

Workers Unite Against Capital!

# AGAINST WAGE-LABOUR

*AGAINST WAGE-LABOUR: THE VOICE OF PROTEST OF WORKERS' STRUGGLES AGAINST THE WAGE-SLAVERY SYSTEM*  
No. 10 July 2008



## **Council Workers of Grünerløkka: A Spark in the Darkness**

The End of The Haft Tapeh Sugar Cane Workers Strike

The Unbridled Barbarization of German Capitalists on the Dead Field of Trade Unions

Homeless Community Take Back their Space

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This newsletter contains articles outlining current worker struggles from around the world thus bringing to light an emerging workers movement. With different bourgeois groups fighting for power and access to more resources most notably cheaper labour, the workers inevitably end up at the end of their blows. In response to this both in the West and elsewhere, the workers are fighting back for better wages, working conditions, benefits, as well as in particular struggling to take back a bigger piece of the surplus values that they produced for the capitalists.

The Iraq War and its failures are outlined in an article highlighting a war that is killing innocent victims as different capitalist poles vie for a stake in the wealthy resources of the Middle East. Capitalists fight for resources including human resources, the workers, to continually protect and gain more capital. The workers of Palestine and other Arab countries suffer at the hands of the American-Israeli bourgeoisie as well as the Islamic bourgeoisie. Furthermore, there are increasing work stoppages and strikes by the workers in Iran where the bourgeois is also gaining economic power and allies with other anti-Imperialists. The sugar cane workers of Haft Tapeh in Iran had begun strikes and despite the brutality by the Police and Security Forces, they keep on resisting and amazingly, they are receiving widespread support and solidarity from other workers. This strike has now ended and the workers have returned to work. The Coordinating Committee to Form Worker's Organization in Iran is promoting not only work stoppages, but the occupation and ultimate self-management of the production within the factories.

The workers when resisting find themselves not only in direct conflict with the bosses but also in conflict with their Trade Union who are the hirelings for capitalists. The Trade Unions which by nature must work within the capitalist framework and keep the labour in peace are also powerful for their role as negotiators for large numbers of workers and therefore can direct the labour power of the masses – with this authority they too are members of the bourgeoisie. Examples of workers striking independent of their union are outlined in the articles about the shoe workers in Viet Nam where they have begun strikes against their employers. They have, independent of the unions, instigated more than 330 strikes in the past year. The companies affected have been accusing the unions of not being able to control the workers. Furthermore, diamond workers in Namibia In Southern Africa have begun a strike without the support of their union. Their union in the past subdued their militant

actions in favour of negotiating with management. This is the nature of the union, to suppress and stifle the struggle of the rank and file workers and bring them back in line with the goals of capitalism, to produce more and more surplus value for the upper classes. The dead role of the Trade Unions is further exemplified in the article titled "It is Time to Wake Up – Unionism is Dead and a Worker Movement Crucial". Additionally this article addresses the need not only for a worker movement; but one that is global in nature; capitalism is global therefore the working class must wake up, understand their class and act as an international class.

These situations are exemplified in the worker's council in Norway article which is forming itself as a true worker organization against the capitalists without union intervention. This worker's council is a spark that could light a fire in favour of a class struggle or it could be extinguished. In Sweden, nurses were on strike and supported by many other workers in their eroding health care system. Their demands were in direct conflict with the concessions that the union proposed to the management. In an update to this article, the nurses' strike lasted 40 days and at the end they did not succeed in reaching any of their demands due to the intrusion of the Trade Union which negotiated for them. In Germany the Bike System factory workers were self-managing for 115 days; a true worker victory as they produced without exploitation, again without the union. Unfortunately the follow up to this action also resulted in a failure whereby they could not hold onto the factory without a long-term anti-capitalistic vision and were forced to recede. However with this in mind, the workers demonstrated militancy and took some first steps within a movement that is at a point to develop into a potent force.

An example of the Union's hypocrisy and stake in capitalism is also seen when the South African Transport Union Workers refused to unload weapons destined for Zimbabwe. This union was very clearly supported by the American/British bourgeois and so it must be emphasized that the anti-imperialism does not equate with anti-capitalism. The intention of the union must be questioned. Although locally demands by workers are made, the movement of workers striking against companies must unite internationally. The division of workers represented by unions with differing bourgeois political agendas is a serious chasm that exposes the workers to increasing exploitation. The exploitation which occurs globally within a global economy, workers must fight back on

a global scale.

Every day workers go to their jobs not only without security and living wages, but in poor working conditions such as the construction workers in South Africa who were killed and injured while renovating an old building; for the Petrotrin Oil Workers who were evacuated from their workplaces due to a gas leak. Workers are forced to endure harsh working conditions in order to bring home a salary. In the most severe circumstances, children must wage-slave. There are millions of child workers who are forced into unsafe and abusive conditions so that they can contribute to their families' paltry incomes. It is negligible the damage that is being done to adults and children in their workplaces because the bottom line is the incredible amounts of wealth that they are generating for the bourgeois class. These levels of poverty occur everywhere and cannot be hidden. This especially holds true when homeless people attempt to take back their community as a downtown east side Toronto community of homeless and working poor did in Allan Gardens in June 2008. The crackdown on a few hundred people by the police on horseback and their readiness to intimidate, arrest and incarcerate should not come as a surprise because their role is to protect the wealth that the city flaunts. There is no pretending which class the bourgeois municipal government of Toronto represents. This is also seen in Germany where the employer's association wants to sue their government to lower Social Security for the workers. It is clearly time for all workers to realize the history of the class war and force its continuation rather than withdraw and concede more and more of what has been fought for over several generations of capitalism.

As inflation increases around the world, many workers are unable to feed themselves. This is capitalism's reality and in facing this reality the workers continue to do work stoppages. For instance the articles discussing the textile workers in Egypt and Swaziland show the severe repression and how they are caught in the middle of a battle between different bourgeois groups vying to procure the cheapest labour costs possible. The South African World Cup construction workers have also held numerous strikes for better wages. Additionally more strikes are occurring with miners in Peru, Mexico and Chile as well as teachers in Oaxaca, Mexico; who are all fighting for better work conditions without union or government interference. It is always time and time again the competition for better profits, the struggle by capitalists to move production to areas, regions, countries where wages are lowest, working conditions can be compromised, and

benefits can be cut; where wage-slavery is deep and deadly.

"Socialism as Movement versus Socialism as Theory" is another article, published in 2007, but continues to be very relevant for this newsletter as there are tendencies that present two containers of struggle; the political parties comprised of middle class intellectuals which form themselves in the name of workers who are recruited to follow these elite leaders; and the union officials who negotiate the economic part of the struggle. These are detrimental and dangerous for the working class as it strips them of any control over their movement. The consciousness of a real movement for workers comes from themselves through their own self-activity. The elitism demonstrated by Trade Unions and so-called Socialist political parties only serve their own interests and leaves workers in the same situation without any power.

