

# RED FLAG

NEWSPAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST WORKERS' PARTY

VOLUME 1 No 5



THE END: Miners' support group leads a demonstration of strikers at Rossington pit village before the return to work after the miners had decided to end their year-long strike.

England Coal Miners Strike 1984



the ground during a mass picket at Kellingley colliery in North Yorkshire.

## Two Months Locked Out and Counting

# Rio Tinto Miners Debate Red Ideas

Boron, CA, March 31-- On a back road in the windswept high desert, a small group of locked-out borax miners harass scab truck drivers approaching the Rio Tinto mine, and huddle around a small fire. Today they are talking about communism with a group of comrades who drove 2½ hours from Los Angeles to visit them.

"Communist ideas conform to the experiences of these miners," a comrade commented. "We spoke with about thirty people, miners and their relatives, and we didn't shy away from politics. The response was overwhelmingly positive. Every miner at the front-line encampment took *Red Flag*."

"This affects everyone," a miner told us. "What they're trying to do to us – cut wages and benefits, change work rules, have total control over us – is what they want to do to all workers." We agreed, explaining how we're building support for the locked-out workers around exactly this idea.

**We ask every *Red Flag* reader to collect solidarity letters and food (or money) for the Rio Tinto miners on your job, at your school, or in your community.**

"Sometimes we think that white workers with American flags on their homes and cars are not open to communist ideas," said a comrade, "but every one of those white workers was open." Sure, they were surprised when we said we're communists – but interested, too.

"Communists organize the whole working class," a comrade ex-

plained. "The working class must determine our own destiny and share the fruits of our labor. We don't need bosses. We produce everything." A miner replied, "Yes." Of course there were disagreements, too.

### Nationalism: Bosses Want Workers to Support World War III

Most militant miners are relying on the union's strategy of lawsuits and appeals to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). "The union [ILWU Local 30] took them to court and won. We got them to stop breaking the law," said one. But he also thinks that Rio Tinto is now cutting wages to pay for the costs of the lawsuit. "The company's biggest crimes are perfectly legal," a comrade said, "they are stealing your labor every day. That's where their profits come from."

A comrade criticized the US flags that decorated the protest campsite. "They want us to think it's our flag, but it's not. We have more in common with miners in Turkey and other countries than with any boss." A miner replied, "Well it SHOULD be our flag – we have to take it back." We said that this country never belonged to the workers, but always to the capitalists. The only flag that represents the interests of all workers is the red flag of workers' internationalism and communism.

We explained that the broader context of this lockout is inter-imperialist rivalry. Boron is a strategic resource needed for military airplanes and other technology. Rio Tinto wants to maximize profits by

expanding sales globally. According to a 2007 Rio Tinto company document, "Clearly China ... has become extremely important...The importance of the US has declined substantially relative to that of China since 2000". That's why Rio Tinto had accepted a Chinese \$19.5 billion bid to acquire 10% more of its stock; which would have given China control of Rio Tinto.

But the U.S. ruling class, preparing for eventual war against China, was not willing for this to happen. Meanwhile, China – angry that England, Australia and the US bosses had blocked the Rio Tinto deal – has sentenced four Rio Tinto execs to long prison terms for accepting bribes.

In this context, the AFL-CIO support campaign "Food and Flags" is a way to win locked-out miners to supporting U.S. bosses' plans for World War III.

### "Miners Have a Fighting Mindset"

One retired miner told us about his experiences in the 1968 and 1974 strikes. We talked about the difference in the period now that the rulers are preparing for world war, and why we see that as an opportunity for communist revolution. He took the paper and then, later, ran across the street to give us \$5, apologizing for not being able to give us more.

"I wish we had more opportunities to walk with these miners in their struggle," reflected a comrade on the way back to Los An-

*Continue on page 2, See Miners*

## Students join workers in D.C. immigrant rights march

### Minds are opening to communist revolution

Hundreds of student leaders from all over the U.S. flooded Washington, D.C. for a conference to learn lobbying strategies to assist with the Obama administration's Healthcare Reform Bill. The bill included an increase in Pell Grants for community college students and a restructuring of the Direct Student Loan Program. After sitting through the first few sessions, some students decided this reform exercise was a waste of time that diverted students from the working class struggle.

Dozens of students splintered off from the conference to attend the Immigrant March on the Mall. A few of them saw this as an important step to winning workers from the march to the communist movement.

There were around 200,000 workers in attendance. They drove up by the busload, some from as far away as Los Angeles. The energy was incredible! Many held signs that said "Workers of the World Unite" and "Smash the Borders." It was a multi-racial international crowd that had supporters from all over the globe.

Most of the crowd was supporting "Immigration Reform" but revolutionary students took this opportunity to pass out *Red Flag* to the crowd as they slowly marched to the center of the rally. The response was empowering. The papers were passed around with great enthusiasm while the group of students began to connect the dots on Healthcare and Immigration Reform and how the bosses distort the fight to further their racist agenda to keep us divided.

Later that evening a few students met up at their hotel to discuss what happened earlier

*Continue on page 15, See D.C. Immigrant March*



## **It's Not Chaos, It's Capitalism:**

# **Build For Communist Revolution to End Bosses' Destruction**

For a couple of years now, the U.S. ruling class has been operating under a dangerously cynical premise: that they can maintain their world dominance by managing their relative, long-range decline through opportunist alliances, bribery, back-room deals and a series of brutal, localized wars. Niall Ferguson warns against this Pollyannaish strategy on the front page of *Foreign Affairs*, the voice of the U.S. bosses' most important think-tank. The title says it all: **Decline And Fall: When The American Empire Goes, It Is Likely To Go Quickly.**

"Decline and Fall" predicts a complete collapse of the American Empire that can happen "at any time." After listing the economic and political strains of the current capitalist crisis, he concludes, "... a sleeping driver can be all it takes to go over the edge of chaos." One industrial workers' discussion group surmised he wants "a modern day Hitler to prepare the country for WWII."

This is not the first time *Foreign Affairs* marked a strategic shift in U.S. policy. These same front pages heralded the Cold War, shifting from "constructive engagement" of the former USSR. Decades of racist, imperialist attacks on the worlds' workers were the result.

### **Bosses Turn To Mysticism; Workers Need Scientific Communism**

Being a bosses' mouthpiece, Ferguson rejects a scientific communist analysis. He's forced to rely on the semi-mysticism of chaos theory, a sure sign of a ruling class incapable of grasping the "unmistakable beat of history."

