

RED FLAG

MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM

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

SOUTH AFRICA: FIRED MANGANESE MINERS WELCOME ICWP

Transnet Strikers, May, 2010



We reported on the Port Elizabeth harbour workers' strike in April. Little did we know that five months later we would be meeting these twenty-eight Transnet workers. They are reported to have lost the battle with the employer at the court. They have been meeting every Sunday for six months, waiting for updates from the Numsa organiser who is reportedly in Johannesburg.

Today we met manganese workers from Transnet South Africa. We introduced ourselves and told the workers about the ICWP and communist revolution. They were very happy to receive copies of many issues of *Red Flag*, and promised to read and write for it. They were very excited to learn about our party and what it stands for: revolution not reforms.

Manganese is a deadly substance that has taken lives and hospitalized many of their co-workers. These workers work 7 days a week, 12 hours a day and are paid R500 (US\$46) a week. They are exploited beyond measure because they are dying working under these conditions and they have been under employment agencies for 12 years and they are still casual workers.

When they hire you at the harbour, they run tests, subject you to all the stringent requirements, checks, etcetera. They then send you underground to dig the manganese in the Port Elizabeth harbour. You have to go deep down into the belly of the earth. After years of digging manganese, they test you again. If they find too many traces of manganese in your body, you are likely to lose your job. The horrors they shared with us were unbelievable.

These workers went on strike in April along with their permanent co-workers. They received a letter confirming that the strike was legal, but later on they were fired and only permanent workers were allowed back. The company told the agency workers that the strike was illegal.

Now these workers are asking the employer, "If you say the strike is illegal then why fire only us? We all participated in the strike. This is unfair, discriminatory and cruel labour practice." They complained to the employment agency, which said they no longer belong to them, that they no longer employ for Transnet SA.

Transnet told the workers that they are on their own. They were requested by the union to join and signed up but now the union says it fights for permanent workers only.

These workers are being victimised beyond explanation and now they are unemployed. Their families and children who depend on them are in great poverty.

We ended the meeting on a very high note, that of having our own ICWP meetings with these workers going forward.

Earlier we were in a meeting of Scribante construction workers in the same place as the Transnet workers. We noticed that they also work under unfair conditions, discrimination, victimization, exploitation and minimum wage.

All workers share similar problems. All these bosses and owners are the same. The survival of their companies depends on these workers they exploit, discriminate against, mistreat and abuse.

We are eagerly waiting for your planned visit. As a collective we are overcoming our fear and weaknesses because there is no solution but communist revolution.

GARMENT WORKERS BUILD RED FLAG NETWORKS

"They're from *Red Flag*, my friend," one worker answered another, while showing her the leaflet and our newspaper, when the first worker asked, "Who are those folks?"

About 2300 men and women work in these factories every day. Recently, ICWP comrades distributed 250 *Red Flags* and 200 leaflets as workers were leaving the factory after a day's work.

A flyer was written that showed the need to fight for communism and how we workers don't need the bosses. The following is part of the leaflet:

We get up early in the morning tired and sleepy, we take one or up to three buses to get to work; while the bosses arrive comfortably at the factory in their luxury cars. At the door they search us as if we were criminals, while the boss, who steals the profits from our labor, walks in calmly. It is we who are producing and building everything, from the factory itself to dozens of shirts and pants that are produced in each shift, so why does the boss get millions while we barely survive day by day? Why? What is he without us? NOTHING!

We don't need the bosses!

We build the factory, we bring the raw material, use the machines, sew, pack and transport everything! We men and women workers do it all! The boss and his money produce nothing, we don't need them; they need us!

The boss must fear Communism!

There is a world to build. A world where the
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US DRIVE TOWARD WWII DETERMINES ITS STRATEGY IN SYRIA-IRAQ-UKRAINE

The main contradiction in the world – that which has the greatest impact on the world’s important events – is the major imperialist powers’ fight for world domination.

Since capitalism matured into global imperialism at the end of the 19th century, the world has been completely carved up by these butchers. Satisfying the needs of newcomers to the table – demand-

ing access to more natural resources, cheap labor and markets – meant re-dividing the world. This could only be done through war: world war.

World Wars I and II are testaments to this. Now, WWII looms closer on the horizon as rising and re-emerging imperialist powers (China, Russia, Germany, Japan, India), and regional capitalist powers (Iran, Brazil, Turkey) demand a re-division of the world that emerged after WWII.

This is a direct assault on US imperialism which has dominated that post-WWII world. Hounded by these rivals, US rulers are more and more unable to impose their will through bribery, persuasion, threats or coercion. They have therefore become the world’s most destabilizing force, leaving a trail of destruction, chaos and wars as they lurch toward WWII to defend their empire.

This strategic long term concern is what dictates their actions in Iraq, Syria, and the Ukraine, where their rivalry is presently sharpest. Here we deal with the Iraq-Syria situation leaving the Ukraine for a later article.



US rulers must stop China’s energy imports

A 2013 article in *Parameters*, a quarterly publication of the US War College, states: “An overarching national security objective of the United States must be crystal clear: to counterbalance and contain a rising China.”

This can best be done, the article argues, by threatening China’s access to the energy it needs to fuel its rapidly growing economy and military. It explains that China’s “Achilles heel” is its “overwhelming dependence” on Persian Gulf energy imports, which must pass through five strategic straits: Bab el Mandab, Hormuz, Malacca, Sunda and Lombok.

It claims these imports can easily be stopped because US rulers can persuade their Persian Gulf allies to stop their energy exports to China. Besides, the US can stop tankers carrying energy from Africa to China by severing China’s “jugular vein”: blockading the above-mentioned five



critical straits and the sea lanes linking them, which are controlled by the US Navy.