Despite working in the hegemonic West, North American and European workers are not exempt from deep exploitation. Factories here move regularly to places where there are cheaper labour costs, health care and education are being eroded as neo-liberal policies exert their agendas. In Sweden, Norway, Canada, workers resist and must continue to resist because not only can working benefits, conditions and wages decline, but because as workers we must fight internationally. All workers are connected through the global competition for profits by different bourgeois poles. Without international networking and solidarity among workers, the capitalists will continue to enjoy their power, but as we fight back through strikes, work stoppages, demonstrations of solidarity, economic disruptions, an international working class struggle and movement will materialize. Despite the militancy of the workers noted in these articles as well as those not documented in this newsletter, a forward-moving and expanding global workers' movement must embark on a long and arduous journey of fighting against management, union interference and compromises; they must fight for their daily demands as well as very importantly, continue their militancy with a strong anti-capitalist vision free of exploitation and wage-slavery. Internationalism must be the horizon that workers are seeing beyond their immediate and local demands. Only then can this emerging workers movement reach out and snatch back the power from the capitalists through the development of worker's councils, self-management thus building a world without classes and wage-slavery. ☒

# Homeless Community Take Back their Space



On June 21, 2008 a group of approximately 200 homeless and poor people arrived at Allan Gardens in the downtown east side of Toronto to stage an occupation protest against the constant repression of poor people by the current municipal government in Toronto. The occupation was organized by the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty where they planned to create a safe place in the park and sleep there overnight. Over the past years, shelter beds are being closed, social assistance rates are so extremely low that people cannot house or feed themselves any more, affordable decent housing is disappearing, as well as job security for many working poor; this alongside the incredible wealth of business and governments. As per the usual of capitalism the extreme wealth of the system does not even pervade to the lower extremities of the very poor and the working poor.

The event began with the gathering of a few hundred people the majority being local

homeless and poor people directly affected by the recent shelter closures, the slashing of social assistance rates, and the overall capitalist system which depends not only on the wage-labouring working poor but on the desperation of those who fall through its cracks. The crowd at

Allan Gardens was met by dozens of police officers, some on foot, and some in cruisers, some on bikes and several on horseback. The infinite wealth of this system is exemplified by this show of force. The police are capital's security to self-maintenance. The capitalist system must with no exceptions never allow any pushback be it road blockades, work stoppages, or occupations of houses or parks. The police came in aggressively and tore down the tarps which had been erected to shelter the people from the imminent rain storm that night. Despite their aggression and intimidation tactics, the people remained. They relaxed on their mats, chatted, played soccer and were overall in good spirits. A fine meal was also prepared and doled out for everyone in attendance. The meal was not only yummy but practical and healthy (spinach salad, pasta and tuna salad, pasta salad with vegetables, fruit, juice, and water) for the many people who rely

on drop-in kitchens and food banks. Everyone felt safe and supported by those around them; it was a community that temporarily felt out of harm's way in a neighbourhood where they are accustomed to being ticketed for panhandling, and being thrown in jail for being homeless. The so-called Safe Streets Act in Toronto makes it illegal to be homeless and under-housed for the sake of the tourists and the wealthy local business associations.

Whether government officials are conservative or in the current case of the municipal government of Toronto, Social Democrats, the result is the same and no illusions must be made about this. The goal of the capitalist system is to generate capital, profits, all on the backs of the lower strata of society, the working class. Within the working class are the working poor, the unemployed, the homeless, all who by their very nature are anti-capitalist and resist according to their levels of consciousness. The crowd on this Saturday evening was militant in their demands for housing and food for themselves. There were no compromises made to the police or their bosses the city of Toronto.

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# The End of The Haft Tapeh Sugar Cane Workers Strike

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Following thirteen large strikes over fifteen months and after the recent fifty day continuous strike which included sporadic intermittent battles with the suppressive Forces of Capital in and around Shosh City, a few thousand of the Haft Tapeh sugar cane workers finally returned to work without achieving any of their demands. However, the method that the capitalist government used was calculated in a very precise manner; that is, the government went around the leaders of the strike in order to make division among the workers and initiated a negotiation with a group of workers and convinced them to put an end to the strike. Those workers who were determined to carry on the strike pointed out this group of workers as a factor in ending the strike, and in order to prevent further division among workers they returned to work. However, to show their good faith they gave twenty days to the employers to fulfill their demands, otherwise, they would start the strike again. Yaghob Shafiei the Executive Director of the company also promised the workers that if they stopped their strike and struggle, and returned to work, he would do something about their demand for their back wages in a few weeks.

For anybody who had been

following the current events of the strike and the entire events over the past two years, obviously one would comprehend that the decision of the workers to put an end to the strike and return to work has nothing to do with building hope or belief in the employer's promises to fulfill their demands. We must speak earthy and consider the reality of the bitterness of a class struggle without making any fantasy. The real mystery of the returning workers and their submissive agreement to the employers has nothing to do with their trust in the promises that have been made; however such a dead end must be investigated within the last fifty days of struggle in which it has been confined. The workers were defeated and they had to endure this failure. It is because they were not able to smash through the dead end of a struggle which would have been a significant turning point. The first condition to smash such a dead end was that the workers make the important demand for job security to prevent the closing of the factory and the loss of jobs. Without a doubt, the struggle for the demands of receiving back wages and sacking the hirelings of capital like Shafie and Zibdari, or put an end to the repression and arresting of the worker-activists not only was necessary and still is necessary, however it would make sense for

the fulfillment of these demands to be based upon the continuity of the work and the production of the factory. Assume all these demands would be fulfilled – how would it solve the workers' issues with the fulfillment of these demands when the factory closes and the workers lose their jobs. In the same direction of solving such issues and to continue the struggle for this, the second condition to smash the dead end, is to promote the struggle from the lower to the higher level. The masses of the sugar cane workers of the Haft Tapeh during the past fifty days, or the last two years of the struggle, experienced different forms of struggle. They interrupted the production and the work; they spread their campaign and struggle against capital and its government from the factory to the streets of Shosh city. They called for solidarity from members of their own class, and to some extent they succeeded. They did all of this demonstrating determination and firmness but the reality is that in spite of doing all of this work and the directions taken which were all so important but insufficient and did not proceed anywhere. The insufficiency of all these directions and the ineffectiveness of their weapons must be mentioned as the most important barriers of carrying on the form of struggle. The strike is one of the most

effective and pointed weapons of the struggle against capital. But in a situation where the capitalists and the factory-owners and their government, do not have a problem with the interruption of production, we cannot with firmness in a strike hope to gain a victory. The same premise would apply in street battles and road blockades. The fifty days of strike of the Haft Tapeh from the beginning wanted the workers to pass through the stages and transfer from the battlefield to another stage. The workers had to focus their strength of their struggle somewhere else to somewhere that could bring a real threat to capital and its government. The issue is not merely about dissent and the strike. The important and key point is to place the capitalists and their governments in a situation to be forced to meet the workers' demands without a way out.

It is precisely with the attention to this circumstance that we constantly stated to the masses of the Haft Tapeh workers that there is the formation of an anti-capitalist council, an occupation of the factory and the preparation for the planning of the work and production, that this is the only approach to the struggle. The worker masses of Haft Tapeh without taking this direction and implementing this approach were almost drowning in the dead end. Forming an anti-capitalist council and occupying the factory was the only way out of this dead end. Underlying this direction is taking

their products of their production from the hands of the capitalists and its government; furthermore in this situation capitalists and its government would push back the workers from what they occupied. With the occurrence of such an event, the current war between workers and capital would exit from the lower levels. If the workers occupied the factory and requested from members of their own class whether from Iran or worldwide, for assistance and support, they would be transferred to a new realm with an approach which contains a class indictment against capital. They could give an ultimatum to the government where the government would have to provide the entire requirements of the factory for free. At the same time the workers could ask from different sectors of their class for different forms of strike to put pressure on the government to accept such demands. If the workers of the Haft Tapeh took such an approach they would be taking the initiative to spread a continuous war with the clear horizon against capitalism. In this way, they would be putting the strength of their class struggle on the central pressure point of the capitalists. They would turn their dissent into a platform for calling all workers to the field of the class struggle.

