

# RED FLAG

NEWSPAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST WORKERS' PARTY \* [WWW.ICWPREDFLAG.ORG](http://WWW.ICWPREDFLAG.ORG)



## CAPITALISM FAILS EGYPTIAN WORKERS



### CAIRO UN- REST BORN IN EGYPT'S NILE DELTA

Egyptian employees of the Misr Spinning and Weaving Company, Egypt's biggest textile factory, demonstrate in the Nile Delta town of el-Mahalla el-Kubra, Egypt, in 2007. They went on to demand higher wages, more work benefits and a larger share of the company's profits.

### Neither Army nor Democracy Will Set Things Right

#### COMMUNIST POTENTIAL IN OUR DAY AND AGE

"There are many questions hanging over the global financial markets, but none more pertinent than the following: will the global economy rebound in time to quell rising discontent among millions of workers who have turned—violently, in some cases—against capitalism."

Bank of America strategist Joe Quinlan

Forget about it! As far as "millions of workers" rebelling, that train has already left the station. These millions shook the seemingly invincible Mubarak regime to its core: forcing Mubarak himself to resign. If striking Egyptian workers "take it to the streets" with communist revolution on their minds—allying with working-class soldiers and youth—they could bury capitalism.

The bosses sometimes seem all powerful. But the uprising in Egypt shows just how weak they are, once the masses get moving.

The capitalists' economic crisis is spreading havoc around the world. Decades-old US-backed dictatorships are unable to contain the rising anger of the masses of workers, who are increa-

singly unable to live in the old way.

Tens of thousands of Egyptian workers began to move from economic militancy to political mobilization (see page 3.) This frightened the bosses even more than the already worrying demonstrations in Tahrir square.

From the Cairo defense industry to Nile Valley textile workers, from aerospace to the Suez Canal, walkouts and rebellions sealed Mubarak's fate. One capitalist/imperialist after another abandoned ship.

For a while there, only the army stood between the Egyptian capitalists and millions of angry workers. And the army rank and file is made up of conscripted workers and poor farmers

An entrenched communist base within the military could have rallied rank-and-file soldiers to fight on the side of their class brothers and sisters. You can see how a working class practiced in mobilizing for communism could easily brush the Officer Corp aside. The country was up for grabs.

Unfortunately, for the moment it will

**See EGYPT page 2**

### Transportation Workers Show Working Class Solidarity:

#### RED FLAG KEY TO SPREADING COMMUNIST IDEAS

Every morning before we start working, the workers meet with the bosses' management so they can give us instructions or inform us of whatever they think is important. On Tuesday, February 8, after the meeting was over, a worker said that he had something to tell us and he started to say that in Division Ten, a mechanic had been suspended for 15 days because he had been caught by the cameras on the vehicle using his cell phone. And that all the mechanics on all three shifts, upset with the company for its unjust punishment, had agreed not to go to work on Monday.

The manager, visibly upset, asked him where he had acquired this information. And he said, "We can't live under threats. Neither can we live kidnapped. The company takes these measures to protect the public."

"If it's like that," said another worker, "why have mechanics been using their own cell phones for years when they go to pick up a broken-down bus? And why hasn't the company worried about installing a more effective com-

munication system? Instead of spending thousands of dollars in installing cameras, they could have already spent the money in communication and avoided a lot of problems."

"What we're asking you," answered the manager, "is to park and talk from there."

(It's easy to say, but when the traffic is congested, it's not so easy to do.) The manager kept trying to justify the rules of the company, and a woman mechanic told him, "Speak up, we can't hear you."

Very arrogantly, the manager answered her, "If you can't hear, why don't you sit in front?"

Then the internal union representative suggested to all the mechanics that they stop using their cell phones, because the company enforces the laws that are to their benefit. "Shut up!" shouted the manager. "You're starting a conspiracy." But the union representative kept talking, and the manager shouted at him again, "Shut up, I'm telling you! This is a direct

**See MTA page 4**

#### **Inside:**

**Celebrating a Year of Struggle, Page 2**  
**Mexicana Flight Attendants, Page 3**

**Salvadoran Teachers in Struggle, Page 3**  
**Wipe Out Capitalism from France to the US,**  
**Page 4**

**Nationalism: Dead End Street, Page 13**  
**Materialism and Knowledge, Page 16**  
**Islamophobia is Racism, Page 16**

## Succesful Dinner Celebrates a Year of Struggle

### AGAINST REVISIONISM AND FOR COMMUNISM WORLDWIDE

LOS ANGELES, Ca.— Over 100 workers, teachers, students and soldiers, young and old, men and women, participated in activities to celebrate the first year of struggle of the International Communist Workers' Party and our newspaper *Red Flag*.

Young black and latino comrades gave political leadership in preparing and leading the dinners. The following is part of the speech of a worker comrade:

"This dinner is politically important for the international communist movement, because today we're celebrating a year of the founding of the ICWP and its ideological weapon, *Red Flag*. The birth of our party wasn't an accident, nor a political retreat. On the contrary, it was the logical culmination of an ideological struggle to the death between two tendencies, one reformist and the other revolutionary communist. This fierce confrontation could only end in two ways. The first, that one of the ideologies submit to the other; the second with the breaking of a non existent peace and that each tendency follow its own destiny. The reformists went to their opportunist marsh and the left has taken up the historic challenge of advancing and ensuring that communist ideas take hold in the international working class.

In a year of struggle, our influence has grown and we've shown that those who were against us were wrong in assuring that many generations would pass before other powers would challenge the US militarily. They also said that there wasn't an economic crisis, that they had seen many workers standing in line to eat at a Denny's restaurant. But the worst was that they declared that the worldwide workers' movement was depressed by the collapse of socialism, and that it is not the moment to talk to them directly about communism. They were also confused by thinking

that we were not going to last economically as a Party because we don't have rich people who support us. We don't need them, we don't want them. Workers, soldiers, teachers, students, domestic workers, and farm workers, have responded to our call and this communist Party is alive, healthy, and prepared to take this struggle to the final victory.

It's not easy, but it's also not impossible when we see that we already have a Party, with a newspaper and with a political line that represents the highest aspirations of our class to build a communist society in which human beings can develop with all the opportunities available, where racism doesn't exist, where there are no borders, where women will be appreciated as valuable members of our class and not as objects. We're fighting directly for a communist system where the capitalist thieves who satiate themselves while millions die of hunger will have no place. It will be a society where each contributes according to their commitment and each receives according to their needs. This



Party (ICWP) is of the oppressed, of the exploited, let's take them our revolutionary ideas, let's teach them that we are the power, the strength that builds the airplanes, the ships, the weapons, the houses. That it's us who grow the wheat, the corn, vegetables and its also us who take up arms to defend our hangmen from their enemies and sometimes from our same class.

Fellow workers, it's our responsibility to assure the growth of our Party; it's our duty to spread communist ideas; its our dream and fight for a communist society of collectivity and equality."