The “pivot to Asia” is to guarantee US Naval supremacy in those waters, while building economic, political and military alliances to eventually face China militarily.

But “pivoting” is futile unless Iran stops its energy exports to China

To successfully starve China of its energy needs, the article says the US must also “prevent China from obtaining Persian Gulf oil and gas via alternative land-based pipelines.”

This means convincing Iran “through persuasion or coercion, to suspend energy exports to China.” But, because a nuclear-armed Iran could not be compelled to suspend energy exports to China, “the current path of coercion involving crippling sanctions, covert operations including subversion and targeted killings, and public threats of an Israeli attack on Iran’s nuclear enrichment facilities, has been pursued so aggressively.”

Unwittingly or perhaps speaking frankly to some US ruling circles, the article confirms what many believe: the Iran nuclear question is just the excuse used by the US to force Iran to stop exporting energy to China, especially in a US-China war.

The article hints that if Iran would accede to the US demands, it could be allowed to go nuclear. It then argues that a nuclear armed Iran wouldn’t pose an existential threat to Israel or the US, would not use the bomb to intimidate its neighbors, would not trigger a nuclear arms race in the region and would not transfer these weapons to terrorist groups. In short Iran “could be deterred just as other nuclear-armed adversaries are deterred—by the threat of mutual destruction.”

Stratfor: Iran “is nearly impossible to invade and impossible for a foreign occupier to hold.” (“The Geopolitics of the US,” May 28, 2012)

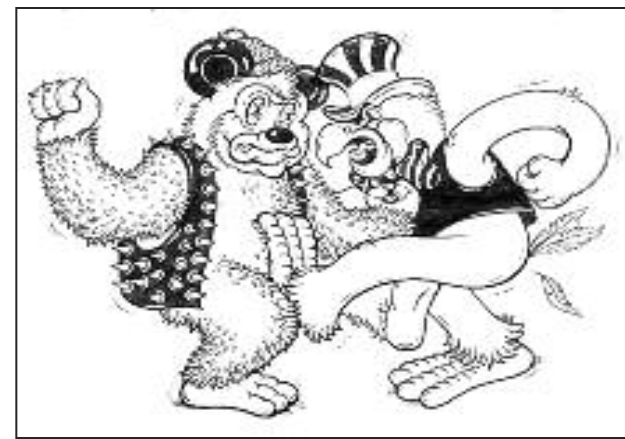
Stratfor, a very influential rulers’ think tank, supports the pivoting to Asia. The US War College’s article echoes Stratfor’s assessment stating, “The harsh reality is that attacking Iran is not a viable option.” It concludes that “the only realistic alternative is to persuade Iran to cooperate with the United States.”

However, this has complicated US rulers’ Middle East exit and pivot to Asia Pacific. Some rulers want to use the Iran nuclear issue as an ex-

cuse to invade Iran and Syria to re-conquer the Middle East. They see this as critical to defeat China and Russia. Others don’t want to fight China or Russia there but in Asia Pacific and Eastern Europe.

The ISIS threat is mainly about “cooperation or invasion.” The “re-conquer the Middle East” gang wants to exploit it as an opportunity to escalate US military intervention in Iraq, and now Syria, into a full scale invasion of Syria and Iran. The “pivot to Asia” gang sees it as the means to try to topple Assad – without putting boots on the ground – to pressure Iran to cooperate.

In either case, the timing of WWII may be accelerated or delayed, but its inevitability remains unchanged.



Communism will end capitalism’s perpetual wars

The age of imperialism also ushered in the era of social revolutions. The Russian Revolution triumphed during WWI and the Chinese Revolution four years after WWII.

Although led by communists, they fought for socialism: state capitalism led by communists. Eventually, the communists became capitalist exploiters.

Learning from our predecessors’ advances and mistakes, we are organizing as one army – under the banners of the International Communist Workers’ Party – to fight directly for communism.

Masses of workers are in motion worldwide. Led by industrial workers and soldiers and our guiding principle “Mobilizing the Masses for Communism,” they will become a powerful material force to end the rule of capital and build worldwide communism in the 21st century. Our industrial worker comrades in El Salvador and South Africa are turning this potential into the actual. We need to replicate, expand and deepen these breakthroughs everywhere!



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GARMENT WORKERS: LET'S TAKE BACK THE VALUE WE PRODUCE

“She is a dictator, a despot,” said a garment worker from Atomic Denim to a *Red Flag* distributor. She is one of about 140 workers—more than half of the workers in the factory—who get every issue of *Red Flag*.

“Never in all the years that I’ve worked in the garment industry have they treated me like this!” said another worker.

“Are these new supervisors?” we asked.

“No. They’re the same ones. But now that they have to pay a higher minimum wage, they make us work more and harder. They keep track of every minute we work,” explained another.

“She won’t let us use our phones. A worker just pushed the button on her cell phone to see what time it was and the supervisor yelled at her to turn it off.” The bosses don’t want workers to spend even a second not producing for them.

“It’s constant pressure. One worker wrote ‘stop



treating us like dogs!’ on the page where workers tear off the tickets to get paid pennies for each operation.”

A worker talked about the higher minimum wage, from \$8 to \$9 an hour. “The higher wage just means that prices of things we buy are higher too,” she said angrily.

“The wage system is a whip over us. We have to get rid of it with communist revolution,” said the *Red Flag* distributor.

“Yes, it’s a whip! That’s how they use it,” said the same worker.

Workers producing only \$15 a day?

The Atomic Denim bosses threaten, “Those who can’t turn in \$50 in tickets a day will be fired!” This is the terror imposed by the whip of the wage system. Without a job, there are no wages, without wages, there is no life. That’s why we have to destroy this inhuman system.

