is just as important as the meeting itself.

Armed with \$2.6 trillion in foreign reserves, the Chinese imperialists have launched a diplomatic offensive to build alliances. They made deals in Indonesia, Thailand, Pakistan, France and Britain and plan a state visit to India in December.

Armed with its huge debt, Obama's trip to India, South Korea and Indonesia offered next to nothing in the way of financial aid other than the protection pro-

vided by its massive military presence.

In this wider context, the G20 meeting in Seoul, South Korea, represents an intensified period of alliance-building as the two major powers in the region – China and the US – line up their forces in the battle for supremacy in Asia. It's a battle the working class has no interest in, but will be forced to pay for.

For us it signals a period of more intense political struggle with friends, readers of *Red Flag* and with the international working class in general. We must struggle harder with ourselves and friends to intensify our efforts to mobilize the working class to fight for communism. This and only this can put an end to capitalism-imperialism's never ending economic crises, vicious racist cutbacks and relentless drive toward fascism and global war.



Union Hacks Blame China:

CAPITALIST COMPETITION, PRODUCTIVITY INCREASES ELIMINATE WORKERS' JOBS

The US bosses, increasingly unable to compete with their rivals (especially China) have declared a currency war against them. This is a serious step toward a trade war, and a prelude to a shooting war. In preparation for this, the US bosses are flooding their media with anti-China propaganda.

The union officials – besides helping the US bosses implement their vicious racist onslaught against the US working class – are parroting the bosses' poisonous propaganda that Chinese workers are "stealing" US workers' jobs.

Richard Trumka, AFL-CIA president, complains that "We're in a trade war with China, and we're losing... It's time for action." (*USA Today*, 8/30/10)

Trumka claims that China consciously undervalues the yuan by 40%, making Chinese products much cheaper in the USA and US products much more expensive in China. The result, says Trumka, is "57,000 US manufacturing facilities shut down in the last 10 years, costing us five-and-a-half million good-paying jobs, nearly half of those to China alone."

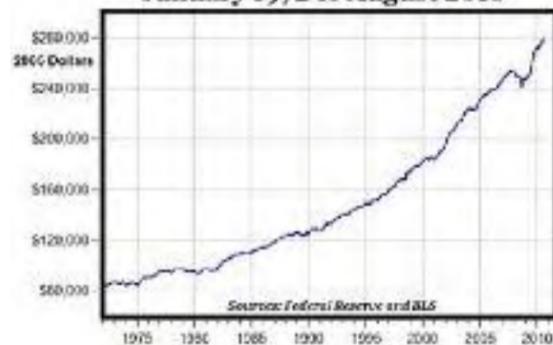
But Mark J. Perry, an economics professor at the University of Michigan, provides data showing that

productivity increases, more than China's currency, caused the loss of US jobs. (www.dailymarkets.com, 10-4-2010)

Perry's chart (first column) shows that, in last ten years, manufacturing jobs in the US dropped from more than 17 million in 2000 to less than 12 million in 2010. This is a loss of nearly 5.5 million jobs.

The chart debunks Trumka's China-blaming argument by showing that manufacturing output during that same period increased by more than 5%, from \$3.1 trillion to \$3.26 trillion (measured in 2005 dollars).

U.S. Manufacturing Output Per Worker
January 1972 to August 2010



Another chart shows that US manufacturing workers' productivity increased over 50% between 2000 and 2010. It has more than doubled since 1992, and more than tripled since 1970.

Thus, in the last 17 years, a US manufacturing worker's productivity doubled. Had productivity remained the same since 1993, 23 million workers would be required to produce the \$3.26 trillion output instead of the 11.7 million employed today.

A steel worker commented: "I have the numbers for our place and I doubt we are an anomaly. We now ship as many finished tons of steel daily as we did 12 years ago, but using 1/3 the number of workers."