**EGYPT from page 1** not be the workers that grab power. The media are calling it a "revolution" but it is really a military coup riding on the back of a popular uprising.

For communists, a revolution means one class (the working class) overthrowing another (the capitalist class). But this requires years of patient mobilization for communism. Only then will the workers will be ready to implement communism, instead of giving the bosses yet another chance to reboot capitalism.

For its part, the U.S. and its imperialist allies are trying desperately to confine this struggle to one for democracy. In this they are joined by elements of the Egyptian bourgeoisie and their servants among professionals and the intelligentsia.

"The immediate problem [however]," according to former U.S. ambassador to both Israel and Egypt Edward Walker, "is that it's very difficult to see how democracy will work to answer the questions the demonstrators have. It doesn't create jobs; it doesn't lower the price of food or eliminate the gap between the rich and poor. No [democratic leader] can deliver what they want."

Adding insult to injury, the Obama administration endorsed Omar Suleiman as the vehicle to usher in Egyptian democracy. This is the same Suleiman known as Egypt's torturer-in-chief (see page 13).

Capitalism always functions under the bosses' dictatorship whether hid behind the sheen of democracy or more openly imposed by an autocrat like Mubarak.

Capitalism requires exploitation and exploitation must be assured by tradition and culture, the rule of law and arms.

The feared Egyptian police force faded into the night within a couple of weeks, but the Egyptian working class was held back from following through with communist revolution, in part, by illusionary faith in democracy. The delusion that massive demonstrations, "people power," can peacefully transfer power to the exploited is a dangerous fantasy.

The masses have been mobilized--by the liberals, by labor activists, by the Muslim Brotherhood--but they have not been mobilized for communism. What that means in practice is that power will be transferred to another, different clique of capitalists. And worst of all, the ruling clique will go into partnership with an imperialist (maybe not the US) and drag Egypt's workers into inter-imperialist fights, including an oil wars and eventually WWII (see page 3).

Only communism can "answer the questions the demonstrators have." The Egyptian flag must be replaced by the Red flag.

Although the Egyptian uprising did not lead to communism, it makes it clear that communism is not an impossible dream. Egyptian workers, on their own, began in small ways to take over the running of society. When the police disappeared, they organized their own neighborhood patrols. They organized the logistics for maintaining tens of thousands in Tahrir Square around the clock. They even organized the cleanup.

Is it so hard to imagine this process going further? Organizing a Red army to sweep away the pro-capitalist officers; organizing production of essentials (food, electricity, water); organizing distribution based on need, without using money; taking over the newspapers and television stations and spreading revolution to neighboring countries.

Of course it is not enough to imagine it--we need to make it happen. This means mobilizing masses for communism here and now.

The bosses' economic crisis has led to mass rebellion and these rebellions have given urgency to our political work. We must find ways to ask workers in as mass a way as possible, "Isn't it about time you rethink communism?" Capitalism sure isn't working.

Every struggle, every shop floor discussion, every public forum is an opportunity to highlight the communist potential inherent in massive revolts shaking the globe. Join us as we redouble our efforts to build communist ICWP contingents this May Day, entrench and expand our Red Flag networks in industry and the army--as well as among the masses of students and potential allies.

Crisis and rebellion opens many eyes. The same conditions exist, in varying degrees, everywhere. Just look at the never-ending joblessness and cutbacks in the U.S. alone.

If the working class moves for communism in situations like these then that is all she wrote. The seemingly all-powerful capitalists are done.



**JOIN THE  
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST WORKERS' PARTY  
(ICWP)  
WWW.ICWPREDFLAG.ORG — (310) 487-7674  
E-MAIL: ICWP@ANONYMOUSSPEECH.COM  
WRITE TO: P.M.B. 362  
3175 S. HOOVER ST., LOS ANGELES, CA 90007, USA**

## ABOLISH WAGE SLAVERY FIGHTING FOR A WORLD WITHOUT MONEY

San Salvador—Feb. 4—Chanting, “Destroy Wage Slavery” and “We need to change systems”, members and friends of ICWP participated in a mass march of 10,000 teachers here. Many teachers took up our chants which were also chanted from the sound system.

“Strike, strike, strike” chanted the teachers in the main streets of the Salvadoran capital in this mass march to demand of the government of Mauricio Funes and his minister of economy Carlos Caceres (from the gang called “friends of Mauricio”) that they fulfill article 34 of the Law of the Teaching Career that establishes that all wage increases to public sector workers must be given to teachers. More than 10,000 mobilized in a march from the National University to the Ministry of Economy where a commission of teachers was received by Minister Carlos Caceres. This commission was warned by the masses of teachers that they’d had enough of discussions. “We want concrete results, no more negotiations.” “Don’t sell us out,” said a teacher.

It was a hard setback for the education workers since the commission left as it had entered, “without anything.” The teachers responded to the statements of the negotiating commission with a lot of disapproval at the results. Afterwards when they went to the legislative assembly looking for the support of the representatives, as is the custom, two representatives of the fmln came out to give cle-

arly wrong information. This enraged the teachers even more. They chanted and didn’t let this pair of liars speak. The political commission of the fmln reacted immediately in the face of this mass mobilization of teachers pronouncing themselves against the union actions and calling on teachers “not to carry out more mobilizations since these incur selfishness and lack of solidarity.” Finally the fmln was able to convince the leadership of the teachers’ union to opt for the road of dialogue and not call the strike. They each toss the ball to the other, claiming that it’s the ministry of economy that has the money, or that it’s the ministry of education. “No one takes responsibility,” said a teacher.

“For whatever increases that they give the workers under this capitalist system, we’ll continue to be drowning in the same poverty,” said a worker. We deepened this conversation with a group of teachers about these reform struggles. And this was a good lesson. When the bosses announce a wage increase, they immediately raise the prices of things, returning to an interminable vicious circle. We teachers must organize ICWP, distribute our newspaper *Red Flag*, and mobilize teachers, students and parents to convert the schools into real centers of education to end this capitalist system. We don’t need more bourgeois schools that teach capitalist education! We need to build ICWP.

## MEXICO: UNEMPLOYED FLIGHT ATTENDANTS RESORT TO A BIKINI CALENDAR

For months, hundreds of workers at Mexicana Airlines haven’t received any wage, as the company faces bankruptcy. This desperate situation forced 10 workers to think about ways to get a little money. They decided to make a bikini calendar. They also convinced some of their friends in the union to sell these calendars and gave them some of the profits. This example shows that capitalism doesn’t work for workers.

A system that can’t guarantee workers’ survival needs to disappear. This company that for years made enormous profits with transportation to tourist areas should have guaranteed a wage to its now unemployed workers. While the company functioned for more than 80 years, they had highs and lows in their profits, but as in all industries and businesses that exist under capitalism, profits are for the owners and losses are for the workers.

