

RED FLAG

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



HONDURAS—Teachers on Strike, August, 2010—See article page 13

US IMPERIALISM LOSES IN IRAQ, READIES DEADLIER WAR AGAINST IRAN

Obama's much publicized withdrawal of "combat" troops in Iraq doesn't mean the Iraqi war is over or that the US imperialists are not planning wider, more lethal wars in the region. As Max Boot, a member of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), the most influential US rulers' think tank determining US foreign and domestic policies, wrote in "Winning the Peace in Iraq", *Wall Street Journal*, August 20, 2010:

"Operation Iraqi Freedom, the legacy of the Bush administration, is ending. On Sept. 1, 2010, Operation New Dawn... takes its place. Going forward, most remaining US troops will not serve in 'combat' but will be part of what the military calls 'advise and assist brigades.' The distinction is largely artificial, crafted to show that the promised American withdrawal is on schedule. Fifty thousand soldiers will retain substantial combat capacity..."

Like shuffling a deck of cards between games, it is the shuffling of armies between wars. It is preparation for military action against Iran, while creating the illusion that Obama will withdraw all US combat troops from Iraq by the end of 2011.

But Obama and his US imperialist masters have no intentions of exiting Iraq, even though he sent his Vice President, Joe Biden, there to mark the end of combat. Tens of thousands of US soldiers and even more mercenaries will stay in Iraq many years after 2011 because of its geostrategic importance.

According to Henry Kissinger, a major strategist for decades for US foreign policy, "Mesopotamia (Iraq) has been the strategic focal point of the region for millennia. Its resources affect countries far away. It cannot be in the



See US IMPERIALISM, page 4

ICWP & MTA WORKERS DEBATE POLITICAL STRIKE

Los Angeles, August 28 - "The majority of us voted to authorize a strike, although we really think it is not going to happen because the United Transit Union leaders are not interested in those kinds of struggles. They pretend to be representatives of the working class but the truth is that they eat from the same plate as the bosses," said a driver of MTA (Metropolitan Transportation Agency).

85% of the 2,800 drivers who voted favored the

strike. This has influenced many MTA mechanics, who are in the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU), to support a drivers' strike. "The drivers are giving us a lesson in struggle. There can be no peace when we are under attack," said a mechanic to some co-workers. The atmosphere is alive: more mechanics are talking about walking out in support of the drivers.

The mechanics want to know what the drivers' demands are, but nobody knows, because the union keeps secret what is being negotiated. Shortly after the voting, these bosses' agents put out a bulletin thanking workers for their support. If it wasn't so tragic it would be comical: "Obviously our goals are very simple - to keep our members working and to preserve their hard-won rights and benefits. But we have no idea what the MTA has up its sleeve..."

No idea? Last year MTA got ex-driver Art Leahy as its new CEO. As CEO of the Orange County Transportation Agency, "hatchet" Leahy got rid of 170 operators and slashed 150,000 hours of service an-

nually—about 8 percent of the county's bus service. This, in one of the richest counties in the US! What will he do to workers of an MTA with a \$251 million deficit?

These sellouts know what drivers want but they refuse to voice their demands, much less fight for them. Some gave us a list of their concerns: "No more increase in union dues, health care premiums and prescriptions. Reinstitute the uniform voucher. Pay differential for operating articulated buses. No more schedule-checker duties, feeding the data into the computer. Rehire the laid off schedule checkers. Stop treating operators like incarcerated felons, monitored with closed circuit cameras and devices."

ICWP understands and sympathizes with the MTA workers' concerns, but we should have no illusions that "good" union leaders and a militant fight will win our demands. As their economic crisis deepens, while they prepare for wider wars (against Iran, see

See MTA WORKERS, page 15

INSIDE:

PAKISTAN FLOOD—PAGE 2

"GROUND ZERO MOSQUE"—PAGE 2

**DO SEATTLE TEACHERS NEED A
POLITICAL STRIKE?—PAGE 3**

**NOV 5: STRIKE AGAINST RACIST
KILLER COPS—PAGE 3**

**CAPITALIST EDUCATION BUILDS
LOYAL OFFICER CORPS
—PAGE 4**

**COMMUNIST EDUCATION WILL
VALUE CHILDREN, NOT TEST
SCORES—PAGE 14**

**DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM
—PAGE 16**

PAKISTANI FLOODS DEVASTATE WORKERS' LIVES, EXPOSE CAPITALISM'S FAILURE

WORKERS WORLDWIDE NEED COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

The disaster in Pakistan caused by the monsoon floods left in its wake over 1600 people dead, 20 million displaced, 4 million homeless, and 5000 miles of roads and railways washed away. This is not an aberration. It is what capitalism does best: It destroys working-class lives on a massive scale.

Deforestation and the super-exploitation of the region's workers by the local capitalists and imperialist corporations created this predictable disaster. Where and how safely can you build your home if you earn less than \$2 a day? These are the starvation wages imposed by this racist capitalist system on more than 108 million Pakistanis, or 60% of the country's population. In nearby India 80% live in poverty, over 960 million people.

Besides, the local and imperialist bosses never built the protective infrastructure against these recurring monsoon rains and floods that could have prevented this disaster. Workers are left to fend for themselves. In one town, men tried to wedge stones in a levee to stop the flood water with their bare hands. They failed, the levee broke, and the town was flooded.

Under capitalism, technology serves the interests of capitalist rulers. Now that they are facing their worst economic crisis since the 1930s, and need to wage ever wider wars and prepare for the coming world war, science and technology are almost exclusively being used to impose fascism, death and massive destruction on the world's workers.

Capitalism's Logic: Money and Technology for War, Not to Save Workers

Capitalism can transport whole armies overnight across the planet, and their lethal weapons can hit any part of the globe in minutes, yet they are slow – as in New Orleans with Katrina and the Haitian earthquake – to deliver aid to suffering Pakistanis. The US brags that it sent \$150 million to Pakistan, and is raising \$460 million internationally. But a Pakistani official said this will only be enough to

help “8 million people for 90 days.”

The US imperialists, however, sent \$700 million on military “aid” to Pakistan in 2010 and plan to spend \$1.2 billion there in 2011. This is to make a dangerous region even more deadly. Thousands of Pakistanis have already been slaughtered by US imperialism, the Pakistani government and their Islamic fundamentalist rivals.

Pakistan: Major Focus of Inter-Imperialist Rivalry

As part of the US bosses' fight for world supremacy against their Chinese and Russian imperialist rivals, Pakistan is a US ally in the war against the Taliban. At stake are the vast reserves of oil, natural gas, and minerals of the region, and the routes and pipelines to take these treasures to market.

The US rulers are also seeking a strategic alliance with India, Pakistan's regional enemy, to contain China. In response, some sectors of the Pakistani rulers are making deals with the Russian and Chinese bosses.

The massive reconstruction program Pakistan will need gives the Chinese a magnificent opportunity to solidify their ties with the Pakistani bosses and win the support of the working people.