Capitalist Science and Technology Only Serve Capitalist Slave-Masters

Technology helps the bosses produce more and cheaper with fewer workers. The capitalist who first acquires the most advanced technology can undersell the competition, maximizing profits by increasing the volume of sales. The competition must do the same or go under. Millions of jobs are eliminated in this bosses' dog fight.

Eventually, the introduction of advanced technology, plus the bosses' need to maximize profits lead to the crisis of overproduction: more goods are produced than can be sold. The crisis deepens as more workers are unable to consume, displaced by ever more modern machinery.

Only Communism Can End Capitalist Crisis of Overproduction and Its Inevitable Wars and Fascism

The bosses' ultimate solution to this crisis is war: to physically destroy the productive capacity of their rivals. Like Obama and all the bosses' politicians, Trumka talks of "we" as if we were a big happy family with the bosses. But our interests are diametrically opposed to theirs.

We can't stop the bosses' world war or the fascism they will need to impose a war economy on the working class. But, as the Russian workers did during WWI and the Chinese workers in WWII, we can turn it into a class war for communism – not for failed socialism as they did.

Under communism there won't be any bosses, money or wage slavery. In a world without races, borders or nations – we'll eliminate the material basis for the bosses' poisonous ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism and patriotism. Science, technology and the enormous creative power of the working class will be used to produce for humanity's needs, not for profits.

U.S. Manufacturing: Output vs. Jobs
January 1972 to August 2010



MOBILIZE SOLDIERS FOR COMMUNISM

“I know the brass doesn’t care about us at all. They just use us to fight their wars,” said a sailor about the imperialist military officers. He reads *Red Flag* and sees that the growing conflict between the US and China is leading to bigger wars where working class soldiers, sailors and marines will sacrifice their lives for the bosses’ empire. Class conscious members of the armed forces like him need to join and help lead the fight to destroy capitalism-imperialism with communist revolution.

To destroy capitalism and create a communist society we must make a revolution and successfully overthrow the bosses’ capitalist system. This is the goal of the International Communist Workers’ Party, ICWP. But to reach this goal we must first organize and mobilize the working class in a mass way in the factories, schools, military, and everywhere else the workers are concentrated. This is the essential principle of a revolutionary communist party, and a critical place that the party needs to carry out its work is in the military, where there exists a large concentration of masses. The bosses’ military forces contain thousands of young working class soldiers who are just as winnable to communist ideas as the workers in factories and students in schools are. In fact, the contradictions between the bosses’ demands for imperialist war and the soldiers’ need to survive make them among the most winnable.

It is critical that we carry out work in the military, and we must have confidence that we can win these soldiers to fight on the side of workers. If we don’t give this work the importance it deserves, we’ll be proven to have made a very costly mistake in the future.

History has proven that the army plays the most critical role and determines the outcome in a revolution. It’s the bosses’ army that we must fight to destroy when fighting to destroy the capitalist system. So it is in the best interest of the working class to win soldiers to side with the workers to insure absolute victory. We can learn from the success of the Russian and Chinese revolutions, where a lot of organizing to win the soldiers was done, which proved effective for the triumph of the revolution. But many other movements have failed in the past. They have been destroyed by the capitalists many times because they failed to organize inside the armed forces. Hence they lacked the support of the military to the necessary degree.

Today the US bosses are building their strategies for World War. They will try to regain total control of the world, in which they were once the undisputed masters and which today countries like China and Russia are threatening to take over. The US bosses have no choice but to go for war, and in order to do this they’ll need to build up their armies with hundreds of thousands of soldiers. But with the unpopular wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the bosses will have to resort to more aggressive methods of recruiting soldiers to their military: increased nationalism, and patriotism will be on the agenda but they’ll also push legislation and laws like the “DREAM ACT” that requires undocumented students to either go to the military or to two years of college. Over 60,000 undocumented students graduate every year from high school, and they would be eligible to serve in the military. The Pentagon sees this as a great source for their plans to build up their military. Eventually the bosses will have to have a full draft.