Even though we’re not against these workers, their calendar promotes sexism even if it’s not conscious. Sexism is one of the key ideological and practical weapons that the bosses use to divide men and women before, during, and after a struggle, whether it’s a strike or an armed struggle. We men and women are part of the working class and we have similar needs, but the bosses divide us with their poisonous ideas.

As in this case they make us think that the woman can be sold or bought, even if it’s only in an “inoffensive” calendar. For a long time, women have been subject to the laws of the ruling class to take more advantage of them. Capitalism paints women as sexual objects and the weaker sex to whom the bosses can pay less, even when they do the same work and are equally trained as men.

But the union hasn’t helped the workers in this situation, which shows us that even though we workers may have high hopes in the leaders, these leaders are in their offices

to serve their masters, the rich of the country, who are involved in one financial group or another. These false leaders have been responsible for destroying the electricians and miners unions, and any other opposition to the government. As the capitalist crisis and attacks on workers has deepened, the number of strikes has been reduced; under Fox’s presidency, there were 267; now under Calderon there have only been 78.

More importantly, whatever action they propose in the union, even if it’s a very militant strike, they never propose the destruction of the profit system. The union will never propose taking state power with workers’ power. For that, we have to build our party, the ICWP, building political strikes against capitalism and for communism.

In Mexico and worldwide, the bosses have been imposing a state of fascism, and they don’t care whether you’re a man or a woman; they subject all of us to their conditions to get maximum profit from our labor.

We workers, as one class, need to destroy this system and build a new one—communism, where we won’t allow any form of division. In communism, men and women will carry out the same tasks; there won’t be jobs considered only for women or only for men. We’ll carry out work our class needs; work that requires both strength and thinking won’t be exclusive for one sex. Women, like men, will lead the workers in organizing the new society; their leadership will be as important in the organization needed for armed revolution, as in how to lead the new relations of communist production. No one will receive more for dedicating more time to improve the functioning of every member of society, but only what we need, depending on the conditions and of nature and the total regional and worldwide production.

## EGYPTIAN WORKERS ON THE MOVE

February 14. It didn’t take long for the Egyptian military to show its true colors. Today, the army demanded spreading labor strikes end.

Strikes and protests by Egyptian labor are neither novel nor surprising. There were 478 labor actions in 2009 alone, involving 129,000 workers.

In fact, the violent strike by tens of thousands of Nile Valley textile workers in April of 2008 is considered the progenitor of the rebellion of the last two weeks.

On April 6, 2008, at least thirty thousand strikers and their families marched through the streets of Ma-

hallah El Kubrah, a city of half a million. The cops opened fire, killing two. The workers responded with bricks, burning down numerous government buildings including the police station. A nationwide protest against high food prices, unemployment, and police killings rocked the nation.

During the recent uprising The Nile delta cities of Kafr el-Sheikh, Mahallah, Dumyat and Damahour saw major industries such as textile, food processing and furniture grind to a halt. Once again, the cop stations were burnt to the ground.

Strikers throughout the country, most notably, thousands of defense workers, joined them. “Every hour we hear about a new strike,” said Rahma Refaat, a coordinator for the Center for Trade Unions and Wor-

kers Services (CTUWS).

In an interview with Al-Jazeera Kamal Abbass, CTUWS executive director promised that if Mubarak was not out by Monday the 14th, all workers across Egypt would strike, paralyzing the country. By that time, Mubarak was history.

Even Mubarak’s ouster has not stopped the strikes, exposing the lie that democracy can meet the needs of workers.

When you start something, it’s good to know who will finish it. You can’t expect the bosses to tell us about the class struggle history of the Egyptian working class. ...For it is this class that holds the key to communist power, as the military knows all too well.

## WORKERS’ REBELLION SHARPENS IMPERIALIST RIVALRY

“The end of Hosni Mubarak’s regime in Egypt portends fundamental change throughout the Middle East and the end of the American era in the region,” wrote Steven Cook (www.cfr.org). Cook is the point man of the CFR in Egypt. The CFR, Council on Foreign Relations, is US imperialism’s think-tank most influential in deciding its national and foreign policy.

The events in Egypt have not only toppled the 30 year-old Mubarak US backed dictatorship but have

shaken the US imperialists to their boots. Their position as the world’s dominant imperialist power is hanging by a thread. They’ve held this position since 1945 thanks to their control of Middle Eastern oil, but this position is imperiled even more now by the shifting political sands in Egypt.

Egypt has been crucial, since the fall of the US backed Shah of Iran, in propping up US bosses’ grip on the region and the peaceful flow of its vast oil riches to US giant oil companies, made possible by the Israel-Egypt peace accord signed in 1978.

US-Egypt military ties have meant critical US access to the Suez Canal and Egypt’s airspace for its military operation. The Suez Canal is also a strategic chokepoint where some 3 million barrels of oil pass

daily, plus about 20,000 cargo ships yearly.

### US-China Rivalry over the Middle East and Africa

At present, the US imperialists are in disarray trying frantically to cut their losses and recoup their position. But, whatever regime – be it secular, fundamentalist or military – that ends up ruling Egypt, US bosses’ geopolitical interests are bound to be negatively affected. The only question is to what degree.

The rising power in the region is China. Its proxy Iran’s growing religious, political, economic and military influence in the Arab world bolsters China’s rise. The Arab bosses can see the hand writing on the

**See IMPERIALISTS, page 13**

## ICWP WELCOMES ARTICLES IN EVERY LANGUAGE

As an international party, ICPW plans to publish Red Flag in many languages. But we don't yet have the capacity to do so. We welcome articles in any language, and will do our best to translate them and publish them. We hope that the article above in French is the first of many articles that we will publish beyond our first languages, English and Spanish.

### Build the ICWP

## SMASH CAPITALISM WORLDWIDE

Being French I follow the French media closely. To me it is clear that the European countries participating in the exploitation and corruption of the Arab regimes have been caught out by the recent uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt. Their unrestrained greed has created a revolt that threatens their domination of these countries.

Just before Ben-Ali fled Tunisia, the French minister of foreign affairs declared in the Assembly that France was ready to share (with the Tunisian police) France's experience in "maintaining order". This declaration is a perfect illustration of the policy of France (and Europe) regarding the Arab and African countries. Colonialism has disappeared in name only. The big oil and mining corporations' greed in looting the wealth of these countries is unbelievable. They mercilessly exploit workers who risk their lives on the job every day, all the while poisoning their environment. To "maintain order" they support corrupt, tyrannical, murderous regimes.

During the Tunisian uprising we heard a lot about kindness and hospitality of the Tunisian people. But "kindness" and "hospitality" are just code words for the subservience Tunisian workers have to show to European tourists (including sexual 'tourists'). Many have to work as servants in the seaside villas of wealthy Europeans.