One of the brands they sew clothes for is Diesel, which demands many very small stitches—hard, slow, detailed work. With the prices they pay and the quality they demand, the bosses claim that some workers only produce \$15 or \$20 a day. That is a big lie. All garment workers produce much more!

As one of the workers said, “I went to their web site and saw that Diesel jeans sell for \$84 to \$698 a pair in the stores.”

Garment workers produce much use value—clothes for our class to wear—but the bosses sell it. That’s how they squeeze out of every garment worker an average of \$126,000 a year.

These workers have made the bosses very rich. And what do they get? They spend their lives in the factories and only get mounting debts, arthritis and other health problems from the stress and

repetitive work.

But what happens to this value that we produce? It doesn’t go to the workers. It goes into the pockets of the contractor and the store owners. It pays for their luxurious life style, and for their state apparatus (police, migra) to guarantee that we don’t rebel.

The bosses, desperate to make the highest profits in a world where more bosses are competing for shrinking markets, are pushing workers beyond their limits, and intensifying their attacks on all workers.

As the bosses demand harder work for longer hours, we should ask, “How can the value we produce be ours?”

“By eliminating the profit hungry bosses and their wage system, replacing it with a communist system.”

In communism, all the value workers create will be used to meet our needs. There won’t be any bosses to steal and sell what we make for their profits. We workers will organize production to collectively produce useful clothes, food, and everything of high quality necessary for our class, while guaranteeing the safety and health of all.

Our motivation won’t be money or fear of losing a job, but to organize a safe, healthy society that meets workers’ needs worldwide. We don’t need money for this. We only need our brains and labor power.

Workers’ anger must become an unbeatable force directed against the whole capitalist system. Garment workers need to build ICWP clubs in the factories to spread *Red Flag* and fight for a communist world, mobilizing the masses of angry workers to take back the value we produce.

GARMENT WORKERS from page 1

exploitation which they subject us to today doesn’t exist, a world in which we produce only what we need and not to sell and make a few people rich, a world where we all work together for everyone.

For years, they have wanted to terrorize us with the word “Communism.” They want us to think that it is something bad. IT’S SOMETHING BAD FOR THE BOSSES!

Together with the leaflet, we took *Red Flag*, as our main tool to mobilize the masses for communism. Our literature was well received. A young worker took the paper, returned, and made a donation. He said “This is so that you can keep distributing it.” This shows that asking for donations should be part of the political struggle to build the party.

The communist comrades in the factory came out to support us; giving us some security and more motivation to carry out this great work that must be constant. In the surrounding streets you could observe many workers concentrated read-

ing the leaflet and the newspaper.

These activities help the comrades who are inside the factories to build *Red Flag* networks and mobilize the workers for communism. Our line has to reach the masses. That’s how the workers will learn about our party and about how to fight for communism.

During the activity, a worker said to a comrade, “I saw that some workers had a leaflet and a newspaper, so I read it. It’s great! I want us to write a leaflet about the things that happen inside the factory where we work.”

After distributing our literature, we met with our comrades from the maquilas about their activities, schedules and future meetings. A comrade told us that we can meet in his house, since we have these meetings whenever we can. We read the newspaper. There are some things that we don’t understand, but we talk about them among all of us.

Self-critically, we must distribute

leaflets and *Red Flag* more consistently. These activities must and will be constant. Bringing communist ideas to workers is the work of all the members of the party in whatever part of the world we find ourselves. In this way, we are building communism. Each newspaper in the hands of a worker is another step towards communist revolution.

Garment Workers in El Salvador, May Day 2014



Read our new pamphlet:

**BIGGER INDUSTRIAL WORKING CLASS:
BIGGER COMMUNIST POTENTIAL WORLDWIDE**

Available at:

www.icwpredflag.org



CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RACISM MUST LEAD TO STUDY OF COMMUNISM

LOS ANGELES, Sept. 4 — A friend invited us to bring *Red Flag* to an open discussion at a community college, about Michael Brown, Ezell Ford, Omar Abrego, and at least 90 others killed by US police during August, 2014. About 30 students and a dozen faculty and staff attended, mostly brought by word-of-mouth and classroom announcements.

One student identified herself as a cousin of Ezell and helped to set a serious and angry tone.

A teacher opened the discussion by stating that we were there not only because of the racist murders but also because of all the ways that the system is attacking young people with mass unemployment, mass incarceration, and a poisonous culture.

She emphasized that “their futures are blighted by the crisis of global capitalism that is dragging us to the brink of environmental catastrophe and widening wars” and that “the promise that education will insulate [youth] from racism and poverty is a cruel hoax.”

A black administrator with a Ph.D. later proved this point when he described how his own cousin was brutalized by the LAPD last spring.

People are fighting back. We must “envision and fight for the future they deserve,” the teacher concluded, “one in which all can contribute their abilities and talents to the common good, where all lives are valued and none snuffed out, all work respected and not exploited, where we know each other without fear and guarantee our own collective security and welfare.”

Those at the meeting agreed on a lot but disagreed too. Some nodded when a *Red Flag* comrade said that racism comes from capitalism and the solution is communism. Many thought that the police just need to be trained better. One said that she felt safer with police around, but more asked, “Who will protect us from our protectors?”

There were also sharp disagreements over education. Several teachers mentioned that the college is creating an “equity plan” so that more black students will get degrees. That was their strategy for fighting racism. Another teacher suggested privately that this “equity” project (created by a pot of state money) could be used to bring up the issue of racist cops on campus. Students, however, wanted to deal

with this issue directly. Three decided to organize other students around it.