This "beat of history" that he accuses Marxists of favoring flows from understanding the internal contradictions of capitalism. The bosses' rate of profit falls as more capitalists around the world bring more modern manufacturing facilities on line. The bosses can counter this fall by more severely attacking workers in their home countries and expanding overseas. Ultimately, this expansion results in a clash of empires.

Today, China and others are advancing at the expense of the U.S. bosses. As Ferguson warns, the U.S. bosses have to be ready to destroy the productive capability of their rivals: a sure prescription for World War.

There is only one way workers can escape this vicious cycle. Communist revolution will allow us to build a society based, not on the dog-eat-dog mentality of capitalism, but on the share-and-share-alike potential of the dictatorship of the working class.

Communism can expand worldwide industry to provide for our needs without pitting worker against worker and nation against nation. Only the insanity of capitalism's production for profit necessitates these periodic wars to destroy productive capacity. Indeed, communists welcome extra hands in extra factories, giving each group of workers more time for leisure and political education. We can become the masters of our fate as communist ideology takes hold, helping us build our society on the basis of real science.

### **The Capitalist Beast Reveals Itself**

It is precisely in these times of crisis that capitalism bares its ugly soul. Let the bosses and their apologists babble on about reforming their murderous,

racist system. Many workers and their allies will come to know better if we dare to fight for communist understanding in each and every fightback.

The "beat of history" Ferguson fears so much not only predicts the collapse of empires, but also that the bosses can be taken by a determined working class guided by communist class-consciousness and a revolutionary Party.

With this long-term aim in sight and your help, the International Communist Workers Party (ICWP) will increase the distribution of our revolutionary communist paper, *Red Flag*, 50% by the conclusion of our Seattle and LA summer projects and double it by the fall. We will organize revolutionary contingents at various May Day marches around the world, relying on youth and workers organizing to "smash all borders and wage slavery." We proudly proclaim, "Working people have no nation, smash racist deportations!"

We bring this same revolutionary communist message to our efforts to support locked-out Rio Tinto workers, MTA workers facing a contract battle this fall, Boeing workers and aerospace subcontractor workers confronting the racist boss/government/union hack gang-up to end strikes, students and teachers marching against racist cutbacks in schools, and class struggle around the world. Join the ICWP to put a revolutionary communist vision back on the agenda—the only way to end the bosses' "new" strategy of destruction.

### **Miners from page 1**

geles. "But the best way to help them is to bring these experiences to the workers and students we see every day and expand the distribution of *Red Flag* so that more people will be inspired by the Rio Tinto miners' struggle to join ICWP."

"Miners have a fighting mindset everywhere in the world," remarked a comrade whose father was a miner in Mexico. They sense the power of the working class, but they need communist leadership."

The ILWU once was a red-led union, the only major union to resist the anti-communist attacks of the post-World War II period. But it followed the old "Communist Party USA" down the path of reformism, patriotism and electoral politics — a.k.a. "revisionism." Now miners, like all workers, need to join and build the International Communist Workers Party (ICWP) into the revolutionary force that will smash this revisionism along with capitalism itself.

**On April 15 Rio Tinto begins its annual shareholders meeting in London.**

## **RALLY AND PICKET AT BRITISH CONSULATES FRIDAY APRIL 16, 11:00 A.M.**

**San Francisco: 1 Sansome**

**Seattle: 900 4th Avenue**

**Los Angeles: 11766 Wilshire Blvd.**

*The LA rally is organized by the LA County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, around the theme "America the Beautiful." Join the ICWP contingent around the opposite theme "WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE!"*



**Join the  
International Communist Workers' Party  
(ICWP)  
[www.icwpredflag.org](http://www.icwpredflag.org)  
(310) 487-7674**



# Reject Bosses' Logic At Rio Tinto, Boeing, Aerospace

SEATTLE, WA, 3/31— “RioTinto is rapidly becoming the norm, not the exception,” concluded our 45 minute on-the-job study/action group, referring to the 590 locked-out miners in the Mojave Desert. Two-dozen Boeing Machinists (IAM) have signed our solidarity letter keeping this in mind. Management there, like here at Boeing, is demanding the abolishment of multi-year contracts that spell out wages, benefits and a few work rules in favor of “flexibility” and decades-long agreements that—they hope—will put an end to strikes and fightback.

Such is the logic of imperialist competition. We’d be fools to accept it. The smart move is to embrace and expand the logic of the working class, where each works according to their commitment and gets according to their need. Such is the logic of communist revolution.

With Partners Like These, Who Needs Enemies?

The IAM international leadership, however, fully endorses the bosses’ logic. It has entered into “game-changing” non-adversarial negotiations with Spirit Aerospace Systems, once part of Boeing, now a prime subcontractor with 5900 union members. “It’s a new world,” says IAM international president Buffenbarger, “and we have to save the [U.S.] industry.”

“A three-year contract where everything is nailed down and can’t change—that’s got to go,” said Spirit CEO Turner at the beginning of negotiations (Bloomberg News, 3/27). “We want to create a longer contract that is flexible.”

The union replied that they had found someone they can partner with. “Our goal as formal negotiations begin in Wichita is to reduce the rancor farther up the chain at former parent Boeing,” said

Buffenbarger, Turner and Spirit board member Dick Gephardt, the Missouri Democrat who is the former U.S. House of Representative majority leader and supposed friend of labor.

## Was Our Letter Too Revolutionary?

Our solidarity letter noted that attacks on Rio Tinto miners “sounded eerily similar to the attacks on aerospace workers.”

“But the similarities don’t end there.” Both companies got mega million\$ from the Federal government to attack their employees.

We called for multi-racial, rank-and-file solidarity against these racist attacks even as “the biggest companies and their government line up against us.” Various tactics to build working class unity were suggested including “join[ing] us on May Day.”

This letter got its start after a long discussion with half a dozen Boeing workers who had read the *Foreign Affairs* front page article, “Decline and Fall (see page 2 Editorial).” When these veteran workers saw the fascism and world war the bosses had in mind, the debate about communism and revolution took on a much more serious tone.

“I agree with your analysis,” said a participant. “Yes, you guys are right! I just don’t feel as motivated.”