In ICWP we have to make mobilizing soldiers for communism in the military one of our first priorities in the US and internationally. Every capitalist army is filled with soldiers potentially winnable to communism. We also have to have in mind that most of the soldiers join the capitalist armies for many reasons but almost never to defend the capitalists’ racist murderous ideas or empire. We have great opportunities to be successful in this struggle and we must make it our responsibility, each and every one of us, to carry out this task.

PRELUDE TO WORLD WAR III HAS BEGUN

Imperialists Fight for Survival

Capitalism is in a severe crisis everywhere in the world. Everywhere there is overproduction of goods and a falling rate of profit. Capitalist competition and inter-imperialist rivalry have reached an historic point where the victory of one imperialist is the loss of another. Victory means survival of an empire, and loss means death. Therefore, the current situation is a prelude to world war where the most powerful capitalists are fighting over life and death of their empires.

For the main imperialist rulers, war is the only solution to the current crisis. For the working class, communist revolution is the only solution. We must destroy this system of deadly competition for profit. The main job of communists in ICWP is to build a mass communist party. With the principle of “mobilizing the masses of workers for communism” we’ll achieve this. The survival of the international working class depends on building communism. We have to re-commit to the central strategy for revolution: work in the armed forces and among international industrial workers.

The US bosses’ power is based on military and economic strengths. Their military power is currently the biggest in the world with hundreds of bases worldwide and, in the face of their failure in Iraq, they need to extend bases to Afghanistan where there are over 100,000 US soldiers. They’re forced to try to cement their alliance with Japan, Western Europe and India. Their technological-military power continues to be the strongest in the world.

But in the economic arena, their power is in question partly due to their tremendous debt. The Congressional Budget Office calculates that the debt will reach 100% of the GDP by 2023. Forty cents of every federal dollar spent is loaned by foreign entities. To counter this development, US bourgeois strategists have proposed guaranteeing the continued dominance of the dollar as the world reserve currency and expanding and assuring the sale of US Treasury Bonds.



The situation of the US imperialists is precarious. A recent poll showed that 61% of US residents think that the US is in decline and only 19% trust the government to do the correct thing most of the time. In 1964, 75% of the population trusted the government.

US Imperialism in Decline, Chinese Imperialism On the Rise

Within two decades, likely by 2027, the Chinese economy will surpass the US economy. Currently, China produces 3/5 of the world’s clothing, 2/3 of its shoes, and 4/5 of its toys. China produces more cars and uses more steel and cement than any other country. It produces 70% of the world’s photocopiers and has surpassed US technology exports: computers, cell phones, digital cameras, etc.

Its central bank contains the largest foreign currency reserves in the world. China has announced that it’s time to move away from the dollar as the world reserve currency and develop a “super sovereign” currency based on a mixed basket of different currencies.

To maintain its growth, China has to guarantee supply lines of natural resources and a well-organized plan of exchange, development and an aggressive military strategy. That’s why China is developing deep-water ports in Pakistan, Burma, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nigeria, and elsewhere. Their submarine flotilla is one of the world’s most advanced. A developing axis is being formalized between China, Russia and Iran against the US, which seeks to ally with Japan and Europe.

How can the imperialists maintain economic growth in the context of the falling rate of profit and overproduction? Only by increasing the attack on the international working class, depriving workers of basic necessities and preparing the populations for war with the goal of destroying the resources and productive capacity of their rivals and capturing new markets.

In China, half of the population continues in poverty, unemployment has reached 20% and there is unbridled corruption. More than 100,000 protests are registered yearly. All of this at the same time that the Chinese rulers prepare for military confrontation against their adversaries, mainly the US imperialists.

So the Chinese empire is growing, but to be able to sustain its growth, it will attack the working class more severely. But it also needs mineral and oil resources from the whole world. Without these resources its survival and growth would be threatened.

At the same time, the US empire isn’t simply in decline. It’s in a fight for its very survival as an imperialist power, and it will be forced to go to war.