Someone suggested a study group to discuss the systemic roots of racism in capitalism. We should have seized this moment to circulate a sign-up sheet for a Party study group. That’s what our friends at the school should organize, not around “equity” or reforming the police. The

“future we deserve” is communism, and the sooner more people learn that, the better.

About forty students took *Red Flag* that day, a dozen at the meeting, including Ezell’s cousin and other new organizers. They know many more students, and will meet others in their classes. We hope that some of them will help expand the distribution of *Red Flag* hand-to-hand on campus, and maybe publicly on campus and at Party industrial concentrations.



FIGHT FOR A COMMUNIST WORLD TO SMASH CAPITALIST BORDERS AND RACISM

EL SALVADOR—Racism and nationalism are problems of capitalism which in the last few decades the bosses here have wanted to hide. However, reality shows us that wherever capitalism exists, there will be racism, nationalism and poverty as capitalism’s tools of division and repression. We will end all of these practices with our struggle for communism.

Due to the dollarization in 2001, thousands of Nicaraguans, Hondurans, and Guatemalans immigrated to El Salvador since when the dollars they are paid are exchanged into quetzals, lempiras and cordobas, their families can buy more. About 3 million Salvadorans live in the US alone. El Salvador is highly dependent on the remit-

tances they send from the US. Therefore popular thinking and “logic” is that in El Salvador the immigrant can’t suffer discrimination, a grave error.

In 2007, the city of La Union (in the department of El Salvador that borders Honduras and Nicaragua by the Gulf of Fonseca) decreed that “only Salvadorans (or people who were naturalized or legalized) can obtain a permit to sell on public streets.” This is a city in which more than 6,000 Nicaraguans live. The harassment by the metropolitan police is constant; at whatever moment they can ask anyone for documents, looking for Nicaraguans.

The bosses of construction companies or agricultural bosses, employ thousands of Nicaraguans and Hondurans at harvest time under conditions of exploitation, discrimination and poverty. In many of these cases when the workers oppose the bosses’ orders or protest their wages, which are the lowest, the minimum, they are threatened with, “If you keep bothering me, I will go to immigration and you’ll be deported.”

We workers are exploited, discriminated against, and excluded. Capitalism has different forms of repressive attacks. They use racist and nationalist tools to divide the workers all over the world. Borders are only imaginary lines created to divide us by colors, flags, or shields that don’t mean anything for the working class. We are only one class and we hold high only one flag, the red flag.

These “undocumented” workers, who accord-

ing to some people “come to take our jobs.” They are subjected to the same discrimination as millions of Salvadorans in the US. Many of them, like Salvadorans in the US, think that when they get residency papers or citizenship, their problems will be over. Nicaraguans and Hondurans who have lived more than 30 years in this country have never gotten their papers, even though the bosses’ laws say that if they stay in the country more than five years, they can enter the residency process.

We must fight against the whole history of racism in this country. The bosses have wanted to deny the history of black people in El Salvador. During the government of Maximiliano Hernandez Martinez, the butcher who ordered the murder of 35,000 workers after the failed insurrection of 1932, blacks were prohibited from entering the country. This forced them to live in the interior of the country where they mixed with indigenous settlements. In this way the black population that inhabited these areas became invisible.

We must respond to the attacks of the system with more struggle. In communism, there won’t be borders to divide humanity. Money, which forces us to sell our labor power, will not exist. There won’t be racial distinctions; we are only one human race. We will eliminate all these evils of capitalism with collective production, and with a new form of education, we will build a new society for humanity. Let’s build this future, step by step strengthening the International Communist Workers’ Party.



Ebola Epidemic:

US TROOPS WILL PROTECT CAPITALIST INTERESTS, NOT AFRICAN MASSES

SEATTLE, Sept. 16, “People hate the U.S. military and rightfully so,” commented a friend from Boeing. “Now these heads of state and ‘humanitarian groups’ are asking for U.S. troops.”

“You better beware of what you ask for. You might get it!” replied another.

And now Obama has announced sending 3,000 troops!

We’ve had scores of discussions in factories, schools and even hair salons as we build for our upcoming Party forum on the Ebola outbreak in western Africa. Many have commented on the sad state of capitalist health care.

We also emailed copies of the *Red Flag* articles on this topic to health care workers around the country. Some will be writing their suggestions about how we can mobilize the masses for communist health care.

One Boeing friend noted the irony of Liberian president Sirleaf’s request for U.S. troops. Already Obama plans to send the military to open a 25-person clinic for health-care worker victims of Ebola. Everybody knows that’s a mere drop in the bucket.

The Gates Foundation is offering \$50 million “to stop the epidemic.” Despite the foundation’s assurances that the allocation of funds would be “flexible,” most dollars are going to develop a vaccine: at this point a sure moneymaker.

Those on the ground have already raised their voices in protest. They really need more health care workers protected from infection by known methods. The potential for profits in this strategy is not nearly as great.

Most attempts to create vaccines fail. Eliminating the poverty that allows these epidemics to spread is the near term, but less profitable, solution. This practical strategy is beyond the capability of capitalism.

The nurses in biggest hospitals in Sierra Leone and Liberia have struck for more help and basic protective gear. They haven’t been paid for a month, making survival that much more difficult. Hundreds of health workers have died as the health systems collapse.

The truth is that capitalist health care can never protect us. It’s profit-driven and elitist.

Capitalist vs. Communist Health Care

These brave nurse strikers rightfully blame the government. What else could you expect from the capitalist government? Their strike has political overtones.

Imagine if they made their strike an overt political strike to build for communist healthcare. That message would reverberate around the world!