The workers did not do this, and were not able to break through the dead end of the struggle. The real mystery of their returning to work and enduring this failure is here. However, it is still not too late to

focus the struggle against capital by forming their council to occupy the factory. Now the workers have given twenty days to the employers to fulfill their demands. Almost certainly in the best optimistic way, all demands will not be met and the workers have to initiate the strike again. In this situation what has to be done is to prevent the same failure. It could not be done without learning from the fifty days of experiences and turning this failure to light the direction for the future. From our point of view, the lesson that workers will experience is nothing but a necessity in order to smash the dead end, and promote it to a higher level of the struggle which will be occupying and running the factory by a worker's council.

Workers, Let's Get Organized  
Against Capital!

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# The Iraq War, the American Bourgeoisie – A Failed Strategy!

## The Tasks and Solutions that Face the International Working Class

By: Naser Paydar

For a while now, the American failure in its war with Iraq has become a common debate within world-wide political circles, even in the White House, the Pentagon (Department of Defense), and the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency). They are all talking about this failure, but what exactly has failed or the achievement of what goals has failed is a subject that either will not be discussed or in the wrong way infuses their minds. The failure of the American bourgeoisie and its allies in the Middle East, if not in the long run but in the short run, was a failure of many expectations and goals. The failure of these expectations and goals was in prolonging the wars in the Balkans, in Afghanistan, and in Iraq which was a combination of another dominant pole of the global capital warmonger approaches. These goals include the following:

1. The creation of a political-military milieu is in proportion to the necessary strategic and secure retreats of the international workers movement. That is, the raid of the

bourgeoisie on the livelihood of working class will not face any effective resistance from the working class in order to again divide the further needed labour and surplus value in the interest of the profitability of capital. In

situation nor at this period. The real issue is that the outcome of the current economic crisis and its potential effects jeopardize the capitalist system's survival and becomes a prerequisite and indissoluble part of capitalism



relation to this contest it does not mean the working class balance of power or its arrangement was in a situation of resistance to attack in the early days of invasion. The international working class, certainly, was neither in that

to maintain the reproduction of global capital; this requires huge threats to the means of subsistence of the international working class. The bourgeoisie inevitably has to answer to it with a strategy and create such a suitable situation for

this attack and invasion. Also, this is a subject matter that all capitalists' governments and all murderers of the retentive political order of global capital production would not neglect for a second. Either the war in Iraq or any war in the future is taking a serious place in this strategy.

2. To ensure the role of the American bourgeoisie as a hegemonic pole to exert political, military, and economic global capital order which at the end of this role can allocate more surplus value of production from other rival poles of the global bourgeois for itself. Being in this situation in the early stages of renewed capitalist pole-building inside the global bourgeois, and the aggravated crisis of the capitalist structure system, and the emergence of other threatening and powerful poles such; China, India, Russia, and the European Union, all are considered important and essential for the social capital of America.

3. The refining of the political order of global capitalism and the unification of them in order to have similar aims. Furthermore, they are cleansing the unstable nation-states and their incompetence for ensuring the political stability of capitalism - such as Saddam in Iraq, the Taliban in Afghanistan; and the removal of political situations to prevent international extortion including the extortion of some regimes such as

Iran, and the settling with the rest of the remaining previous capitalist governments such as: Cuba, North Korea, and the former Yugoslavia.

4. The direct dominance of the political-economy of the American bourgeoisie in the Middle East and Central Asia as a powerful lever to push the competitive process among the other poles of global capital to create more surplus value by production by the workers, and seizing the oil capital in that region. Additionally, there is the continuous strengthening of more of the American strategic situation in the Persian Gulf, and more of the direct and sufficient appearance of the military, the political, and the economy in this region which is very important for global capitalism.

Any failure or success of America in the Middle East needs to be reviewed with these factors in mind, and to be judged. At a glance, it could be seen that the war in Iraq could not only progress to their expectations but also, it undermined the strategy and the framework of these goals. The global bourgeois situation with respect to the working class prior to the war in Iraq was not gaining strength, and if it was, it was a result of other factors. Furthermore, the hegemony of America did not have the strength to exert their politico-economic order; and its situation with respect to the other poles of global bourgeoisie not only indicates no gaining of any strength rather its weakness.

The military failure of the Bush government to establish a puppet regime has decreased the credibility of the White House even among other political satellites in the Middle East, and it causes other rival forces in that region to take a more aggressive position. The bourgeois government of Iran is in a more powerful situation in terms of its political situation compared to the times prior to the war in Iraq. Now, Iran is playing an important role in Iraq either in the economic or the political arrangement of the bourgeois of Iraq. Weakening American allies in the Middle East such as Prime Minister Fouad Siniora in Lebanon and the increasing power of the reactionary Hezbollah, or the greatly decreasing validity of the Palestinian forces such as the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) who are more inclined to the West (or Fatah), and at the same time the declining situation of Israel are all results of the invasion of Iraq. Additionally, the emergence of the great advantage for Iran to use the situation of Hezbollah and Hamas to demand more shares of the economy and its political role are subjects that through the invasion of Iraq, they have risen to the political surface.

The huge spending on war is another factor that has impacted America's economy which has subsequently decreased its competitive situation against other global capitalists. For example, the balance of trade of the United States compared to China is an

obvious example of the shifting of the balance of economic power. The new action of China's government to change 100,000 billion dollars of its resources to Euros, as well as other countries such as Iran, Libya, Romania, Lithuania, and others. All of these are indicating the new wave of unemployment in America, and the diminishing of the rate of profit of the giant industrial and financial corporations of the United States and its huge impact on the European economy and its rate of profits. These are all indicators of the impact of America's offensive military.

The effort of the American bourgeoisie to dominate Middle Eastern and Central Asian resources accompanied with the reinforcement of its strategy and economic situation in the Persian Gulf and that entire region, has failed substantially. Iraq and its war have brought such instability in terms of the political and military authority for America in which the relation of Russia and other countries of the former Soviet Union with Iran has become more firm. The relationship between Iran and Russia jeopardizes America's economic outlook. Also, the war with Iraq has to a large extent undermined the ability of the military to be used against any opposing force. The affect of such an outcome can be seen in the relationship of America with Latin America, and in this case specifically, Venezuela.

Without a doubt, the list of

consequences of the American failure in Iraq war is an exhaustive one. However, what is important here is not the failure of America, rather the following outcomes of the American strategy in that region; the fate of the worker masses underneath the crimes of global capital and the important duties in which the international working class has to face the warmongering of capitalism and the future of the Iraqi people. The bourgeoisie of the United States has failed in its war in the Middle East, but the administration of the White House, and generally all of America's allies will not surrender to this failure rather there is much evidence indicating preparation for more bloodshed against humanity. For example, the new assertions from the Foreign Minister of the White House, Condoleeza Rice, Jimmy Carter, some of the Senators of the Senate Committee, the head of the CIA and the Pentagon are all demonstrating the extension of the "shock and awe". All of these groups are well experienced in warmongering, coup d'etat, and the wickedness from the conservatives to the democrats, whether they agree or not agree with Bush, they are all admitting the failure and have accompanied their clamoring with the amendment of this failure and the transferring of the current situation to a victorious situation.