The prelude to WWII has begun and the potential for communist revolution is on the horizon. Members and friends of ICWP need to deepen our struggle with friends and co-workers to shed our illusions about what capitalism has in store, to build solid networks of *Red Flag* readers to mobilize fellow workers, soldiers and students to fight for communism.

QUESTIONS FOR RED FLAG STUDY/ACTION GROUPS:

1. Why will technological improvements to make production more efficient never solve the contradictions inherent to capitalism? (See Page 13)
2. The editorial on page 2 “Fight Revisionism” makes the point that the roots of revisionism lies in the failure of “mobilizing the masses for communism.” Do you agree, and how can this principle be used to guide our political work?

Dont' Stop Struggling for a Communist Society

A couple of days ago we had a communist cadre school. A comment made by a comrade about education really caught my attention. He had the idea that getting an education means a better economic future. Others argued that education will only guarantee a miserable job in the system.

That's what I really think; for example, in the past decades people with elementary level education were very well received in any company. That became obsolete; it then changed to the requirement of middle school to be guaranteed a job and also have the opportunity to be a preschool teacher. Now the requirement to earn 1000 pesos is a high school education or higher. The people who stopped at a primary or middle school education only have the potential to earn 500 pesos, the minimum wage.

I think it is very important to mention that we have to work very hard to build the Party. Capitalist ideology creates many illusions and we try to change our minds, because capitalist illusions lead to individualism and desperation. That's why today there are a lot of youth who commit suicide when they finish their studies and they go out in to the real world. They were not educated about what they were really studying for or what to expect when they look for a job, that things won't be as they expected. That's why in the cadre schools it's so important to talk about these topics and to expose the illusions that capitalism pushes in the youth. It is important to talk about these topics and unmask this system of illusions.

One day victory will come, which means we have to struggle and overcome the enemy, which means decades of our lives serving the Party and the working class. Struggle, struggle, struggle, don't stop struggling for a communist society. The only thing that remains is to send all of you greetings and a hug until next time.

A woman worker Comrade in Mexico

How do we make the Party grow?

The last full meeting of the collective was very good: among those who came were housewives, teachers, students, farm workers, workers and unemployed youth.

We talked about the current crisis of capitalism, the inter-imperialist struggle and about the bosses' anti-communist campaign. With a lot of enthusiasm, a couple joined ICWP. We're sure that soon they'll write a letter. They're very committed, are very serious, and have a deep political understanding. Having them with us is a big achievement for the party. They've come to ICWP after seeing the consistency of our political line and our practice.

There's enthusiasm in the collective and when we slack off on our march towards communism, the actions of the other comrades push us to expand the limits, to do more and better work each time. In the small collective that I'm a part of, we've been selling **Red Flag** in a university in the center of the country. We also pass it to workers who are close to us.

The last two editions were received for the first time by a new worker. He received his first copy of the paper with misgivings. When I gave him the second edition, he commented to me, "But who are you? I don't believe in the parties or in the unions." And with great glee, I answered that we don't believe in the unions either, that we are an international communist party, that we doesn't believe in elections and that we fight to destroy capitalism through a communist revolution. He showed interest and said that he would read **Red Flag** carefully and calmly and that we would talk again soon. He was very enthusiastic.

We're convinced that the main way the party will

grow is through personal ties, one on one, through sharing our lives daily with those who know the party closely, with follow up, building ties of friendship that are indestructible.

But we must also distribute the paper massively, because this allows many workers, students, soldiers, farm workers and teachers to know the party and our political line and to become part of the party. When we sell the paper to the youth, we make comments about the paper and the party. Some of the teachers take advantage of our comments to discuss the current situation, the inequality and injustices that exist in this system. Awakening consciousness through the paper is showing sufficient results to continue doing the sale. Last time, one teacher gave 40 pesos, others gave 20 pesos, even though the majority of students gave between 1 and 2 pesos.

ICWP is advancing with firm and solid steps. Each time we're growing. This should push us to do more. War is getting closer and the opportunity that the party led the masses comes with it. Let's fight every day to reach communism.

