

RED FLAG

MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM



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



LOS ANGELES, January 31—Kaiser workers staged their 4th one-day strike in a year. Strikers gladly took about 165 copies of *Red Flag*, donated money, and some read articles with interest during the strike. Of those who read the Kaiser article, many strongly agreed that we don't need money and need a new system. Still, the workers' mood was hopeful toward the one-day strike, but they will continue to fight the same struggle in future years unless they break away from union reformist demands and fight for an elimination of our exploiters.

SOLDIERS, SAILORS, WORKERS: FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST POWER

COMMUNISM IS MORE AND MORE ON TRANSIT WORKERS' MINDS

LOS ANGELES--Capitalism's economic crisis is deepening and the preparations for world war are accelerating. Both events are profoundly affecting workers internationally.

On one hand, life is becoming more unbearable. On the other, it is clearer and clearer to millions that capitalism can't meet our needs and that we need a new system.

Many are going from questioning capitalism to actually considering communism to be a viable alternative. This is the case at MTA.

When Stan first came to an International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP) meeting, he said:

"All my life I had been told bad things about communism. I never thought that I would be coming to a meeting and discussing communism."

Here are some excerpts of a recent conversation:

Stan: Yes, the bosses helped create this mass unemployment by exporting jobs overseas.

Ben: Precisely. They can't help it. Competing for market share, the capitalists look for where to super-exploit workers. Also, they introduce machines at home to produce more with fewer workers.

Stan: But then more people can't afford to buy what they produce.

Ben: Yes, it then becomes a crisis of overproduction. They can't sell what they produce. Yet millions can't satisfy their basic needs. It shows the need to destroy capitalism.

Stan: Well, we can become independent.

Ben: No, that's no solution. We will either end up being exploiters or bankrupt. No, we need a revolution.

Stan: I guess you're right. I'm ready for the revolution. When do

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PENTAGON BUDGET MIRRORS BOSSES' PLANS TO CONFRONT CHINA

Soldiers are talking about the cuts in the new military budget and what they mean. Looking beneath the surface of the Pentagon's announcement of reduced spending, the message is that the bosses are preparing for wider and more intensive imperialist wars. According to the *LA Times*, "The plan is meant to shift spending away from the heavy commitment of troops and equipment needed to fight the wars of the last decade, and to instead beef up the Navy and other assets to help counter Iran, China and North Korea."

According to the *Washington Post*, the budget reflects "a new strategic focus on the Pacific."

According to Defense Secretary Leon Panetta, the budget cuts include cutting some soldiers and marines and eliminating obsolete equipment. These cuts are deceptive. Soldiers and Marines are the

part of the budget that are least expensive and easiest to replace when war needs demand.

The savings, supposedly "peace dividends," will be used to upgrade and replace defense systems whose construction requires more time. The Pentagon plans "new generation bombers capable of penetrating modern air defense systems like that of China." Also, carriers and long range bombers will be kept and submarines will be upgraded. This means more war against workers here and worldwide. This is the true nature of this war budget.

With ever-increasing competition, US imperialists are facing the daunting task of keeping militarily ahead of countries like China and Russia. Even though competition now seems mainly economic, US imperialists know very well that ultimate power lies with the capitalists with the stronger, most

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US "Asia Pivot" Prepares for World War

WORKERS, SOLDIERS, STUDENTS: PIVOT TO COMMUNISM!

"China is now an economic superpower and is fast becoming a military force capable of unsettling America." —*The Economist*, January 2012

The US-China relationship is a clear contradiction: the unity and struggle of opposites. The two economies are deeply interconnected but locked in fierce competition for global markets and energy resources. In any contradiction, unity is temporary and relative. Struggle drives inevitable change. For the US and China, that will mean war – world war.

Imperialist competition and war are fundamental features of capitalism. Communism will wipe out national borders and organize the masses worldwide into one International Communist Workers' Party. Increased production in one region will help workers everywhere. The only war will be the struggle to suppress every attempt to restore class society.

The coming world war is our opportunity to mobilize the masses, especially rank-and-file military, for communism.

Obama Says: US a "Pacific Power"

Last November, announcing a beefed-up US garrison in Australia, US President Obama declared that "in the Asia Pacific in the 21st century, the United States of America is all in."

Since World War II, the US has kept dozens of military bases, a sizable naval presence, and tens of thousands of troops in Japan, South Korea and elsewhere in Asia-Pacific. The north Australia base strengthens US access to the South China Sea.

But China is Australia's largest trading partner. And "China's submarines and missile platforms, soon to be backed up by an aircraft carrier taskforce, are projecting naval power into regions where the US has dominated since 1945," writes Simon Tisdell in *The Guardian* (UK).

Without naming China, Obama unveiled the

US military "pivot to Asia" on January 4th. His chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said that "all trends ... are shifting toward the Pacific. So our strategic challenges will largely emanate out of the Pacific region" and the coastal areas of the Indian Ocean, including the Persian Gulf.

Obama did mention China five times in his State of the Union Address, suggesting that the US economy struggles because of China's rapid growth. He also called for "bringing jobs back to the US" ("reindustrialization"). The first point shows why US imperialism needs to prepare to fight China. The second shows how it's preparing for that fight.

Michael Klare writes that "almost every tanker bringing oil to China travels across the South China Sea ... By securing naval dominance of the South China Sea and adjacent waters, the Obama administration evidently aims to acquire the twenty-first century energy equivalent of twentieth-century nuclear blackmail." The Chinese capitalists' calculated, long-term plan to build "staggeringly expensive pipelines across the entire expanse of Asia to the Caspian Sea basin," says Klare, shows their deep concern. (*Le Monde Diplomatique*, December, 2011)

US Anti-War Movement: Narrow Focus on Iran

Iran is crucial to China's energy strategy. That's the main reason why US imperialists are urgently trying to contain (if not control) Iran.