“Then you probably have some disagreement,” our comrade replied as the discussion progressed.

Everyone began to understand the stakes that were involved. They viewed this solidarity campaign in a different light. One even hesitated to sign our letter thinking it “too revolutionary” after putting it in the context of our study/action group.

Twenty-four hours later he signed, making a point that we had no choice [but to carry on this debate about the communist alternative].

Another maintenance guy was warned by his friend, “Don’t sign that! You’re a black man in Amerika; you’ll get in trouble.” He thought about this for a moment then signed in bold letters—John Brown—in honor of the armed opponent of slavery!

These two show the potential. Step by step workers can reject bosses’ reasoning if the logic of a revolutionary communist alternative is fought for in the midst of class struggle.



March, 2010—Students and Teachers Support Miners Rio Tinto

## Elections—bosses’ deadly trap! We Need Communist Revolution!

El Salvador, April 2010—After 10 months of the government of President Mauricio Funes and the FMLN, the causes of poverty and unemployment have increased. The layoffs have grown to 40,000 in the last months; making the situation worse is the worldwide capitalist crisis which has provoked a decline in money sent to El Salvador from Salvadorans working abroad. Delinquency and organized crime continue with figures of an average of 15 assassinations a day. Corruption continues triumphant throughout the country.

The communists organized in the ICWP maintain our vision that the bosses’ elections don’t help the international working class fight to destroy the capitalist system. Elections only help maintain the illusion that this system can be reformed. We maintain that Mauricio Funes and his project were a capitalist illusion for the Salvadoran working class. Because of this analysis we were attacked by members of the FMLN and the revisionist Communist Party of El Salvador.

With our new government, up until today, no corrupt official has been put in jail, even though there’s proof of corruption in institutions like water, telephones, and roads. “I’m not interested in persecuting the corrupt,” says Funes. (La Prensa Grafica, 3/17).

Other more crude example of capitalist greed are the transnational corporations in the telephone industry. One call to the US costs \$ 0.10 a minute, and calling from one cell phone to another in the

same city costs up to \$0.33 a minute. Telcom (owned by Carlos Slim) reports profits of \$120 million a year, just from the obligatory basic monthly fees in El Salvador. La Telefonica of Spain, Tigo (Millicom International Cellular S.A.) headquartered in Luxembourg, and Digicel, backed by Irish capital, haven’t wanted to reveal their profits and accuse Carlos Slim of monopolizing the telephone and Internet market. Slim is a friend of Funes and the FMLN. All these transnational corporations exploit the workers to get profits in the millions, financing the current wars and preparing for World War III.

“Don’t worry, Mauricio (Funes) is more right wing than we are,” the current Minister of Housing Carlos Caceres assured Miguel Menendez, owner of the biggest private security company in El Salvador (COSASE). This meeting took place in 2007 when the group “Friends of Mauricio” was organized. It is a group of right wing millionaires who financed Funes’ campaign.

The “government of change” changed from some bosses to others. The structure of the bourgeois state continues intact. In the meantime, thousands of workers continue to wait to climb out of unemployment and poverty. The protests among some honest workers who believed in the campaign are beginning to be converted into anger against the bosses’ system along with their lackeys.

“Patience, friends. In 2014 one of us will be President,” say the sellout leaders of the unions, trying

to stop workers from taking to the streets to protest. The limit to this patience is at the point of overflowing. Many are willing to fight, and we call for this May Day to be militant against the capitalist attacks pushed by the Funes government and the FMLN.

A system based on the exploitation of the working class must be destroyed. Teachers, workers, students, farm workers and soldiers, we must fight to free ourselves from this rotten capitalist system and build a new communist system that provides dignified work and education for young and old, developing their true vocation in the service of meeting the needs of the international working class.

There are no magic or easy formulas. Communist ideas sometimes won’t be the most popular, but they represent reality. The job of every worker organized in the ICWP is to use the RED FLAG to expose the sellout leaders and the capitalist system, and to organize more of the oppressed in clubs in a true Communist Party. We organize networks to distribute our paper and other literature and ask for donations from workers to continue the struggle for the working class in RED FLAG.

**ALL MARCH THIS MAY DAY FOR  
COMMUNISM, UNDER ONE PARTY,  
ONE FLAG, ONE CLASS.**

# CAPITALIST CRISIS DRIVES “RACE TO THE BOTTOM”

## Part II: Profit System Means War and Fascism

*The first part of this article (RF 4/7/10) described how Los Angeles politicians and union leaders are slashing and burning city jobs and services in a “Race to the Bottom.”*

LA Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and the City Council (mostly Democrats) have a plan. It's the same plan being imposed on the Los Angeles Unified School District, the rest of California state and local government, and elsewhere in the United States. Washington Post columnist Harold Meyerson reports that the states' cumulative deficit is now \$350 billion (WP, Dec. 3, 2009) and is leading to cuts, layoffs, and new fees across the entire country. Apparently “too big to fail” only applies to banks and wars, not to cities and states!

One aspect of the cuts is to use the cover of a deep recession to institute “neo-liberal” policies to make government, as think-tanks and politicians put it, “business friendly.” Some call it “crony capitalism,” the use of taxpayers' money to increase short-term profits of politically-connected private investors. Social-democratic author Naomi Klein calls it the *shock doctrine*, except in this case the target is not impoverished countries like Haiti, but local government, public employees, and urban residents in the United States.

There is, however, a deeper method to the politicians' madness, and that is long-term profit. They delude themselves with claims about imminent prosperity, saying that cuts are just short-term budget fixes until the U.S. economy recovers. Few of them realize – and even fewer admit -- that the U.S. economy, like the global economy, is in the midst of a deep, long-term capitalist crisis.

Most of the cuts and layoffs are here to stay and will get worse. If there is any sort of economic recovery, it will not be used to raise salaries and benefits, fortify pension funds, build libraries, plant trees, or educate students. The rulers are willing to sacrifice most of local government – except for cops, spies, and jails -- to pay for corporate bailouts (intended to restore international competitiveness) and energy wars.

LA city bosses' plans to fill enormous local gaps with such gimmicks as charter schools, contracting out, and privatization, are nothing more than their chaotic strategy to “race to the bottom.” While they might actually believe in these schemes, or that cities can function without adequate libraries, parks, urban forests, cultural events, inspectors, building plan checkers, and neighborhood groups, they are really diverting public resources to their long-term priorities: financial speculation and imperialist wars.

