

RED FLAG

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



TEACHERS, LONGSHORE, TRANSIT & AUTO WORKERS: BUST LEGAL ROADBLOCKS ON ROAD TO COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

Striking Teachers Learn:

IT'S AGAINST THE LAW TO FIGHT FOR EDUCATION, JOBS

TACOMA, WA, September 21, Fifteen hundred Tacoma teachers have been on strike for 7 days, even after a court injunction. In Washington state, strikes by teachers and other public employees are illegal. The bosses' laws are very clear when it comes to the so-called "rights" of workers.

According to the fascist editorial in the *Seattle Times* on September 15, "Conversations in Olympia (the state capital) about having the state negotiate teacher contracts should be resurrected." Basically, the editorial lays out the bosses' plans for ALL workers in the land of the free:

"Their reluctance to accept a small salary cut or a few days furlough is grossly out of sync with economic reality."

This reality is the worldwide crisis of capitalism, with constant wars, genocide, soaring unemployment and homelessness. And yet, when teachers dare to demand one less child per classroom, (the average kindergarten class is now 27

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Battle of Longview:

PITS LONGSHORE WORKERS AGAINST THE LAW IN A FIGHT FOR JOBS

LONGVIEW, WA, September 7. AFL-CIO president Richard Trumka condemned the congressional attempt to cut the power of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) at a recent Washington state rally. This same NLRB is leading the charge to punish longshore workers and supporters who seized the port's grain terminal to fight for their jobs.

Who do you trust: the power of the law, courts and government agencies or the power of the working class?

The battle of Longview erupted Wednesday morning as some 500 protestors stormed the grain terminal, breaking down fences, cutting freight train brake lines and dumping 72 tons of grain on the tracks. The riot-gear clad cops were forced to retreat and eight company security guards were taken prisoner.

The NLRB immediately asked for an injunction against the protesters. The U.S. District Judge in Tacoma granted the injunction, but ad-

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MTA Drivers Reject

Contract and Sellouts: NEED TO ORGANIZE A POLITICAL STRIKE

LOS ANGELES, CA, September 11. "We don't want to hear your bullshit. We want to discuss the contract. You take our union dues and we are not getting our money's worth," shouted a bus driver as John Ellis, Vice-General Chairperson of the drivers' union, patronizingly explained that "things were bad... we can't expect much... this is the best we could do."

This meeting was called at the last minute by the union officials who, prior to it, refused to provide any information about the contract. Their plans were to ram the contract down the MTA drivers' throats.

Instead, the meeting turned into a roaring attack against these traitors. The first driver who interrupted Ellis spoke against the proposal and how the union has neglected the members. When the union's security thug tried to threaten this driver, most of the over 1000 workers present made it clear that they supported the brother. He was allowed to speak. Other drivers followed, attacking the contract and the union officials.

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Whether we like it or not...

IT'S A MATTER OF BUILDING A MASS COMMUNIST PARTY

*"It's nonsense, nonsense, nonsense,
Nonsense at this time of day,
That bread and butter issues
Should be in any man's way."*

poet Hugh MacDiarmid (1930s)

This earth is full of raw materials (iron, oil, rare metals) and lush with fertile soil. It is populated with billions of skilled and semi-skilled people who have developed science, technical and practical knowledge to undreamed of heights. Yet it is mired in crisis, famines and malnutrition. The bosses have spent the last two decades dropping more TNT than was unleashed in all the bombing of World War II.

It is no exaggeration to say we live in a period where our technical and scientific abilities (the forces of production) are at odds with the use the bosses put them to in order to make profits under capitalism (the relations of production). While this has been generally true for some two hundred years, it has an even more murderous impact today when a general crisis has gripped capitalism world-wide.

It started in one section of the US economy as a housing bubble. It became a financial crisis bringing banks in the US and Europe to their knees. Now as a sovereign debt crisis, it threatens the world's two leading currencies – the US dollar and the euro. Greece is a small economy, but when it comes to the Spanish and Italian economies it is no longer a question of "being too big to fail." It becomes one of "being too big to save." When that happens, world wars get planned. We are on the brink of passing into this phase of the crisis.

As it is, this crisis already threatens the dominance of 'Western' capitalism (Europe and the US). China, India, Brazil and Indonesia are all projected to grow at a far faster rate. It is a crisis that has been years in the making and won't be resolved until massive amounts of capital (facto-

ries and workers) have been destroyed. Of course such destruction will have a devastating effect on the masses. It already has.

In 2009, the International Labor Organization estimated that 1.53 billion people were working in "vulnerable jobs," either working for themselves or in badly paid family jobs. India, one of the poster children for capitalist development, suffers worse malnutrition than sub-Saharan Africa. Who can make sense of that?

The fact remains that a worker can only find work so long as his or her labor gives a sufficient profit to a capitalist. Money in the form of capital dominates our lives. It's owned by the capitalist but has no social use for workers. Its sole purpose is to create more wealth (capital) for the bosses by destroying workers' lives. In the US the Economic Policy Institute estimates there are 6.9 million fewer jobs today than there were in December 2007. Yet, since 2007 US corporations have amassed over \$2 trillion in savings. That could put everyone to work – butter all our toast, but it won't.

In fact, you could say that the key motto of US capitalism is "No butter and ration the bread!" From their point of view the best use of capital right now is to withhold it from productive investment. It's not jobs and social services they want to offer us but homelessness, malnutrition and unemployment. That, they figure, will discipline us and make us accept lower than low wages. Since the 'regional' wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have already brought us to the brink of bankruptcy, the astronomical costs of a full scale war can only be met using the cheapest of cheap labor. Capital has a logic of its own, but it's not ours, it's the bosses'.

The world's workforce is more than 3 billion strong. Why should we let money in the form of capital dominate us? Clearly capital can't organize society to meet our needs for food, shelter,

community, life. Why are the forces of production that have produced such enormous levels of scientific and social knowledge so completely contained by the relations of production? The ICWP maintains it's because we have not yet fully developed the one skill vital to the revolutionary new world we are setting out to create: a mass communist party. A party that is capable of organizing the 3 billion strong workforce of the world to make a revolution to produce the food, shelter, community and life we need without bowing to the needs of capital or money.