A comrade reports that his anti-war organization talks a lot about Iran and very little about China. At a recent meeting, a *Red Flag* reader drew the connections. She noted that ten years ago the US invaded Iraq to maintain control over Mideast petrodollars. The stakes in Iran are higher: the survival of the US empire, which is trying to starve China of energy.

Later she distributed a summary of the last *Red Flag* editorial. "This is very helpful, thank you!"

the masses to rise with the right ideas. We want a vision of communism in the minds of those who will pull the trigger on capitalism.

We said good-bye till another day. Self critically, when he asked, "When will the revolution start?" I should have answered that it has already started. We are on the road to revolution, mobilizing the masses for communism. I should have asked him to join ICWP. It is not too late. I know he will read this article. We would be more than honored if he joined ICWP. The working class needs communist fighters like him, and also like you who are reading this.

Like capitalism, MTA continues relentlessly its reign of terror against workers

A driver from Division 15 told us that Management prohibits them from carrying their cell phones on them, turned off or not. However, since there are no public phones, management wants drivers to use them to call in if their buses stall or the radio fails.

Management is also forcing drivers to sign an agreement granting them access to the drivers' monthly telephone bills. This is to get proof of "illegal" use of cell phones to fire drivers.

Other drivers report that MTA wants to force

said one friend who read it during a boring discussion. Others are fighting for the organization to study inter-imperialist rivalry instead of droning pacifist platitudes. These friends are in a dinner-discussion group that has met for five years. Many read *Red Flag* and help in different ways.

Global mass uprisings are creating the conditions for broad discussion of the urgency of a new society. History shows "how much the masses stand to lose by choosing sides amongst imperialist powers rather than fighting to end capitalism," the handout said. "The masses are in motion. It matters a whole lot what they choose to fight for."

As increasing numbers choose to fight for communism, the main contradiction in the world will change from inter-imperialist rivalry to all-out revolutionary class struggle. Worldwide communist workers' power will reorganize production and distribution, without money, to serve the needs of the masses. Communism will unleash mass creativity to develop and share new technologies and energy sources. Nowhere will anyone be better-off or worse-off than anyone else.

Join the ICWP — help pivot the masses to communism!



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you think it will start?

We talked about the need to mobilize the masses for communism. We both agreed it was not an easy task but that it could be done. He thought that a general strike by MTA workers that shuts down Los Angeles would be a good start. He said that unlike previous strikes, the buses would have to be stopped completely.

Stan: What would be the demands? It wouldn't be for higher wages, right?

Ben: No, they would have to be political slogans that point toward communism. Demanding higher wages would just perpetuate our wage slavery. We need to destroy it!

Stan: You're right. Higher wages wouldn't be a unifying slogan. It divides us from other workers. We need something that would unify us all!

The conversation got more politically intense. We talked about the simmering volcano below a sea of seemingly passive masses. We talked about Wisconsin and the Occupy movement as examples of the masses beginning to stir. We talked about the 1992 LA Rebellion triggered by the Rodney King beating, showing small events can trigger huge ones. We both agree that we want

drivers to work overtime for free. Due to budget cuts, routes that had five buses running now only have three. Drivers can't service these routes within the old allotted time. They routinely finish their shift twenty or more minutes late. Management is now suspending drivers who submit those minutes for overtime pay.

Many drivers who regularly finish 5 to 10 minutes late never submit them for overtime because of the hassle. Now MTA wants to make this unpaid labor "official."

With friends like the union officials, who needs enemies?

The union is a dues-collecting machine that does the bosses' bidding. Expect nothing good from them or any other union leader. Unionism only leads us down the path of reformism and electoral politics. Both are deadly traps.

It bodes well for the revolution that more MTA workers see us and communism as a viable alternative to these traitors and capitalism. Join the growing numbers reading, distributing and financing *Red Flag* and our manifesto *Mobilize the Masses for Communism*. Most important, join ICWP to move the revolution forward.



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STATE OF WHOSE UNION?

SEATTLE, WA--In general, workers are cynical about the American dream Obama was selling in his State of the Union address. Too many are living in a nightmare. But the hard fact is that cynicism will get you only so far. We need an alternative vision that none of the presidential candidates can offer.

Obama told “a story of success that every American can share--the basic American promise that if you worked hard, you could do well enough to raise a family, own a home, send your kids to college and put a little away for retirement.”

“The defining issue of our time is to keep that promise alive,” he said. “We can either settle for a country where a shrinking number of people do really well while a growing number of Americans can barely get by, or we can restore an economy where everyone gets a fair shot, and everyone does their fair share, and everyone plays by the same set of rules.”

But it is precisely this set of capitalist rules that makes this promise of more equal distribution of

wealth such a lie.

Have you ever played Monopoly? You divvy up the money equally to begin the game. You buy and sell and always someone gets it all while the rest lose. Those are the rules of capitalism.

That is why Obama’s call for higher taxes on the rich and restoring “middle-class” manufacturing jobs is just putting lipstick on a pig. In fact, the Buffet rule--requiring the rich to pay at least the same percentage in taxes as workers--provides political cover for a system based on driving down the workers’ standard of living.

Obama proposes tax breaks for corporations that open factories in high unemployment areas. Boeing, for one, just made a fortune on those tax breaks. The company opened a new factory in low-wage, non-union South Carolina. In the process, they eliminated thousands of better-paying jobs in Washington State. More manufacturing and more income inequality!