—Member of ICWP in Mexico

Citizens & Immigrants Unite!

On October 14, 2010 forty one immigrant workers were arrested and detained during an ICE raid at the S & S Bakery in Otay Mesa, San Diego. The workers were charged for working illegally and for presenting false documentation. The owners of the bakery and an employee were charged for conspiring to hire undocumented workers. They are alleged to have known the status of the workers, and to have aided the immigrants in obtaining fake documentation. Local officials and some San Diego residents lauded the massive raid because they feel that ICE should be enforcing its immigration laws by keeping undocumented workers out of the country.

What the media and residents have failed to explain is why so many immigrants have fled their countries and are desperate to take low paying jobs in the US. The fact is the capitalist free market model imposed on countries around the world has created a capitalist economic system that benefits the elite business owners at the expense of the poverty and suffering of the working class. This corrosive economic system has impoverished and displaced millions of workers so that they are forced to take jobs that undermine their talents and abilities.

For many undocumented workers, like my family and me, the only hope of escaping a life of poverty back home was immigrating to the United States. Because we are undocumented, we are forced to take low paying jobs that usually entail poor working conditions, and we fear losing our jobs due to lack of documentation.

The US capitalists profit from the hard labor of undocumented immigrants. We comprise and help bolster such fields of work as: food, hospitals, domestic work, construction, landscaping, and many others. Immigrants continue to work jobs that many Americans are unwilling to take withstanding deplorable working conditions and constant fear of deportation.

Many crimes continue to go unreported in immigrant communities because our communities fear deportation. My family resides in the city of El Cajon where the police department and ICE have merged to deport undocumented immigrants. Calling the police over domestic violence can mean deportation to an undocumented person because police officers systematically call ICE when they learn the person is undocumented. Basic chores like going to the grocery store or commuting to school or work on public transportation mean risking

deportation because ICE carries out raids in front of grocery stores that are frequented by immigrants, or even at trolley stops on the way to school or work.

Every time my mom goes to the grocery store, or she rides the bus to work, I fear she will be arrested and detained by ICE. This constant fear becomes a part of everyday life for us undocumented workers.

The constant harassment and intimidation of undocumented workers is meant to keep us scared and therefore subservient to the capitalist elite. ICE is used as a tool to carry out this form of intimidation. To all workers who are in solidarity with the plight of us fellow undocumented immigrants, we must rise up against this system. We must organize to support immigrant communities. We must reach out to immigrant workers who live in fear. We must unite all workers, documented and not, so that together we can smash the capitalist system that keeps us submissive to the capitalist elite.

An immigrant youth

Red Flag responds:

It is important to remember that immigrant workers are not merely victims, but come to the US with a long history of struggle in their countries of origin. US citizens can learn a lot from that struggle; so also can immigrants learn a lot from the struggle, in particular, of black workers in the US. Together we can smash these capitalists who try to divide us and exploit us all.

Smash Racist Police Terror

Los Angeles – Robert Thomas, Jr., a black youth just 21-years-old, was murdered by the racist Los Angeles Sheriff's Department on November 8, just days after Johannes Mehserle received a slap on the wrist for killing Oscar Grant. Deputies stopped to search the group he was with. After he had already been searched once, an officer tried to grab Thomas, who ran and was followed up a nearby driveway by deputies and out of sight. It was there that bullets rained upon young Robert, as he was shot multiple times in the back. As in many police murders before this, deputies claimed that Robert Thomas pulled a gun and pointed it at them, which seems impossible to do and still get shot in the back.

The International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP) went to the East 123rd Street neighborhood in Willowbrook, an area in South Los Angeles, armed with **Red Flag** and a leaflet about the police murders of Manuel Jamines, James Davis, Jonathan Cuevas, and Oscar Grant. We met with Robert's neighbors, friends, and family and discussed these murders and showed how, under capitalism, the police are the frontline defenders of the bosses' interests. They loyally serve the ruling class by exacting a terror campaign against the workers in an attempt to keep us from banding together in multiracial class unity for revolution. That's why it's so important to win workers to our communist line and get them to fight for it as well. Robert Thomas' friends thanked us and promised to read the leaflet and newspaper.