We have started. **Red Flag** is already an advance as it discusses, explains and argues for communism in every issue. No other party does that. Our members are organized around getting the paper out to industrial workers, soldiers and students in a mass way. No other party does that. We have started but we need you to join us.

By all measures Greece, which was ruled by a military junta from 1967 to 1975, has defaulted. Capitalism, which operates in secrecy, has not yet conceded it openly. An openly conceded Greek default will be a disaster for the German and French banks. It is known they have lent huge amounts to Greece, but exactly how much is a complete secret. In any event, the euro - as we know it - is unlikely to survive.

The US, the world's biggest debtor, is trying to help the Europeans! That must build confidence. Maybe, in the end, it will be the Chinese and Indian capitalists who rescue them.

We don't know exactly how things will play out. We do know that in the 1930s German capitalists faced with huge short term debts and a sudden collapse of the world market understood their future - as a capitalist class - was bleaker than bleak. It was then they began their secret preparations for war in Eastern Europe

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or 28 in the Seattle/Tacoma area) the *Times* calls it "contrived and meant to distract from salary demands."

Capitalist Education = Lies and Contradiction

Let us not be naïve about the futures of our working class children. The ruling class has no answer for our crumbling public education system. Teachers and support staff are supposed to be preparing students for college and good jobs.

Colleges, including state and community colleges, are expensive and hard to get into. Plus, there are no jobs when you graduate. Many choose the military, believing they will be able to afford college when they get discharged.

There are tens of thousands of unemployed and underemployed people out there with degrees and years of experience who can't find a job. So much for the promise of higher education!

The bosses make the laws and they turn right around and break the laws. Yet, the working class is told to respect and obey the law at all times. The threat of losing a job, going to jail, being deported, etc. is held over our heads. We have got

to understand, like the teachers in Tacoma and the longshoremen in Longview, that we must defy the bosses' laws to win...but not to win a few more dollars.

We Need a Communist Education

To really win, we need to defeat the monster called capitalism. Things are not going to get better. There will be no recovery. If we really want to create a better future for our children we need to create a new world, a communist world.

A world based on collectivity, not competition will have no high stakes testing. Instead, our children will gain knowledge and skills to meet the needs of workers and their families, not the profits of corporations. Education will be a lifelong process where teachers and students are constantly learning from one another, and will be the same person.

This can happen in the fu-

ture, and it will require a worldwide revolution. Right now we need to educate ourselves by reading **Red Flag** and discussing these ideas with our families, friends and co-workers. We need to be out on the picket lines and even go to jail with the workers so that when the true role of the state is exposed we will be there with the right answer... communist revolution is the only solution!



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

Negotiations Show:

AUTO WORKERS NEED POLITICAL STRIKE AGAINST FEDS, UNION MISLEADERS

DETROIT- The bosses' government is helping the Big 3 domestic automakers impose even more drastic wage slave conditions on autoworkers. The government bailout of these companies a few years back has made cheap labor the foundation of any revival of the U.S. auto industry.

The current negotiations at Chrysler, GM and Ford stand no chance of reversing this super-exploitation. These racist attacks will intensify. Auto workers need to organize political wildcats against the capitalist government that has imposed this no-strike regime. These strikes would go a long way in putting our class on the road to the communist revolution we need.

Take Chrysler for example. The cornerstone of their unlikely comeback is 900 workers turning out a Jeep Grand Cherokee sport utility vehicle every 48 seconds.

Nothing distinguishes these workers at the Jefferson North plant, except their measly paychecks and reduced benefits. These new employees get half the pay of veterans, starting



at \$14/hour. They get four weeks time off instead of five. Defined pensions are a thing of the past.

These second-tier hires will never get as much as veteran employees. So far about 12% of Chrysler's 23,000 union workers are stuck in this dead-end category. The industry plans to make these second-tier workers the majority in short order.

Young and old rank-and-file United Auto Workers (UAW) chanted "Equal Pay for Equal Work" at the big Labor Day parade in Detroit. Full-paid workers are ready to forgo pay increases to eliminate this divisive two-tier system.

UAW president Bob King is having no part of this class solidarity. He said the two-tier system is a way for companies to become more competitive without cutting pay for existing workers and that it helps create jobs.

As a sop, King negotiated a trifling pay increase for new hires and a \$5,000 signing bonus to bribe veteran employees at GM. If he can sell this tentative deal, he hopes it will set a pattern for the other carmakers. Adding insult to injury, profit sharing (aka disguised piece-work) is still on the table.

What can you expect when the union vows to follow the law banning strikes? Rather than hit the bricks, King and company have extended the old contracts indefinitely. He plans to wear down the upset rank-and-file until they finally accept contracts that codify two-tier exploitation.

Communist Ideas Key To Political Strike

Communists know the State is the repressive arm of the capitalists no matter who runs it. This idea must become the property of the mass of autoworkers. Then and only then can they mobilize to override the union misleaders and take on the government directly.

Such a wildcat would need to be political. The political goals must advance towards smashing this center of the bosses' power. Otherwise, even a political strike will leave the bosses' repressive apparatus in place.

True workers' power requires more than a strike. It requires a revolution.

Communist revolution is more than a spontaneous outbreak of class hatred. Communist revolution requires a sustained violent attack on all the institutions of capitalist power. Smashing the bosses' State ranks high on the list.

Workers Debate Political Goals

"But the working class is divided against itself," worried one industrial worker as we tried to figure out what our political goals should be. "Why go on strike now asking for decent conditions when so many are unemployed?"

"They've [the media] managed to pit union workers against non-union workers," he said.

"The hard truth is that trade unionism isn't up to the task of serving our needs when capitalism is in crisis, or anytime," answered our comrade. "It's not union or non-union. The question has come down to capitalism or communism."