Trying to get the upper hand, the US imperialists have undertaken their aid program. But the Pakistani masses hate the US for raining death and destruction on them with their drones. This sentiment is voiced by many like Shah, a 71-year old, “Everyone here hates the American government. I haven't seen a penny of this US assistance.” (*Washington Post*, 8/26/2010).

Disaster Will Strengthen Taliban, Obstruct US-Brokered Settlement

The *New York Times*, a US imperialist mouthpiece, admits that militant anti-US groups will gain from the flood crisis. Some of them have their strongest

support in areas most affected by the floods that have been ignored by the Pakistani government. These groups have been very active dispensing aid.

The US bosses also worry because one of the main supply routes for US forces in Afghanistan was destroyed and others were disrupted. Also, the Pakistani army, busy with relief and reconstruction work, might disengage from the war in Afghanistan – endangering a US-negotiated settlement with the insurgents.

Therefore, the US more urgently seeks a political settlement with the Taliban. After visiting Afghanistan on August 19, Senator John Kerry reported, “They [negotiating efforts] are serious, and I completely agree – and so does General Petraeus and so does President Obama – there is no military solution. And there are very active efforts now to seek an appropriate kind of political solution.” This “Peace” with the Taliban is necessary for the US to fight Iran. (See “US Imperialism” on page 1)

US Soldiers, Pakistani Workers Must Destroy Murderous Capitalism-Imperialism With Communist Revolution

Only communism, organized by and for the benefit of the working class, can prepare for natural disasters and end forever the capitalists' wars for profits and empire.

Communism will involve millions of workers in studying, planning, and building the infrastructure needed to withstand any and all natural phenomena. And when disaster strikes, communism will mobilize workers worldwide to help by sending supplies and personnel as needed.

The best way to advance this struggle is to spread **Red Flag** and build ICWP worldwide to fight for a communist revolution and a world free from racism, exploitation, nationalism, and the capitalist-imperialist butchers whose quest for profits creates these monstrous disasters. Join us!

Patriotism, Religion Pave Way for US Attack on Iran

The “Ground Zero Mosque” isn't a mosque and it isn't at Ground Zero. It's an Islamic community center two blocks away from the NY World Trade Center site. But that's not the story.

Fox News and Republican bloggers are spinning this issue to win votes in the November US congressional elections. That's not the story either.

“Let's remember that Muslim-bashing is part of the justification for the wars in the Middle East,” said an anti-war activist. That's true – but even that's not the story.

The main thing we need to understand here is how liberalism paves the way for war against Iran.

Fareed Zakaria, a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and a spokesman for liberal imperialism, wrote, “Were this mosque being built in a foreign city, chances are that the US government would be funding it....Its vision of Islam is bin Laden's nightmare.” (*Newsweek*, 8/6/10) Zakaria even returned a \$10,000 award from the Anti-Defamation League because it opposed the community center.

Former FBI anti-terrorism expert Ali Soufan wrote in *Forbes Magazine*: “From a national security perspective, our leaders need to understand that no one

is likely to be happier with the opposition to building a mosque than Osama Bin Laden.”

Liberal Religion: Imperialist Ally

Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf, the community center's leader, is strongly linked to the US ruling class. He attended the 2006 US-Islamic World Forum in Doha, Qatar with Bush advisor Karen Hughes, holding a press conference with her. He worked closely with the FBI.

Rauf worked with imperialist heavyweights Madeleine Albright, Richard Armitage, and Dennis Ross on a report (9/08) which concluded that the war on terror was not adequately improving US “security.” Influential Republican Senator Richard Lugar praised its recommendations for improving “America's relations with the Muslim world.”

So we must see Rauf's community center as part of a bipartisan strategy crafted by the US imperialist class and promoted in the name of “religious pluralism.”

A statement issued by the Muslim Public Affairs Council and signed by seventy religious leaders praised racist NYC Mayor Bloomberg and President Obama for “articulating our essential American values in order to re-unite our country and take us to

new heights in our freedom and security as one people and one nation.”

The liberal Unitarian Universalist Association was even blunter: “The voices of moderate Islam hold the key to defeating extremism,” it said. “To demonize them is at odds with the geopolitical interest of the United States.”

“The anti-Muslim bigots help build mass sentiment for a US attack on Iran,” a **Red Flag** reader said, “but this talk of US geopolitical interests and the importance of enlisting ‘moderate’ Muslims against ‘extremists’ sounds pro-war also. Who are these ‘extremists’? Ahmadinejad? This is about preparing war on Iran.” “I didn't think of it that way, but you have a point,” a friend responded.

US Rulers Plan War on Iran

Democrats were outraged by Seymour Hersh's 2006 *New Yorker* article about Bush's plans to attack Iran to stop its nuclear program. Now Republican Elliot Abrams writes (*Atlantic*, August 2010) that “It's inevitable that as Iran creeps closer to the Bomb and Obama creeps closer to defeat, Democrats -- above

See PATRIOTISM – IRAN, page 13



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Seattle Teachers Must Strike Against a System that Will Never SERVE the Working Class!!

The end of summer is officially here. Time to kick back for a few more precious days, and get ready for a fresh new year in school. Right?

Not this year! Teachers in Seattle are facing the school year with anxiety and uncertainty. During contract negotiations this summer, the school district launched a campaign called SERVE Seattle (Support, Empower, Recognize, and Value Educators in Seattle). It is a system of teacher evaluation and pay based on student performance on standardized tests and other factors. Their slick brochure promises (lies) that it will be fair and just, and that students will benefit, etc. But this is happening all over the country...they call it Educational Reform. We call it Preparing for War and Fascism.

The US rulers need to have tight control over the educational system. They need to have young people who understand technology, who can produce goods in a factory, and who can fight in their endless wars. But they also need to win workers and students to capitalist ideology in order to do these things. They will want only the teachers who are willing to teach what they are told to teach. They will use the merit system to do this. There will be no job security.

The contract vote is on September 2nd. Of course, the union and the administrators will work out a deal that will most likely incorporate some of SERVE. But it won't go away. They may recommend a 1 or 2 year contract so that it can be phased in next time.

Should we vote to reject the deal and strike? Yes—but not on their terms! Even so-called good reforms that might be won during more prosperous times are still capitalist reforms. But these are not prosperous times for the US bosses, so we will not win any reforms, and probably won't even be able to stop from losing what we already have...if we go along with a strictly reform strike.

We need to raise the stakes and organize a political strike. When we organize for a political strike, we could spend our time having study groups and forums, social events, maybe even larger community events. Instead of relying on academic research funded by one capitalist or another, we would encourage workers and students to ask real questions about their education and their future.

- Do we want a system of constant tests based on boring scripted curriculum, while our teachers live in fear of being sacked because they no longer have job security?
- Will our education include useful and interesting, hands-on learning skills, or will it remain mostly deskwork?
- Will we be introduced to the world of work and the people who do the work? (Plumbers, machinists, nurses, cooks, and so on.) Or will we learn that people who do such work are losers who didn't go to college?
- And, if we do go to college, will there be a job for us when we get out? Will we ever be able to pay off the loans for our tuition?
- What values do we embrace...selfish consumerism, dog-eat-dog competition, blame the victim? Certainly the SERVE plan and all other merit-based plans encourage these values!
- Can racism and sexism ever be defeated under capitalism, a system that is based on exploitation and pits us against each other based on ethnicity, nationality and gender?
- SEA (Seattle Education Association) says that we are "on the brink of adopting historic



DESTROYING THE DIVISION BETWEEN MENTAL AND MANUAL LABOR

changes." The "historic changes" that they are ushering in are part of preparing the schools for fascism and war!