Rather than the illusion of more equal distribution of wealth, we need to eliminate personal wealth. Rather than spending all our energy struggling for non-existent “family wage” jobs, we have to fight to eliminate exploitive jobs, the only kind possible under capitalism. Everyone should work according to their commitment and ability, and get what they need.

Of course, the dog-eat-dog rules of capitalism won’t allow this. That is why Job One is to mobilize the masses for communism.

Marching To The Bosses’ Tune

It’s no accident that Obama couched his fairy tale in nationalist and militarist terms. “When you put on that [US Armed forces] uniform, it doesn’t matter if you’re black or white; Asian, Latino, Native American; conservative, liberal; rich, poor; gay, straight. When you’re in the thick of the fight, you rise or fall as one unit, serving one nation, leaving no one behind.... As long as we are joined in common purpose, ... our future is hopeful and the state of our Union will always be strong.”

Nationalism is the bosses go-to card, especially in these times of crisis. First, it prepares us to march behind US bosses to war. The capitalist economic crisis has shaken U.S. imperialism. Obama’s pitiful attempt to deny the decline of the empire stood out. Never before has a U.S. president been forced to include such a denial in a

State of the Union speech. Obama doth protest too much!

Ultimately, the bosses know their decline can only be reversed by war against their competitors. Although this speech was not an overt war speech, the constant references to challengers China and Iran painted a clear picture. Small wars, regional wars and eventually world war are on the bosses’ agenda.

The Union the bosses want is a union of U.S. workers and U.S. bosses hidden behind the slogan “American jobs for American workers.” Next step: sacrifice your sons and daughters on the altar of U.S. corporate profits.

Second, nationalism reduces the fight against racism, sexism and exploitation to a struggle for an illusory fairer capitalism. This fairy tale of a “fair capitalism” is central to the bosses’ political preparation for war.

But even more importantly, nationalism short-circuits the only way to eliminate racism, sexism and exploitation: communist revolution.

Beyond Cynicism

At a recent ICWP dinner about a dozen workers and students discussed Obama’s speech. The same cynicism that is present in the population as a whole was reflected in the discussion.

But this group went beyond cynicism. The discussion focused on the communist alternative, motivating these comrades and friends to spread the reach of our Party.

They took more *Red Flags* because they had run out of the papers. The young comrades made a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) that their friends and classmates and co-workers had about communism. They plan to answer these questions in the pages of *Red Flag*.

They took dozens more of our manifesto *Mobilize the Masses for Communism* to further the struggle with dozens of their friends. We discussed the tens of thousands of these pamphlets we are distributing in the heat of class struggle. This openness to a communist alternative is building, as is the enthusiasm of our comrades and friends to the possibility of building such a movement. Our future--not the future of the bosses’ system--is hopeful if we can expand on developments like these.



COMRADES IN MEXICO DISCUSS HEAVEN AND EARTH

In an ICWP study group, we talked about religion and communism. This came up because several of us have had contact with workers who could join ICWP and who are religious. We all agree that we’ve had ties with believers and that often they haven’t been won. On the contrary they have distanced themselves from us after we confront the ideas they defend. Here we write about some ideas that we discussed that have been treacherously instilled in the believers by the exploiters.

They have made us believe, as an oppressed class, that the Kingdom of God is not of this earth. They say that heaven (paradise) is where we’ll enjoy our reward for having suffered the injustices of the wealth that creates the divisions in which we live. This argument was instilled when the *Bible* was modified in the 13th century. After they recommended that using the name of God in vain is a sin, the word “God” was substituted for heaven and added to the prayers, painted in murals, and engraved in the minds of many workers. That’s because the exploiters were afraid that the poor (or the “just,” according to the church)

would challenge them in this world.

The believers see it as bad that we want to achieve communism through the violent road, forgetting that this is the only way that the exploiters will surrender the means of production. We have to convince them by using some violent passages from the *Bible*, like when Jesus and his followers drove the Pharisees from the temple. Capitalism kills us with hunger while there is food, and with sickness while there is a cure...We must ask which is more violent: to shoot a bullet or to keep us from eating? Is it less vicious to shorten a person’s life and vitality than to cut it off suddenly? To defend our life is something we cannot renounce.

No Christian document mentions the wicked without contrasting them to the poor. Therefore, to be rich is to be wicked and to be poor is to be just. For example, a passage in the New Testament says, “It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God.” We could use this to say that the only way to save the rich is to deprive them of that which makes

them wicked.

They accuse us communists of caring more about humanity than God, and that’s really the case. In what way could we “give food to the hungry or cure the sick,” as the Catholics say, if we leave the means of production in the hands of the exploiters?

We comrades in the meeting accepted that there are well-intentioned people who come around the Catholic Church when they don’t find another option. We think that there are many people who are winnable to ICWP. We should know how to explain to them, have reasons, and know how to win them to communism, rather than confronting them and driving them away.

It’s an honor to be a communist. Communism has been a project of humanity from periods long ago: Spartacus, Jesus, Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao have been episodes of this project. In this historic moment, ICWP is the vanguard and it’s up to us to move forward the only project of salvation for the workers. Join ICWP.

Bosses Reorganize Community Colleges for War

COMMUNISM WILL UNITE “HEAD” AND “HAND” IN WORK, EDUCATION

LOS ANGELES—Hundreds of students dash from college to college, trying to “crash” classes that filled up long ago. They are desperate to finish degrees that might get them jobs. Meanwhile new California-wide and federal regulations will force out many who are trying to balance school, work, and family, or who were victims of the racist mis-education system.