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mitted he thought it would do little. The threat of \$25,000 a day penalties did little more.

Wildcat strikes shut down the Tacoma, Seattle, Anacortes and Everett ports. Even Boeing's barges were left unloaded.

"I feel like a paper tiger here," said Judge Ronald Leighton.

The Brewing Battle

Wednesday's battle has been brewing since November of last year.

The Longview port hired the international conglomerate EGT to build and run a new \$200 mil-



lion grain terminal. The company pledged to employ longshore workers from the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 29. Instead it hired non-union low-wage workers.

EGT Development is a joint venture of Japan-based Itochu Corp., South Korea's STX and Bunge International subsidiary Bunge North America. Bunge is a huge food processor and transporter with sales of \$52 billion.

Bunge CEO Alberto Weiser sits on the Council of the Americas and U.S. imperialism's main foreign policy think-tank, the Council of Foreign Relations. One longshoreman noted that EGT was only applying the same exploitive tactics that they use in "third world" countries.

Within months a relatively large movement grew in this small town to preserve the longshore jobs that had been around for 70 years. The often-violent protests culminated in a demonstration of over 1,000 longshore workers and supporters from Washington to California in front of EGT's regional headquarters in downtown Portland.

After this outpouring, EGT turned the terminal operations over to Kiewit and Sons, itself a \$10 billion conglomerate. Kiewit found a small, relatively weak union, Operating Engineers Local 71, to handle the grain. This obvious ploy failed to calm the longshore workers and their supporters.

Illegal Work Actions: The Order Of The Day

The Longview fighters rejected the ten-month legal suit the union leadership initiated and took matters into their own hands. It's good the workers didn't rely on the courts and broke the law. Breaking the law has almost become a prerequisite to any meaningful fight-back in these times of capitalist crisis.

A communist vision illuminates

the role of law. The law camouflages the naked power of Capital. Workers must see through this camouflage if they are to fight for their interests.

Once you come to the realization that you'll have to break the law, it's better to have a strategy that aims to smash those institutions that uphold the law. That means the bosses' state, cops and army.

The masses mobilized for communism can shatter these seemingly all-powerful institutions like cheap crystal.

Spontaneous short-lived revolts must give way to planned sustained revolts. Economic demands must yield to political demands. Work actions must develop into mass rebellion. The army must turn the guns around.

We will then be free to organize work according to the principle "from each according to their commitment to each according to their needs." Transporting grain to the tens of millions now starving will be our priority, not maximizing profits.

Communist institutions will mobilize to assure that the work we need gets done. The absurdity of a job crisis will cease to be a part of human experience.



LA Grocery Strike Derailed

WHEN IS A MASS STRUGGLE NOT A MASS STRUGGLE?

LOS ANGELES, Sept. 19—As *Red Flag* goes to press, grocery workers in southern California are about to vote on whether to accept a last-minute contract offer or go out on strike. Union officials claim “victory” in maintaining health benefits, but contract details are not available – possibly not even to the workers.

Leaders of the United Food and Confectionery Workers (UFCW) Local 770 praised “the courage, solidarity and resolve of members who were willing to strike.” We, too salute these brave and committed workers! But they need and deserve what Local 770 will never allow them: the opportunity to learn to give revolutionary communist leadership to the masses.

The façade of a “mass struggle” organized by Local 770 hides their profound distrust of their own membership and their reliance on the bosses’ laws and politicians.

Take the “emergency rally” on September 9. Hundreds marched on a Ralph’s store in LA, forcing management to shut its doors temporarily. Then they marched right into a Vons store across the street, rallying inside the store itself.

But the marchers were almost all union staffers or interns from UFCW and other members of the County Federation of Labor, along with friendly clergy. Why didn’t Local 770 bring busloads of

workers who had the day off?

Except for one “day of action” months ago, it’s been the same with the “delegations” and “vigils” and other actions before and since. The appearance is mass struggle (more or less militant) but the essence is the opposite.

In the last few days, after the “72-hour notice of intent to strike,” the union-sponsored “candlelight vigils” featured state and local politicians, not rank-and-file workers. They were held in places like Beverly Hills and Burbank, not in the heart of working-class Los Angeles.

Like all unions, UFCW is firmly committed to following the laws made by the bosses to keep themselves on top. For example, Local 770 gave the required “72-hour notice,” allowing the stores to organize scabs (strikebreakers). It even said that a strike would probably be called late at night, the time that would cause the least disruption.

The UFCW 770 website even reassured the workers that “it is illegal to close the stores, fire

ness. We wonder whether they wrote it off on their taxes.

Communists know better than to trust in the bosses’ laws and the bosses’ courts. We do not see embattled workers as “victims” who need



the workers and re-open non-union.” Sure, Ralph’s paid \$70 million in penalties after the last strike. That seems like a lot, but it’s only pennies per hour per worker over the course of the contract! For Ralph’s, these penalties are just a cost of doing busi-

capitalist politicians as “champions.”

We know that 62,000 grocery workers, organized to fight as the Washington State longshore workers fought back (see page 1) could give leadership to the masses.

Grocery workers who embrace the communist politics of *Red Flag* could organize their co-workers for a political strike that would target the capitalist system, not just the supermarket chains. They could build unity of the employed and unemployed, showing that joblessness and exploitation are two faces of the same racist system.

And they will! And bus drivers will, and garment workers will! Not all of them, not right away. But you who are reading *Red Flag* right now can and must become part of the core of the only mass movement that can free us from capitalist tyranny. That core is the International Communist Workers’ Party.

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Used to imposing their contracts unopposed, the union officials were unprepared and lost control of the meeting. Trying to regain control, Victor Baffoni, Vice President of the International, stood up to talk about the contract. When there were shouts of “Strike!” he arrogantly answered, “The decision to strike or not to strike is mine.” He claimed that the strike fund was \$600 a month. Some workers exposed this claim as a lie shouting that “it was \$1200.”

At the end, the majority voted down the proposal.