As communists, we study history and dialectics to learn from the past, understand the present, and prepare for the future. We know that this system is run by and for the capitalist class, and will never SERVE the needs of the working class. We need to make a revolution to achieve communist dictatorship of the working class.

Whether we strike or not, we must get these ideas out to our fellow workers and students. They are ready for struggle and change. Let's get the **Red Flag** out to workers and students and invite them to join in our study/action groups. Let's ask them to join the International Communist Workers Party (ICWP). In Seattle we are planning a Fall potluck to bring our friends, co-workers and students together to talk about lessons we learned from the summer project and the education struggle.

Nov. 5: Strike Against Racist Capitalism that Lets Killer Cops Walk!

Killer cop Johannes Mehserle will be sentenced on November 5 for murdering Oscar Grant at the BART station in Oakland, California. Mehserle shot Oscar, a 22-year-old black worker, as he lay face down on the platform.

Witnesses filmed this cold-blooded murder but Mehserle was only convicted of "involuntary manslaughter." He faces a maximum sentence of 14 years but will probably get much less – maybe even "time served." No matter what the verdict, there is no "justice" for the working class.

ILWU Local 10 (Oakland Longshore workers) is holding a rally on October 23 demanding "jail for killer cops." Some are calling for a strike on November 5 if Judge Perry lets Mehserle walk. Workers and students everywhere should organize multi-racial political strikes that day against the racist system that killed Oscar Grant. These strikes must target capitalism, the source of racism.

Three years ago, 1500 members of Local 10 shut down the Port of Oakland to mourn and protest the death of their co-worker Reginald Ross, killed while unloading freight from Germany.

"Day in, day out our class creates billions of dollars in profits for the capitalists," a comrade declared then, "but life is infinitely more valuable than profits. The Longshore workers showed us what a working-class value system looks like."

Oscar Grant is our brother just as every one of our co-workers and every worker in the world is our brother or sister. The bosses don't want us to think like that.

Racism is the cutting edge of the knife capitalism holds at the throat of every worker. European capi-

talists got a head start in the 16th century by stealing the land, the labor, and the very lives of African and American indigenous people.

Later, their doctors and professors concocted the theory of "races" to justify the genocidal exploitation of racialized slavery. For hundreds of years they have pushed these lies to divide and conquer the working class, maintaining their profit system through the super-exploitation of black, brown, and indigenous workers. We need revolution to smash this racist profit system, and we need a sharp fight against racism to make victory possible.

Today in the US:

- One in nine black men between the ages of 20 and 34 is behind bars. (2008)
- Homicide is the leading cause of death for young black men (ages 18-24) (2004)
- Young black men are four times as likely to be killed by cops as white men of the same age. (1990s)

The police are the enforcers for the racist bosses and their capitalist system. In July, they killed another man at the same BART station where Oscar Grant died. When workers strike, you can bet the cops will be there to escort scabs (strikebreakers) and protect the bosses' property.

There can be no "justice" for Oscar Grant because the cops, the courts, and the laws all serve the capitalist class. We are in the midst of a class war, bosses vs. workers. Their laws make it legal for the bosses to use force against us but illegal for us to fight back.

We need to build an illegal revolutionary communist



movement to smash the bosses and their whole racist government ("the state"). We need to build a workers' state that openly declares its purpose: to destroy capitalist wage slavery and create a communist society based on the value of workers' lives. Until we do this, racism will survive in one form or another. As we build communism, we will destroy racism at its root.

We should use **Red Flag** and its communist analysis to organize political strikes on November 5 against capitalist imperialism, the system that killed Oscar Grant and will let off cop Mehserle with a slap on the wrist as it has done with killer cops so many times before.

(Further information on the Oscar Grant case: <http://newyearsmovement.org/>)

Capitalist Education Needs to Build Loyal Officer Corps for War and Fascism

The US bosses want to send their military officers back to school. The ruling class frets that their officer corps is being trained for operational leadership, not “for [their] responsibilities at the nexus of the political-military relationship.” What they are really saying is that their officers are not being trained to understand the geopolitical interests of US imperialism and act accordingly. This call tells us as much about the role of education, as it does about the future of the military.

The ouster of General Stanley McChrystal set this call in motion. McChrystal refused to change his strategy of militarily weakening the Taliban before negotiating with them. Instead, the Taliban grew stronger, while the US and its allies grew weaker. The US rulers want to negotiate now! (See “Pakistan” on page 2.) He was fired for not understanding this. Colonel Mathew Moten makes the case for “professional reform” in the latest *Foreign Affairs*, the house organ of the United States’ premier foreign policy think tank, the Council on Foreign Relations.

Moten proposes a number of reforms. He asks retired, high level officers to refrain from political endorsements, particularly those with ties to defense industries. He wants to curtail private contractors. He puts this forward because these officers, not being politically committed, might endorse candidates backed by private contractors whose only interests are short term profits – not the long term needs of the US empire. But he spells out the heart of his plan in the section entitled, “Back To School.”

Nine years of war has produced soldiers who are “exceptionally seasoned, experienced and proficient.” At the same time, the toll of these wars has forced junior and midlevel officers to leave the military in large numbers. The new generation of officers, Moten worries, will be promoted without regard to merit because of a shortage of eligible candidates.

For these promotions, merit must be based more on a “long, formal education,” even as “the duration

of these wars has made the education deficit more chronic.” Moten warns, “The military is paying less attention to professional education than in the past.”

What formal education high level officers get is “focused more on readying them for the next operational assignment than on offering a broader, deeper education.” He warns against “stamping the label soldier-scholar on combat-hardened officers in the hope that they will become strategic leaders, rather than committing the time and effort to formal education.”

Public or Private: Schools are Ideological Arms of the State

When the bosses talk about a broader, deeper education, they are referring to developing an ideological commitment to the long-range interests of US imperialism. This ideological training is often camouflaged under the catch phrase of building “a commitment to democracy.”

Tactical proficiency in waging war is not enough. High-ranking military officers must also understand the strategic interests of U.S. capitalism. Unconditional loyalty to the US ruling class and its political leadership is paramount. Education and politics are intimately related.

Schools, including military schools, are never neutral places of “learning.” They serve the interest of the capitalists under capitalism. They can only serve the interests of the working class under a communist system.

Schools now serve the murderous butchers who brought us the Iraq and Afghanistan wars and aid in preparing for bigger imperialist wars ahead. If we want an education that serves our class, we have to build for a communist revolution. We’ll have to smash capitalist education, replacing it with a system based on the collective might of the working class.

An army fights with its brains as well as its arms. So, too, does the working class.