Halfway around the globe, thousands of prospective students and their parents massed outside the University of Johannesburg, South Africa, last month, seeking a last chance for admission. When the gates opened and the crowd surged, a woman was trampled to death. Public South African universities turn away over half their applicants. The government pushes students toward vocational schools (F.E.T. colleges) to remedy its “dire skills shortage.” But F.E.T. colleges, like US two-year colleges, have a huge drop-out rate. Even graduates often can’t find jobs.

During the long and militant 1999 strike at the huge National Autonomous University of Mexico, many students complained that massive fee hikes would force working-class youth into vocational rather than academic programs. Communists replied that students should unite with industrial workers, key to revolution, instead of trying vainly to escape the working class.

A similar struggle is now going on in California, where new regulations are transforming public two-year colleges to intensify the tracking of students into vocational or college-prep programs. All schooling prepares youth for their place in the system of production. In racist capitalism, that mostly means wage slavery, whether in white-collar jobs that require college degrees or in the factories.

Academic programs push pro-boss ideas and train students to jump endlessly through hoops. Those who make it are encouraged to think of themselves as superior, and those who don’t are made to feel like failures. The real failure is capitalism.

The opposition of academic and vocational education is a feature of class society that will disappear under communism. We’ll all work, including manual labor, and we’ll all study. We’ll learn languages to communicate globally, dialectical

materialist philosophy to analyze and change the world, and everything else that will help us build the world we want and need.

Rulers Take Advantage of Budget Crisis

Colleges are scrambling to replace lost funding with contracts, grants, and industry/government partnerships. The ruling class intervenes more directly in what gets taught, to whom, and how.

For example, war contractor Caterpillar is moving production from Canada to North Carolina, where wages are lower because of a long history of racism. The company isn’t paying for on-the-job training. Instead it turns to Forsyth Tech, where “Assemblers do assembly training ... machinists do machining training,” according to an instructor. Many students pay \$thousands getting trained for \$10/hour jobs that they may or may not get.

Many community colleges administer the NCRC-Plus “career readiness” test. The “Plus” tests “soft skills” like “discipline, dependability, attitude/optimism, and teamwork.” Companies like Boeing hope to use such tests to weed out rebellious workers. It won’t work!

Youth must optimistically join the Voc Ed programs, the factories, and the barracks, confident that the masses can be mobilized for communism. We must develop that dependability, discipline, and teamwork to build the International Communist Workers’ Party – learning much more in the process.

Communism Will Unite Work and Study to Serve the Masses

Capitalist managers are supposed to be “thinkers” and workers the “doers,” treated like beasts of burden. So vocational training generally ignores the complex cognitive skills involved in all work. Instead, students are shown “how” with very little “why.”

The same is true in academic classes. Colleges talk about “critical thinking” but workers and students aren’t schooled to

think critically about anything. That’s one thing the rulers really can’t afford!

The “head versus hand” division serves to justify capitalist rule over us, the working class who produce everything. Class society can’t provide meaningful work or meaningful education, because it separates the two in the service of exploitation.

Communism, in contrast, will unite planning and doing, learning and producing, as we work collectively to serve the needs of the masses. The Chinese Cultural Revolution provides some helpful examples, such as the Wukou Tea-Growing Middle School in 1968. Plantation workers, tea-growing peasants, and technical workers became teachers. Workshops, tea gardens, and fields became classrooms. “We have learnt from our worker-peasant teachers what we could never have learnt in the classroom before,” students declared.

Today, communist class struggle is our “classroom” as we organize for communist revolution and prepare to build communist society. Every *Red Flag* reader must become a teacher as well as a learner! Read, discuss, support, distribute, and write for our “textbook,” *Red Flag*!



LONDON, ONTARIO, CANADA, Jan. 21—Caterpillar Inc locked out workers and threatened to move to the US after they rejected a contract offer that would have slashed wages in half and cut benefits while the company reports record profits.

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committed military force. This is the reason that the US is changing its defense priorities, to focus on China and try to come back with a vengeance.

For the imperialists, serious steps need to be taken before launching the next war. First, the US



The Yemeni government is desperately trying to crush a wave of mutinies at military airbases. Rebellious soldiers have demanded the ouster of officers who steal from them and amnesty for those who refused to fire on protesters.

bosses need to convince the soldiers, workers and students in the US that war will be necessary and in our interest. We shouldn’t fall for their lies. They’re fighting for their empire at our expense. Even when they tell soldiers they want us to be “critical thinkers,” it’s just to help the bosses fight for their empire, to exploit more workers.

They will try to pit US workers against Chinese workers. Many articles in the bosses’ media talk about competition with countries like China and about Iran’s nuclear quest. In the name of “democracy,” “peace,” and “economic survival,” US imperialists will try to win domestic support for wider war, to get us to fight patriotically for the bosses.

They are modernizing the current military force that continues to use drones to spy on and bomb other countries, while they cut jobs, health care and pensions. Obama’s military budget includes increases for every year for five years, except one. It’s no surprise that the Pentagon plans to discontinue drones like the one captured in Iran, and build a group of new ones with the latest technology.

Perhaps the brass is afraid of the rank and file refusing to follow orders when told to bomb innocent civilians. This explains why the bosses created a military elite group that controls drones from a central control station. But soldiers, sailors and Marines from many ranks refused orders during the Vietnam War. In fact, the rulers got a taste of how low morale can affect the wars in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan. You can bet that the temporary reduction in troops is also a plan to weed out rebellious soldiers who have experienced the harsh reality of war and who don’t believe the lies of the brass and the rulers.

The Pentagon has revealed that the Navy forces will be maintained. This includes ten carrier air wings, eleven aircraft carriers and all amphibious assault ships. The only elimination is the Ticonderoga class cruisers, which need extensive repairs. In fact, all this talk of downsizing is really planning for the next wars.