All of these events are indicating

that the American strategy in the Middle East with the aim of transferring the power balances and pushing back the wave of failure is about to change. What would be the context of this change or changes is not easily predicted, but the sequences of events are indicating;

1. The composition of the Iraqi government at the present time does not satisfy the United States. The expectations of the Bush administration was that Iraq becomes a stable island of capital; or to be another Israel or to some extent similar to Saudi Arabia, Jordan, or something like Iran before 1979. The political supremacy after the war in Iraq and the strategic landscape of Washington was supposed to play an important role to guarantee this supremacy in the framework of the social-political and military of global capitalism. This dream has been changed into a nightmare. This does not mean that the interim reactionary forces within the Iraqi ruling coalition do not like to play such a role and mission - rather this coalition is not capable of playing such a prophetic role. The military invasion by America has brought a situation such that reaching this success is not possible due to the contradictory political composition and background of the coalition. Even if we for a second ignore these parties, and the official reactionary forces such as; the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), Islamic Dawa Party, or Chalabis'

gang (Ahmed Abdel Hadi Chalabi) or Kurd Nationalism; every human being in the world is loathing the American invasion. To impose their own political stability of one of the most brutal global capitalism on the worker masses which the war has coerced them to a situation far worse than Saddam's regime was not an easy job. The reactionary bourgeois ruling coalition of Iraq either for this reason or under its own huge contradictory pressure is not able to succeed in forcing the political order of the Bush administration to be desirable, and therefore ironically has no choice but to rely more and more on this bourgeoisie of America.

2. On the other hand, the inability of the Iraqi bourgeois coalition to accomplish the expectations of the United States makes it more aggravated and complete. This coalition does not see the military and political support of America as a solution to its problems from the collapse of Saddam's government till present time. From the point of view of the coalition's interest, kissing the ass of the White House was effective as long as Saddam would be removed from power and they could establish their own power. With the collapse of Saddam the relationship between the forces in the coalition and the Bush administration was nothing but a disaster according to the characteristic and outcome of the situation of the war. The savagery of America's army in Iraq is dreadful for the Iraqi people and gives

pretext to the brutal terrorism of the reactionary forces of the other sectors of the bourgeoisie to exist in Iraq. As a result, in both cases, the opportunity of the reactionary transitional government would be limited to take advantage of the illusion of Iraqi people. Also, all of the forces that form the transitional government due to their dark political background are carrying out various commitments within different global sectors of the bourgeoisie. The Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council (SIIC) which has not only been long based in neighboring Iran but also it receives training by the Islamic Revolutionary Guards in Iran. The Islamic Dawa Party has been funded for such a long time from entire reactionary regimes in that region. Due to their patriotism, the Nationalist Kurds sell themselves to Savak (SAVAK Organization for Intelligence and National Security) which was the domestic security and intelligence service of Iran from 1957–1979); and later to the capitalist ruling religious of Iran. The important issue for all these forces is climbing the ladder of political power and finding a place in the structure of the government power of the bourgeoisie. The basic calculation of all of them was that the US Army would not meet their expectation but now with the situation after the war, not only did the US army not meet their expectation but also it has become problematic. By observing the new situation, all these forces are reaching out to the bourgeois Islamic government of

Iran for help such as military power, and the economic and political role of Iran in that region as a solution in front of them. The necessity of such an approach can be seen in the daily relationship that has extended between the present governments of Iraq with Iran in every aspect. The extensive need of such a strengthening relationship is so huge that even Jalal Talabani had tried to show that he knows some Farsi.

Part of the strategy of the U.S to overcome the symptoms of its failure in the war is trying to change the composition of the interim coalition forces in Iraq. With respect to the American expectations of its daily strategy, the new political powers in Iraq must stop the terrorism from other sectors of the bourgeoisie that opposed the U.S. Also, they must disable the mass dissent that is frustrated with the invasion and has the ability to extend its relation to all U.S. allies in that region as well as guarantee political order and then capitalist production in Iraq in relation to the America's capital and its government. The bourgeois of the U.S. in its process of changing its strategy to overcome its failed outcome is recognizing, independent of being successful or not, the body of the remaining political and military of the Baath Party; and these days for the attainment of such a policy. For example, the pressure on the ruling coalition of the U.S is involving more of the Baath's army and its political cadres in any meeting in such an

approach. Bush's recommendation to Nuri Al Maleki for postponing Saddam Hossain's execution was another action in the new strategy in which the transitional government of Iraq accepting such a recommendation did not benefit itself. The White House, essentially, was not against Saddam's execution because by involving the remaining Baath Party without Saddam to some extent seemed more rational and more explanatory. The main aim for postponing the execution verdict was more the preparation of a primary task for implementing the new strategy. From the point of view of the White House what could be guaranteed in the interest of the America's bourgeoisie and compensate the disgraced failure of the war in Iraq is the establishment of a powerful dictatorship in that country. None of the governments in Iraq that came after Saddam were able to accomplish this task, even the government of Nuri Al Maleki. The composition of all these forces in the government owed their entire power and existence to The White House and its invasion in Iraq. These coalition forces not only had no legitimacy and support among the working people of Iraq but also did not have any political skeleton or any deeply rooted political apparatus to exert such power. The invasion of Iraq placed them in power. None of these governments in Iraq had any governmental apparatus, police organization, or army to wield such power and suppression which is a pre-condition for running such a government after

the war. For example, the Islamic Republic of Iran after the revolution (1979) apart from the weakness of the working class situation had advantages to use a prepared army, Savak, the machine of police for the suppression of the revolution. The created governments by the American war in Iraq did not inherit anything from the previous regime. And, that is, what the White House has understood and takes it into its calculation for a new strategy. Referring to the body of the remaining Baath Party is supposed to be the solution for this problem. The Pentagon's prescription for forming the next government in Iraq is to organize a powerful coalition in which the composition of such a government would be the forces that currently are in the government and the security, police, army and the political institutions of Saddam's regime. The current debate on changing the strategy related to Iraq revolves around this issue. And, that is what is not pleasant for the Kurd Nationalists, the Supreme Islamic Iraq Council (SIIC), the Islamic Dawa Party, and their range of allies but is a necessity for America to overcome this situation. The adoption of this policy would bring some support from some Arabic governments who are allies with the U.S. Additionally, this is probably another chain of another strategic attempt of the U.S. which would bring more power balance for the U.S. and its allies. However, even this new strategy would not bring any opportunity for Bush and

his administration. At a glance it could be surmised that all of these changes would bring more benefits for the Iranian regime.

What has been stated here is part of a new approach of the American strategy in relation to Iraq and the Middle East. The other part of this new strategy needs to be discussed. Unless the United States without weakening the political situation of the Iranian regime connects more and more with the socio-political interest of the bourgeoisie of Iran with its own foreign policy and international economic aim it will not be able to solve the problem in Iraq. The bourgeoisie of America has considered such an important merger historically besides using military force such as it did in Iraq. During the twenty-eight years of the Iranian regime ruling, it obviously demonstrates in each step that neither the Democratic Party nor the Republican Party pursued these goals and used all possible means. For example, the persuading of Saddam to attack Iran is a similar policy where it endured the humiliation of bearing the seizure of the American embassy (Iran hostage crisis November 1979) which resulted in the holding of sixty-three U.S. diplomats. Or, the widespread campaign against the access of Iran to Nuclear Power or the threatening of Iran with military attack is pursuing the same plan as the various commands to attain a socio-economic relationship. None of America's governments had any serious plan to invade Iran or replace



it with another regime because all of these actors know that the result of such an invasion would be devastating for the bourgeoisie of America and the entire global capital. The core issue for America is to convince the head of the bourgeois government of Iran to abandon extortion and adopt the expectations and policies of either America or another key centre of a dominant pole of global capital. On the opposite side, the Islamic Iranian regime from the beginning until now, from the hostage crisis (1979) to the Iran-Contra Affair (1987), from the anti-American sentiment of Khomeini and Ahmadinejad to Rafsanjani (Akbar Hashemi

Rafsanjani) who has a moderate position or Mohammed Khatami with his Dialogue of Civilization - position themselves all in the same direction as asking for the recognition of the bourgeoisie of Iran and the acceptance of the hegemony of Iran in that region. The concepts of all the disputes between Iran and America have not gone further than asking for such privileges or recognition. The important point is that all of these disputes between Iran and America have benefited Iran even with all the tumultuous situations. Furthermore, with the situation of America in Iraq, this balance has shifted towards Iran. This situation

is not tolerable for America but it has no other choice than to adopt the same direction.