The 120,000 West Point residents that were cordoned off by U.S.-armed troops at the end of August are the very people that could end this epidemic. This kind of ghetto quarantine is the opposite of the “bare-foot doctor” approach communist health care would use.

“I agree with this bare-foot doctor approach,” said one medical tech, “but is 3-6 months of training enough given all the diseases cap-

italism has created?”

“What if the basics of health care were taught to every child as they worked in clinics as soon as they were able?” suggested another worker. “Then we wouldn’t be starting the training from ground zero.”

We’ve invited a nurse to the forum who will give a short presentation on stopping blood-borne infections. We all need to know this stuff to fight for the health of our class.

Many more questions like these need to be discussed in the pages of *Red Flag*. Our forum has already recruited members and friends to write such letters and articles.

Next on the agenda: showing how the fight for communist health care is an essential part of mobilizing masses for communism.



September 2--Nurses strike at John F. Kennedy Hospital in Monrovia, Liberia.

TO CURE THE EBOLA EPIDEMIC, DESTROY ITS ROOT: CAPITALISM

The Ebola epidemic is spreading very rapidly in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. Like malaria, the epidemic is caused by increasing the impoverishment of the working class, the product of racist capitalism in crisis.

US and China Struggle Over Africa

This epidemic is taking place amidst the sharpening inter-imperialist rivalry over control of Africa, West Africa in particular. The Chinese imperialists surpassed the US and Europe as Africa’s number one trading partner and investor in 2009. In Liberia, traditionally a US neocolony, the Chinese are challenging this domination. They have built roads and improved existing ones, to help make their investments more profitable, like the Bong mines which plan to ship ten million tons of iron ore by 2016.

Africa is a key source of oil. China imports 30% of its crude oil from Africa. West Africa provides about 12% of US crude oil imports. The US National Intelligence Council predicts that this share will rise to 25% by 2015. (Egypt Oil and Gas website, 5/14). This struggle will lead to war (see editorial).

Beware of “Humanitarian” Aid

“China is taking the lead among countries offering assistance, which fully demonstrates that they are a good friend,” said Liberian President Sirleaf.

The Chinese are vying with the US to lead the “humanitarian” aid, designed to gain influence and control, not to help stop the disease and end poverty. So far, China has sent \$37 million in aid to West Africa.

On Sept. 16, Obama announced that the US will set up an AFRICOM (US Defense Depart-

ment’s Africa Command) headquarters in Liberia. It will “to provide command and control to support the U.S. military activities and...coordination with the U.S. government and international relief efforts,” an administration official said. (*Wall Street Journal*, 9/15)

US AFRICOM has spent years engaged in “humanitarian” projects in Africa meant to enhance the US’ military presence. US aid is designed to influence foreign governments and civilian populations to “facilitate military operations and achieve U.S. objectives.” According to the Pentagon, humanitarian efforts are engineered to improve “U.S. visibility, access, and influence with foreign military and civilian counterparts.” Development projects are designed to “promote the security and foreign policy interests of the United States.” (Nick Turse, *The Investigative Fund*)

With this aid the US wants to project an anti-racist image. But the US bosses’ racism oozes out of their pores. Some US television commentators said that the crisis reflected a “cultural problem,” because the families of the Ebola victims touch them before and after death. This is racist. The real culprit is the inhuman conditions created by the crushing poverty of capitalism.

This aid will not provide what is needed: masses of people equipped to guarantee that the victims of Ebola are treated with fluids, electrolytes, and other medicine. Also necessary is protective gear for health care workers and families who treat patients to stop the spread of the disease.

It also requires decent housing, nutritious food, clean streets, a sewage system and clean drinking

water. In fact, those who clean hospitals and cities, those who drive garbage trucks and dispose of waste are more important than doctors in preventing the spread of disease.

Capitalism, based on profits squeezed from the exploitation of workers, will never do this. Only communism is capable of educating and mobilizing the masses of workers so that collectively they plan and fight for the well-being of our class.

Chinese Imperialists Not Lesser Evil—We Need Communism

The Chinese bosses built their wealth by super-exploiting the Chinese workers. Now, they are expanding their wealth by super-exploiting Africa’s workers and resources. For example, Liberian workers at the Bong mines protested in 2013 against their \$5-a-day pay with no pay for over time, their terrible living conditions and lack of medical care.

During the Cultural Revolution in China in the 1960’s, the Chinese Communists massively trained “barefoot doctors” to treat people and mobilize them to wipe out diseases like malaria. But with the defeat of the Cultural Revolution, China abandoned those principles and instituted capitalist health care.

The urgent need is to mobilize masses of workers in Africa and worldwide for communism. Then the masses will put an end to poverty and exploitation, and discover cures for and treat all the diseases that capitalism has produced.

Nurses and other workers should organize communist solidarity with the nurses who struck in Liberia for protective gear. But most important, we call on all workers to spread *Red Flag* and the fight for a communist world.

LETTERS FROM COMRADES IN SOUTH AFRICA

“Send me 20, no, 50 Red Flags”

Greetings comrades! I got the dialectical materialism articles and I have started reading them. Will keep in touch and give you feedback. I have been reading *Red Flag*....Revolution is the only solution!

I am very inspired by what ICWP stands for and I hope it can only grow stronger from here and expand to far corners that are in much need of such ideals, because I believe there are still many like us out there we need to reach out to and make aware of ICWP and its mission!

You can count on me. Send 20 copies of RF.
Two days later:

I just read the letter by the farmworker comrade. Very inspiring indeed and it's sad to know that some people are not willing to stand up just because of fear and lack of information. ICWP really needs to reach out to these souls and educate them. Thus they can be well equipped to stand up and fight against the dreaded Capitalist system that's killing our people...while the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer with no voice. Let's make ICWP the voice of the people!