Workers, soldiers and sailors around the world should realize the truth of the matter: the imperialists are gearing up for world war and we must organize in the ranks of the soldiers, sailors and Marines to turn imperialist war into communist revolution. We need a communist world without wars for profits or exploitation. Join us!

Martin Luther King Day Parade:

CAPITALIST PROPAGANDA SPECTACLE

LOS ANGELES, January 16— Thousands of enthusiastic onlookers watched the Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade. High school bands with great musical energy led it off. The middle of the parade showcased fancy convertible sports cars with politicians, news anchors, etc. waving to the crowd, attempting to rally votes and enthusiasm for the 2012 elections. Floats advertised things like new cars, and charities for services that capitalism cannot and will not provide.

The Tuskegee Airmen attended. These brave black World War II veterans – featured in the new movie *Red Tails* – faced down segregation and vicious racism. Now they are used to convince black and latin youth to join the bosses' military

to get “respect,” “equality” or “citizenship.”

Uniformed youths marched for nationalist groups, recruited to unwittingly build up patriotic sentiment to counteract mass anger and disgust with the entire capitalist system.

The most glaring outrage was a gigantic police presence. How can anyone enjoy a parade featuring the LAPD, one of the world's largest groups of fascist terrorists!

Capitalism singled out Dr. King as a civil rights hero because the bosses feared a violent backlash if they didn't “honor” this dead black leader “properly.” Capitalism uses Dr. King to preach pacifism, to advertise, and to ensnare us into voting and joining the military to fight the bosses' wars.

This MLK parade sent the message that we, the working class, only matter to make profits for the bosses. They herded us like cattle into sitting passively on sidewalks cheering politicians, keeping us passive by the fascist show of police force.

Many thousands worked for civil rights reforms, but “civil rights” are only small concessions given to us by the bosses (and later taken back) in order to placate our anger and convince us to

submit to their corrupt dysfunctional capitalist system. Under communism, we the workers, as brothers, sisters, and neighbors, will end racism and take our lives into our own hands.

WE are the leaders, all of us.

We lead each other through life's struggles. Imagine if ALL workers in banks, industries, restaurants and stores, garbage collectors, life-guards, homemakers, students, teachers, construction workers, homeless, and military organized together to say, “DEATH TO CAPITALISM.” The bosses are the 1% and we are the 99%. Who would win? WE WOULD!

Under communism, parades will be free of advertising. Parades will mobilize workers to display talent, art, innovation, and feelings. Everyone will be able to join the festivities because there will be no police to push us behind the lines. Instead of being stuck thinking we have to compete against each other as individuals, we'll work harmoniously together to share in all defeats and triumphs.

Today's most important message is that energy, anger, questions, analysis, communication, determination, and organization must lead us to COMMUNIST REVOLUTION—THE answer to ALL our problems under Capitalism.

Many parade-watchers were open to this message. They took thousands of leaflets, 700 copies of *Red Flag*, over 100 copies of *Mobilize the Masses for Communism*, and some gave us their names to join the struggle.



MOBILIZING THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM GETS ENTHUSIASTIC RECEPTION

“You already gave me that last time,” said a driver to an ICWP comrade who offered him a copy of our manifesto, *Mobilizing the Masses for Communism (MMC)* along with *Red Flag*.

“Good, did you get a chance to read it?”

“Yes.”

“What did you think of it?”

“It was awesome!” he said.

She asked him to take an extra one to give to someone else and he did, donating a couple of dollars.

When we asked another driver who read *MMC* what he thought of it, he answered, “We have to get bigger!”

The ICWP comrade agreed. “You're right. Take an extra manifesto for a friend.” He did and he's since taken several more copies. The comrade said, “More workers need to become organizers, like you. Do you want extra papers too?” He did. Every time we see him, he takes extra papers and contributes financially to ICWP.

We've distributed hundreds of manifestos to transit workers. We've gotten an excellent response. This has helped more transit workers read and distribute *Red Flag* and the manifesto.

Not all workers agree. One very religious driver read the whole pamphlet. He told us we would fail like the Russians and Chinese. We disagreed, saying that workers learn from history. The next time we saw him, he said that everything we wanted in a communist society would be done by God, through his son Jesus, so we didn't have to worry about it. The *Red Flag* seller asked that since he thinks we're God's children, then what role do we have in making this happen? He said that Jesus would take care of it, but he took the paper to read, which he hadn't done before reading *MMC*.

Another driver, when asked what he thought of the manifesto, said, “We have to talk.” We replied, “Absolutely.” But the driver of the car behind him was honking his horn to get into the parking lot. So we'll see him next time to have that talk.

Another comrade found that giving *MMC* to his professor opened the door to a fruitful conversation:

“In a follow-up discussion with my professor, I asked his thoughts of our manifesto and he answered that he thought that it was a solid piece of literature which explained clearly our point of view. This was encouraging to me because this critique was coming from an individual who had a great understanding of communist ideas and showed a great disgust for this capitalist system of government that we live in today. I respect him because he openly expresses his ideas to his students and shows how the government is involved in every aspect of the working-class community.

“After this conversation, my professor said he would still be interested in taking and reading the paper. I believe feedback from those we dis-

tribute to is important in our decision on whether to distribute our manifesto massively or just to a chosen few. I believe that mass distribution will lead to further understanding of our politics which will lead to more constructive criticism from fellow students, teachers and workers who will be interested in sharing their views.”

More workers, students and others are taking *Red Flag* and *MMC* to distribute to other workers and family members. Reading the manifesto has led to many discussions among workers about whether communism is possible and how it will work. We encourage transit workers and all other readers to write their impressions, disagreements, criticisms, suggestions, and questions they have about *MMC* to *Red Flag* and to move from support to active membership in ICWP. We urge you to help distribute our literature to thousands of workers, students and soldiers.