Rich Europeans may enjoy la dolce vita in Africa but for African immigrants life in Europe can be hell. European governments (such as that of Sarkozy in France or Berlusconi in Italy) regularly organize massive raids to round up undocumented immigrants. The racist declarations of Merkel (Germany) or Cameron (UK) about the alleged failures of "multiculturalism" are hardly subtle. The European bosses have nothing to offer their citizens and prefer blaming immigrants rather than

international capitalism.

The exploiters should be getting worried – no more Mr Nice Guy in North Africa. First the Tunisians revolted, then the Egyptians. Next may be the Algerians, in spite of the memory of 150,000 dead in the campaign against the Islamists. If Algeria blows up, nothing will save the French backed royal family of Morocco. The capitalists' insatiable greed has created unbearable



conditions for many young Arabs and Africans. They are ruthlessly exported (or left unemployed) by their own bosses at home and hunted like dogs by racist police in Europe. Risking their lives to emigrate and be exploited in Europe is no longer a way out of misery.

This revolt seemed to come out of nowhere but conditions made it inevitable. But will the Arab workers themselves benefit from these revolts. Where are the Arab Bolsheviks to lead the workers to take real power? The lesson for communists: build the party so we will be ready when our turn comes. The time is not that far off.

Les pays européens participant à l'exploitation et à la corruption des pays arables sont pris au dépourvu par les récents événements en Tunisie et en Egypte. Leur cupidité a créé une situation de révolte qui menace réellement leur domination et l'ordre établi.

La ministre des affaires étrangères française (ancienne ministre des Armées) a déclaré à l'Assemblée que la France était prête à partager son expertise avec la police tunisienne pour maintenir l'ordre en Tunisie. Cette déclaration illustre parfaitement la politique de la France (et de l'Europe) vis à vis des pays arabes et africains. La colonisation n'a disparu que de nom.

Les grandes compagnies pétrolières, minières et autres pillent avec une avidité incroyable les richesses de ces pays. Elles exploitent sans pitié les travailleurs risquant leur vie et empoisonnant leur environnement. Pour maintenir l'ordre social, elles soutiennent des tyrans et des régimes corrompus et n'hésitent pas à tuer.

Sans oublier de se servir bien sûr. La ministre des affaires étrangères voulait profiter sans soucis des vacances de Noël offertes par Ben Ali et son clan. Quand au Premier ministre Fillon il séjournait avec sa famille en Egypte aux frais de Mubarak.

Lors de la révolution tunisienne, on entendait beaucoup parler de la gentillesse et de l'hospitalité du peuple tunisien. Un euphémisme couvrant la serviabilité avec le sourire pour ne pas donner mauvaise conscience à laquelle sont obligés les employés du tourisme (y compris sexuel) et les serveurs des riches Européens qui se sont accaparés les belles villas en

bord de mer.

Cette douceur de vivre n'est pas si attrayante lorsqu'elle est transposée en Europe. Les gouvernements européens (Sarkozy et Berlusconi) ont organisé de vraies chasses aux immigrants arabes. Les déclarations de Merkel et de Cameron sur les échecs de l'intégration et du communautarisme ne sont guère plus subtiles. Les capitalistes européens n'ayant rien à offrir à leurs citoyens préfèrent blâmer les immigrants plutôt que la cupidité de la mondialisation. L'Europe prise au dépourvu par les événements a montré son incapacité et sa faiblesse.

Les exploiters devraient commencer à trembler. Le temps de la gentillesse est passé. Les Tunisiens se sont révoltés, puis les Egyptiens et aujourd'hui (samedi 12 février), les Algériens commencent malgré le souvenir des 150 000 morts de la dernière guerre civile. Si l'Algérie réussit, rien n'arrêtera le Maroc martyrisé par ses rois soutenus par la France. Ensuite ce sera l'Afrique. L'avidité des capitalistes jamais satisfaite a créé une situation intenable et sans espoir pour beaucoup de jeunes Arabes et Africains. Exploités chez eux par des tyrans, victimes de véritables chasses à l'homme racistes organisées par l'Union européenne, ils n'ont même plus la possibilité de risquer leur vie pour aller se faire exploiter en Europe.

Leur révolte est inéluctable. Comme nous avons pu le voir, une révolution peut arriver soudainement sans avertissement. Les travailleurs arabes seront-ils les bénéficiaires de ces révoltes ? Où sont les Bolchéviques qui pourront sans hésitation prendre le pouvoir pour protéger les travailleurs ? Une leçon pour tous les communistes : Travaillons, construisons le parti pour être prêts ! Le grand jour n'est pas si lointain.

### MTA from page 1

order." The union rep shut up.

And somebody else continued talking about the need to improve communication, but in that moment there was an almost general discontent because of the offensive and disrespectful way that the manager had talked to the workers.

After the meeting was over, a *Red Flag* reader sought out the union rep and told him, "The manager shouldn't have talked to you like that, because as our union rep, he owes you respect. Other workers told him the same thing, and the union rep, upset, went to complain to the manager, and they had another argument.

We should admire the action that the workers of division ten took, because they challenged the company without asking permission or approval from the union. This is an example that should be imitated in all the divisions. Many people know, actually, as a

worker said, that the union is just the other side of the company. Many people commented about the need for multiracial unity, and the unity between mechanics, service attendants and drivers, and men and women.

This reflects the influence that *Red Flag* has begun to have in these struggles. We're sure that this is only the beginning of the attacks. We must prepare ourselves ideologically to understand that only with a revolutionary communist party like ICWP, which represents the true interests of the workers, will we be able to confront the attacks and repression that the bosses are planning for the working class in general.

The economic crisis is already affecting millions of workers nationally and internationally, with wage cuts, speed-up, people losing their houses, etc. The bosses' wars are killing thousands of workers in many parts of the world. The need to make our revolutionary communist international party grow is urgent. We have to break the individualist illusions that "I can

still probably make it." The future is not comforting. Our strength rests in our class unity, and it's necessary for us to get more involved in the activities of our party, reading, writing, distributing and cooperating with *Red Flag*.



## Nationalism traps workers

# ISRAELI & PALESTINIAN WORKERS NEED TO FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM

US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, sounding like Condoleezza Rice, has railed against despotism in the Arab world and cried buckets of crocodile tears over Israel's construction of Jewish-only cities and towns in Palestinian areas. But capitalism-imperialism can't solve the problems of Arab or Jewish workers.

US politicians say that Israeli "settlements" undercut their favored "two-state" solution. This political goal, established by the United Nations in 1948, has been restated by every imperialist power intent on controlling Middle East oil and gas, including the pipelines and shipping routes necessary to get these highly profitable and essential commodities to international markets. For example:

Since 1948, the Soviet Union and its successors supported the two state solution, claiming that this would provide "national liberation" for Jews and Palestinians.

The European Union has strong diplomatic and economic ties with Israel, while supporting the development of a future Palestinian state.

The US repeatedly calls for a Palestinian state, while blocking any UN condemnation of Israel. It supports Israel with \$3-5 billions each year. The CIA and the Pentagon have methodically built up the spy agencies, police force, and military of the future Palestinian state. They even sent General Keith Dayton to nearby Jordan to establish a permanent US training facility for Palestinian spies, cops, and soldiers.