MTA workers’ revolutionary spirit and understanding is growing

We distributed about 400 *Red Flags* and many more leaflets calling on workers to reject the contract and organize a political strike against capitalism’s wage slavery. Workers eagerly took our literature and thanked us for being there. One expressed the general sentiment saying, “We find you to be a better and more trustworthy source of information than the union leaders.”

Another said, “The union is supposed to unite and equalize! The proposal that was read has segregation written all over it (tiers, part timers, full timers, old timers).” This worker is voicing his quest for a society, constantly described in *Red Flag*, where sharing according to need will equalize us and where the bosses’ divisive tools of wages, racism, sexism, nationalism and bor-

ders will be eliminated.

Unionism will never created this kind of society.

Our leaflet made it very clear that our union officials’ main crime is not that they negotiate sell out contracts. Their main crime is that they are anti-communist pro-capitalist mouth pieces of the US rulers. Their job is to keep us forever tied to the bosses’ wage slavery and electoral circus.

They help MTA impose its reign of terror, which is the US bosses’ order of the day for all workers. Things will get worse, not better. The bosses are out for blood. They have spilled rivers of it in the Middle East. Their terror is to force us to sacrifice ever more “blood and treasure” for their profits and wars.

These are the burning issues of the day not being addressed by any union hack: How to get rid of a system that for the profits of billionaires grinds us deeper into poverty and terrorizes us daily, while slaughtering millions of our class brothers and sisters worldwide? How to get rid of a system bent on global war? The only solution is to get rid of capitalism. Only communism can put an end to capitalism’s centuries of exploitation and wars for profits and empire.

This militancy should be channeled into a political strike against capitalism.

Baffoni is full of it! The power to go on strike resides in our hands, not in his or any union hack! Only we have the power to paralyze the whole of LA’s transit system. Let’s defy our union hacks and the bosses’ laws. Let’s follow the example of

the Longview longshore workers (see page 1).

But we don’t need a strike that fights for crumbs and a contract that only perpetuates and deepens our wage slavery. We need a political strike against capitalism and for workers’ power.

Having rejected the union’s and the MTA’s latest offer, let’s organize our political strike! Contact *Red Flag* distributors and readers inside and outside MTA to organize this strike and the struggle for communism. Be a *Red Flag* reader and distributor. Join ICWP.

THESE ARE THE SALARIES NEGOTIATED BY THE MTA UNION OFFICIALS IN THE REJECTED CONTRACT.

Performance Allowance :

December 1st of 2011 (one time bonus)
\$1325.00 for Full Timers
\$750.00 for Part Timers

December 1st of 2012 (one time bonus)
\$925.00 for Full Timers
\$500.00 for Part Timers

To qualify workers have must not be absent more than 30 days due to illness, injury, or leave of absence, or 60 days due to worker’s compensation.

Wage adjustments:

Effective July 1, 2012 - \$0.25 for Tier Two full time and part time bus and rail operator

Effective July 1, 2013 - \$0.15 for all bus-rail operators and schedule employees

Postal Workers Face Layoffs and Cuts

CAPITALISM CAN'T DELIVER

“Postal workers and all workers need a better system, (a communist system),” said a worker who is tired of harassment from the supervisors. “We don’t need to be pushed this way,” he said. “We don’t need to be told what to do. We know what to do and how to do it better without a supervisor telling us what to do or to hurry up. They are the ones who don’t do anything but harass the workers. They are the ones that need to be fired.”

This reflects the general thinking of the great majority of the workers. And it’s not only postal workers, but workers around the world are experiencing more intensely how brutal the capitalist system can be for workers, now more than ever, as the capitalist crisis deepens.

Workers with “good jobs and benefits” are starting to feel the worst because they know that the capitalist system can take all of that away from us workers whenever they decide that it’s more important to save their rotten system from a financial crisis. They will take as much as they can from workers and use the money they take from us in their bloody wars around the world to kill our brothers and sisters.

Right now many of the workers here are concerned about whether or not they’re going to lose their jobs. It has been a while now since the bad news about how bad the Post Office has been doing financially these days. Congress is calling for 220,000 layoffs, closing post offices and ending Saturday postal service.

More often now we hear from the workers about how abusive supervisors are using this crisis as an excuse to threaten, intimidate and harass workers in many different ways. They tell workers they can be fired for just about any little mistake, especially the T.E.’s. These are the Temporary Employees hired on by a yearly contract that are not “regular” workers but they do the same thing everyone else does and get less. These workers are especially targeted by supervisors.

Supervisors tell us we are not doing enough and that if we don’t improve there could be consequences, when in reality workers are giving 100% of their abilities every day they work. But of course to management it will never be enough no matter how hard the workers work to do their jobs. This is one of the main principles of capi-

talism: to maximize profits at the expense of workers’ jobs, health and lives.

It is true that many workers are afraid they could lose their jobs, especially in these hard times. But no matter how much we try to be obedient to the bosses and do what they say we will never be safe or at peace with them. This system is the bosses’ system. They make the rules and laws in their best interest. We the workers have nothing to gain from this system.

We need a system that works for us, the working class. The only system that can do this is a communist system. That is a system where we don’t produce for profit but to satisfy the needs of our class. We will produce to make sure everyone has the necessary things to live a decent life and not to make someone have everything and someone else nothing like the capitalist system we live in now.

We must get rid of our fears and start building for that better, communist, system now, where workers won’t be intimidated by fascist supervisors or put their lives at risk just to do the job. We need to start now. Read *Red Flag* and join us!

Salvadoran Troops in Afghanistan:

OPPORTUNITY TO TURN THE GUNS AROUND

EL SALVADOR. Several weeks ago, the government of Mauricio Funes announced that he’s sending troops to Afghanistan. They’re sending 22 soldiers from the Salvadoran army in a mission of “security and peace,” supported, instructed, and financed by the US bosses and NATO in a demonstration of support for the coming 3rd World War. In a sign of intervention, they were trained for three months especially for this mission and were sent to US army bases in Miami and Baltimore.