ANGRY WORKERS CONFRONT RACIST SUPERVISOR

Los Angeles, CA—“We can’t just leave it like that. We’ve got to do something,” said a worker in response to the insult of a supervisor, who had said, “In this factory there are a lot of stupid people, who can’t speak English.”

The next day, a group of workers went to look for the general supervisor, who is the father of the other supervisor.

A worker asked him, “Is it company policy to insult the workers?”

“Of course not,” answered the general supervisor.

Another worker said, “Yesterday there was an incident where a supervisor called us stupid.”

A third worker said, “This is serious because it could end up in a fight.”

The general supervisor committed himself to having a meeting with all the supervisors so that supposedly this wouldn’t happen again.

We know that this isn’t true, since the supervisors are here to terrorize the workers and that they work under orders from the bosses.

The good thing in this angry action is that it united workers from different countries with whom we have been discussing communist politics, using *Red Flag*, and participating in social activities.

This little action showed us many things, but one impressive thing was that a very quiet worker, who appears quite humble, was one of the most active and angry workers. This has united us more as workers and has given us the opportunity to expand our revolutionary communist ideas.

Red Comrade



US IMPERIALISM, from page 1

American interest to leave the region. . . . Obama’s Iraq policy must be focused on more than withdrawal” (*Washington Post*, 2/3/2010). The region, Kissinger chooses not to say, is of fundamental importance to the US strategy of containing China, Iran and Russia in their struggle for world supremacy.

US Liberal Imperialists Losing War On Terror

The US war on terror is really against local Middle Eastern capitalists – backed by Russia and China -- who are fighting to expel the US from the region.

These local bosses want to control the region’s enormously rich and crucial natural resources, the cornerstone of US imperialism’s world-empire since WWII.

The US bosses, however, are losing their war in Afghanistan-Pakistan. In Iraq, not only are they losing, but they are losing to Iran.

As things stand today, Iran holds the key to Iraq and Iraq holds the key to the region.

If radical Shiites come to dominate the whole of Iraq and line up with Iran, Kissinger concludes, “... we will witness ... a fundamental shift in the balance of the region. The outcome in Iraq will have profound consequences, above all, in Saudi Arabia, the key country in the Persian Gulf ...”

**Kissinger’s and US Rulers’ Nightmare:
The Kingmaker of Iraq**

“As US troops leave the country, one man stands to

benefit above all: Moqtada al-Sadr,” reads the headline of an article in *Foreign Policy* magazine. Moqtada, an anti-US Shiite cleric, has followed the Hezbollah model, creating a populist political movement backed by a battle-hardened militia. He has pledged not to dismantle his militia until the last US soldier leaves Iraq.

Sadr’s Free Movement political party got 39 of the 70 parliament seats won in the March election by the Shiite political block it belongs to. This gives Sadr a decisive vote within this block, empowering him as kingmaker to decide on the next prime minister. Choosing one has been impeded by the political squabbling taking place since March.

Recently, Obama sent a letter to Iraq’s top Shiite Muslim cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, urging him to prod the Shiite groups to a compromise. If successful, Sistani’s intervention would get the incumbent prime minister Maliki to step down and compromise on a new candidate. Sistani, however, would more likely not back Ayad Allawi, winner of the largest number of seats in parliament, because Allawi is opposed by Iran.

Thus, when a political compromise is reached, al-Sadr’s vote can be crucial in electing a pro-Iranian Shiite government, further consolidating Iran’s influence in Iraq.

The US bosses, unable to stop Iran in Iraq, must stop Iran in Iran

US imperialists are using Iran’s nuclear aspirations as an excuse to wage war against it. Richard N.

Haass, President of the CFR, concludes that it is in Iran where the lessons from the first Gulf War “are likely to be debated and, ultimately, applied.” (*The Gulf War at 20*, www.cfr.org, 8/8/2010).

Haass, studying the first Iraq war, concludes economic sanctions might catapult the US-backed Green Movement into power “But if not,” he writes, “the question of whether to use military force ... will come to the fore.” He ends by saying that the outcome of such an action is unpredictable but “not acting risks bringing about a more dangerous and possibly costlier future.” After Obama’s Iraq speech (8/31), the Wall Street Journal wrote, “In each case [Iraq-Afghanistan-Israel-Palestine] a key goal is to clear the decks to focus on the challenge posed by Teheran.

All these bosses’ apologists hide the fact that the real reason behind their masters’ national security concerns and war on terror is their quest for profits and empire. It inexorably leads to wider wars and world war. Only communism, without money, the market and the profit motive can eliminate capitalism with its endless carnage. Communist revolution is the only way for workers to achieve such a society. These crucial times demand more than ever that communists in ICWP make the fight for communism primary among workers, soldiers and students in every struggle worldwide.

BEST EDUCATION FOR HONDURAN TEACHERS: LEARN AND TEACH COMMUNIST IDEAS

Honduras—On August 26, 2010, with rocks and sticks, the teachers defended themselves from tear gas, bombs, and bullets that the police and the genocidal national army wielded to disperse a demonstration of 25,000 teachers. This struggle took place when the teachers marched to the Presidential Palace to protest the robbery of 3,700 million lempiras (\$194 million) from the teachers' pension fund (the National Institute of Support for the Honduran Teachers – INPREMAH) carried out by the Honduran oligarchy, led by the government of Michelleti. These are savings that the teachers had been setting aside for their retirement, but which ended up in the pockets of capitalist thieves who then use these assets to repress the working class and make themselves even richer. In this ferocious police attack, many teachers were injured and others were captured.

Thousands of teachers from the different regions (i.e., departments) of Honduras were sleeping in the National Pedagogical University, which became the teachers' headquarters, and where the police attacked them with tear gas. "It looked like a Nazi concentration camp. We're furious and we're going to fight," said a teacher who is a friend of ICWP.

The leadership of the different teachers' unions, which has sold out to capitalism, met for over 15 days with the government representatives of Porfirio Lobo, to end the month old strike. They want to reach agreements on 17 points, among them the return of the stolen money to INPREMAH.

The teachers have also demanded the firing of the Minister of Education, Alejandro Ventura, who until recently served as General Secretary of PRICPHMA (First Honduran Teachers' Professional Association), and who now serves as a

hatchet man. He has sent out a legislative edict to end the school year and has ordered the mass firing of teachers. He also began criminal proceedings against some of his former fellow teachers. Removing these sellouts from office won't solve anything since the bosses can put another "well-intentioned person" in his position and things will stay the same. Negotiating with these corrupt officials to win isolated improvements for some teachers also is not the solution.

The Confederation of Honduran Workers (CUTH) gave its direct support to the striking teachers. This has become a mass working class struggle. Why keep playing capitalism's game when we can fight to destroy it? The education workers and all other workers must organize and fight, with communist ideas, to destroy this murderous capitalist system.

The Honduran working class must fight so that the capitalist oligarchy, the cause of the repression, poverty, and the growing gap between rich and poor, can't continue their reign of terror. The teachers must be part of the struggle to eradicate this system, of which this band of thieves forms a part. They are murderers who have treated the workers as slaves. (Reading *Prisión Verde* and *Destacamento Rojo* would be an enormous help in understanding how the history of Honduras is full of workers' struggles.)