## Capitalist Anarchy: What Happened to the LA General Plan?

There once was another plan. The “Los Angeles General Plan,” required by state law, cost the city millions of dollars to prepare fifteen years ago. It was based on rigorous research, honed through several hundred public meetings, reviewed, debated, and legally adopted by a previous City Council and Mayor. It forecast the city's growth and clearly identified the city's priorities for the next two decades (1990 -2010). But, shortly after the plan's adoption it was stuck on a shelf, and it has been totally ignored ever since. Why?

The LA General Plan was a long-term plan which downplayed policing and considered the city's infrastructure needs as important criteria in reviewing real estate projects. This would hamstring speculators and undercut the ability of City Hall officials to dish out favors. It was put on the shelf for the same reasons that federal officials were deregulating financial institutions and other sectors – to boost short-term profits. This shelf document is about to expire, and there are no plans to update, rescind, or replace it.

There are some clear lessons to be learned from this debacle. First, there is no solution to this crisis within capitalism. There are no politicians capable of rectifying this situation and no economists with a magic formula to return to an imagined golden age in which public coffers were full and local government provided high

quality employment and local services.

Advanced capitalism is a huge bundle of very sharp contradictions. Production is social (requiring massive coordination and the labor of many, many workers) but the means of production are privately owned and managed competitively to maximize profits. Individual corporations' short-term interests conflict with the long-term needs of the capitalist class as a whole. This contradiction is reflected in the government, which serves as an executive committee for the capitalist class but cannot resolve these fundamental contradictions.

Internationally, capitalist competition inevitably leads to world war. The deadly cutbacks hitting workers in the industrial countries today are part of war preparations. The U.S. bosses (federal, state, local) are increasingly relying on fascism to force or terrorize workers into submitting to sharper and sharper attacks. This fascism also aims to force smaller capitalists into sacrificing their short-term interests for the sake of “the good of the country” – meaning the capitalist class as a whole.

The alternatives open to public employees and their supporters are to accept further cutbacks as part of war preparations, or to fight back with a revolutionary outlook in which communism is the only long term solution to the contradictions of capitalism. Join the INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST WORKERS PARTY – ICWP – and become part of that solution!

## Doomsday Scenarios, Imperialist War and Communist Revolution

In recent years, many workers and students have been convinced by predictions of catastrophic climate change resulting from peak oil and global warming. But the main issue is a political one, not a scientific one.

Any analysis of doomsday scenarios related to these issues must take into account the current capitalist crisis, and the rapid escalation of energy wars, especially in the Persian Gulf-Caspian Sea region. If we don't understand this, we'll fall into the bosses' environmental trap: workers and students uniting with “corporations” as the capitalists rush toward World War III.

Oil and natural gas are highly valuable commodities that are essential to industry and the military as presently organized under capitalism. We seem to be entering the stage of peak oil/gas (i.e., declining supplies of *profitably recoverable oil/gas*, while demand continues to grow).

Some writers (like James Kuntsler) argue that the end of cheap oil, like global warming, means massive social dislocation. He mentions a collapse of metropolitan areas and access to food, and massive human deaths. The violence of this doomsday scenario is largely confined to “riots in the streets.” Inter-imperialist resource wars and class-based communist revolutions are not factored into these scenarios. While other doomsday scenarios are more scientifically-based than Kuntsler's (such as Paul Roberts and Richard

Heinberg), they all claim that the most important questions for us are scientific, not political.

### Energy Wars: Sharpening Inter-Imperialist Rivalry

Other writers such as Michael Klare (Rising Powers, Shrinking Planet) note that the increasing demand for limited supplies of these resources is already resulting in escalating geo-political conflicts. So far most of these energy wars are near the Persian Gulf and Caspian Sea, with two-thirds of the world's known oil and gas reserves.

Klare argues that these wars will spread to other regions with smaller oil reserves, specifically Africa and Latin America. They will spread also to areas identified for strategic pipelines (Caucasus, Afghanistan) and to shipping choke points like the Straits of Hormuz.

But Klare and other liberals miss three key points. First, the control of these resources plays an important military role. For example, in WWII, the U.S. forced Japan to attack first by constricting Japan's oil supply.

Second, oil and gas are prized commodities because of their enormous profitability. It is this feature - because it is essential and irreplaceable for transportation and industrial production -- which drives the escalating energy wars.

Third, these expanding energy wars are driven by the intensifying inter-imperialist rivalry. The world's imperial powers – in particular the

EU, Russia, China, and the U.S. – are in increased conflict over oil and gas because of their profitability, strategic military value, and importance for transportation and industry.

High energy prices will indeed cause food shortages and other dislocations, especially in poor countries. But energy wars will escalate faster than the social impacts of climate change, increased energy costs, and reduced supplies of oil and gas. The spinners of “doomsday” scenarios ignore the geo-political aspects of peak oil and gas. They see the trees, but miss the forest.

The “forest” is the \$1.2 trillion the U.S. is spending annually on its military. Under Obama it is going up by 4 percent.

The forest also includes the two major energy wars the U.S. is waging in Iraq and Afghanistan-Pakistan. It also includes the enormous U.S. arms sales in this region (\$30 billion to Israel, \$35 to the pro-U.S. Arab dictators). It includes the expansion of energy wars into Iran, Horn of Africa, and South America with new U.S. bases in Colombia.

### Turn Imperialist War Into Communist Revolution

The primary contradiction in the world is this inter-imperialist conflict, leading to widening wars up to and including World War III. This, coupled

Continue on page 14, See Doomsday Scenarios



## From Spain to America, Communists in ICWP Prepare for May Day

Spain. “Listen, are we ready to distribute RED FLAG newspapers on May Day?” Of course we’re ready! We, the comrades in Spain are going out into the streets to distribute our newspaper RED FLAG, because we understand that in order for our Party to grow we have to make the communist ideas of the ICWP mass. The crises, the fight for oil, racism, sexism, wage slavery are now the order of the day and we are fighting against this capitalist armament. We understand that we have to sharpen the struggles and win new members and form new leaders that raise the red flag of the working class.