Please send me *Red Flag* as soon as possible. I requested 20 but I think you can give me 50...so that the ones I give it to, I will tell them to also to recruit and send to people at their workplace. Each person I mobilise I will request for each of them to mobilise just as much.

—Young comrade

Mobilize the masses all over the world as quickly as possible.

I recently read an article by a ninety-year-old ICWP member. I was heartbroken when he mentioned a worker who received a blow on the

head as a result of a defective tool. I was sad when I read that the worker spent the rest of his life suffering till he died.

There are many such incidents all over the world. Another worker came back from work after long hours, got to his bed, and never woke up. He died. All these cases are part and parcel of this worldwide capitalist system which must be killed by all means necessary. Capitalism doesn't care at all about the lives and safety of the workers; it only cares about its production and maximising profit.

Capitalism, labour exploitation, death and injuries of hard-working labour must end. Join the



ICWP, fight for communism! Let's put an end to this heartless and cruel system to workers, the time to destroy capitalism and its tools is now!!!! I wish we can mobilise masses all over the world as quickly as possible. This is urgent, comrades; it's long overdue.

—Proud Comrade

Inspired by farmworker comrade's wise letter

I found the letter written by a farmworker comrade therapeutic. It tells of the suffering experienced by wage slaves worldwide. But what is striking is its ability to lift one's spirit up. It is not about doom and gloom. The writer poignantly points out the correct revolutionary communist line: building our party, the ICWP as the only viable alternative for the workers of the world.

The letter resonated with the hardships experienced by expelled workers at the Port Elizabeth harbour. We want to keep contact with

these workers and join them to our party. The farmworker comrade is spurring us on to continue to build workers' power to crush the bosses' tyranny all over the world. He enjoins us to be confident and without fear look the bosses in the eye and demand what is ours, the fruits of our labour that the bosses expropriate for themselves. He detests the anti-communist beliefs peddled by the bosses as lies meant only to sow divisions and weaken the working class.

He shows in a very simple way, how workers anywhere in the world are treated the same. The phenomenon of labour brokers is happening

everywhere in different shapes and disguises. Were it not for this comrade's letter, I would be drowning in miseries. Let us therefore heed the comrade's advice, defeat the bosses' system all over the world and build a system of production based on need not profit. Viva ICWP Viva!

—Comrade in South Africa

“Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement.” Lenin, *What Is To Be Done*

MORE ON MECHANIST PHILOSOPHY IN THE USSR

In our last column, we began to look into “mechanism” (or “mechanical materialism”), an influential trend in capitalist philosophy for a long time. We saw how the Soviet mechanists' claim that the sides of a contradiction don't need to be connected led to completely wrong ideas about imperialist rivalries. The mechanist idea of taking the science of mechanics as a model for all change had far worse results than that, however.

Rejecting Qualitative Change

Typically, mechanists saw mechanics as a science that studies only quantities, that is, things that can be measured with numbers. Since they thought that mechanics is the most basic science, they often concluded that qualities and qualitative changes are not real. Despite the fact that qualitative changes, like boiling water to make steam, are studied in other parts of physics, some Soviet mechanists argued that qualitative change was not an objective scientific fact, but depends on an observer's point of view.

They claimed that having or not having a certain quality depends on which properties people single out because of their own interests. Thus they rejected the dialectical law of the transformation of quantity into quality. Other mechanists rejected this law because they claimed (falsely) that mechanics has a “law of continuity,” so a sudden qualitative change—like a revolution—is not a real phenomenon.

Fantasies of Equilibrium

Another typical mechanist view was borrowed from thermodynamics, the physical theory of heat transfer. It is a law of thermodynamics that an isolated system, that is, one that does not exchange matter or energy with its surroundings, will tend toward a steady state called “equilibrium.” A system in equilibrium has no tendency to change unless affected by some external cause.

Mechanists treated this tendency to equilibrium as if it applied to all systems, not just isolated ones. They claimed that people and societies always move toward equilibrium unless disturbed from the outside. This means that internal causes, and class struggle in particular, are not the causes of historical change. Mechanists saw social conflicts as tending to die out on their own and reach equilibrium. This is the opposite of Marxism.

The mechanist claim that societies strive toward equilibrium was actually based on completely bogus physics. Physics does not require that non-isolated systems move toward equilibrium. In fact, a human being who is not exchanging matter and energy with his or her surroundings must be dead! A society isolated from sources of matter and energy is impossible. This whole argument was pseudo-science.

Bad Dialectics Matters

The wrong idea that every system tends toward equilibrium really mattered in the debates in the USSR in the 1920s over creating a collective agriculture. At that time almost all food was pro-

duced by peasants. The food supplied to city workers was largely controlled by rural capitalists called “kulaks” (“fists”), who were hostile to the Soviet government. In line with his mechanist ideas, Nicolai Bukharin, an important political leader at the time, viewed the conflict with the kulaks as gradually dying out. He advocated being nice to the kulaks by producing more consumer goods that would encourage them to produce more grain.

Stalin had the opposite view. He eventually recognized that the class struggle with the kulaks would not die out gradually, but would become more intense. This became obvious when the kulaks withheld grain from the cities in 1928 and workers had to be sent to the countryside to take it. The kulaks were exploiters who would resist their class being eliminated and “the resistance of the exploiters cannot but lead to the inevitable sharpening of the class struggle,” as Stalin said.

This conclusion was right in line with dialectics. As long as classes exist, contradictions between classes (and most other contradictions, too) tend to become more intense and can only be resolved that way. The mechanist ideas that qualitative change is not objective, that conflicts tend to die out on their own, or, as we discussed in the previous column, that the opposite sides of a contradiction tend to cancel out, all lead to wrong conclusions and harm the fight for communism.