Teachers around the world must realize that reforms hold back the process of fighting for revolution, that these temporary crumbs that the system gives them, even when the product of workers' struggles, can't be allowed to mislead the struggle.



This conflict will be bogged down until we destroy capitalism.

The International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP) is organizing for this; it's the only alternative open to the working class. Our newspaper, *Red Flag*, must reach thousands of Honduran workers. Workers in Honduras, like workers everywhere, must see the need to build ICWP into a mass fighting party that will fight these oppressors. Teachers, workers in the factories (there are now 110,000 workers in maquilas here), and soldiers must join the international struggle for communist revolution.

Update: After almost a month, the strike of over 60,000 teachers ended. They were demanding the payment of a debt by the government to the pension fund of the National Institute of Teachers' Pensions and the re-hiring of many department directors. The government accepted the demands and formed a commission to supposedly "help to resolve the problems" between teachers and the government.

PATRIOTISM—IRAN, from page 2

all, the ones in the White House -- will start wondering exactly why striking that nuclear program is such a terrible idea."

The US rulers hope openly that the Iranian Green Movement might topple the Ahmadinejad regime. That, too, means war. After Iran came out the real winner of the US war on Iraq, war on Iran is their only option to control that strategic oil region.

"The international community should harbor no illusions that [a Green Movement] success would inevitably lead to peace and democracy in the long term," wrote Michael Singh in *Foreign Affairs* (7/26/10). "The US and its allies should be considering how to prepare for the real possibility of instability in Iran should the opposition prevail."

Workers Must Plan Communist Revolution

We should learn from the "Ground Zero Mosque" controversy that religious pacifism, religious pluralism, and religion period are not the solution to imperialist war. They are part of the problem. Only communist revolution can end its bloody horrors.

In communism, factories and other workplaces can become community centers instead of the religious-based ones (YMCA, JCC, Muslim) that dominate today. That's how it was in Soviet Russia. But we won't make the Soviet mistake of keeping a capitalist mode of production ("socialism"). That undermined real international working-class solidarity and made communism impossible.

As millions of workers build real connections through our INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST WORKERS' PARTY, study dialectical materialist philosophy, and take our destiny into our own hands, we will break the chains of mystical thinking. As Karl Marx wrote, we need not freedom of religion but freedom from religion.

Gangs: Death Traps for Young Workers

It seems like you can't drive down any street in South Los Angeles without seeing candles, flowers, photos and cards in memory of a working class youth killed in gang violence. Since the beginning of 2007, there have been 1209 homicide victims between the ages of 13 and 25 in Los Angeles County. Hispanics outnumber blacks by about 250 homicides, but this in a county where Hispanics are almost half of the population. So the death rate for black youth is higher, but even one death by gang violence is one too many.

By comparison, there have been 599 Californians killed in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan since 2003, so it's obvious that the bosses have made it more dangerous to walk down our own streets *in the US* than to be out on the battlefield in their war. However, there have been more than a million Iraqis and Afghans killed in the wars since 2003. Imperialist war and racist terror both attack our class!

At the core of the homicides in South LA is gang violence. Kids as young as eleven or twelve are being recruited into street gangs. Sometimes a rotten home life, where the pressures of capitalism have ruined the love and support that a family should provide, pushes youth to look for love and protection from a gang. Racist unemployment has convinced many young people that there is no future for them in the system.

Racism has always been a factor in capitalism, but the current crisis has made it much worse. The unemployment rate for youth is about three times that of the whole population, and even the experts are talking about a lost generation of youth who won't be able to find jobs in the current economic crisis. Working class young people look at the racist oppression of their own parents and everything that is going on in their neighborhoods, and they judge their own future based on what the bosses have surrounded them with.

Because this is worldwide economic crisis, working class youth around the world are placed in the same

situation or worse. What is the solution? Bimba, a college graduate from Guinea in West Africa says, "If change is going to come here, it is going to come with violence. Me, I would take part. I could not ignore the chance to make a change." [<http://www.irinnews.org>] Building a working class movement that fights for a communist system where everybody's work is valued equally is the only solution to this problem. Capitalism in crisis isn't going to have jobs for everybody.

But the ICWP has room for every single worker—young or old—who wants to fight for a better world.

When Darrick Collins was killed by the sheriffs last year, we fought for a five minute work stoppage on all MTA buses in protest against this racist murder. Gang murders are just as much the fault of the capitalist system as Darrick's murder; a system that convinces working class youth that they don't have a future is guilty of genocide. Every one of these murders should be met with a political strike or a demonstration that puts the blame on capitalism.

In a communist society, there won't be any unemployment. Everyone will work to meet the needs of the working class, not for the bosses' profits. Youth won't be forced to join gangs as a form of protection and comfort. The energy, strength and creativity of young people will be seen as a precious resource. And we will fight tooth and nail against any vestiges of racism that continue from capitalist culture. But the economic basis of racism, of competing for jobs, and bosses competing to make maximum profit with the working class at their disposal, will be abolished.

Our job is to reach out to the working class youth in our communities and recruit them to the ICWP. We know that there is a future for the working class. That future is a communist society. Working class young people in the factories and in the army can play a vital role in making that future a reality. Fight for communism.

Tamaulipas, Mexico

DESTROY CAPITALISM THAT MURDERS IMMIGRANT WORKERS

Mexico—Last Tuesday, August 24, 72 immigrant workers, 58 men and 14 women, from Central and South America, were cowardly murdered in the city of Tamaulipas. The executioners were the Zetas, an armed group linked to the drug cartels, extortion, and kidnappings, etc. The guilty party who masterminded this crime is rotten capitalism, its borders and racist unemployment.

According to the Human Rights Commission in Mexico, this year alone there have been more than 10,000 kidnappings of immigrants. They say that last year there were 9,000. These kidnappings yield the captors hundreds or even thousands of dollars for each person. This only so they can follow the long dangerous road north (to the USA). According to the government of Felipe Calderon, in these kidnappings, extortions and killings, both groups of criminal street gangs and “official” criminals like the police and immigration agents are involved.

But at the same time, many Mexican men and women workers extend their hands out in solidarity to migrant workers. There are dozens of Immigrant Houses where food, clothing, and other aid is given to the migrants so they can continue their journey. Also there is the famous community, La Fortuna, where entire families prepare food, water and bags to give to those who travel along the famous “Train of Death.” This is part of working class solidarity, seeing all workers as our brothers and sisters, a communist principle.

With the current economic global crisis, and at the

doorstep of more imperialist wars, the situation for the world’s workers will worsen. These migrants have to risk dying either on the road or crossing the borders. This is a worldwide capitalist phenomenon, from Africa to America. Why do these workers have to travel to other countries in search of a miserable job? In “their” countries, there are no jobs, only poverty and repression. The bosses who control these countries are as guilty as the Zeta killers.