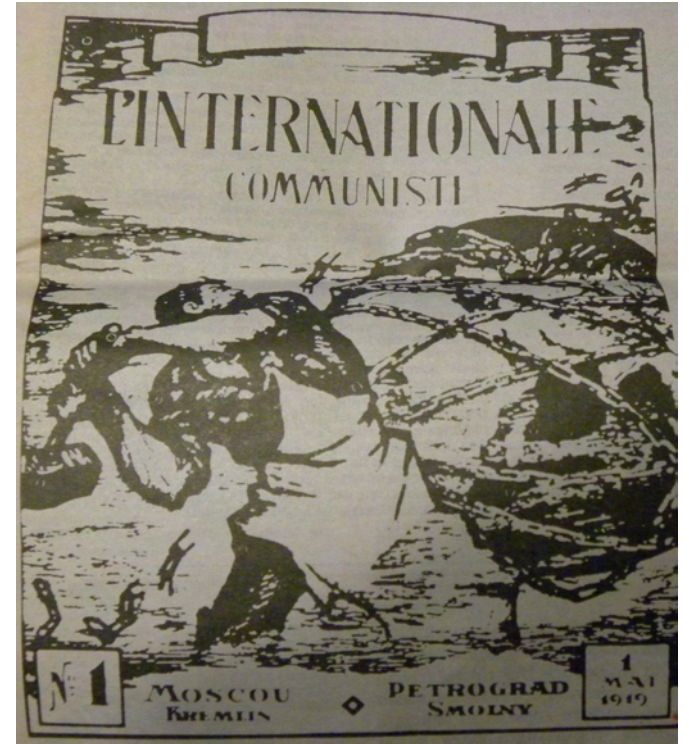
We are working now to open a new internet page for the reading of Red Flag, since we discovered that the page is being blocked here in Spain, we are also setting up a Blog to put workers’ ideas on the internet. We hope that all goes as planned and that in a few months all of this will be up and running so that we can provide some details of the

web page. We welcome the help of the entire Party to give us ideas for its contents.

We have read the last edition of Red Flag and we have emphasized the question of racism and are in agreement that it is one of the main points in which we have to sharpen the struggle. Everyday we live with the effects of racism all over the world; when you are not white, when you are black, when your wages are less than the other’s, etc. Racism is a weapon that capitalism uses to obtain super profits by way of cheap labor costs. In Spain there is no exception, a slogan that has to be upheld is “workers have no borders”.

Only we, comrade members of the ICWP, have the solution building the communist system by smashing capitalism.

**We are the Internationalist Communist Workers’ Party and We Fight for Communism!  
Long live the ICWP! Long live our newspaper Red Flag! Long live May Day!**



### “World war will change everything”

I recently attended a teachers’ convention. Delegates debated a resolution to end the war and occupation in Afghanistan, end attacks on Pakistan, close all military bases in the region, and immediately begin the withdrawal of all troops, contractors, and weapons from the region. However, these same delegates loudly applauded Senator Barbara Boxer and voted to endorse a raft of other politicians who keep voting more money for that war.

“We underestimated the disagreement there would be over the resolution,” an organizer remarked later. “We should have realized that some people would be taken in by

the Obama administration’s line that Afghanistan is the ‘good war’ to ‘liberate Afghan people,’ especially women.”

One delegate used her two minutes at the mic to explain briefly that the war is really over the geopolitics of energy resources. She cited Obama advisor Brzezinski’s book the *Grand Chessboard* and warned that regional wars in Central Asia were likely to bring the U.S. into direct conflict with larger powers, including China, Iran, and Russia.

“World war will change everything in our lives, all the issues we’re talking about here,” she said. “That’s why it’s so important that this resolution calls for educating teachers about the real facts on Afghanistan. We also need to educate our students and their parents – most of whom are workers – and especially young people in the military.”

Later I spoke with another delegate who organizes actively against the wars and the budget cuts. He has anti-capitalist politics but has the

outlook of building a militant reform movement for a long time to come. “Do you really think that a third world war might happen?” he asked.

I told him about some of the reasons that U.S. imperialism is on a collision course with its imperialist rivals. I also talked about the ways that the U.S. rulers are using reform movements (education, immigration, health) to prepare for war. He took in all in and reflected, “then we do have to think about this work differently.”

I gave him *Red Flag* and he said he’d read it, though he is pretty skeptical about communist organizations. The conversation opened my eyes a little wider, too. It showed me how a sharp and sustained analysis of the global trend toward world war is the key to getting our friends to think more seriously about the need and possibility of communist revolution.

-- Red Delegate

## Rio Tinto’s River of Blood and Sorrows

Rio Tinto, the world’s fourth-largest mining company, has a long history of attacks on workers. Founded in 1873 to channel British capital into mining projects in Spain, the company welcomed dictator Francisco Franco to power. In 1937 Rio Tinto managers announced, “Since the mining region was occupied by General Franco’s forces, there have been no further labor problems. Miners found guilty of troublemaking are court-martialled and shot.”

Rio Tinto’s business partners read like a “who’s who” of the most brutal dictators of recent history: Suharto in Indonesia, Pinochet in Chile, and apartheid South Africa, where Rio Tinto still racially segregates company housing and pays Black miners far less than whites.

The British-Australian multinational’s most shocking attack was in Bougainville, an island in Papua New Guinea. After destroying rainforest and poisoning residents with toxic waste from its copper and gold mines, Rio Tinto paid \$10.3 million to the country’s military and supplied weaponry and private militias to crush residents trying to close the mine.

When this didn’t work, the company began a 10-year blockade of the island. By the end of the war in 1999, the blockade had killed 15,000 people, 10 percent of the population. Rio Tinto’s Bougainville manager was successful in his stated goal, “to starve the bastards out.”

Despite profits of \$4.87 billion in 2009, Rio Tinto continues to squeeze workers. Government bailouts have secured the global prices of many of Rio’s commodities: uranium, aluminum, copper, gold,

and iron.

Rio Tinto’s consistent anti-union campaigns were the focus of a 1998 meeting of mining unions held in South Africa, where activists discussed the company’s tactics. Describing a company plot to unravel labor law by placing managers in government, an Australian unionist warned, “If Rio Tinto hasn’t come for you yet, it is only a matter of time until they do.”





From antiquity to the present:

## MINERS HAVE LED REBELLIONS AND REVOLUTIONS

The arrogant Rio Tinto bosses, who locked out the Boron (California) workers, must think of themselves as all-powerful giants. But they wouldn't be so confident if they knew more about the militant and revolutionary history of the world's miners.