Next column: The mechanists' opponents in Soviet philosophy.

LETTERS

LETTERS

LETTERS

CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

Don't Fall for the Bosses' Game

Recently in an MTA (Public Transport Agency) garage, a series of incidents have occurred involving our working-class brothers and sisters fighting amongst each other. In some cases, some workers have reported other workers to the general supervisor. From a communist perspective, this type of things can be resolved among our own selves.

When we fall for the bosses' game of blaming each other, we are weakening our strength as a collective and giving more power to the boss to justify the attacks that are taking place, such as the ban on phone use in work areas.

A brake mechanic made a true statement when he said: "These guys want to fire each other on their own," referring to the latest incident between two workers in charge of an area.

All this division between us is the result of the lack of understanding of communist revolutionary ideas.

The history of the working class is the history of class struggle and when workers as a revolutionary class have united they have been capable of great achievements and advances.

By fighting, betraying or attacking each other, we make ourselves weak and easy prey for the bosses, especially now that we are at the threshold of a World War III, in which we will supply the corpses and the rich will keep the conquered wealth.

The political understanding we need is in **Red Flag** and ICWP study groups. Let's not ignore or underestimate the power of communist ideology. It is the ideology of the working class.

--MTA mechanic

Communism All Day, Every Day

A good friend started giving me **Red Flag**. I had been organizing a group of 20 workers. When my friend told me about communism, we had the same goals. So I decided to join ICWP.

The time to preach has been much exhausted, comrades, now is the time to practice and promote what we believe in - Now is the time for Communism!

It's time we included communism in everything we do. It's time we integrated communism in our daily lives and core beliefs so it's visible in our fight against Capitalism.

Capitalism is pandemic because communism has never really been given a chance. Capitalism is a ruthless beast that eats us alive. Capitalism has everyone and everything working around the clock to feed it by any means necessary.

The flip side reveals that some of us only take up communism as a hobby or to trigger engagement on issues which we will soon forget. When we neglect communism as an occasional issue it stands no chance. We might as well fold and call it a day.

Comrades, I'm being a realist. We can't work on something for 2 hours or 2 days and expect positive results. We can't go to work Monday to Friday working and feeding the capitalist system, and then spend a few weekend hours just talking about communism and expect it to grow against capitalism, whilst we put in much work on capitalism in almost everything we do. It's like having two babies and every time it's feeding time you lock one up in a room and expect it to grow as strong as the other which is fed daily. Chances are the one locked up will turn up weak or dead.

Marikana, South Africa, 2012

So my plea is that we need to be more about communism than we talk about. We need to come up with innovative ways collectively within the movement to empower ourselves so that we won't need to rely on the capitalist system that we are opposing. That will always come at a price that will hurt our ultimate goal, which is Communism for All...All day every day!

—New comrade in South Africa

Red Flag helps us understand revolutionary process

Yesterday I attended a meeting organised by Numsa. I left feeling dejected. What lifted my spirit was the recent **Red Flag**. I perused the article on MTA Workers' Historic Task: Mobilize for Communism. "How do we organize this mass sentiment into a material force capable of changing history and the world we live in?"

I found this an apt description of our revolutionary work. I haven't finished reading the article but already I feel rejuvenated and ready to tackle any obstacle. This shows how the **Red Flag** is key to our organizing and it illustrates dialectical materialism – likeness and differences. The workers in LA and South Africa have more in common than differences. But the capitalist bosses make the superficial differences to divide us. The **Red Flag** is our biggest weapon. We must read, write and distribute it.

--A comrade of a thousand struggles

With all my energy, you can count on me.

Thank you, comrades. You truly stand for communism; you breathe communism, you practice communism, you live communism, you are communism. I learnt whole lot from you and communism.

Mobilising masses for communism must be in the air we breathe and talk about it wherever we are. Mobilising for ICWP to me is no longer just a responsibility; it's what I love to do. Soon we will meet the members of AYA who are now ICWP members.

Since the international ICWP meeting I feel very confident. I am able to answer questions about capitalism and why communism is the only solution. Yesterday I gave some ICWP t-shirts to comrades J and V. Comrade J is so clear about communism that he is helping me become a better organizer. I will emphasize that he write for **RF**.

--Young Lion Comrade

Obama & Kerry on Propaganda Campaign in the Middle East

Obama's speech on the eve of September 11, and US Secretary of State Kerry's whirlwind tour of Middle East capitals trumpeted US resolve to take on ISIS. The chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Dempsey, even told Congress on September 16 that he was open to sending US troops back to Iraq.

The mass media from the US to Europe to Japan have barraged the world with this imperialist propaganda, stressing Kerry's presence at a Paris conference called by the Presidents of France and Iraq.

The fact is that the US has lost the initiative in Middle East. The only significant forces in Iraq and Syria are allied with Iran, which is allied with rising imperialists Russia and China. The most active fighters against ISIS are the Iraqi Shiite militias and the Syrian government, both bankrolled by Iran. Russia and China were also represented at the Paris conference.

The US poses as the leader of an anti-ISIS "coalition of the willing," but it has few reliable allies in the region. After more than ten years of US war and occupation in Iraq, the US has destabilized the region and strengthened both Sunni extremists and Iranian-backed militias.

On September 16, the US had to call in airstrikes fifteen miles from the Iraqi capital of Baghdad, where Shiite militias and the Iraqi Army were under attack by ISIS forces. These are the same Shiite militias that killed the last US soldier who died before US troops were withdrawn in 2011. Although the US airstrikes supported them tactically, these militias refuse to fight on the US side.