The effort of the American government to implement a new strategy in the Middle East in relation to the Iranian regime is a failed challenge - the condition in Iraq comprises some of the operations which seem to oppose each other but in reality are fundamentally in accordance with each other. The United States is attempting to: first of all reinforce as well as extend their alliances in the Middle East; secondly, they are putting more pressure on the Iranian regime; and thirdly, they are weakening the situation of the Iranian regime; and finally, they are providing some privileges to the Iranian regime in order to foster an agreement by the Iranian regime for the establishment of a political order and for capitalist production in Iraq. What Bush has accomplished thus far and especially more recently, was attaining these goals which seem contradictory yet are in accordance with each other. The White House policy makers, on one hand, are trying to recruit Bashar al-Assad and trying to bring Syria to ally with America, as well as supporting the Fouad Siniora government against the Hezbollah and the other opposition groups against Siniora. Furthermore, the administration is attempting to convince Ehud Olmert to have an active relation with the Palestinian forces that lean more towards the West and thereby bringing more isolation for

Hamas and Hezbollah. Additionally, the American government finally agrees with the conditions of Russia and China for preparing a common resolution against Iran and the approval of this resolution in the U.N. Security Council. At the same time, there was emphasis on having a dialogue with the Iranian regime. All of these attempts and policy-making indicate the current diplomacy of the United States, however, it seems contradictory.

the current government of the U.S. which is unable to comprehend any historical fact due to its reactionary class pressures. The clear truth of imposing such brutality in order to sustain wage-slavery even in a situation where the working class is suffering enormously due to the lack of its horizon and class formation is very difficult. The new strategy of the U.S. in the Middle East has no new prospect for overcoming the current situation.

In spite of the huge need for strengthening their power bases and temporarily accepting direction from Washington, the current coalition forces do not perceive the benefits for the long term with respect to the political and economic structure of Iraq. That is, it would bring more distrust in the U.S. Other factors in the political realm have no indication that show any way out for the United States.

The Working Class of Iraq and the



Chronicle / Michael Macor

This is not the case - rather it is part of a connected chain rather than a contradiction.

At a simple glance, what seems more obvious is the process of a failed attempt by Bush and his administration which continues to drown in this swamp. The bourgeoisie, in general, includes

The people of Iraq have already paid a price for such brutality. The American bourgeoisie has destroyed the lives of millions of people completely with the pretext of getting rid of Saddam. These masses cannot be witness to all these crimes again with the aim of restoring the political-military body of Saddam into power.

International Workers Movement

The above discussion was a review of the current approach of the capitalist system and the American bourgeoisie to drive the working class of Iraq into the depths of poverty, bloodshed, starvation and destruction. The fundamental discussion point is what has the international working class done

during this period? What has to be done? And, what can the working class do? What has been lost to the people of Iraq; to the women, children, young and old during the last sixteen years? The description of the aggravating degree of this brutality from 1990, compared to the previous period, on one hand, is difficult and on the other hand, it is not necessary. It is difficult because such brutality cannot be described and not necessary because we are witnessing it everyday in the media.

The media coverage is full of lies – it is a sham. All media outlets dependent on any power spectrum of the bourgeoisie are insisting and singling out terrorism as a phenomenon whose purpose is to hide the real source of what is happening to the millions of people working in Iraq. This current terrorism in reality is a solution for different actors and sectors of the bourgeoisie for the liquidation of other sectors of the bourgeoisie by means of creating bloodshed and the mass slaughtering of oppressed people. What is happening in Iraq is a direct continuation of a military invasion by global capitalism and its opposition to other sectors of the bourgeoisie. All the crimes, including terrorism are characteristics of capitalism. The aim of such brutality is to sustain capitalist ruling over the working class and the impenetrable existence of wage-slavery. Additionally, all these media outlets bury the truth with this sham. They are providing the lie that there

is war between America and Iraq, Bush and Saddam, terrorism and the transitional government of Iraq, a war on terror, a war between Alqaedah and the U.S. and a war between Islam and the West. It is true that there is a different part of the bourgeoisie involved with the war in Iraq, but the essential issue is that all of these wars are about the role and the amount of the existence of these actors to attain more political power over capital in order to gain more shares from the exploitation of working people. This war and generally all wars that have occurred around the world are part of the aggravated exploitation in the interest of capital.

What is happening in Iraq is a capitalist war at the expense of the worker masses in that region. The working class of Iraq in this situation is not able to oppose this war due to a long historical term of enduring a dictatorship, the slaughter and the brutality of capitalism. The working class of Iraq has never displayed its independent class power; either it was under the huge pressure of the criminal Saddam regime or was under the destructive illusion of the “left”. Furthermore, in the situation that after 15 years of war and invasion from global capitalism and a recent war it has become more and more exhausted. The emancipation of the working class of Iraq from the hell that has been imposed by global capitalism needs an international solidarity workers movement. The working people of Iraq without an emerging international working

class movement will not be able to overcome this situation. The international working class disregards and lacks sensitivity with respect to the dreadful situation of Iraq and this is a catastrophe for our movement. Why we and our movement are quiet about this handmade dreadful situation by global capitalism must be discussed. But, one thing is obvious. It is a result of a long-time dominance by all left-wing spectrums; either those who were receiving directions from Big Brother (the Eastern Bloc), the right-wing reformism of syndicalism, as well as the corporate Union movement, social democracy, left nationalism, and the populist movement within our movement; where they have all created this situation for our movement. This is our situation which they have imposed on us but, there is no reason to stay in such a situation.

Worker internationalism is not a common moral solidarity, that is, it does not reflect the attitude of an empty bourgeois humanitarian. On the contrary, it is a fundamental class occurrence, a radical and anti-capitalist situation which rests in our socio-historical existence of the international working class. What the people of Iraq bear now is a part of the capitalist agenda which is happening everywhere over the working class for more profits and labour force. The defense of the working class of Iraq and protests against the crimes of the bourgeoisie is not merely a moral humanitarian prophecy

rather it is an organic chain of a class emergence and is compulsory against wage-slavery. The defense of the working class in Iraq is a defense of our movement.

Probably the most important difficulty is how the international working class in this dreadful situation would help their fellow members in Iraq? Probably, the answer for many workers is to refer to Trade Unions and request such class assistance. The reality is that deferring to Trade Unions goes nowhere. The Trade Unions, everywhere, are playing the role of a cane, that is, they are an assistive aid for the bourgeoisie in order to get rid of the anti-capitalist movement of the working class. It has been a long time that the bourgeoisie of the West with the help of these Trade Unions has gotten rid of the workers movement. This pole of global capitalism is in competition with the previous Eastern Bloc which was utilizing these Unions for the dirtiest job against the other pole. Even the most right-wing in the U.S., the bourgeois within Congress attempts to rely on union reformism against the bourgeoisie of Iran. For example, the objection by Rick Santorum, a senator, is interesting when he states that the United States needs to pay attention to and support the Bus Drivers syndicate in Iran.