Even in the ancient world, the slave worked-mines were notorious for nightmare conditions. For example, the commercial wealth of the ancient Athenian "democracy" was based on the labor of tens of thousands of slaves in the silver mines of Laurion. Mining was practically the only real industry in ancient Greece and Rome, and the slaves were ruthlessly exploited exactly because what they produced was so valuable - such as copper for manufacture, silver (as in Laurion) for commerce, and iron for weapons. This is still true today.

When slavery gave way to wage slavery, miners were among the first to rise against the new class of exploiters. In 1497 tin miners in Cornwall (England) rebelled against Henry VII when he raised taxes to support his war against Scotland. They marched on London, gaining support along the way, but were defeated at the Battle of Deptford Bridge. (About the same time silver miners rose against the Ming dynasty).

In 1831 (well before the publication of the communist manifesto) the miners of Merthyr Tydfil (Wales) were the first to raise the red flag of revolution in the UK. Their movement began as protests against low wages and unemployment but by May the whole area was in their hands. After storming the town of Merthyr itself, they attacked private property: they sacked the debtors courts and returned the goods that had been confiscated. Then for good measure then they destroyed the account books. The bosses sent the Swansea cavalry to restore (capitalist) order but the miners ambushed and disarmed them. It took another month to finally suppress the revolt.

When capitalism completed its transformation into imperialism (around 1900) rebellions and revolutions spread throughout the whole world, often with miners in the lead.

In 1906, the copper miners in Cananea, Mexico, struck against racist pay differentials. On June 1, when they marched by the company store, two flunkies fired on the crowd, leaving three miners dead. The strikers killed the murderers on the spot and burned down the wood shop. The governor of Sonora called in a posse of goons from the US, lead by Arizona Rangers. Although the strike was suppressed, the fighting at Cananea is now seen as

the first shots of the 1910 Mexican revolution against Porfirio Diaz.

This was not the last time a miners uprising led (directly or indirectly) to a revolts and revolutions. The Spanish Asturian miners' strike/insurrection of 1934 preceded the Civil War against fascism. In South Africa the 1946 African Miners' strike launched the struggle against apartheid, and in 1952 the tin miners overthrew the government in Bolivia.

Of course many miners lost their lives in these struggles; but the real tragedy was that nothing permanent was achieved. These revolutions did not have ending capitalism as their goal. At most, they won some temporary reforms, while handing power to a different group of bosses. These may have been more 'progressive' or more 'patriotic', but in the end were just as ruthless exploiters of miners and other workers as were their predecessors.

The most successful of all the miner-revolutionaries were the Red coal miners of Anyuan China, who were among the founders of the Chinese Red Army. We'll tell their story in a future article. Unfortunately, in the end even they failed to finish off capitalism, a mistake we in the ICWP are determined not to repeat.

## BOSSSES' GREED KILLS MINERS IN THE U.S., CHINA, AND WORLDWIDE

Monday, April 5, Raleigh County West Virginia—25 coal miners were killed in an explosion in a West Virginia mine, 4 other miners are still missing. The mine is owned by the Massey Mining Company. These workers were murdered by the bosses' greed which means using antiquated safety equipment, lack of enforcement of safety rules, no union. This is part of the bosses' drive to fascism by attacking workers' conditions and very lives, as in Rio Tinto and Boeing.

At the same time, over 150 miners were trapped in a coal mine in northern China for a week. 115

were rescued but about 40 are dead or missing. In this case also, profits trumped workers' security.

US imperialism rose to become top dog imperialist in part over the bodies of 100,000 miners murdered since 1900 in "accidents" due to the callous greed of the bosses. The Chinese bosses, fighting to become the top imperialists, are doing the same. In the last decade alone, over 45,000 coal miners have been killed in China.

Capitalism's inevitable competition for maximum profit and world domination means the death of workers for the bosses' greed to prepare for wider

war. Only by organizing workers from the US to China to fight for communist revolution can workers take history into our own hands, destroy murderous capitalism, and build a communist world of cooperation to meet the needs of the working



### Doomsday Scenario, from page 4

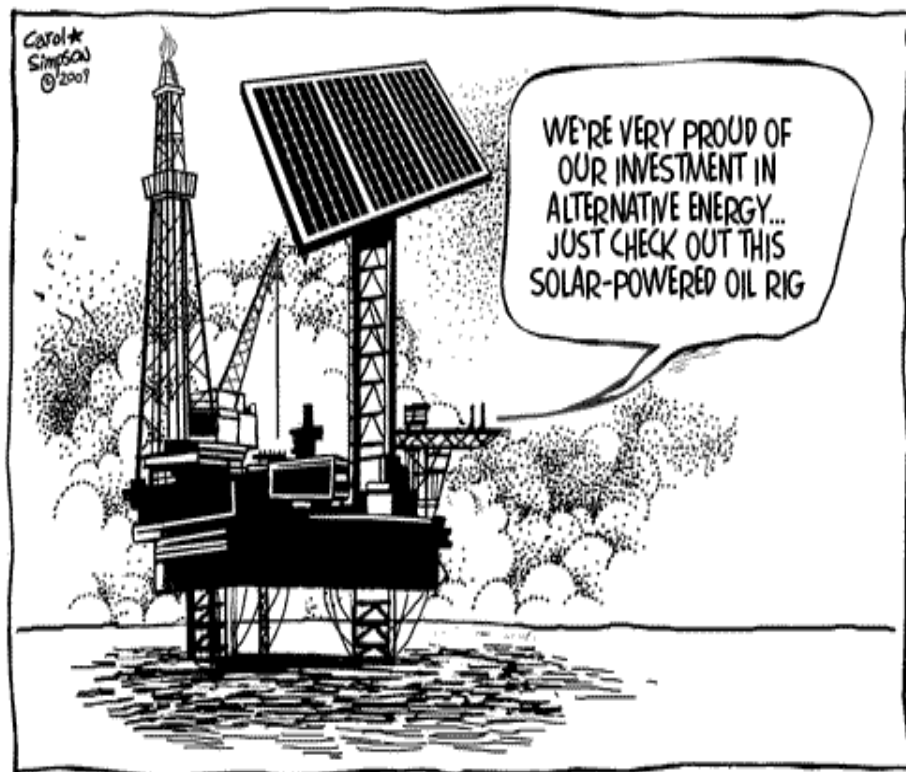
with domestic fascism, is the context that helps us understand global warming, climate change, and peak oil.