But, the "two state solution" is no solution for the working class. Even if two sovereign states could be established, they would be a vehicle for outside imperialists from all corners of the globe to maintain their control of the Middle East through local politicians.

It's also an imperialist policy to block revolutionary developments in the region. Imperialists and local capitalists can only benefit when workers in Israel and the Palestinian areas are kept apart by walls and the separatist ideology of nationalism. This is because nationalism, the guiding ideology of the two state so-

lution, works hand-in-hand with the need of imperialists to continue their control of this region.

Most Israeli and Palestinian progressives haven't overcome their respective nationalisms. This is what prevents building on strong bonds that could break the yoke of imperialism and oppression with communist revolution.

Israeli scholars Meron ben Venisti and Jeff Halper carefully document how Israeli military zones, checkpoints, spying and surveillance by Israel and the Palestinian authority, along with the confiscation of land for Israeli-only highways, villages, and cities have undercut the viability of a sovereign Palestinian state. They have only managed to see the trees, missing the forest.

This is why some now call for a "single state solution." They argue that Israel has already created an apartheid state, with about five million Jews and five million Palestinians living under Israel's direct or indirect control. They think this creates the possibility of a South African-style democratic revolution.

But a one-state solution can just as easily be controlled by imperialist powers and become a vehicle for class exploitation. Look at South Africa today. There, an apartheid state became a unified state with, on paper, equal rights for all. But, by maintaining the same class structure and same relationship to imperialists, South Africa has more inequality, poverty, and corruption than it did under apartheid. Israel-Palestine would meet the same fate.

There will be no liberation through Jewish and Palestinian nationalism, no matter how it is packaged, since they perpetuate capitalism, including the role of imperialist powers. There is only one solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In Israel-Palestine, like every corner of the globe, the only path to liberation is through the communist revolution which the ICWP intends to lead. It requires the physical borders of nations to be battered down at the same time that the psychological borders or nationalism are pushed aside. That's our task. Join us!

### Red Flag Comments:

We must understand the Israel-Palestinian conflict in relationship with the main contradiction in the world: the inter-imperialist rivalry and looming WWII. Given this, there won't be any peaceful solution – whether "one-state or two-state solution" – to the Israel-Palestine conflict. The US bosses know it.

The US bosses also know that this issue inflames the Arab street. It endangers the hated pro-US despotic Arab regimes in the region. This reduces the impact of the US rulers and their allies' influence in the region, while that of their adversaries – Iran, Hezbollah and Hamas – grows by leaps and bounds. Behind them stand the Chinese and Russian imperialists moving to occupy the vacuum left by US imperialism. The relationship of forces in the region is shifting against US bosses.

Without the oil and petro dollars of the Middle East, the US imperialists would quickly lose their dominant position. They are therefore preparing for the war they must wage against China and Russia. Iran seems to be the next war on the route to World War III. All their talk about peace is to lull the workers of the world, especially US workers, into believing that they have pursued all avenues and war was their only alternative.



## IMPERIALISM from page 3

China edges out the US of the Middle East their inevitable impending clash is being greatly accelerated.

The African rulers also understand this. Even some sectors of the Egyptian ruling class understand this. Ugandan commentator Nicholas Sengoba writes, "China has now conquered Africa, because China is strictly doing business and not poking its nose into governance issues, most African leaders are drifting towards China."

Some Egyptian rulers are cozying up to China. Fourteen months ago, Egypt hosted a China-Africa summit. The Chinese premier pledged \$10 billion in new low-cost loans to African governments over the next three years. "Trade between China and Africa jumped 45 per cent to \$107bn in 2008, a tenfold increase since 2000, and the new loans are likely to sustain the expansion." (Financial Times, 11/8/09).

The Brazil-Russia-India-China club of emerging powers, at China's initiative, has made South Africa its newest member. This is China's strategy for furthering its access to Africa's markets and natural resources, especially oil. As the US becomes more dependent on African oil and



## WHO IS OMAR SULEIMAN?

Omar Suleiman is the newly appointed Egyptian vice-president and the de facto power in charge of negotiating regime change. He's the CIA's man in Cairo and a notorious torturer. This is the man Obama's blessed to usher in democracy.

His support at Langley and among the "Iran nexters" is legendary. In 2009, the *London Telegraph* and *Foreign Policy* called him the most powerful spy in the Mid-east, topping even the head of Mossad.

From 1993 to last week, he was the Chief of Egypt's General Intelligence Service. In the mid-1990s, he worked closely with the Clinton White House setting up its rendition (i.e. torture in foreign countries) program.

At least one person extraordinarily rendered by the CIA to Egypt--Egyptian-born Australian citizen Mamdouh Habib --was reported tortured by Suleiman himself.

Habib recounts in his memoir, *My Story, The Tale of a Terrorist Who Wasn't*, how he was repeatedly subjected to electric shocks, immersed in water and beaten. His fingers were broken and he was hung from metal hooks. At one point, he was hit so hard that his blind-

fold dislodged, revealing the identity of his torturer: Suleiman.

Habib was innocent of any tie to terror and released to Australia in 2005.

Suleiman's most famous torture case involved the extraordinary rendition of Ibn al-Libi, who unlike Habib, was allegedly a terror trainer in Afghanistan. Libi "confessed" knowledge of an al-Qaeda-Saddam connection.

Libi's "confession" was a central piece of "evidence" presented at the United Nations by Collin Powell to justify the Iraq invasion.

Libi recanted several years later after no weapons of mass destruction or Bin Laden was found. When the F.B.I. asked him why he had lied he explained, "They were killing me. I had to tell them something."

Human Rights Watch found Libi in a Tripoli prison in April of 2009. Suleiman dashed off to Tripoli for the first time in his life. By the time Suleiman left, Libi had committed "suicide," according to Evan Kolhmann, a U.S. "al-Qaeda expert", who cites classified documents.

Such is the true nature of capitalism's democracy.

**Questions for Red Flag Study/Action Groups:**

1. How do the struggles in the Middle East affect your life? What can we learn from these struggles?
2. What do you think about the article on page 7 about the flight attendants?
3. Can you discuss and send your comments about the article "Will There Be a State Under Communism?"

**ISLAMOPHOBIA from page 16** worse off than others.

Civil Rights movement.

But capitalism can never meet their highest aspirations. Liberal activism is no more able to end Islamophobia than the liberal civil rights movement could end anti-black racism. Collaboration with the capitalist rulers can only pave the way to even more fascist repression and wider wars.

The fight against racism is a cornerstone of communism. Communism demands multiracial and international unity of the whole working class. "From each according to ability and commitment, to each according to need" means that nobody and no group will be better or

Communist roots ethical and pro-social behavior in material reality – the workers' needs – instead of in abstract theologies. Its practice and its dialectical-materialist philosophy help us understand the real connections amongst ourselves and with the rest of the universe without leaps of faith or vague notions of spirituality.