For example, the Salvadoran government, even with the reformist FMLN in power, cannot meet the needs of the working class. And if we compare what the Salvadoran bosses have done in the past to workers, the Zeta killers are small fry. We should remember the constant massacres of farm workers, workers and students in the 1980’s in El Salvador. One of saddest, most infamous incidents is the massacre of El Mozote, where the National Army massacred more than 850 people in cold blood, mainly women, elderly, and children.

Other countries, like Mexico, Honduras, Ecuador and Brazil also have the same history of parasites and murderers; where the bosses get richer as the workers get poorer. For example, look at the constant strikes that are attacked and workers are killed,



beaten or jailed.

The murder of the 72 workers who were looking for a “dream” and wanted to escape the horrors of racist unemployment were not able to break down the barriers imposed by the bosses, like borders and their money hungry and blood thirsty groups of hyenas.

This is a bitter lesson, one more reason why we need to destroy this capitalist system, its borders, its nations and its money. We need to see the urgency of building a massive and international ICWP to lead the working class of the world to destroy capitalism and build a new society where there will be no bosses. Our goal must be a communist society where the life and well being of each worker will be the responsibility of the whole society. That’s why our fight is for ONE CLASS, ONE PARTY AND ONE FLAG. FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM!

Communist Education Will Value Children as Young Workers, Not as Test Scores

We’re fighting for a communist society, where production is to meet the needs of the working class. We want to learn from those who went before us, and to rethink every institution in society, including “schools.” Education must break down the barriers between manual and mental work, as well as the barriers between home and school.

We envision a society where social activity is organized around the workplace. In the USSR, for example, factories had day care centers where children were taken care of while their parents worked and mothers nursed their babies on their breaks.

Schools will operate in the same way. Parents will bring their children to an educational center adjacent to the factory. Parents will take turns being involved with the children’s education, and “teachers” will take turns at being part of the production process.

Some people will probably take more responsibility for the coordination and planning of the educational process, but we will struggle with everyone to be involved and to take leadership in the education of a new generation of workers. Children will be involved in age-appropriate ways in the production process. Work and learning will not be separated from each other.

Capitalist Schools Treat Children as Capitalist Commodities

In capitalist schools, working class parents are alienated from their children’s education. Schools are a capitalist institution which exists to serve the interests of the capitalists: to train children for their role in capitalist society, and to indoctrinate them with bourgeois ideology. Schools ask for parent volunteers, but only unemployed parents without young children at home can do this. When they do volunteer, they are given menial tasks and rarely invited to participate in education or decision-making. Because of this alienation, many parents are eager to send their children to charter schools.

Parental alienation also creates a political base for the ruling class to blame the teachers for the failure

of the schools and to institute more fascist working conditions.

Playing a leading role in this attack on teachers is the *Los Angeles Times*, which has compiled a list of all the 3rd and 5th-grade teachers in Los Angeles, ranked by their “Value Added” score. This indicates whether their students improved more or less than would be expected by looking at their test scores from the previous year.

“Value added” is a concept that comes from manufacturing. It actually represents the surplus value extracted from workers. It is only under the capitalist system that one can speak of whether a working class child has received “added value” and that this “value” has been imparted by a single teacher who taught the child for the test.

As a consequence, if the student does not receive “value added” instruction and the teacher doesn’t impart it, as measured by a test, then one of them or both are deemed to have less “value.” The ruling class can then justify its attack on the student, the parent, or the teacher.

This is just one more way the rulers divide the working class and get us to blame each other, rather than capitalism in crisis.

Teachers Need a Political Strike against Fascist School Reform

Even within the context of capitalist education, there are many problems with this approach to teacher evaluations, and union teachers and academics will be pointing them out. For the working class, the main problem is that “teaching to the test” requires teachers to toe the line ideologically, teaching patriotism and US triumphalism, and preparing students to fight for the bosses in the next war. The ruling class wants kids to read, do math, and follow directions, but they don’t want kids to question the system and the bosses’ lies.

Using Value Added Modeling (VAM) will also result in more fascist working conditions for all teachers. Union officials are caving in on this with alarm-

ing speed. National AFT President Randi Weingarten joined Education Secretary Arne Duncan on nationwide TV Sunday morning, August 29, in advocating the use of “Value Added Modeling” (VAM) to evaluate all teachers. The president of the Los Angeles teachers’ union, while insisting that he rejects VAM, has agreed to reopen talks on teacher evaluation in the wake of the *LA Times* articles. Education union officials advocate the same social-fascist labor peace as Boeing and MTA union hacks. Teachers must reject this and instead must organize a political strike against VAM and all fascist school reforms.

Want Real Education? Fight for Communism!

In a communist society, teaching the young will be a collective job, and if a parent or teacher is having trouble, their comrades and fellow workers will help them improve. In capitalist schools, kids are tested to see how much “value” a teacher “adds” to their brain in a given year, and if the tests indicate that the teacher doesn’t “measure up,” the teacher is out on the street. As the ruling class prepares for world war by instituting more fascist conditions on every job, teachers and other school workers will face more attacks like VAM. Communists in ICWP must share our vision of education in communist society. We invite teachers, parents, and students to join ICWP and organize in the schools, factories, and barracks to fight to turn the coming world war into a revolutionary war for communism. Only then will education truly serve the needs of the working class.



LETTERS

LETTERS *****

CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

“We’re trying to open people’s minds”

I joined the Party this summer because I believe that there’s no such thing as reform in a capitalist society, so I just tossed the idea of reform out the window. I just believe that communism will work for the working-class citizens of the world. It would be more equal, more fair, and we would grow as a community together as one instead of separate nations.

I like *Red Flag* because it’s user-friendly, it’s easy to read and the articles are interesting. Like the one about transit workers discussing communism and the unions. I’m reading it and it got me in the eye.

The first place I was handing out papers was to workers at an MTA division. One refused to take the paper because he said he fought the communists in Guatemala for twenty years. Later he walked by with a friend and I said to the friend, “Here’s a newspaper, it’s about communism, if you like any of the articles hit me up and we’ll talk some more.” He said, “Okay, sure, I’ll take one.” The anti-communist gave me a sour-faced look but it didn’t stop the other guy. About seventy-five workers took the paper that day.

Sometimes when people pick the paper up and see it’s communism they might just put it down. The original history of communism through Russia, and China—they think it failed. We’re trying to open people’s minds to the fact that it wasn’t communism that failed but socialism.

Red Whistle (I’m loud and I’m red!)

“I Need to Work”

I work for a free health care clinic (supported by private donations) and I have the opportunity to help patients and listen to their stories. I have heard stories of pain, death, and heartache.

I saw a patient allow his blood sugar to reach such dangerous levels he was willing to risk his eyesight, kidneys and life because he “needed to work.” Being illegal for him means having to travel frequently and change jobs in order to hide from ICE officials. He was too afraid to seek medical care in any other city. The constant fear was also driving his body to physical deterioration.

Being “illegal” means that even the ER order he was given by an MD was not sufficient to get a day off of work. “I need to work” was his answer. His boss said, “You need the money! Work or lose your job.”