What is stated here about Trade Unions would apply to all campaigns and meta-class movements such as the anti-war movement. Relying on these campaigns would not solve any of the problems for the working

people in Iraq. Being anti-war without a true class struggle against the existence of those who make a war if not demagogical it is an illusion. In order to move against the warmongering of capitalism, we must bring out the forces of anti-capitalism of workers. The flags of anti-Americanism and anti-globalization would not permit the engagement of any successful struggle against the warmongers of capitalism and would not grasp the root. The working class cannot remain in the same campaigns and lines that other sectors of the bourgeoisie are standing on. The history of the working class in the world shows that if the working class does not form its own line enviably it will be played out by another sector of the bourgeoisie. An example of this can be observed after the invasion of Iraq when even Jacques Chirac, Vladimir Putin, the Iranian regime, and Hamas became anti-war and tried to hide their ugly faces behind this.

In defense of the working class in Iraq we must find another way. The formation of committees and anti-capitalist councils to organize the support for the working class in Iraq is an effective international way to take on such a task. Furthermore, all of these committees and councils that can be formed are able to be a container of anti-capitalist activists around the world to move against capitalism and be a chain within the struggle.

These anti-capitalist councils can bring international solidarity for the

working class of Iraq and can work on many tasks - from organizing a march in a street to disrupting economic production, to organizing food, and medical aid for people in Iraq. The demand of controlling the process of work and production and the political order of the working class can be one of the major demands.

Forming anti-capitalist councils with a very transparent job against the brutality of global capitalism in the Middle East can be the realm of a current struggle everywhere. Instead of Turkish, Pakistani, Palestinian and others going under the false flag of reactionary forces, they must be brought under one flag, and that is the international flag.

The dominant atmosphere in the current working class movement everywhere, probably, would think that it is a dream. However, this atmosphere is the same poisonous environment as what there is within global capitalism, within the right-wing reformism of the Trade Unions, and the left reformism of sectarian lefties which were imposed on the working class. This environment must be smashed. The international working class within this environment would witness more barbarism. Smashing such an environment is the duty of any anti-capitalist activist. The establishment of such anti-capitalist councils for the solidarity with the working class in Iraq is possible. We must be the starting point for making it happen.

# Socialism as Movement versus Socialism as Theory

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By: Mohsen Hakimi

(Parts of a Polemic Currently in Progress within the Working Class Movement of Iran)

There is a significant difference between two approaches to socialism. One regards socialism as a theory and a guideline for action of “the working class party”. This “party” is in charge of “guiding and leading the working class in a revolutionary struggle against capitalism, for the establishment of socialism”; whereas, to my understanding socialism is the working class movement which struggles against the miseries of today’s human beings, aiming to go beyond a capitalist framework. The former approach views socialism, on the one hand, as a mere theory that must guide the action of the “party”, and on the other hand, something which should be set up or ‘established’ in the future. The latter approach views socialism as a practical-theoretical movement. In other words, in one view socialism is only a theory, and in the other socialism is the unity of practice and theory, that is, Praxis.

As both of these approaches to socialism claim themselves as the socialism of Marx (unless otherwise claimed), in order to find out the correctness or incorrectness of these approaches one must refer to Marx himself. Marx has a famous clause

which plainly elucidates the matter:

Communism is for us not a state of affairs which is to be established, an ideal to which reality [will] have to adjust itself. We call communism the real movement which abolishes the present state of things. The conditions of this movement result from the premises now in existence. (German Ideology)\*

In the German Ideology as well as other works of Marx, one could bring more examples in which Marx defines socialism as a movement, and not a mere theory. Essentially, the socialism of Marx and generally his materialist conception of history were formed in contrast to the theoreticians and philosophers who sufficed to criticizing one idea with another. Marx did not establish his materialist conception of history as a pure idea against Hegel’s, Feuerbach’s and Young Hegelians’. He criticized socialists such as Saint-Simon, Fourier, Owen and their efforts for establishment of socialism as a theory, and knew their socialism as utopia. Marx considers that the upside-down and bourgeois theory is rooted in the upside-down world of capitalism, and in order to bring an end to such theory one must bring an end to this world:

It [the materialist conception of history] has not, like the idealistic view of history, in every period to look for

a category, but remains constantly on the real ground of history; it does not explain practice from the idea but explains the formation of ideas from material practice; and accordingly it comes to the conclusion that all forms and products of consciousness cannot be dissolved by mental criticism, by resolution into “self-consciousness” or transformation into “apparitions,” “specters,” “fancies,” etc. but only by the practical overthrow of the actual social relations which gave rise to this idealistic humbug. (Ibid, p.189)

Therefore, contrary to the theoreticians and philosophers prior to him who were attempting to create only a correct consciousness, thus, only interpreting the world, Marx went beyond the realm of theory by claiming that the point is to change the world. He himself started the actual way of changing the world, namely, “the practical overthrow of the actual social relations”. Marx’s approach, contrary to the upside-down world reality, which consists of the practice and theory of capitalism, is not just a socialist theory. Rather, it is an actual and material movement by the name of socialism which will abolish that upside-down reality. Accordingly, Marx’s point of departure for changing the world was not the socialist theory and attempting to establish it. Rather, it was organizing the workers, i.e.,

the active and actual human beings. It is in this meaning that I refer to Marx: Marx as a theoretical-practical and a worker-activist of the working class movement, and not merely as a socialist theoretician. Otherwise, if I refer to Marx just as a theorist, I reduce socialism into a pure and abstract theory.

Based on this view of socialism, Marx did not consider that organizing the worker movement for changing the capitalist world is conditioned to changing the mentality of the worker masses. According to him, the change of the mentality of the worker masses under the rule of capital is essentially impossible, with the clear reason that until the worker masses are under the submission of capital, their mentalities too are under the submission of capital. He considers that altering the workers mentality on a mass scale is feasible only in a revolutionary process which takes place for changing the capitalist world:

Both for the production on a mass scale of this communist consciousness, and for the success of the cause itself, the alteration of men on a mass scale is necessary, an alteration which can only take place in a practical movement, a revolution; this revolution is necessary, therefore, not only because the ruling class cannot be overthrown in any other way, but also because the class overthrowing it can only in a revolution succeed in ridding itself of all the muck of ages and become fitted to found society anew. (Ibid, p.195)

If the alteration of the workers mentality on a mass scale is possible only within revolution, thus, to the same degree that the workers are acting for revolution, they would also create the possibility of the alteration of their mentality. As, due to various reasons, the levels of activity for revolution among workers are different, the levels of change in workers mentality, that is, the levels of their socialist consciousness, also become different. These levels of consciousness form a spectrum that begins from the most conscious workers and ends to the most unconscious ones. In this spectrum, the unconscious workers merely know their actual immediate practice, whereas the conscious workers, based on the education that takes place on the ground of the class struggle, go beyond this level of knowledge and recognize their surrounding world and how to change it. Thus, although the alteration of the working class mentality on a mass scale is possible only in a revolution, the consciousness of the forerunner sector of this class that is acting for revolution, can be altered from in-itself state to for-itself one. I emphasize that this alteration of in-itself mentality to for-itself would only be possible in the process of a revolutionary activity, i.e., in the process of struggle against capitalism. The example of intellect in a human infant can help to elucidate this issue. An infant has an intellect in-itself. In other words, an infant is potentially rational. He or she is actually a human being, but is only potentially rational. To become actually rational and to alter

the intellect from the state that is not recognizable for the infant to the state that can be recognized for him/her, he/she is bound to grow and be matured in the process of years of living in the human society. In the same way, a worker has a socialist consciousness in-itself. But alteration of this consciousness from in-itself to for-itself requires organized worker's activity in order to change the capitalist system as well as the education which has to take place simultaneous with this activity. As much as this activity/education is promoted, the possibility of changing the mentality of the worker increases. Such education which is capable of altering workers' in-itself consciousness to a for-itself one, is only possible and effective on the ground of and during an anti-capitalist activity.