This is not the first time that El Salvador has sent troops at the call of their US bosses. The first time troops were dispatched to Iraq in 2003 in support of the fascist invasion there.

And a second battalion went in 2006 as a part of the blue helmets of the UN in Lebanon. What everyone knew came to light recently when WikiLeaks cables revealed that the US negotiated with the parties in the Legislative Assembly so they would vote in favor of the second dispatch of

troops when this decision was shaky. Without caring about the lives of the soldiers, the government and their bosses sent these soldiers as cannon fodder.

We young communists need to join the army and distribute *Red Flag* to soldiers, since they are an important key to turn the guns around against the bosses and achieve a real communist revolution.

Now with this dispatch of troops, the government of the fmln is exposed once again. It again shows that they are servants of the capitalist-imperialist system and that elections and reformism are not the solution to the problems of the working class. Only communism can meet the needs of the working class.

The first two battalions in which five soldiers died had been sent by the government of the right. In its campaign to join the government, the fmln said that they would stop dispatching troops to Iraq, like any other electoral party that makes

promises to administer the system. Even though the fmln didn’t give its vote for this decree in the assembly, in their government they propose it.

Is there a difference between the government of ARENA and the fmln? NO! Because they’re part of the same capitalist system. We as communist members of ICWP must organize the soldiers and workers, and show them that elections are not the solution and that the bosses only use soldiers as cannon fodder in their wars for profit and empire

This is the opportunity to organize more soldiers for communism and to distribute *Red Flag*. Organizing soldiers is an enormous step towards communism since it’s soldiers who can turn their guns on the bosses.

“Give us weapons and we’ll know how to use them,” say revolutionary youth.

Building the Red Army is the duty of all since it is essential in building a communist society. Distribute, read and support *Red Flag*.

Racist Capitalism Murders Troy Davis

WHO’S THE REAL CRIMINAL?

FLASH: As we go to press, we learned that Troy Davis was murdered by the State of Georgia at 11 pm, September 21.

“Who can make a difference? WE CAN!” Twenty students rallied on this community college campus today against the scheduled execution of Troy Davis. Chanting and waving signs, their message to hundreds of fellow students and workers was outrage at this racist system.

Davis, a black worker from an activist family, was convicted of the murder of an off-duty white police officer who died trying to protect a homeless man. But Davis was not the killer! Seven of the nine witnesses who testified against him have recanted, saying that the police coerced their testimony. One of the other witnesses is himself a prime suspect in the murder.

Troy Davis spent 22 years on death row for a crime he did not commit. Four death warrants were issued, and students were hoping that one more time there would be a last-minute stay.

Masses of people worldwide have rallied around Troy’s cause, not only because he is innocent but because the US is one of only five

countries in the world that routinely executes its citizens.

Of course the US rulers also execute unknown numbers of workers and their children around the world with drone attacks and other military actions. In fact the US capitalist-imperialist rulers are the biggest mass murders in history!

“No Justice, No Peace Until We End This Racist System,” read one student’s sign. This was exactly the opposite of the line of the NAACP, whose president Ben Jealous said that “Troy Davis is a true patriot because he never gave up on our country’s justice system.”

It’s about time that we all give up on this racist system.

Under capitalism, we workers are not guaranteed human rights – only “civil rights” that are spelled out in law. The US Constitution, for example, does not guarantee the right of an innocent person to escape execution. But it does guarantee the capitalists’ right to profit from their private property.

Liberal activists want to move forward from Troy Davis’s struggle to build a movement to

abolish the death penalty in the US. But it’s capitalism itself that we need to abolish.

Communist society will be dedicated to meeting workers’ actual human needs, not abstract “rights.” It won’t take lawyers to tell us what we need, or courts to tell us our “rights.”

Will we have laws? Cops? Jails? The death penalty? How will we end every last scrap of racism? Many of the students who rallied today are *Red Flag* readers. We invite them to join this ongoing discussion.



WHAT YOU DO COUNTS

Self criticism and advance

For some time now we've been sending a couple of copies of *Red Flag* to a friend in Mexico, without knowing exactly what she did with them.

A couple of weeks ago, I decided to call her on the telephone, mostly to keep in touch with her as a friend. Self critically I wasn't thinking about developing a political struggle with her.

To my surprise, during the conversation, she told me that several times she's made photocopies of the paper to pass out to some of her co-workers. I felt a little embarrassed, thinking that I should have known this before; this is like fresh air.

Then she said, "Recently, I came home late and my father had the envelope in his hands. He asked me to open it because he wanted to read it. I told him that he knew what was inside and

that he could open it even if I wasn't there."

When she said this, I felt more embarrassed and self critical, but I was also very moved, thinking what this meant for communist revolution.

Her brother also reads *Red Flag*. They are a solid base of a teacher and factory workers. We made plans to continue a closer relation and we'll guarantee that they have all the papers they need.

I asked her to write to the paper about her advances and obstacles.

I'm encouraged by this process which gives me a lot of confidence that communist ideas will be taken up by the masses of workers and converted into a real revolutionary force that will put an end to this capitalist system.

--Comrade Painter, Los Angeles

One Small First Step

A Boeing worker's daughter attends a Tacoma high school where her teachers are defying an injunction against striking. We had just finished discussing the Auto contract, the Battle of Longview, and the Tacoma Teachers illegal strike. He took an extra *Red Flag* to show his daughter.

The struggle to mobilize the masses for communism will continue for many generations. When this friend took an extra paper he knew he was taking a first small step towards starting this struggle. Convincing himself to struggle with her to join the picket lines to spread our ideas would be another.

Bigger struggles involving hundreds, thousands and tens of thousands and smaller struggles like the friends and family we influence are linked. In each we must shed capitalist illusions to prepare for the revolutionary battles ahead.