Racist police murder will not end until we end the filthy, bloody system that breeds and runs on it. We must actively build for communism every day in the factories, the military, in the classroom, and among our family and friends. An important way to do this is by studying, writing for, and contributing to, **Red Flag** – the newspaper of the international working class.

READ, WRITE,

DISTRIBUTE AND

SUPPORT RED FLAG!

THE COMMUNIST PHILOSOPHY OF KNOWLEDGE: PART I

Where does knowledge come from? Capitalist ideology provides many wrong answers to this question: that knowledge comes from academic authorities, from geniuses, from God, sacred books, religious leaders, etc.

Marx's answer to this question is the basis of communist philosophy of knowledge. He wrote that whether human thinking is true or not is a practical question: "Man must prove the truth—that is, the reality and power ... of his thinking in practice." The truth of any thinking that is not connected with practice can't actually be figured out—and wouldn't matter anyway!

To understand where knowledge comes from, then, means understanding human practical activity. We must also understand how practice can provide knowledge that is useful to people in various ways, including the most important task for the working class, making communist revolution.

Practice is different from merely observing something, since it always involves the activity of *changing things*, as well as being changed yourself by your activity. Practice starts with making a living, raising kids, and paying the bills. This practice is only possible because of the practical activity of producing the things every one needs to live: food, clothes, housing, etc. The practice of production includes things that workers usually don't get paid for like producing and raising children.

Since they are directly involved in production,

workers usually know much more about the production process than their bosses do. The knowledge they get from production helps them produce more effectively. Knowledge doesn't just derive from practice—it *directs* practice.

Under capitalism the practice of production always involves another kind of practice: class struggle. What jobs there are, what the pay and hours are, who pays what taxes and how are those taxes used, which class runs the government—these are all subjects of class struggle. So are the practical struggles about who gets shot by the cops, or goes to prison, fights in wars, or starves to death. Finally, there is the practical battle the working class must fight to overthrow capitalism and establish communism. Being involved in all these conflicts is part of practice, but the practice of past revolutions and of current organizing for revolution is the kind that is most critical for the success of communist revolution.

There are several other kinds of practice that are important for knowledge. Under capitalism, capitalists fight wars for profits and the labor, and raw materials (like oil) that capitalists need to make profits and keep their rivals from making them. The practice of these battles between the capitalists of different countries is a very important source of knowledge. Along with the death and suffering they cause, wars have been a source of new scientific discoveries and technological improvements. The practice of fighting wars also provides a vital kind of knowledge for com-

munist revolution. To overthrow the bosses and defend workers' victory requires practical experience in fighting, and soldiers and vets are a key resource in developing the workers' army.

Besides production, class struggle, and war, scientific experimentation is essential for some kinds of knowledge. Experimentation is a form of labor in which obtaining information is the main goal. Experimentation often involves the skills and tools similar to manual labor—scientists need to "get their hands dirty."

There are other kinds of practice that not part of production, social conflict, or science, but are important parts of human life. These include activities like dating, playing sports, drawing a picture, playing a musical instrument, etc.

Not every kind of practice leads to knowledge. Practicing a religion or reformist politics provides very little basis for knowledge. These also have a corrupting influence on people that makes it more difficult for them to honestly evaluate evidence and find the truth. Practice based on the wrong political line may only provide the knowledge that the line is wrong.

Practical knowledge is as vital for revolution as it is for other things workers need to do, but knowledge also goes beyond practice to theory. In the next column, we will discuss why revolutionary theory is necessary for the victory of communism, and how theory is tested and corrected by practice.

Rulers' War Plans Demand

"AN AGE OF AUSTERITY"

"Fiscal, economic, and political failures at home are threatening the ability of the United States to exert the global influence it could and should." So says Richard N. Haass, president of the influential Council on Foreign Relations, and his co-author Roger C. Altman (*Foreign Affairs*, Nov/Dec 2010).