As we gain more confidence in ourselves and our collective power to transform the world, we will feel less need for religion. Meanwhile, don't let religious issues stop us from mobilizing the masses for communism. That's the only way to defeat racism, once and for all.

**MARCH ON MAY DAY  
SUNDAY, MAY FIRST  
WITH ICWP  
MOBILIZE THE MASSES  
FOR COMMUNISM**

**UNDER COMMUNISM WILL THERE BE A STATE?**

**This article is for discussion and doesn't necessarily represent the Party's position.**

In a recent discussion among friends and members of the party, a question was raised that wasn't answered, because it's not so easy to have the necessary arguments so we aren't characterized as anarchists, without organization. Under communism, will there be a State? First, we have to understand what the State is. The modern state was born with the industrial revolution and to get to the contemporary state there have only been quantitative changes in the number of people who work for the state. It's said that the capitalist State is an institutional being, a political concept of a form of social organization. Under capitalism, just as in the previous societies like feudalism and slavery, the State has a class character. It serves a small group of the rich and maintains millions of workers in poverty.

The State is controlled by the economic power, the ruling class. Those who have more money and influences in the government get more benefits from it. Even though every country has a State, the State is not a country. The State is the idea that we belong to a nationality and that we have a national anthem. The country is the territory that is between the borders maintained by the police forces and the military, to keep the workers divided.

The State is the best developed weapon of the bosses to keep themselves in power; they have to reproduce capitalist relations of production, making clear to society who is the owner and who is the disposed, but above all deciding when to make war, without taking into account the majority of workers. This includes laws, as well as repressive bodies like the police and the army. But their biggest power lies in the ideological control through the schools and their means of communication like the TV and the bosses' press. It's in our first years of life in which they teach us to respect private property, individualism, and nationalism, and during our whole lives they promote the fear that we'll lose our jobs, so we are wage slaves.

The violence carried out against the working class by the State is what gives it its character of superiority and dominance. Even though under capitalism there exist Democratic States and Tyrannical States, both try to extract maximum profits from the exploitation of the workers' labor. But a State without the ruled is nothing. That's why millions of us workers are the base of the pyramid. We workers must demolish not only a government, but the State itself with a Communist Revolution worldwide.

Under communism, there won't be a State because there won't be a class that benefits from the lies and the stealing of our labor power. The Communist Party

in power will lead the society in the material and intellectual benefit of every one of its members. There won't be laws, because these guarantee the enriching of a few and the impoverishing of many. As members of a society, we will decide what benefits all of us and what hurts each of us. The behavior of every individual in the society will be accepted or rejected by the group in which they participate. Violence will be used against those who use it first, not as a weapon to maintain power, and there won't be specialized jobs like police or soldiers. We workers will play an active role, not only with our hands but with our minds, to guarantee that everything that exists in nature and society has a balance (equilibrium). Nationalities won't exist and much less regional or national anthems. We could invent songs and develop a language that unites all the languages spoken on the earth, so that in the future there would only be one universal language.

When all remnants of capitalism have been eliminated, the class struggle against the bosses' class will disappear from the face of the earth, and the new struggle will be how to improve our relations with nature. We'll decide what we can give to nature and not only what she can give us, because no matter how advanced the society, it will always exist within nature with its own development. Let's participate in this struggle. Join our party, ICWP.

**LETTERS****LETTERS****ICWP Anniversary Dinner:  
Youth  
Struggle to Understand  
Communism**

The following comments were written by youth after the dinner:

"The most surprising thing to me was that most of the ideas expressed were ideas I had considered about the world at large. I truly believe that I've always had a communist state of mind."

"I left with some unanswered questions. How can we assure that we won't repeat the mistakes of past leaders? What's the next move after we mobilize workers? I am confident that all of my questions will be answered in time."

"I am proud that I went because it made me see the truth and what kind of trouble is out there."

"The only challenges that I have, pertaining to the Party, are organization and understanding. Some members had different answers on how they would tackle revolution and communist life. For this group to succeed, everyone must come together and speak as one voice. Another question: How would another party be addressed? There will always be somebody trying to bring about change. How will the ICWP maintain communism?"

"I agree that communism should

exist where everyone helps out and everybody is treated equally. But what about those who don't want to help? And how long will it take for this change to take place?"

"I am not one for capitalism. I can promote communism because it shares my belief system, that all men and women, are created equal. I believe in my heart that in a society where we are all equal things such as crime will decrease because we will all have what we need. This may be all a dream now, but a dream is not something to wait for. It is something to work for."

"After the dinner, my friends and I had a conversation in the car. We all liked the dinner very much. Several questions came up. First, how will the world adjust to not using money? How are we going to convince people that it is for the best? What will happen to all those people whose jobs were to advertise and entertain us?"

"We discussed the May Day march. We talked about how we needed more participants. We received a planning sheet to help us organize for the march. It had a small explanation of why we were marching on May Day and ten spaces for us to write the names of those that we would be struggling to come to the march."

**SUBSCRIBE TO RED FLAG - \$20/YEAR**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ I want \_\_\_\_\_ copies per issue

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Send to P.M.B 362, 3175 S. Hoover, Los Angeles, CA 90007



### Incarcerated Youths are Potential Communists

My situation in teaching youth in juvenile hall schools is different from common public schools. Yet, as different as the environment can be, there is ample space for me to talk about our communist politics with the youth. In a social science class, I was recently responsible for teaching a certain period in U.S. History. When explaining the assignment to one student, who I will call Cuahtemuc, he questioned why I was covering the section on the aftermath of the Civil War. He mentioned that he wasn't interested in this history. He wanted to learn about the Aztec people. I thought it was a great idea to compare and contrast the type of slavery African Americans and indigenous people endured in their respective times and social systems. Slavery is directly linked to a social system that depends on the exploitation of workers in order to maximize profits. This is exactly what occurred in the U.S. and Aztec systems. I also explained how even when slavery ended, workers around the world are still wage slaves that need to free themselves from the bonds of capitalism. I brought more sources for Cuahtemuc, and we created a respectful relationship.

On another occasion, while going outside for P.E., Cuahtemuc and I had a deep conversation about the capitalist system in which we live. I don't think I've ever witnessed a set of eyes so interested in the topic I was covering. I mentioned how imperialist countries around the world are constantly fighting each other. It is the top capitalists, or imperialists, who are at each other's throats to defend their empires. And workers around the world have to pay by killing each other in imperialist wars. Cuahtemuc immediately told me that "his mind was expanding." He seemed thirsty for more of this knowledge. I eventually told him about my communist politics and the need for workers around the world to organize a revolution which replaces capitalism with communism. Cuahtemuc was so consumed in the topic that he told me to talk to one of his friends about my ideas. I decided to bring *Red Flag* to have him read it in class. He was very excited and he wants to learn more. I asked him to write a brief commentary, and this is what he wrote on a piece of paper:

"It is possible to create a revolution. But in order to commence with this life changing experience, we need to organize. In order to do this, minds need to change, as well as our way of living and our perspective of the world."