I also spoke with a man who said that during his “illegal” immigration he had to leave 3 frozen bodies behind in the mountains. “I needed to work!” was his justification. “Life here is so tough and lonely, but I need to work.”

I know that many clients use false documents and because we keep everything confidential they say, “I’m using false documents and I know if I get caught I will rot in jail but – I need to work— there is no other way.”

I know that many leave their families and long to go

back home to their native countries. I know they are not here on a mission to work, not to get a “free ride” in the US. I have encountered many patients who have been paying through pay check deductions to Social Security and Medicare but they will never claim a dime. “I don’t care if I don’t get the benefits I pay for – I need to work.”

Coming home today, I was grateful I didn’t have to die, let die, or abandon my family and personal well-being to work, or at least not yet. I am still under military contract and could be deployed— I need to work.

Midwest Reader

Red Flag comments: Under capitalism, people “need to work” so they don’t starve. Jobs mean wage-slavery. Under communism, people will “need to work” to be useful and contribute to the common good. Nobody will have to leave their family or go without medical care in order to work. We hope that you get this paper to friends, co-workers and patients and enlist them in the fight for communism.

Public companies and education versus privatization? No, what we need is communism!

Defending public companies against privatization has been a demand that those who want to reform capitalism have made. This has been supported by masses of workers dissatisfied with racist exploitation and oppression.

However, in the whole period before the mass privatizations of the neoliberal period or globalization,” spanning the first three quarters of the 20th century, the public businesses (or state companies) prospered under what was predominantly state capitalism world wide, and these same companies exploited and oppressed the workers forcing them into poverty and death in wars (including two World Wars).

That’s what the reformers of capitalism recommend for us: state capitalism against private exploitation. For them there are only two soups for us, both rotten. What we need is to take production and all life into our own hands. This is communism, which won’t have state companies or “public” businesses as there were under socialism, but centers of production of life for humanity: without wage labor, without buying and selling of products, but instead producing to meet our needs defined by the goal of finally being humans.

In the struggles to reform education, the liberal reformists, some of whom call themselves “leftists,” including the revisionists (fake communists) also advocate public schools against the privatization of schools, increases instead of cuts in budgets, “free” education (that is, covered by the taxes collected by the State) instead of paying tuition, and “alternative” education. The defenders of state or “public” education keep their demands and struggles within the limits of capitalism.

The majority of students are young workers, in preparation to be exploited or join the reserve army for industry. They need, like all the other workers including those in the army: to destroy the system of wage slavery with communist revolution.

A Comrade in Mexico

Dear Red Flag

El Salvador—“We won’t always be here, and that’s why it’s necessary that the youth organize,” stated a comrade about the new group of youth of ICWP.

Throughout history the youth have been an important part of these struggles against the system. That’s why the need for a collective of youth of ICWP in this country has been raised.

This collective started three weeks ago discussing articles in *Red Flag* and other topics like the anti-immigrant law in Arizona and that the system is the cause of the violence in El Salvador.

We youth have to organize in study groups using *Red Flag*, go to the factories to see the reality of the working class, go to the military, and strengthen the alliance of workers and soldiers.

The youth, as the future of the revolution, must organize and circulate *Red Flag* so that the new generations know the reality of the capitalist system that offers nothing for young people and that’s why we need a communist revolution.

LONG LIVE THE WORKING CLASS! LONG LIVE ICWP! WORKERS OF THE WORLD, UNITE!

Dear Red Flag,

Some of the territory that ICWP is currently exploring is relatively uncharted. One of the things in this territory that we’re discussing is how to deal with strikes and the concept of “political strikes.” What we should advocate around this is very unclear to me.

It has been clear to me for a number of years that fighting for reforms is a loser. If the reforms are won, that prolongs the life of this racist, murderous system... a system that periodically requires widespread destruction, a system that’s rapidly heading for the kind of devastating war this world has never before seen. Capitalism requires this. The major powers, locked in deadly competition with each other, must spend the greater part of their budgets on war. Companies “consolidate,” and those left standing must keep reducing their expenditures, the greatest savings coming, of course, from layoffs. What that means is that the capitalists’ ability to maneuver is shrinking to almost nothing - they don’t have extra crumbs to pass out to us workers now.

Given these facts, ICWP has been calling on workers to go out on strike - but a political strike that calls for destroying capitalism, followed by building a communist world. MTA drivers are facing a strike vote. A number of us have gone to various MTA depots and distributed leaflets there, putting forward this idea of a political strike. The response of the majority of workers has been positive - and a sizable minority of drivers expressed enthusiastic agreement of this concept.

However, I’m worried that our calling for workers to vote for - or call for - any kind of strike may be dishonest. Even though our leaflets explain that only political strikes - strikes that put smashing capitalism front and center - we still may be building the illusion that strikes can truly benefit us. Maybe what we’re doing is the best that can be done. I haven’t thought of a viable alternative. Maybe my reservation is not well founded, and we should continue to deal with strikes the way we are dealing with them. I’m really not sure.

Sincerely,

A comrade in ICWP

MTA WORKERS, from page 1

article pg.1) and eventually against China and Russia, the bosses have no money for workers. But even if we won our demands, the bosses have state power and can take them back at will. For example, our contract will very likely be a give-back one.

Not being able to win our demands doesn’t mean we shouldn’t strike. Passivity, “hoping for better times”, and accepting a no-strike regime, disarms and sets us up to be buried in an avalanche of racism, fascism and imperialist wars. At stake is the future of the international working class.

Thus, the crucial question is not whether to fight or not, but what to fight for and how.

We need to fight to destroy this anti-worker pro-

boss system with a communist revolution. Internationally, our interests can only be permanently guaranteed under a communist society.

A political strike would raise this revolutionary communist vision for all workers to see as the only solution to their problems. As one MTA mechanic said when giving his opinions about a political strike, “It is a good idea and I like the idea of going to other transport agencies, to the trains, but before anything I would like for all of us to go one morning to the homes of Mayor Villaraigosa and LA County Supervisor Gloria Molina to give them a little taste of our anger.”

This worker has the right idea. We have to take our struggle and communist ideas to all workers, soldiers, and students and our demonstrations should

target those in power and the seats of power, like City Hall. This clarifies to the working class the need to take state power, not just fight for crumbs.

During the preparations for the strike vote and possible strike, ICWP intensified the political struggle with the workers. *Red Flag* was distributed massively, together with thousands of communist leaflets. We call on workers to organize a political strike under the leadership of ICWP’s members and friends and *Red Flag* readers. Winning – and this is the crucial point we have to win workers to – is distributing more *Red Flags*, building study-action groups and recruiting members to ICWP. This and only this can make all our struggle worth while. A political strike can help win this victory!

Revolutionary Dialectics: The Negation of the Negation

In the last issue of *Red Flag*, we discussed the differences between change in the *quantity* of something, like your age or your weight, and a change in *quality*, like the change from health to sickness or life to death. In this column, we will look a little deeper into qualitative change, and discuss what happens as qualitative changes follow one another.