Earth Day organizers have worked for forty years to get workers and students to unite with capitalists under the banners of "saving the environment" (see box). They use doomsday scenarios to build passivity in the face of war and sharpening attacks on the working class. But capitalism – with its inherent racism, crises and imperialist wars – is the real catastrophe.

Communism means the end of the profit system that drives the current crisis in all its dimensions. Communism will be the material base for replacing oil and gas with alternative, sustainable energy sources that workers will develop when our needs, not capitalist profits, drive production. Communism will make "one world, one working class" the new reality, ending imperialism and its increasingly devastating wars.

If you really want to save the planet, help the International Communist Workers Party (ICWP) build the revolutionary communist movement with a focus on industry and the military. Industrial workers and soldiers are the key force that can turn imperialist wars among the bosses into revolutionary wars for workers' power and communism.

SEE BOX -PAGE 15



## LETTERS

## LETTERS \*\*\*\*\*

## CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

**Dear Red Flag,**

I read with interest the article in the last issue of RED FLAG that compared the impact of the current economic crisis with that of the Great Depression. There is one other factor that I thought we ought to mention: the prison population. For the first time, in 2008, more than 1 out of every hundred adults in the US was in jail or in prison. This is a dramatic increase since the 1930s, when the incarceration rate was about 1 out of every 600 people.

The incarceration rate in the U.S. increased gradually from the Civil War until the 1980s, when it really took off. Since 1980, the incarceration rate in the U.S. has tripled. Of course it has a racist character; one out of every 9 black men from the ages of 20-34 is locked up, as compared to about one out of every 26 Hispanics and one out of every 57 whites.

But it seems to me that such massive incarceration must have an impact in lowering the impact of an economic crisis; so many men are already locked up that the communities that would be most affected have already lost a significant portion of their working men.



### **Budget Cut Fightback: "Students are tired of capitalism"**

Sacramento – Over ten thousand students and some workers from across California's higher education system united in a mass march on March 22

against the budget cuts and fee increases. The leadership of this protest pushed for reformist ideas, but many more students than last year held anti-capitalist posters and had anti-capitalist ideas. "Students are getting tired of capitalism," remarked a bus captain.

The signs students held included:

"Strike Against the System that Cuts Education for War"

"Tax the rich, fund education"

"Tax the rich, real change"

"Support the schools, not CEOs"

"Stop Racist Budget Cuts"

These students responded well to the communist ICWP leaflets that comrades passed out.

The leadership encouraged students to make lobby visits and talk with "their" representatives, which is a waste of time! They make students think that their personal stories will change legislators' minds. This builds elitism, not mass struggle. We want to get rid of the elite, a small group of people that run everything. We want a communist society that allows for the common workers together to decide how it's run.

The bus ride to the march gave us a chance to talk to each other about many things. One long conversation was about the difference between communism and socialism. Another went like this:

Student: "This rally seems to support the left. Why don't we talk to the bankers in their language? We need to tell them that they should fund education because it will create workers for them."

Comrade: "This does not solve the issue, though! That would only feed the capitalist system."

Student: "Well, if we talk to them from a revolutionary perspective they would get turned off and not want to help."

After awhile the conversation ended with the student saying that he had many questions. "So do I!" said the comrade.

The answers to their questions about revolution can be answered by reading *Red Flag*. We do not want support from the bankers. We want to overthrow them and their capitalist system!

**D.C. Immigrant March, from page 1**

that day. A couple of Texan students were newcomers to the "Tea Party" movement and claimed they joined to be part of something revolutionary. Another student said, "If you want to be part of something revolutionary, then you should look at this paper." A copy of *Red Flag* was read aloud. After hours of struggle, even these Republican students agreed that capitalism is the root of all evil. "Capitalism is tied to racism," summed up a California student, "and it undermines any progress toward a truly free society."

Two students continued the conversation in their room. "I never understood what capitalism is until today," said one, "and I never really thought about this stuff before." She and others came back to their hometowns with a renewed sense of purpose, pushing for continued action in rallies against racism, forming study groups, and mobilizing for the May Day march.

*Red Flag* comments: As other articles in the paper show, the bosses' reform movements (education, health care, immigration) are all part of their strategic planning for a third world war. This is something we need to discuss in all our study groups.

**FOR A  
REVOLU-  
TIONARY  
MAY DAY  
MARCH  
UNDER THE  
RED FLAGS  
OF ICWP**

### **Earth Day: Class Collaboration, Ra- cism, Distraction from Imperialist War**

April 22 will be the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of "Earth Day," the brainchild of U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson. *The New York Times* wrote hopefully about the first Earth Day that "Rising concern about the 'environmental crisis' is sweeping the nation's campuses with an intensity that may be on its way to eclipsing student discontent over the war in Vietnam." (NYT, 10/29/69) As the accompanying article shows, the "environmental crisis" is being used today to cover up the immediate threat of energy wars escalating into World War III.

In the wake of the 1968 student-worker strike that shut down France, anti-war students in the U.S.

were increasingly open to the communist politics of a "worker-student alliance." Nelson's agenda was to win students instead into an alliance of "individuals" and "corporations" around environmental issues. Earth Day's first \$1000 came from the capitalist leader Laurance Rockefeller, followed by larger donations from his labor lieutenants George Meany and Walter Reuther of the United Auto Workers.

Class-collaboration and its twin, patriotism, are deadly for the working class. That was true forty years ago, but it's even more so today as the U.S. rulers are building, with increasing momentum, for a third world war in a desperate effort to salvage their global empire.

The present chair of the Earth Day Network, Gerald Torres, is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. He was counsel to then-U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno with her "get-tough" approach to

undocumented immigrants. Nelson himself came out as an open racist on Earth Day 2004. He said, "The bigger the population gets, the more serious the problems become.... In [the U.S.] it's phony to say 'I'm for the environment but not for limiting immigration.'" (*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 2001-04-22)

The first Earth Day happened to fall on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of the Soviet communist leader Lenin. Right-wing nuts tried to claim that made Earth Day "socialist," but Lenin must have been turning over in his tomb. Liberal environmentalists like Al Gore are paving the way for fascism with their calls for all-class unity and shared sacrifice. Our response must be to carry forward Lenin's legacy of class struggle for workers' power by marching on May Day with the *Red Flag* of communist revolution!