Therefore, in Marx's view, there is a real movement struggling to change the existing situation; within this movement all the workers are struggling for this change, the masses spontaneously and the forerunners self-consciously. What Marx calls communism is not only the pioneers but the whole of this movement, that is, both the worker masses who are struggling against capitalism spontaneously and the communist-activists who do the same thing self-consciously. Both the worker masses and communist-activists are the unity of practice and theory. However, among the worker masses this unity is in-itself and unconscious - that is, while they are struggling against capitalism, this system is not

known to them in terms of theory - whereas in communist-activists the unity is for-itself and conscious. It is in this meaning that Marx, in German Ideology, defines communist as a practical materialist, and thereby emphasizes the self-conscious unity

thing else than conscious existence” (Ibid, p.180).

Therefore, communist consciousness can only exist within workers; this consciousness though unrecognized by the working masses,

consciousness is formed based on the division of mental and manual labour and it comes from sources other than manual labour. Without a doubt, separation of mental labour from manual labour, because of creation of a field by the name of mental or theoretical labour which goes beyond human being's consciousness in its immediate practice, is a step forward. But, this progress takes place inevitably as a separation from manual labour, and it is exactly this that transforms theory into an abstraction which practice has to obey or, according to Marx, the reality must adapt itself to it. This conception that Marx's socialism is a theory which is formed outside the working class and must be taken into the working class - that is, must be implemented in practice or the practice of the working class must adjust itself to it - emanates from the separation between mental and manual labour, a separation against which Marx's socialism, that is, the theoretical-practical movement of the working class, came into being. Also, Marx's socialism contains the criticism of the view that separates the leaders of the working class into "theoretical leaders," and 'practical leaders,' a view according to which few workers are only thinking and the majority of workers only implement their thoughts. In Marx's view, each leader of the working class is a theoretical-practical activist. As I mentioned, while this unity of thought and action is in-itself for worker masses, for communist-activists it is for-itself. It is obvious that, accordingly, the role of leading and leadership of the working class



of theory (materialism) and practice in the communist human being.

Hence, socialist theory, as workers' class consciousness, whether in its unknown state in workers masses, or in its known form in communist-activists, is an inseparable part of the working class movement, and it is not something outside this movement :

“...a class which forms the majority of all members of society, and from which emanates the consciousness of the necessity of a fundamental revolution, the communist consciousness...” (Ibid, p.195)

Also:

“Consciousness can never be any-

is recognized by some practical materialist.

This view of Marx about class consciousness shows the invalidity of Kautsky's (and consequently, Lenin's) view that socialist consciousness is something which comes into being from outside and injected inside the working class. Such theory, based on which the sectarian lefties who are inspired by Lenin's approach write their 'program' and build their "party", would not be a socialist consciousness. Rather, it would be some abstractions separated from the context of the living class struggle that, because of its abstraction indeed, is incomprehensible and unintelligible for the workers. This

struggle is the responsibility of communist-activists. But how?

The answer to this important question, as a matter of fact, is the chief subject of this debate, and again it depends on the communist-activists' point of departure: movement or theory? If, like Marx, we depart from the actual living movement which is struggling against the existing situation to overthrow it, then as forerunners who at the same time are representing the interests of the whole movement and attempting to organize this struggle, and thereby educating the worker masses on the grounds of this organized struggle as well as struggle against other non-worker views or tendencies inside the working class, we would strengthen the self-conscious aspect of the struggle against capitalism and make the working class ready for the abolition of wage-labour by seizing the political power. Thus, by departing from the movement (not theory), what is organized is not merely the forerunners of the working class but the whole movement that Marx calls communism. In other words, the organization that communist-activists must struggle for its building is nothing but the organized form of the working class movement. Whatever we call this organization, one thing is certain: it is nothing but the anti-capitalist and all-embracing organization of the working class. It is in this meaning that I believe that the anti-capitalist and all-embracing organization of the working class

is a container for the establishment of socialism. As I mentioned, in this organization as the organized form of the worker movement, although the majority of workers are actually struggling against capitalism, they are potentially conscious of this struggle. Consequently, the organized worker masses in the anti-capitalist organization remain vulnerable to different kinds of non-worker views and tendencies. The responsibility of communist-activists is to show the essence of these views and tendencies to the worker masses, and attempt to organize the whole masses, and not just the communists, against these views and tendencies. Among other things, this is one thing by which Marx differentiates communists from other tendencies within the workers movement. He says, in *The Communist Manifesto*, that one thing which distinguishes communists from other workers' parties (tendencies) is that in every stage of the workers struggle they represent the movement as a whole. The condition for the communists to represent the entire movement is that they do not form an organization separate from the worker masses but, by playing the role of the forerunners within the organization of the worker masses and attempting to transform the in-itself consciousness of mass workers to the for-itself one, try to make their goal and political strategy to the goal and political strategy of the whole workers movement. Without a doubt, this is not simple and needs a difficult and long-term struggle full of blood and bullets.

However, it would be possible only with the presence of communists and worker masses within one anti-capitalist organization, because they both have a common material goal: communism. Communists, by organizing themselves separate from the anti-capitalist organization (one that contains only communists has no meaning but a separation of communists from worker masses) with this pretext that this organization would be a mixture of different non-workers and bourgeois views and tendencies, on the one hand, transform themselves into a sect and, on the other hand, leave the worker masses in the hands of the same non-workers and bourgeois tendencies and views. Thus, concisely, if communist-activists depart from the workers movement and the active existing individuals of this movement, that is, worker masses, they would promote the direction and leading of the working class struggle for the change of the world by way of the organized manifestation and crystallization of this movement, that is, the anti-capitalist organization of the working class.

But, if we depart from theory, we would inevitably put the role of leading the working class in the hands of the manifestation and crystallization of this theory, namely the 'working class party', which is indeed nothing but an organization separated from the actual socialism, that is, the social movement of the working class. According to this approach, the realization of the political and strategic goal of the working class would be the responsibility of the 'working class

party' and trade union would only do the economical struggle and utmost a non-revolutionary political struggle. Lenin, whom the possessors of this idea are usually inspired by his approach to the workers movement, calls the first organization as 'professional revolutionary organization' and the second one as 'workers organization' (what has to be done?).

I am working on an article where I will show the contradiction and estrangement of Lenin's approach towards the worker's movement with Marx's approach. Here, I mention just an example of this contradiction and estrangement. One of the most famous and indicating sentences of what has to be done? which the sectarian left has always used as its motto is this: 'Without

a revolutionary theory there would not be any revolutionary movement'. This sentence, which is a concise statement of Lenin's approach to the relation of movement and theory, is in exact opposition to the following sentence of Marx in German Ideology:

"The existence of revolutionary ideas in particular period presupposes the existence of a revolutionary class."

In other words, the existence of revolutionary ideas of the working class in the particular period of capitalism presupposes the existence of the revolutionary class of proletariat. Therefore, the materialist approach of Marx to the history brings a conclusion exactly opposite to Lenin's view: Without a revolutionary movement there would not be any revo-

lutionary theory. If Lenin had read German Ideology and particularly this sentence, he would have called Marx a pure economist. In Lenin's view, the revolutionary nature of the working class is restricted to the existence of the conscious element, which will show itself in the "working class party". And this is why he does not regard the spontaneous movement, or self-activity, of the working class as revolutionary and considers it as trade unionist.....