ICWP CALLS ON RED FLAG READERS TO SEND COPIES OF MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM TO FRIENDS AND FAMILY IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD.

WE ALSO NEED HELP IN TRANSLATING MMC AND RED FLAG INTO THE MANY LANGUAGES OF OUR CLASS SISTERS AND BROTHERS.



Workers, Not Money, Make the World Go Around

CAPITALISM CREATES CRISIS AND WAR

A song in the musical *Cabaret* claims that “Money makes the world go around.” It’s catchy but it confuses more than it clarifies. The money we see – money as wages - really forces us to stay in or near poverty. Money as wages is a by-product of money as capital. And money-capital has rules of its own that most of us don’t realize because we never control or use it.

Money-capital is invested to make more money-capital. Although it can be invested in anything, only when invested in industrial production does it make more money and add value (in the form of manufactured goods) to society. Exploiting workers who make things is the only way surplus value is created. It is often written as a formula: $M-C-M^1$. Invest \$1 million in raw materials, labor, and machinery and sell the finished product for \$1 1/2 million. In this way \$1/2 million has been added to the economy. Capitalism can only create added value (growth) if it circulates successfully (when everything made is sold). The faster it circulates (completes one cycle and begins the next) the more added, or surplus, value it can create.

This is called productive investment (as opposed to speculative investment). In today’s crisis-driven world there are a few areas where productive investment is most profitable. These are the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and Germany. Of these, China and Germany are the most important. They provide the hope that capitalism can restore itself as a productive system without too much destruction or war.

There’s a catch, however.

If the crisis were to play out like that, China, Germany or another of the BRICS would emerge either as sole leaders or co-leaders of the world. Either way, US imperialism loses.

The remarkable thing is that a situation like this was bound to happen. There is a built-in contradiction to the circulation of even capital invested in production rather than speculation. Over the years successful cycles of $M-C-M^1$ create too much money-capital. There are not enough places for it to be invested productively. If capital were allowed to sit (be hoarded or stored somewhere), it would disrupt the whole

system. Who, in our example, would bother to go through all the trouble to create the \$1/2 million surplus value (the M^1), if all you had to do was go to the bank or warehouse and take it out?

This excess capital, then, has to be invested. There are three avenues open to it. It can be invested in infrastructure, building new roads, bullet trains, even expanding education. It can be used to enlarge the Army. And, to get a quick return on their investment, it can be used in speculation like selling derivatives, betting on currency fluctuations or creating ‘bubbles’ as in dot.com or housing bubbles. None of this cre-

ates products.

Fixed capital investments (including most government spending from infrastructure to the military) can help the economy but they are also a drag on it since they circulate slowly. This is especially true of the military.

In the US the 30% of total government budget that the military absorbs is a huge drag on the economy unless it is used. In action it can capture raw materials or markets away from rivals. As we have seen, it can defend the world market for the US\$ to circulate in as the world’s reserve currency. However, the main problem is that there is too much capital in the world to be invested productively.

Since, as we have seen, hoarding capital for a rainy day isn’t a solution, only one alternative remains – destroying capital.

Historically, that is the role crises play. The question then becomes whose capital – in the form of factories, workers’ labor power and currencies – get destroyed. While this is being played out on many fronts throughout the world, the principal struggle at the moment is the attack on Europe by US financial institutions. While taming if not destroying the Euro is an important goal in and of itself, for US imperialism there is an added incentive. Europe is China’s biggest trading partner. A crisis-ridden and poorer Europe will import less from China, and hobble the growth of its productive forces. Just as the wars in Yugoslavia and Iraq were attacks on Europe and its euro, the financial attack on the euro is also an attack on China.

When capitalism is expanding, money in the form of capital unleashes production. In crisis, it unleashes destruction in the form of austerity, lay-offs, bankruptcies and, if the destruction by economic means isn’t sufficient, by war. What a system! When it functions well it creates the conditions for crisis and war. When it functions well it creates a wage system that keeps us at, or near, poverty. Capitalism doesn’t have a sell-by date; it only has a smash-by date. That is long past. We need communist revolution.



DISCUSSION AND DEBATE: CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

US Needs Eurozone Allies

A comrade writes in response to the article above:

The U. S. capitalists are in a dialectical contradiction with the capitalists of Europe. These are two rival imperialists, but they also have some common interests and areas of cooperation. Right now, economic and military cooperation is important to both sets of capitalists, and this cooperation outweighs their conflict. In particular, it is not correct to say, as the article above does, that U. S. financial institutions are trying to destroy the euro currency in the current debt crisis. In fact, the U. S. Federal Reserve recently lowered the cost for troubled European banks to borrow dollars, taking some

pressure off them.

The U. S. capitalists might wish that the euro had never existed as a rival to the dollar, but the failure of the euro now would be a disaster for U. S. business and especially for U. S. banks. U. S. banks have significant investment in the government debt of European countries. As of a few months ago, for example, J. P. Morgan Chase held \$15 billion in the bonds of weak E. U. governments. The much bigger issue, however, is that if European banks fail because the weak governments default, the European banks will not be able to pay what they owe U. S. banks.

It isn’t just the banks that will be in trouble, however, if the euro crisis is not solved. The result of a crash in the euro would be a world-

wide recession like the one the U. S. banks caused in 2008. This would send the U. S. economy back into recession, as U. S. government spokesmen have said repeatedly.

Despite their conflicts of a decade ago, the U. S. and European capitalists have recently been allies in two wars (Afghanistan and Libya) and the Europeans are cooperating with the US in imposing sanctions on Iran, a move against Chinese capitalists who buy their oil from Iran. For the present, cooperation dominates rivalry in the U.S.-Europe contradiction, and U. S. bosses are not trying to bring down the euro. Instead, they are looking for allies in the coming battles with China.