Cuahtemuc sounds like a communist to me. I will definitely continue our relationship in the class and beyond. People may mistakenly judge juvenile delinquents as criminals. Yet, most kids are incarcerated for crimes such as drug dealing, grant theft auto or petty burglary. These are capitalist crimes that will not exist in a communist society. Capitalism creates these problems and criminalizes the youth who often have no choice but to fall into such behavior. Even the more serious crimes are often linked to some money-making motive. Every day I go to work, I make it a point to reach out to kids in a respectful manner because they are children of working-class parents. These kids are bright, and they are able to accurately criticize the system of which they are victims. I hope, and will work to guarantee, that Cuahtemuc always criticizes capitalism and joins this revolutionary movement with ICWP in order to change "our way of living and our perspective of the world."

--Red Teacher

### On Jails and Cops

An article in *Red Flag* (Vol.1 #23) wrote that "Communist society won't have judges, cops, courts or prisons. Masses of workers will mobilize through

ICWP to guarantee the safety, and political development of all workers, and to stop crime and anti-social behavior." In the next issue, a letter replied to this idea.

The letter writer pointed out the experience of the Russian communists, who had to fight against and destroy criminal gangs. They executed the gang leaders and sent the children to orphanages. The writer said that the executions took place because they had no jails during the civil war, but that jails would be necessary for a while after the revolution so that people so corrupted by capitalism that they are a danger our worker's society can be isolated and rehabilitated. I agree with this idea, and I think that it is difficult to say now how long it will take to eliminate counter-revolutionary and criminal behavior. If people are to be put into jail, however, there will have to be trials where evidence is considered. Investigating crimes and gathering evidence, including scientific evidence like finger prints and DNA, will require some training and experience. Since criminals and assassins can hide and run away, some need to be tracked down. So investigating crimes and catching criminals needs to be someone's work assignment.

I think that under communism we should expect everyone to have several work assignments, both to overcome the division between mental and manual labor, and to make work more interesting and rewarding. One of those assignments for some people should be to investigate crimes. You might call them worker-police, but whatever you call them they will be needed, at least for a while.

Some other lessons from past revolutions bear on this issue. In Russia, there were serious attempts to assassinate Lenin and other communist leaders. Some of these attempts were successful, although Lenin escaped. If people are determined to mess things up it doesn't take a large number of them to create big problems. We should be prepared to use the power of a workers' state to protect communism from those who try to destroy it or attack workers.

--Red Reader

### Suggestions for Writing for Red Flag

The principle of "mobilizing the masses for communism" applies to everything we do, including writing articles and letters for red flag. Every time we write an article, we should ask first, how does it contribute to this mobilization.

As an experiment, I looked back on some articles that have already been published (including ones I wrote myself) and the results were interesting. Some of the articles that at the time I thought were good, turned out not to be.

A typical example was an article a few months ago about how the bosses in Europe are whipping up extreme and even neo-fascist racism against immigrants. It was up to date, informative, and well-written (clear and persuasive).

But the question is: how does this contribute to mobilizing the masses for communism? It didn't say anything about communism, about how communism will eradicate racism, or about how ICWP deals with racism right now. An article like this, that merely exposes an evil of capitalism, is more likely to discourage people and, therefore im-mobilize them.

The editors of *Red Flag* apparently felt there was something wrong, because they added a sentence about the Soviet Army smashing the Nazis. This sentence didn't help, because it gives the impression that fighting against fascism is a good substitute for fighting for communism. I told a comrade that I thought the bad politics in this final sentence ruined the whole article. The comrade replied that one sentence couldn't ruin a good article (or save a bad one). That made me realize that the article I thought was so good was already ruined.

The problem with the article is with what it didn't say. It is not enough to expose an evil of capitalism. Our readers need a balanced diet. An expose article must also: (1) explain why these evils are an inherent result of capitalism itself, and not just the result of unusually evil bosses being in power; and (2) explain why communism (but not socialism or 'democracy') will end this evil forever.

However even that is not enough. It gives people hope that things will be better in the future, but that's usually not enough to get people moving. The missing ingredient is an explanation of how we, as communists, use communist principles now to deal with the racism that is all around us. For example, a recent, better, article described how a worker mobilized co-workers to blunt the racism of another coworker.

In the same way, an article about pension plans should also talk about how we try to involve retired workers in the fight for communism, making sure their valuable experience is not lost. Or an article about crime and prisons should talk about how we reach out to workers who are or have been in prison for bogus 'crimes'.

And since we mobilize, our writers' responsibility doesn't end with the written word. We must circulate, enlist new sellers, raise money and help produce *Red Flag*. To mobilize the masses, we must convince them that they can start applying communist principles today - if only, at first, in a small way.

--A Comrade

### Criticism of the phrase "let's mobilize"

Our goal is to make our class incorporate communist ideas building a mass party to lead the revolution and build communism. Our guiding principal has to be mass mobilization for communism. The title of the article "Communist Students call for a mass mobilization against racism" (Vol. 1, #23, page 1), affirms this correctly. But we think that a contradiction exists in the expression that is observed in the editorial (Vol. 1, No. 23, page 2), Mobilizing the Masses. This expression contradicts the principal of wanting to build a mass party constituted by thousands of millions of conscious workers who themselves are capable of leading the revolution and building communism.

In the ICWP, we fight to build a mass party, which means a party made up of our class, the working class, where we'll be thousands of millions from all parts of the world. We're conscious from the beginning of what type of society we want to build, that is communism, and that to get there we will fight very hard against revisionism.

That's why we emphasize that it must be massive, that it not be only an elite. This mass of workers will form part of the party and will have to capacity to organize their brothers and sisters in a society without classes, to satisfy all their needs.

We don't endorse anarchism; we believe that for everything to function correctly in favor of all the workers it has to be through a party, as our organizing principle. For this to function, the majority of the working class has to make communist ideas their own, understand them, develop them, and spread them.

We don't want a party of the "elite of the left" that moves masses to what only a handful think is best. Capitalism triumphed in Russia and China precisely because the communist parties that led the revolution only mobilized the "masses" of workers without the broad work of political development, using stages, they built socialism, that in essence is state capitalism.

Comrade from Mexico

# MATERIALISM AND KNOWLEDGE

## What Materialism Is

Materialism says that ideas, thinking, and ideals are parts of material reality that are created by human beings in processes that take place in their brains. Materialism says that ideas result from people's interaction with each other and with other material things in nature and society. Although thinking influences reality when it directs human activity, material reality has a much bigger effect on thinking than thinking has on the rest of reality. This is the central idea of materialism.