**SMASH  
RACISM  
ALL BORDERS  
WAGE SLAVERY  
SEXISM  
IMPERIALIST  
WAR AND  
CAPITALIST  
EDUCATION  
  
FIGHT FOR  
COMMUNISM  
  
JOIN  
ICWP**



# Dialectics: The Communist Philosophy of Struggle

*Note: This is the second of three columns summarizing communist dialectics. It is based on an ICWP pamphlet available on the internet at <http://ICWPRedFlag.org>*

In the last issue, we learned that a dialectical contradiction is a unity and struggle of opposites things or processes which are connected, but which interfere with each other and cause change. We found that contradictions tend to become more intense, that is, the two opposite sides interfere with each other more. When contradictions reach a peak of intensity, they are resolved, like the worker capitalist contradiction, which is resolved by communist revolution. In this issue, we discuss some basic contradictions in the capitalist economy.

## The Falling Rate of Profit

One of the reasons identified by Marx that the contradictions of capitalism tend to become sharper is the tendency of the rate of profit to fall. This means that the rate of profit on each dollar invested tends to get smaller over time. Because of competition, each capitalist must try to produce things more cheaply than the next one. Individual capitalists lower production costs by introducing more machinery into production, thereby reducing the number of workers. Other capitalists are then forced to automate in order to keep up. The result is a much larger amount of money sunk into technology.



More money spent on machinery means a lower rate of profit because of one key fact: Workers' labor is the source of all value. Profits are *only* made from workers labor, by capitalists making workers produce much more value than the workers get in wages. The value produced by the labor that capitalists don't pay for is called "surplus value," and it is the ultimate source of profit, interest, and rent.

There are several ways that capitalists can try to counteract the fall in the rate of profit, like reducing the wages of workers. Capitalists can do this directly, or they can move production to areas that already have lower wages, like the southern U. S., Mexico, or Asia. The U.S. automakers, for example, have been making cars and car parts in Mexico and Brazil for a long time. This not only means that they can hire workers for less in those countries, but the threat of moving jobs away helps the auto bosses keep U. S. workers' wages down. Inside the U. S., capitalists are also reducing wages by making greater use of racism, super-exploiting a section of the working class, for example, by increased use of immigrant labor in basic industries. This is particularly true of the companies that outsource production to lower wage, non-union shops. The result of all these changes has been a significant decline in wages and cutbacks in benefits since the 1970s.

The intensifying contradiction between workers and capitalists can be seen in the current economic crisis. As capitalists try to cope with the weaknesses of their system, they are increasing their attacks on workers, laying them off, cutting back on their health care and education, foreclosing on their houses, and sending them off to wars like Iraq and Afghanistan for capitalists' profits and resources.

While we should join in and lead the resistance to cuts and layoffs that is now taking place against these attacks, reform movements will not prevent things from getting worse for workers and students. The weaker the U. S. capitalists get, the less room they have to make concessions to angry workers. The future of capitalism holds only more misery, war and further steps toward fascism until revolution destroys capitalism and resolves the worker-capitalist contradiction.

## One Side of a Contradiction Is Dominant

In the conflict between the two sides of a contradiction, one side is almost always dominant. Situations where the two sides are "even" are rare and temporary. But the dominant side does not have to stay dominant. The side that is dominant needs to fight to stay on top. The other side fights to gain the upper hand.

Competition is a kind of contradiction, and capitalists in competition with each other have to do whatever it takes to keep up with their competitors. Even capitalists who are in a strong position for the moment know that they can lose. General Motors was riding high for decades, but has finally lost out

to its competitors, especially to Toyota, and gone bankrupt.

Imperialist countries of the past, like Spain or Britain, who were dominant for a while, have ended up as minor powers. They lost out in the struggle and their imperial power was destroyed. Now the U. S. empire is facing increasing challenges from Russia, China and Europe. While it remains the dominant power, that situation will not last indefinitely.

These intensifying contradictions in the world tend to intensify the contradictions in pro-capitalist thinking, and this represents an opportunity for the growth of the communist movement. More people are questioning the system and are open to a communist analysis of it. The same is true of the Obama administration's major escalation of the war in Afghanistan, as the contradictions of the economy drive the U. S. capitalists to greater efforts to control the world's main sources of oil and gas. All aspect of U. S. capitalism are gearing up for war, including the military, industry, education, and even health care. This process will intensify the contradiction between capitalism and the international working class, moving toward resolving it with revolution.

*Next issue:*

*Dialectics and the fight against revisionism in the communist movement.*

## WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE!



**Saturday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 10 am –  
STOP the NAZIS in downtown Los  
Angeles! Meet at Temple and  
Main, March to City Hall.**

The City of LA has given a group of Nazis called the National Socialist Movement a permit for a hate rally against immigrant workers. They plan to meet at LA City Hall on Saturday, April 17th. We call on all workers and students to demonstrate to stop these fascists. This group of open fascists, from Riverside, plans to rally against immigrants and Obama's Comprehensive Immigration Reform. They must be stopped by a united multi-racial working class. Their anti-immigrant lies are echoed by politicians like Poisonous Steve Poizner who is running for Governor with TV ads blaming the huge budget crisis in California on "illegal"

immigrants. This lie is meant to build a racist movement to attack immigrants rather than the capitalist system which is cutting schools, jobs, services, and taxing the workers to pay for their crisis, bail out banks, and wage wider imperialist wars. It's meant to divide immigrants from citizens at the very time we need to fight the capitalist crisis with multi-racial working class unity.

The liberals who support Obama's Comprehensive Immigration Reform (See RED FLAG last issue) use these open racist groups to try to drive immigrant workers and their supporters into the arms of the liberal imperialists, who pose as the "immigrants' friends." Their CIR includes the Dream Act, which will force undocumented youth into the military, and a 12- year "path to citizenship" which threatens immigrant workers with deportation if they organize on the job or are unemployed for over 60 days. The CIR also sets up "e-verify," a data base that checks up on all work-

ers, immigrant and citizen, who apply for work. The attack on immigrants is a key part of the bosses' drive to fascism and wider war. It's meant to build patriotism, to have workers identify with the bosses, rather than to unite with workers of the world to fight to destroy capitalism and all borders with communist revolution.