Palestinian Authority at the UN:

CONTRADICTIONS SHARPEN, BALANCE OF POWER IN MIDEAST SHIFTS

The Palestinian Authority (PA) runs parts of the West Bank with financial and military support from the US, the European Union, and Israel. Its current threat to ask the UN to support Palestinian statehood reveals sharpening contradictions in many quarters.

Such a Palestinian state would be, like every other government in the world today, a capitalist state. The sharpening contradictions increase both the danger of wider wars and the opportunities they will bring for communist revolution.

Within the US ruling class, some imperialist strategists worry that a US veto of the Palestinian bid would be a major diplomatic setback. Saudi Arabia has warned that it would jeopardize relations, undercut the US throughout the Middle East and empower Iran.

Other US strategists favor a vote in favor of Palestinian statehood. But this would anger Israel, the US' most reliable ally in the region. Pro-Israel conservative Jewish and Christian Zionists make sure that Congress knows this. This lobby has so far ensured continuing unconditional US military, financial, and diplomatic support for Israel.

The Obama administration is trying to solve the US bosses' dilemma by avoiding a veto, pressuring the PA to withdraw its request for statehood. If successful, it might buy some time for US imperialism - but probably not much.

The Palestinian camp is also divided. Some Palestinian civic groups and intellectuals have, at the last minute, opposed taking the case to the UN. Hamas is also opposed to it.

The Israeli ruling class is more solidly united in opposition to Palestinian statehood, while formally claiming to support a "two-state solution." They say they believe in negotiations, but they act unilaterally. This includes building cities and towns ("settlements") in occupied Palestinian areas.

Israeli bosses fear that a successful Palestinian appeal to the UN would result in a populous and

armed Palestinian state on Israel's border. This would rule out a Greater Israel with total control over the areas conquered from Jordan in 1967 and consolidated with the settlements.

But a Greater Israel would also have contradictions. What if the US withdrew support? A few Israeli intellectuals have proposed that Israel begin to develop relations with other imperialist powers such as China, India and Russia. But those bosses support Palestinian statehood in spite of their internal and external conflicts with Muslim nationalist forces.

The European Union states are divided, too. Few sympathize with Israel. However, they are caught between their alliances with the US and their realization that the world is rapidly changing. The Arab Spring has put the decline of the United States on the fast track, on top of the unfolding defeats in Iraq and Afghanistan. In the coming world war to re-divide the globe, Europe could align with the US - or not.

Whatever the immediate outcome of the PA's appeal to the UN, its long term result is turn the greater Mideast into a time bomb waiting to explode.

Don't hold your breath waiting for peace to break out.

Many activists believe that the time for a "two-state solution" has come and gone. Still, there could be a deliberate strategic change in US policy. US rulers might persuade their Israeli allies that a stable Palestinian state could free up Israel's military forces to fight Iran.

A much more likely outcome is that the Israel/Palestine conflict could escalate into another regional war fueled by inter-imperialist contradictions over control of the region's oil and gas.



Palestinian Gaza, controlled by Hamas, is increasingly important because of recently-discovered gas reserves off its Mediterranean shore.

The US would have few allies other than Israel in such a war. The US bosses would have to rely on their technological advantage, including nuclear weapons. Both history and the logic of the present situation strongly suggest that regional or world wars are inevitable. No peace process can change this.

Palestinian workers and workers everywhere must understand that no capitalist state, no nationalist aspirations, will solve our problems or meet our needs. We must unite to turn the inter-imperialist wars into communist revolutions. This happened in World War I, producing the Russian Revolution, and in World War II, the Chinese Revolution.

This time, however, our victorious communist revolution will smash all national borders and every trace of capitalist wage slavery.

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Envisioning the First Steps in a Communist Society

We've liked what was published most recently in *Red Flag*, which has declared that we won't have everything in place from the beginning in a communist society. The distinction between laws and "principles" isn't the question. The fact is that we'll promote rules of conduct that help human development. And in the beginning this will require making laws. Everyone has to know what is acceptable and what is not. The use of someone else's labor will be penalized. Buying and selling also. Sexism in varying degrees. Racism in its distinct forms.

Won't many workers continue with their capitalist attitudes? We'll have to "popularize," that is, generalize, our point that taking power and the Party ruling society mean the first step for the extinction of the State.

More, as I've put forward, is gradual, by steps or "stages" as in all development. That is dialectical. What we disagree with is with the "stages" put forward by the old communist movement.

However, all qualitative development involves a quantitative development also.

This is implicit in the articles that we have published in *Red Flag*, I believe.

When the Party rules, the State will not disappear immediately as the anarchist conception advocates. The working class needs a permanent armed force ("Red Army") which we're going to try to begin to build from now on. At the same time, this standing army will begin to dissolve into what Marx called "the people in arms."

We also liked the letter about Communist Centralism and the one from the retired transit worker. I had written some notes about this, but you went ahead of me. Very good!

Teacher in Mexico

Expanding communist ideas

We take advantage of all the opportunities for discussion to put communist ideas on the table. For example, at a party, a few days ago, a conversation began about the worry that we have about security in Mexico. The strategy that the government is following to control drug trafficking has killed more than 50,000 people and it's clear that they are cleaning the area of some drug dealers to leave it free for other drug dealers.

One person commented that on a trip to Monterrey (in the north of Mexico), there were buses like the ones used by the army with the initials CG (Cartel of the Gulf) working together with the army and the police, pretending to be the good guys before the population. Just recently on September 13 in Zacatecas, 300 people from CG entered to clean up the Zetas (the rival cartel) and the police didn't get involved.

The questions that caused the discussion were, "Is this kind of life that we have normal? Don't you think there's some better way to live?" We can't become indifferent to what occurs daily. It's not normal that so many people die everyday, that children play at being drug dealers, or that they can't go out to play for fear of the streets, that there are 7 million children who neither go to school nor work, that 52 people were burned to death in a casino in Monterrey on August 25th, 2011, that every day dead bodies appear throughout the country, that the bosses get rich from our labor, or that there are 85 million poor people in Mexico.