## What Idealism Is

Idealism means opposing materialism in various ways. Some idealists say that there are non-material beings, like gods or ghosts, that can think. Other idealists claim that some kinds of thinking affect reality directly, so that thinking about the world differently or believing different theories about it makes the world different. Still other idealists see brains as producing correct ideas all by themselves, without extensive interaction with the rest of the world.

In this column and the next one, we will discuss some of the specific ways that material reality affects thinking more than the other way around. We will discuss the materialist philosophy of how people discover true ideas and learn, why false ideology is dominant under capitalism, and the relation between communist political ideas and the contradictions of capitalist society. In this column we discuss the materialist philosophy of how people learn.

## Materialist Theory of Knowledge

Perhaps the most basic way in which thinking depends on material reality is this: Thoughts have not always existed, but only became possible when animals with brains evolved, which happened a very long time after the beginning of the universe. Thinking has only been raised to a higher level through biological

evolution of modern humans and their production of their own historical development. But thinking still depends on material reality every day, in discovering knowledge and in learning.

As we discussed in previous columns, all knowledge derives from practical activity. As Fredrick Engels put it, "the most essential and immediate basis of human thought" isn't nature itself but "the alteration of nature by people." This is the materialist view of knowledge. People's ideas derive from what we do as we interact with the part of reality that those ideas are about. People are not just born with correct ideas about the world and correct these ideas don't grow in brains by themselves.

## Idealist Theories of Knowledge

Idealists deny this. Some idealists claim that important knowledge is built into human brains, like linguist Noam Chomsky's theory of "innate ideas." Others claim that knowledge about the world depends very little on practice, but is deduced by a few "geniuses" with special brains. This idealist view doesn't even work for the most theoretical kinds of knowledge. Most new laws of physics, for example, are discovered by experiments and could not be deduced from previously known principles.

## How People Learn

Learning things that are already known by other people also shows the materialist approach is correct. No one would think you can learn to fix cars, play sports, or be a political organizer without practice in that specific activity. But the same is true when you learn theoretical knowledge. To understand concepts and see how they work, people have to work their way through specific examples. Examples are not only essential for understanding, but are also important tests of ideas. If someone makes a general claim that might be wrong, discussing examples is an important way to check it.

## Idealism Makes Learning Harder

Idealist theories of learning are not just false, they do a lot of damage. Psychological research shows that kids learn better in school when they understand that practice and effort are what counts, not some special kind of brain (see *Scientific American Mind*, 11/28/07).

Certainly people learn different things at different speeds, depending, for example, on whether they already know how to learn a specific subject. But the general method is the same: getting particular cases right, often after first getting them wrong and learning from mistakes.

## The Dialectical Relation of Thought and Reality

Learning is one important example of the materialist pattern of the relation of thought to the rest of reality. We can describe this as a "dialectical relation with a dominant side." Thinking and reality are opposites that influence each other, but reality is the dominant side. We will discuss this more in a future article.

## SOME CONCRETE EXAMPLES:

What you spend most of your time doing is what you get good at. The Tuhumara in Mexico are the fastest runners in the world. Why? Because they run everywhere! Why are a lot of kids good at soccer or basketball but not so good at reading? Because they spend all their spare time playing ball. The main way to be a better reader is to read. Anything. Just read, you'll be a better reader.

Anybody who's ever watched a baby learn to walk knows that it's fall down, get up, fall down, get up, over and over again. The same goes for skaters...ask anybody with a skate board.

Practice, effort, try and try again, that's how everybody learns.

## Islamophobia is Capitalist Racism

### FIGHT IT WITH COMMUNISM, NOT RELIGION

"Muslims, except for the Black Muslims, used to be 'white' in the US," remarked a young Pakistani-American activist. "Now they are making us a 'Muslim race.'" Farfetched? A century ago, apologists for US and German capitalism spoke of a "Jewish race."

Capitalism has a long history of inventing "races" to justify its brutal appropriation of human beings, land and natural resources, for maximum profits.

"The race problem in America," wrote historian Lerone Bennett, Jr. in 1975, "was a deliberate invention of men who systematically separated blacks and whites in order to make money."

Racism became the cornerstone of capitalist exploitation. It created sharp contradictions between the American myth and reality: "liberty and justice for all" vs. racist super-exploitation, "one nation, indivisible" vs. segregation.

Black workers resisted and fought back. Sometimes—not often enough—white workers joined them. Millions of workers from Latin America to Africa to Asia saw through the hypocrisy of racist US imperialism.

US leaders became desperate to stem the mass anti-racist upsurge and win the Cold War. They encouraged a liberal "Civil Rights" movement. Today, multi-culturalism and "identity-based" politics build patriotism while racist inequality is on the rise and racist cops are on the warpath.

Similar contradictions are emerging with the rise of Islamophobia (anti-Muslim racism).

On one hand, the US imperialists need to win military recruits to fight for the bosses' oil and empire. They dehumanize Arab people with racist insults. They need racism to win US workers to sacrifice "blood and treasure" for US bosses' desperate attempts to keep their oily grip on the Middle East.

On the other, they need Arab governments as allies in their sharpening conflicts with Russian, Chinese and Iranian capitalist rivals. They need US Muslims as soldiers, interpreters, and spies.

"What matters for the U.S. global strategy is whether the publics and elites in Islamic countries believe that Americans are hostile toward Islam," writes Steven Metz (US Army War College).

Metz sees two paths. One is "constraining domestic mistrust and hostility toward Islam at least enough to sustain the global strategy." Obama takes this approach, but Islamophobia is key to "Tea Party" Republicans' Obama-bashing. This conflict within the US ruling class is sabotaging their global strategy.

The other is embracing Samuel Huntington's "clash of civilizations." This means declaring the Islamic world an enemy of US imperialism. But, Metz warns, "The American public cannot be anti-Islamic and expect Islamic nations to serve allies in the fight against extremism." Such a strategy would throw open the door for rising Chinese capitalist-imperialism. It would hasten World War III.

Domestically, some US rulers—like the Los Angeles City Council—promote "religious tolerance." Muslim civil rights organizations model themselves on the NAACP. They are building a liberal patriotic movement "against Islamophobia."

This is part of the problem, not part of the solu-

tion.

The Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC) recently hosted a conference on "Muslims, Law Enforcement and National Security in a Post 9/11 Era." Racist LA County Sheriff Lee Baca praised the Muslim-American Homeland Security Congress as "our way of saying that Muslim Americans... are part of the protected fabric of America and that we wanted to make sure that there were certain things going on."

What "things"? MPAC spokesman Alejandro Beutel presented data showing that Muslim informants exposed 40% of all alleged post-9/11 Islamic extremist plots. "The US [rulers] must identify and apprehend terrorists while avoiding the alienation of its mainstream Muslim communities," he warned.

A movement against Islamophobia is growing among Muslims and non-Muslims, especially students and young workers. Many find support for their activism in their religious traditions, as in the 1960s

**See ISLAMOPHOBIA, page 14**