--A comrade

See response to this article on the next page.

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DISCUSSION AND DEBATE FROM PAGE 14

Conflict Outweighs Cooperation

Response to the comrade:

The comrade makes a good point by raising the rivalry and interdependence of two major imperialist economies: the Euro and the US\$.

However, it's overstating the case to claim that "economic and military cooperation is important to both sets of capitalists and cooperation outweighs their conflict."

The world economic crisis has heightened contradictions in the Eurozone. Its dominant member, Germany, is at odds with most other member states as well as with the US.

The US\$ is still the world's reserve currency and its military the world's largest, with around 30,000 troops in Germany itself. Clearly any break with the US would have dramatic consequences. Nevertheless, it could occur. Rather than "cooperation," it would be more accurate to describe German-US unity as 'enlisting,' 'manipulating,' or 'coercing.'

What sort of ally has Germany been in Afg-

hanistan and Libya? German forces are about 6-8% of those under US command in Afghanistan and have a low casualty rate (about 1/8 of their British ally) because they have not been deployed in important (and dangerous) areas.

German 'cooperation' in Libya has been even less impressive. Germany joined the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) in abstaining from the UN Security Council vote on authorizing NATO support for anti-Gaddafi rebels. Later, after arm-twisting, they agreed to send 11 soldiers to bolster NATO. They actually sent 100. Some ally!

The euro might well fail. In fact a sizeable section of the German ruling class wants it to. They might or might not settle for its drastic restructuring.

The idea that Germany is an ally of the US against China is hard to swallow. Germany's trade with China is greater than its trade with the US and has increased 34% since 2009. It's set to grow even more. When Prime Minister Wen Jiabao visited Germany last year, he brought a huge entourage including 13 minis-

ters and 30 managers.

Certainly, it would be in the US rulers' interest to hobble this growing German-China trade relation.

This suggests that the world is much more volatile and dangerous than the comrade's picture of a cooperative alliance between the Eurozone and US imperialism.

—Author of the original article



LETTERS

LETTERS

LETTERS

CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

Crisis of Tarahumara Indians is the Crisis of the Whole Worldwide Working Class

A few days ago, seeing the local news, I saw a news item in which the journalist who gave it was deeply moved by the images he saw. This caused him to weep and he said that this should make all Mexicans feel ashamed for the situation in which the indigenous of Chihuahua live, especially the Tarahumaras.

The crisis of hunger and cold is due to the drought that the ethnic groups who live in this state are living through. They showed some really disturbing images, but this is the sad everyday reality for them, even when there's no drought. It made me furious when I heard that the President of Mexico, Felipe Calderon, said that its not about a philanthropic situation nor was it a question of fad, that we must support the ethnic groups due to the drought in Chihuahua.

There can't be such cynicism on his part to make the whole Mexican population feel guilty for the lack of responsibility of the rulers in general. It filled me with anger, fury, and impotence to see these images on television. But this is the cruel reality and as this pig said, it's not a question of fad but of consciousness, and that's why we must fight for a society in which there's no lack of basic elements, especially the most important, WATER.

I'll keep fighting for a system in which everyone has food, clothing, and medical services. We have to work day by day to raise the consciousness of the workers of a real change and not a society of donations or gifts, where we won't only satisfy thirst for a week, but always.



Workers of the World, Unite!

That's why I think that we're not some crazy dreamers. We're not wrong to work for a party like ICWP.

Fight for communism and these images that we see every day will disappear forever. This fills me with energy to continue fighting tenaciously day by day.

--Comrade Worker

Fight Against Racism: Key to Struggle for Communism

In a letter in the 2/9/12 *Red Flag*, "Young Comrade" wrote, "I also believe that racism, sexism and homophobia all have equal importance..." in the struggle against capitalism. These isms are not equally important in capitalist ideology (the body of thought that guides a social movement or institution). Racism is the primary (first in importance) ideological tool of capitalists. Homophobia is not equal to racism in the capitalists' scheme. I write specifically about racism from a historical standpoint and my life experience and those of millions more.

Let's look at racism.

It was written into the US Constitution when the "Founding Fathers" counted slaves as 3/5 of a person and didn't count Native Americans at all.

It formed the basis of slavery in the US and the laws, institutions, social structure, and brutality that sustained and enforced slavery.

It was codified in the Jim Crow (segregation, apartheid) laws of the South after emancipation and Reconstruction.

It is the political underpinning of the mass incarceration (the "New Jim Crow") of Blacks now that segregation and apartheid in public accommodations no longer exist (due to massive workers' class struggle).

It is the political underpinning of attacks against immigrants and Muslims in the US and imperialist ventures abroad.

I was born and grew up in the South in the pre-civil rights days.

I went to schools segregated by law and was denied admission to the state-supported (paid for by taxpayers) university in my home town after I graduated high school, again because of segregation laws. During that time, hospitals,

public water fountains and bathrooms, seating on buses, eating in restaurants in shopping areas, seating in railroad cars were segregated by law. There were "colored" and "white" signs to remind people of segregation.

Today, we see college football and basketball games on TV with SEC teams (Tennessee, Alabama, Auburn, Florida, Mississippi, etc.) consisting largely of Black athletes, for example, Carn Newton, from Auburn, now in the NFL. When I was a teenager, these schools and teams were all white because Blacks were legally barred from admission.

Capitalist racism has been a major influence in US history and my life experience. In other words, slavery, Jim Crow, mass incarceration, etc. have been produced and maintained through capitalist racism, not sexual orientation.