Just a few years ago we were surprised when communist comrades from El Salvador said that the gangs forced the truck drivers to pay them, as well as the schools and all the businesses, threatening

to kill them if they didn't pay. Now this is happening here too and this is only one sign of the world wide crisis. This even affects our nutrition as well. For example, the gangs started charging the avocado producers in Michoacan and the price per kilogram went up to 80 pesos (over \$6). Now we can't buy them to eat.

We explain in the conversations that we have with people that this form of capitalist life is very recent compared with the history of humanity and this has been the most harmful of all forms of society. Frequently they say that it's hard to change, because it's hard to change people. We say that we can do it, that we have the capacity to organize ourselves. We take advantage of this to talk about how life will be in a communist society.

At the end of the conversation at the party, we were invited to give a talk, in the next few days, with teachers at a school about nutrition in capitalism and its consequences. Soon we'll write about that experience and how the working class will organize and plan nutrition in a communist society.

A Comrade in Mexico

Will the communist working class be governed by principle and not laws?

As you have already discussed in *Red Flag*, we have to make very clear the differences between what these two words mean conceptually.

A principle is the first instant of the existence of something. It's a concept, a norm that governs thought or conduct. And itemizing what fits into a principle, it can be divided into 4 fundamental axioms that can lead us to deduce where the criticism of communist principles leads, whether they can govern us or not.

While there's a law, it's defined as "a rule imposed by a higher authority," not taking into account in the definition of law that it can also be a universal rule to which natural phenomena are subject.

Basing ourselves on these clear definitions, I consider that the principles are already antecedents to the rules in a communist society. That is, when we have communist conduct and thought, this will allow us to install the laws that are needed to govern in a communist society. They don't necessarily have to be oppressive like capitalist laws, clearly differentiating that these laws will be new and universal for scientific communism to apply collectively.

We suppose that for this moment and to the degree that we are consolidating a communist society, we can count on that at least the majority will have the practice or level required to be conscientious in the governance of the working class. For the other aspects discussed in the article, about whether or not jails will exist, we need to re-think and analyze up to what point they could be necessary, because a communist system won't start functioning perfectly overnight. We'll be in a constant struggle against anti-social behavior.

The networks of criminals and insecurity that we live with today in Mexico will never be resolved in a capitalist system because there are million dollar losses and gains at play that benefit the same powerful politicians who govern this capitalist system. As if the same system that creates these evils, could find the cures. Clearly they could if the system was built to do that, but this isn't the case, and that's why we need to install a new system with new laws.

Red Flag Reader

Talking about communism with college students

Last Monday, another comrade and I distributed *Red Flag* at a local college. We distributed 100 pa-

pers pretty quickly and got about \$8. But the most impressive part was the good conversations we had. "Communism? We were just discussing that in class," said a student. "I like communism." We explained the difference between socialism and communism. She gave us her number and told us that some of her friends think she's a little crazy because she tells them she's a communist. She was really happy to meet us and we planned to get together again soon.

Another student had lunch with us. "How will buildings like the one we're sitting in be built without money?" So we talked about how wood comes from trees and no one will own the trees, but everyone will in common. And we don't need money to make trees into lumber to build with—or to make any other natural resource into useful material. We need workers' knowledge and skill, and there will be plenty of that. So we kept talking for a while and he said he would come to our next discussion group. A good day.

A comrade

"I love that paper!"

"I love that paper," said a worker who took her copy of *Red Flag* outside the L.A. MTA drivers' meeting to vote on the contract. Another worker asked, "Why haven't you been to our division lately?" She took extra papers.

Many workers thanked us for being there.

We gave drivers bunches of ICWP leaflets to distribute inside the meeting entitled, "MTA WORKERS: VOTE NO AGAINST THE CONTRACT! STRIKE AGAINST CAPITALISM'S WAGE SLAVERY!"

"This is the communist paper they bring to our division," said a transit worker to her friend as they went into the meeting. Both carried *Red Flag*.

One driver had a discussion with us about whether or not workers can rule society without the bosses. "You've worked as a driver for 19 years, right?"

"Yes."

"Do you know more about running the busses or does management?"

"I do."

"Well, workers can run all of society—much better without the bosses. We do all the work and know how things function."

"Yes, I think you're right. I hadn't thought about it like that before," said the driver, as he took the paper. We invite workers who like the paper to contact us to receive it regularly, distribute it, and to join us.

A comrade



**READ, WRITE,
CONTRIBUTE,
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DISTRIBUTE
RED FLAG!**

OBAMA'S ANSWER TO UNEMPLOYMENT: CUTS, SLAVE LABOR AND WAR

COMMUNISM = NEEDED AND MEANINGFUL WORK FOR ALL

On Sept. 8, Obama spoke to Congress introducing his "jobs program" based on tax and spending cuts and promises to modernize schools and repair roads. His promised "jobs program" will be financed by slashing Medicare, Medical and Social Security--all of which will hurt black, latin and all the poorest workers the most. These cuts, made to fund increasing preparation for war, will mean poverty and death for millions of workers. The attacks the US bosses have carried out around the world are being carried out in the US too.

Obama and the capitalist system he defends are proving they can't meet our needs. Only communism, based on workers' collectively producing and distributing what we produce for our needs, can do that.

There are now 46.2 million people in poverty in the US. 2.6 million fell into poverty in the last year under Obama's presidency. With Obama as president, over 50 million people in the US have no health care. Under Obama, more than one in 6 people in the US workforce is unemployed or underemployed. One in 3 black and latin workers are unemployed or underemployed! Racist attacks are the point of the spear of the bosses; attacks on all workers.

Compare that to Brazil, where 28 million people have climbed out of poverty during the same year. Worldwide, capitalism is in crisis, but it's uneven, affecting some more than others as China, Brazil, Russia and India rise and the US declines sharply.

Weapons, not walkers, retirement, or mail

Obama promised to create jobs by re-building the US infrastructure. The few jobs he's talking about will be slave labor jobs to build up the infrastructure in order to prepare the US for world war against China.