They warn US bosses that the US federal debt could equal US total production (GDP) within ten or even five years. "If US leaders do not act to curb this debt addiction, then the global capital markets will do so for them," they predict. "The result will be an age of American austerity."

Attacks on Workers Anywhere Are Attacks on Workers Everywhere

"Austerity" means that you and I and everyone we know will see our standard of living severely cut. The budget cuts we've seen so far are only a small taste of what's to come. In the past, the International Monetary Fund wielded the "austerity" ax mainly against workers in Asia and Latin America. Now European workers' lives are on the chopping block.

During the last week of November, 3,000,000 million workers shut down Portugal in a one-day strike protesting an "austerity" program of wage and benefit cuts.

In Ireland, 50,000 workers marched against an "austerity" package that will cost 25,000 public-sector jobs, reduce pensions and the minimum wage, cut welfare, cut family income up to 10%, and raise taxes on workers (but not corporations).

Student protests against tuition hikes rocked Great Britain as "the most stinging national austerity plan in decades" threatened social benefits for workers across the board. Then workers shut down the whole London subway system.

Greece imposed an "austerity" budget in response to IMF pressure, in spite of massive protests earlier this year.

Mexico has slashed education and workers' benefits. The only sector left intact was the military.

The US is next. Altman and Haass anticipated the draft report of Obama's National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform, released a week after Election Day. This report – signed by chairmen Alan Simpson and Erskine Bowles – called for deep cuts to most programs (including Social Security benefits), elimination of others, a gradual 15-cents-a-gallon increase in the federal gasoline tax, ending mortgage interest tax deductions, increasing the Social Security retirement age, and much more. (www.fiscalcommission.gov)

Suddenly we're hearing a lot about austerity

"Charting a path to national austerity: The nation can't afford not to act on Simpson-Bowles realities," editorialized the Minneapolis Star-Tribune (11/13/10).

Simpson and Bowles call for "shared sacrifice," urging Washington to "lead the way in tightening its belt." That means an all-out attack on government workers and the services they provide other workers. Obama already began by proposing a two-year wage freeze for all Federal civilian workers.

Sacrificing workers' wages, pensions, benefits, and livelihoods is a critical part of their way to "make America the best place to start and run a business." Simpson and Bowles – like Altman and Haass – realize that "austerity" cuts must even reach the Pentagon. They think this can and must be done even while

ramping up the preparations for wider wars.

"Chinese central bankers could prove more dangerous than Chinese admirals," Altman and Haass write. They predict that "Washington's ability to lead on global economic matters... will be compromised by the coming plunge into austerity." They anticipate a "shift in power from the United States, Europe and Japan" and a rise in "the global clout of... China, Brazil, India and others."

"The post-2020 fiscal outlook is downright apocalyptic," they write. The US ruling class is divided on how to respond to its crisis because there is no way for it to continue exercising power as it did in the half-century after World War II. But every likely scenario involves war – sooner rather than later – and massive attacks on US workers as well as workers worldwide.

Smash Capitalist "Austerity" With Communist Revolution

The mass protests rocking Europe inspire us to fight back. But they also show the severe limits on even the largest strikes and demonstrations. Only communist revolution can smash the bosses' power over our lives, and create a world where workers can produce goods and services for our class.

In a communist society there won't be bosses or their "capital markets." When needed, we will share the hardship and mobilize all workers – no unemployment! – to move forward together. Most important, we will continue to recruit, recruit, recruit to the International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP). That way, more and more workers will participate fully in making and carrying out decisions that affect our collective life.

The bosses' "austerity" means that neither they nor the working class can continue to live in the old way. The inevitable surge to world war puts masses of soldiers, workers, and youth in motion. These conditions – in the not-too-distant-future – will create the need and the opportunity for communist revolution. Our Party aims to mobilize the working class to seize this opportunity. Join us!