The fight against racism is key to the struggle against capitalism and for communism. We workers must fight in our class interests against racism, regardless of race, gender, or sexual orientation.

--An Elder Comrade in the Bay Area

Capitalism is the Material Basis of Racism

We liked the January 19th article "These Times Demand Communist Struggle... There should be explanation about the "material basis of racism and sexism." To clarify for readers we should explain that material basis means capitalist exploitation, money and profit.

There are no biological "races." All humans belong to the same species and have the same remote ancestry, to which all conclusive evidence from comparative anatomy, paleontology, serology and genetics points. In other words "race" is a political term, not something that exists in the natural world.

Since there is no race, the liberal tendency that celebrates "multiculturalism" and diversity is also heading in the wrong direction, because the subtext is still race. We need to smash the material basis for racism which is capitalism and then the international working class will be the human race!

--Northern California comrades

A COLD MORNING...

A climate unusually cold in Southern California is penetrating even to the bones. The thermometer shows 41 degrees. It's almost 7 am and "he" still hasn't come. From the car you can observe that the workers at this juice bottling factory are running to get to the entrance before the bell rings to begin the shift. From far away you can see the silhouette of a person walking hurriedly. Little by little you can recognize him as he gets closer. It's "him," with his jaw stuck to his chest, and wrapped in a kayeffa (Palestinian scarf), a cap of black wool pulled down over the ears, and his hands in the pockets of a thick nylon jacket, greeting me only by moving his head.

"You're late, Roberto, hurry up. The bell rang."

"It doesn't matter. Now I'll wait 10 minutes, because anyway they'll take 15 away from me. Yesterday they took my car, my good one, for not having a license. There was a despicable police check point, they say for sobriety, but they always ask for your license and if you don't have it, they send the car to the police impound. Now I have to pay \$1800. That includes the \$40 a day that the car is detained for a month, plus the fine for driving without a license."

The bitterness is reflected on Roberto's face as he says this. His cheerful look has disappeared; this playful character, joker, typical of some residents of Mexico City, seems to have changed. In its place a harsh face, a grey look.

He continued. "They took my car yesterday when we were going to visit my mother-in-law,

and there was a horrible chill from hell. My three kids were cold and hungry. The smallest one was crying and crying, and I got madder. I told my wife to make the little one be quiet. 'Stop bothering me!' she yelled angrily.

"Fed up, we walked to take the bus back home. Today, at 5 am, we got up to take the children to a neighbor who takes care of them. She takes the two oldest to school. My wife then left for work early with some other neighbors. I came on the bus." Roberto's frustration is evident. For a minute it seems that he wants to cry. His eyes are reddened. Maybe it's the cold.

Like his car, dozens and maybe hundreds of cars, the property of undocumented workers, are confiscated in Los Angeles County every week.

"I brought you *Red Flag*." The words came out timidly as if I didn't want to talk about this topic, at least at this moment. Would Roberto be able to hear that apart from terrorizing the workers, this is a money-making business for the bosses? Or is it better to listen to him, let him unburden?

"We illegals are always attacked more; it's hard to find a job; they pay us almost nothing; they don't want to give us drivers' licenses because we don't have papers," said Roberto wearily.

"Undocumented, Roberto, undocumented. No worker is illegal. We all have the right to work and live better. The illegals are the bosses. They created the borders and, without asking permission, they go exploit our class brothers and sisters

throughout the whole world. This is capitalism. The bosses force us to emigrate. They make us believe that we're illegals to exploit us more easily. They do the same in Europe with African and Asian workers."

Roberto's gaze avoids the factory where he works. "I don't want to work today. I don't feel like it. Only because I have a family to maintain, if not..." He raised his shoulders in a gesture of resignation.

"Look, Roberto, I know your situation isn't good now, but when has it been good for the workers? The good times have been when the working class has fought. There's always a light at the end of the tunnel. Or, to say it better, a *Red Flag*."

"Once again, with the same song, my friend. Better, tell me now, when we will start making the revolution?" he asked with a smile full of sarcasm.

"In ICWP we've already started. The only thing missing is for you to do it with us. Starting to distribute the paper is the first step. I already told you to join the study groups where we'll all learn how to get rid of this unjust system. In communism, we won't need to emigrate to work. We'll have everything in the place we live. We'll work for ourselves, for our class."

"I'm going. It's getting late and they'll fire me and it will be your fault." He composed himself, returning again to his bright smile.

"That's how I like to see Roberto, with enthusiasm, always."

"I'm going because now you're going to talk to me about communism and you have me up to my ears with this." He smiled and now it wasn't with irony.

"Take another paper so you can give it to someone."

"No, I'm good with one. Don't you see that no more will fit in my backpack?"

Right away he slowly extended his hand, as if he wanted to avoid touching hot steel, took another *Red Flag* and put it in his backpack. He said goodbye as always, joking.

"Lend me some change for my good car, no?" Smiling, as if soon in this grey morning, the sun would come into full view.



THIS MAY DAY

INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' DAY,

IN LOS ANGELES AND OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD, ICWP URGES WORKERS, STUDENTS, SOLDIERS AND THEIR ALLIES TO:

MOBILIZE THEIR FRIENDS TO STRIKE
ON MAY DAY FOR COMMUNISM

MARCH WITH ICWP AND HELP SPREAD RED
FLAG AND OUR MANIFESTO MOBILIZE THE
MASSES FOR COMMUNISM

TO TENS OF THOUSANDS OF WORKERS.



ICWP has published our manifesto *Mobilize the Masses for Communism*. It's available in English and Spanish. Order your copy or copies. Please send donations for the costs of printing and mailing. We also ask for your suggestions and criticisms.

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