Saudi Arabia finally decided that ISIS threatens its legitimacy as the representative of conservative Sunni Islam and has agreed to train a third force of "moderates" in Syria. But other governments in the region don't trust the "moderate" Free Syrian Army, whose record does not inspire confidence. It's clear that weapons given to any of the dozens of armed factions could well end up in the hands of ISIS.

So Kerry's round-the-world talkfest and the US bombing campaign are attempts to regain the appearance of leadership in the Middle East, while the US is actually being marginalized. This PR campaign targets both international and domestic audiences.

Internationally, while the US policy is to destabilize the region, a rout in Iraq would be a huge blow to US prestige. If you're totally humiliated, it's hard to find allies. This has to worry US rulers who anticipate fighting China in the next world war.

The US rulers must also worry about workers at home, who are sick of imperialist wars. What can they say to the 2.5 million US veterans who came home from Iraq and Afghanistan? To hundreds of thousands of relatives and friends of the ones who didn't come home? And especially to the young people who they'll count on to fight the next war?

Here's what we say: soldiers, workers and youth must mobilize the masses to prepare to turn the next imperialist war into communist revolution.

—History Student



Climate and Capitalist Crisis:

ONLY COMMUNISM CAN “CHANGE EVERYTHING”

Can capitalism rescue us from the environmental crisis that capitalism itself created? Can “climate resilient growth” end world poverty? Are our only options reducing our personal “carbon footprints” and pleading with world leaders to do the rest?

The United Nations and organizers of the September 20-21 People’s Climate March (PCM) answer “yes” but the truth is a resounding “NO!”

This month, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is hosting a summit for world leaders to make plans to dramatically reduce carbon pollution, which drives global warming.

The PCM coincides with this summit in order to “push our world leaders” so that “solutions to the climate crisis [will] no longer be determined by multinational corporations.” It wants to “shift the balance of power back to the people and to the planet.”

As we go to press, tens or hundreds of thousands are preparing to march in New York City and elsewhere around the world. While previous environmental movements were often elitist and even racist, this one is trying to mobilize masses, linking climate change and poverty as a single “social justice issue” that hits poor people of color the hardest. The Democrats hope to use this issue to get out the vote in November.

Many participants correctly identify capitalism as the problem. But leading capitalists themselves see global warming as a growing threat to their profit system. The UN summit website declares, “Improving economic performance and pursuing low-carbon, climate resilient growth is ... one and the same objective.”

The *Stern Review of the Economics of Climate Change* (2006), commissioned by the British government, predicted that “ignoring climate change will eventually damage economic growth.” It warned of “risks of major disruption to economic and social activity... on a scale similar to those associated with the great wars and the economic depression of the first half of the

20th century.”

Those “major disruptions” included communist-led revolutions in Russia and China. That’s what the rulers most fear today, and that’s why “activist” leaders and pundits are deliberately steering the masses into an all-class alliance around reforms like a carbon fee (tax).

Reformism: Path to a Really Dead End

Naomi Klein’s new book *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate* (9/16/2014) admits that markets cannot fix the climate crisis. But, she says, reducing carbon emissions would reduce inequality, “re-imagine our [sic] broken democracies, and rebuild our [sic] gutted local economies.” Klein wants to “fix” the economic system, not to overthrow it and build communism instead.

The movie “Disruption,” released on September 7 to promote the march, insists that “power never concedes anything without a demand” and urges us to build a movement strong enough to scare “our leaders” into taking action at the 2015 UN-sponsored meeting in Paris.

What we should be building is a communist movement for the working class to take power, not a reformist one that makes demands on capitalist rulers.

“Disruption” puts forward the rulers’ estimate that dependence on fossil fuels is a “classic market failure” because the fossil-fuel industry doesn’t pay the true cost of production. Instead it “exports them to the public” which pays for the impacts (like expensive wildfires), for military costs involved in marketing Mideast oil, and for tax breaks. It says the problem is a malfunction of capitalism, not the capitalist system itself.

But capitalism’s market system, however it’s managed, always passes costs to the working-class masses and benefits to the capitalist ruling class. Globally, it leads to imperialist world wars, regardless of “international conferences.” Only communism can eliminate this viciously exploiting and war-making commodity system and replace it with a society without profits, money, or exploitation.

When the needs of the masses and our planet are the first and only consideration, we can quickly transition away from carbon. We, the masses – led by industrial workers and soldiers – will really be able to change everything.

Throw the capitalists overboard

The so-called “People’s Climate March” says that “to change everything, we need everyone on board.” Los Ange-

Climate Change: Workers of the World, Unite to Destroy Capitalism!

Scientific American (2008) listed twelve diseases that were likely to worsen due to climate change. Ebola was one. “Outbreaks tend to follow unusual downpours or droughts in central Africa—a likely result of climate change.” More evidence is accumulating for this hypothesis. Meanwhile, tropical diseases are spreading to Italy and elsewhere as mosquito habitats expand.

The long-term drought in Darfur, which led to murderous competition between farmers and herders, was caused by the warming of tropical southern oceans and the cooling of the north Atlantic, which disrupted African monsoon patterns.

Pacific island nations like the Maldives and Kiribati are already planning to evacuate as rising ocean levels will soon leave them under water. One quarter of the land of intensively populated Bangladesh may also be submerged.

The melting of Arctic sea ice has intensified conflict among Russia, Norway, the U.S., Canada and Denmark for control of the shorter, easier Northwest Passage route between Europe and Asia that is now open for military or commercial naval operations.

As the rulers of rich and poor nations fight over the costs of climate change, the working masses everywhere pay the heaviest price. We must reject nationalist and reformist ways of thinking, and mobilize for communism.



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