A qualitative change can only happen when some aspect of a thing or a process has been replaced by an opposite characteristic, like the solidity of ice being replaced by the fluidity of liquid water when ice melts. This transition from one quality to an opposite quality is called a *dialectical negation*.

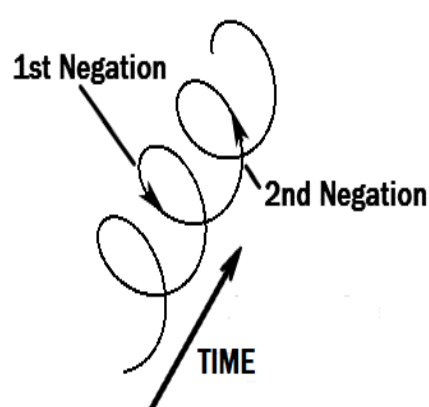
This use of the word 'negation' does not mean that the transition it describes is something negative or bad. If you have been out of work and find a new job, the transition you make is the negation of your unemployment, which isn't a bad thing.

A dialectical negation is never a complete change in all aspects. Some of a thing's qualities change into their opposites while others are preserved. A healthy person who gets the flu undergoes a negation from health to sickness, but that person's brain, heart, legs, etc., will usually continue to work.

The contradictions inside things drive them to change. Sometimes this change is just change in quantity, but if quantitative change continues far enough, it produces qualitative change, that is, dialectical negation. Another way to put this point is that qualities have quantitative *limits*. If the rivalry of competing capitalist countries becomes intense enough, they make the transition from peace to war, or from small wars to big ones.

Dialectical negation does not happen all the time, but it does happen eventually. As long as a process lasts, the contradictions in it will drive it to the next negation. History keeps going, one dialectical negation after another. This is part the dialectical law called the *Negation of the Negation*.

A dialectical negation is never completely reversed. If you have an accident and break your arm, that is a dialectical negation. If your arm heals, that is a second negation. Your arm may seem as good as new, but in



fact the structure of your broken bone has permanently changed, even if what is new is too small to notice. In other dialectical negations, the difference is a big one. If a seed grows into a plant (a negation) and the plant produces a new seed with altered genes (a second negation), the new seed may produce a plant with quite different characteristics (a mutation). This is an essential part of evolution by natural selection. Marx described the history of capitalism as capitalists grabbing the land and labor of workers and small farmers (a negation), and communist revolution as grabbing the means of production from the capitalists (a second negation). This second negation does not take us back to pre-capitalist days, but is a huge step forward.

One way to describe how negations follow negations is by comparing a process to a spiral. Each negation is a half twist around the spiral. If you start at the top, two half twists bring you back to the top, but farther along the spiral. So history is not circular. Situations that are similar to the past can happen, but always somewhat different from what happened before. This is the second part of the law of the Negation of the Negation.

Sometimes people describe the result of the second negation as a partial repetition of the original situation on a "higher level." The result is higher, but *only* in the sense that the process is farther along in its development. "Higher" does not mean *better*. The process of the death of an empire, for example, goes through many dialectical negations that make it worse and worse. As we build up the communist movement, however, we need to use the Law of the Negation of the Negation to understand the course of the struggle for communism. This will be the topic of our next column.

A Big Contradiction : Being Communists in a Capitalist System

We know the responsibility entailed by declaring ourselves communists of ICWP before our friends. It demands consistency of our actions and the political line that we put forward. Our daily life reflects whether or not we understand the politics we advocate.

In a meeting, our collective discussed dialectical materialism, contradiction and the struggle of opposites. The example we used was marriage: unity = marriage or a couple, contradiction = communist ideas vs. capitalist ideas.

This example uncovered contradictions in our marriage that were causing us problems. The collective strongly pushed to sharpen our contradictions with an objective analysis of the root of the problem. They confronted our contradictions and we discussed them for almost four hours. The result: a lot of learning for the whole collective. We could clearly see the root of the problem and its solution. It was an emotionally exhausting session, to the degree that when we were alone, we said that we felt that we had undressed in front of the comrades.

Couples' problems are recurrent under this system whether or not we're communists. We began to avoid talking about them in meetings, or minimized them. We aren't suggesting that we should spend all our time talking about such problems but that we dedicate time when a couple or comrade needs it and that we have confidence in the collective. No one is exempt.

We need to put contradictions on the table, sharpening and resolving them to reach a higher level of unity.

When problems become very sharp some recommend seeking "specialized" help. As communists, we recommend dealing with the problem as a collective, without fear. Most psychologists have capitalist training and their solutions aren't always the best, since they don't see the couple as class brothers and sisters, but as the closest enemy.

Now, sharpening the contradictions and provoking movement doesn't guarantee making the best decision, or that

we advance to the left. Many times capitalist ideas win out and the problem ends in divorce. What does this depend on? The answer is the goal pursued and the road taken to get there.

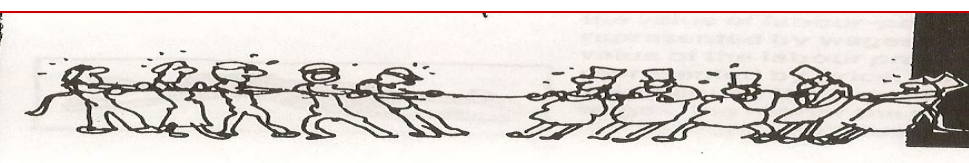
In the case of marriage, when we don't sharpen the contradictions, the goals stop being collective, and capitalist ideas win out. This is reflected in actions that are inconsistent with communist ideas (for example, individualism, sexism, liberalism, infidelity, etc). When we don't solve these contradictions by moving to the left, the marriage can end in separation.

Capitalism has put forward an infinity of biological "theories" of couples (humans and other species) that justify anti-communist statements. We believe that in the couple there should exist several elements of unity: solidarity, loyalty, alliance, consideration, and hormonal attraction. However, we don't deny that this last changes according to social conditions, both physiological and environmental. It's a factor so vulnerable and temporary that we shouldn't allow it to condition or rise above the factors that we need as a working class.

On many occasions in capitalism, unity is maintained in a marriage under agreements to not intensify the contradiction: don't criticize me and I won't criticize you, respect my ideas and I'll respect yours. These are clear signs of capitalist ideas, in essence the contradiction is more alive than ever, the problems increase and the right wins thus destroying the working class and communist revolution.

As class brothers and sisters, we're stronger together than separated. As the working class we need to be united. When we understand this, we make the ideological struggle primary and solve the contradictions in favor of our class. For this there must be the willingness and the conviction to defeat capitalist ideas in ourselves, because the internal is primary. When there's not this conviction, when unity=marriage, when the struggle ends, this is a blow for our class and the revolution. Let's reverse this by building for communist revolution in ICWP.

Red Couple



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Questions for Red Flag Readers' Groups:

1. In a letter on page 15, a comrade asks if we are building illusions in reformism when we urge people to organize for a political strike. What do you think? What are the best ways to build communist consciousness and help the working class organize for revolution?
2. The article about communist education (p.14) says that "we need to rethink every institution in society, including schools, "What do you think about the article's vision of education in a communist society? What other institutions must we rethink?