Where is he planning to get the money for this "jobs creation" program? By cutting Medicare

(by \$248 billion over 10 years), Medical, Social Security, health and retirement benefits for veterans, cutting \$21 billion in retirement programs for government workers ("in line with the private sector"), cuts to postal jobs and service (eliminating Saturday service).

Rhetoric about "taxing the rich" is a cover to make attacks on workers more acceptable. The government may force billionaires to pay some more taxes from the enormous profits they reap from exploiting us in order to fight for their class' empire. But this won't help the working class. In fact, it will mean more intense exploitation.

The US admitted projected national security budget for 2012, counting the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, is \$1.2 trillion. ("The Real National Security Budget," www.counterpunch.org) It's really even more and grows as the US prepares larger wars against China.

In a *NY Times* op-ed article called "For Jobs, It's War," Charles Blow quotes Gallup chairman Jim Clifton saying "The war for global jobs is like World War II: a war for all the marbles. [It] determines the leader of the free world. If the United States allows China or any other country...to out-enterprise, out-job create, out-grow its GDP, everything changes."

The US is a capitalist-imperialist power in decline, pressured to expand its wars to control oil and to destroy the productive capacity of its rivals. Many think that Obama is only cutting programs workers need because the Republicans would do worse. But these are decisions of the whole US capitalist class and their government. These cuts, supposedly to pay for a "jobs" program, are really to prepare and pay for war to defend the US bosses' profit system. (see RF vol 2, #16.)

The US imperialists face a "war for all the marbles." No imperialist power has voluntarily left the stage of history and the US bosses will be

no exception.

We have to prepare now to fight for our needs: to get rid of capitalism-imperialism, exploitation, production and wars for profit. We need to build the fight for communism, where money won't be king. It won't exist. While capitalism pits workers in the US against each other and workers in one nation against workers in another, we need international anti-racist unity with workers everywhere to destroy the profit system. Communism means we'll all work to produce to meet the needs of our class. We'll meet our needs for healthcare, housing, food and culture by designing, building and organizing for them. This is the only system that will meet our needs. Join us!

Communism Will Eliminate Racism

Capitalism needs racism because it is based on competition and the constantly more urgent need to maximize profits. That's why it pays black and latin workers less, lays them off first, and segregates them into the worst living and working conditions. Because the capitalists are massively outnumbered by the working class, their continued rule depends on dividing us. Racist ideas that blame black and latin workers for the oppression that the bosses visit on us form the ideological underpinning of capitalist ideology. We cannot eliminate racism without ending capitalism with its super profits made by super exploiting black and latin workers in the US and others around the world. Communist revolution, on the other hand, requires the conscious rejection of the racist divisions of capitalism. Only a working class united with communist ideas can defeat the capitalist bloodsuckers. Only a communist society can eliminate money and wages and all the divisions in the working class.

LET'S JOIN THE RANKS OF THE ICWP

The main reason to join the International Communist Workers' Party is that we're sick and tired of the criminal capitalist system which we have to fight against and destroy. There's also one reason why some lose the desire to fight against capitalism, and that's anti-communism.

We need to join because we want to put an end to the exploitation of capitalism through the organized force of the working class and communist revolution. Obviously, the struggle has to be from a working class point of view (class struggle). So we have to get rid of all our egoism, all individualism, racism, nationalism and sexism. If we don't cast away all this garbage, this could cause us to abandon the struggle.

When we confront the capitalist way of thinking with communist ideas we establish an internal ideological struggle in ourselves and other workers, that is, the struggle between the two ways of thinking, the communist way of collectivity against the capitalist way of thinking, of individualism, egoism, racism, and religious mysticism, etc. In this internal struggle, communist ideology must be victorious. This will keep the worker active and consistent in the fight for communism.

Otherwise it would be like wearing two hats, one communist and the other capitalist. That is, he or she isn't completely convinced of everything; there's not enough anger to continue the fight to cast away the filth that constitutes the

anti-communism that the bosses push and that he or she has inside. Anti-communism and fear are the greatest obstacles to deciding to confront capitalism. Because even when we have joined ICWP, if we don't defeat this anti-communism, a person can give up being active, and even withdraw from the struggle.

In the past, I've known relatively young workers who, like many more I don't know, have died as victims of capitalism. Nevertheless in life they never dared to accept communist ideas, partly due to their anti-communism and fear of the bosses.

Only to mention a little of what I know from experience and what happens every day: I knew a worker who suffered a blow to the head from a defective tool during work. As a result of the blow, he suffered for many years until he died. Another worker worked spreading pesticides on the grape vines without appropriate protection against the poison and, after several years, he died.

Another who worked harvesting oranges by contract slipped off the ladder, fell to the ground and broke his spine. Many years have passed since then and to this day this worker continues to be crippled and suffering. Another worker, after a very hard shift of nine hours by contract, got to his apartment, and threw himself on the bed to rest and he never got up again. He died there. None of these workers or their families re-

ceived any compensation, as far as I know, from the bosses. And even though some knew about communist ideas, none tried to organize and fight against the capitalism that ended up killing them.

Aside from the exploitation and so many workers becoming victims of the bosses' greed (so-called accidents), which happens every day, worse things are coming, including world war. What do we need to make the commitment to join ICWP? How can we gain understanding and confidence that the working class, which creates all value, can run society to meet our needs? The bosses want us to be tamed and passive as if we were beasts of burden, resigned to live only to work and make the capitalists rich. But masses of workers are rebelling worldwide against capitalism—from Washington state to Egypt. What they lack is communist ideas to break free from capitalist exploitation and anti-communism.

Let's go! Let's go! Let's perk up and raise our heads, to join and build the Party now, and look the bosses in the eyes; show them that we're not dead, that we can conquer our anti-communism. Let's stand up on our two legs and organize, confront them and defeat them and spread **Red Flag**. We can organize a workers' revolution, bring down their capitalist system and establish a society of communist equality where all workers receive what they need.

--Farm worker member of ICWP