\*All quotes of Marx in this text are from the following work: Marx, Karl, Selected Writings, edited by David McLellan, Oxford University Press, 2nd edition, 2000.

## Child workers

Currently around the world child labour persists due to the inability of the parents to earn enough wages to make ends meet. It could be surmised that despite the clear and obvious injustice and brutality of this situation the current numbers could rise with increasing inflation rates and prices of food. In Pakistan for example there are an estimated ten million children working in one form or another and the drop-out rate in school is at 50 percent which is probably related to the fact that many must work to eke out a living for their families. A simple, peaceful and fun childhood does not exist for these millions of children.

Despite pleas from international agencies and non-government organizations, governments do

not respond to these dire situations. Enormous economic wealth abounds globally among the few privileged corporations and their executive bourgeois masters. Little to none of this bourgeois money trickles down to the working classes. It is cruel enough that wages are deplorably low that parents cannot take care of their families; this results in increasing numbers of workers taking to the streets demanding wage increases around the world.

The sad picture of adults wage-slaving for a fraction of a fraction of the profits generated for the corporate bosses is nothing compared to the persistence of millions of children selling their labour power to companies. While adult workers come to the streets to make their demands,

do work stoppages, wildcat strikes etcetera, children should not even be subjected to these issues.

Our most valued and precious children must wage-slave. The tolerance and blindness towards the conditions that force the exploitation of children, our future, into slavery is utterly disgusting. Just as we workers must provide international solidarity and direct support to other workers around the world we must also recognize that it is not just the adults that are subjected to exploitation, however in the case of children, they have no autonomy over their lives and are subjected to indecent and inhumane conditions – they are completely voiceless. We must not be.

# Sixteen Thousand Textile Workers Strike in Swaziland

It is now the second week of a strike for many textile workers in the Southern African country of Swaziland. They have been tear-gassed and assaulted by police for their action. The workers, many of whom are women, are demanding a 12% increase in wages. As one worker put it "I cannot afford to buy bread" as they earn approximately US\$77 per month. For the second week now they have lead marches and pickets only to be repeatedly assaulted with many ending up in the hospital. One 23-year-old 8-month pregnant woman was severely assaulted by police ending up in the hospital. She had been unable to outrun the police and the tear-gas engulfed her and she collapsed only to be brutally beaten when caught. Several others ended up in the hospital many of them sole bread-winners in their home. As per usual, capitalism protects only the ruling class machine and cannot cede anything to workers lest there be an entire uprising therefore at the first sign of any dissent oppression is necessary.

This textile factory is owned by a Taiwanese company who, like many Asian-owned companies, had invested in Swaziland due to its favorable trade conditions which began during the earliest part of the decade when the United States enacted the "African Growth and Opportunity Act". This act is intended to increase investment and trade with sub-Saharan African countries while furthering access to American technical expertise and credit. Following this, US President Bush expanded on this Act and made an announcement to spur further 'growth' in Africa.

"President Bush announced the creation of a \$200 million Overseas Private Investment Corporation support facility that will give American firms access to loans, guarantees and political risk insurance for investment projects in sub-Saharan Africa. He also announced the establishment of a Trade and Development Agency (TDA) regional office



in Johannesburg and the TDA Trade for African Development and Enterprise Program, both to provide guidance and assistance to governments and companies which seek to liberalize their trade laws, improve the investment environment, and take advantage of AGOA." (www.agoa.gov) African Growth and Opportunity Act

What is 'growth', but another word for capital looking to generate more capital by seeking out, developing and enacting trade laws to lower the cost of labour thereby enabling corporations to exploit the labour power more effectively. With its cheap labour, Africa was a region where the opportunity of global investment could progress, albeit not terminating the perpetual poverty and the immense squalor of the majority of the people.

The textile workers in Swaziland are not only in conflict with their immediate

bosses and management but the entire system which favors the global capitalist contamination and contagion, forever branching to new environments with cheap labour and enough corruption to continually undermine any sort of 'legal' protection for workers. The double-edged sword here is that a continued strike at a factory such as this in a country where unemployment levels are at 40%, HIV rate is 40% and life expectancy is a mere 33 years, could very well threaten to move—these threats and in some cases realities can force many unions to compromise regardless of whether the workers agree and certainly regardless whether the workers receive decent living wages. This is why workers from around the world must recognize that these isolated groups of workers fighting back must receive international solidarity. Capitalism divides and conquers; therefore we must conquer the division between us. These workers' problems are our problems. We are all united as a class against a global enemy that does not have a heart, rather only an agenda to keep on churning profits. Each and every worker must recognize our affinity to other workers in other countries and other industries and not be stripped of our ability to fight by bureaucratic unions or management. From bus workers in Iran, to Autoworkers in North America, to Teachers in Sweden, to Miners in Latin America, to Garment workers in Asia, we must not be divided. This means that an international, cross-country organization for workers should be developed. Capitalism is an international system that crosses borders involving linkages of capital through international trade and financial organizations etcetera. As workers we must do the same and more, mobilize internationally, understand the system and use our power to fight for immediate demands locally while at the same time aiming to end wage-slavery everywhere.

Workers must unite, mobilize and organize globally against capitalism.

# The Unbridled Savagery of German Capitalists on the Way Paved by Trade Unions



کمیته هماهنگی برای ایجاد تشکل کارگری  
Coordinating Committee to Form Workers Organization

The German employers' association is preparing to sue the German government to force it to lower the budget allocated for Social Security. According to the Deutsche Welle news agency, Dieter Hundt, the head of the employers' association (BDA) told the Bild am Sonntag weekly that the organization would file the suit with the constitutional court in Karlsruhe by the end of August if there was no decision by the government to cut Social Security contributions. A worker is entitled to Social Security when unemployed after having worked and contributed for at least 12 months. This is paid jointly by both the employees and employers; for the employees the cost is 6.5% before tax.

The 21st Century is a disgusting comedy of the tragedy of the exploitation of labour power by Capital. The form of such a farce is different in different parts of the World. In Iran, the tragic comedy is made up of the owed back wages to the workers even for one year, the cheap labour and burdensome work as well as the disfranchisement of millions of hungry workers who have nothing along with the masses of hungry

children is a painful reality that has brought this comedy to the stage. In Bangladesh a fierce and criminal capital has become partners with the gigantic TelNordia Company; Muhammad Yunus of Bangladesh and the Grameen Bank are jointly receiving the Nobel Prize from the field of social democracy. In Iraq, Afghanistan, the Balkans, Africa, and other places the lives of human beings are being destroyed by the American and European dreadful armatures that are called Democracy. In Germany, the capitalists plan to sue the government (which is an institution of the production and political order of its own) for not lowering Social Security. The BDA has also said that they will go on strike if their demands are not met by the government. Furthermore, probably the BDA would sack all the workers! Compared to this statement from the German capitalists, other anti-humane statements are nothing. What the capitalists are doing to human beings has been called a tragic history of humankind indeed, but today it is recreating a disgusting farce of this tragedy. The bourgeois of Germany have been savagely sacking millions of workers and now want the government to slash their Social Security. What the capitalists are doing around the world; Iran, Bangladesh, Africa, East Asia, Latin America, or in Germany or U.S. demonstrates the nature of capitalism.

The question is what would workers do about this immense savagery? What would the German workers do against the crime wave that capitalism is carrying out? Why have these workers and their class fellow members in England, Holland, Italy withdrawn

so much? Where will this withdrawal end? Is it not the time that the workers in Germany, France, and elsewhere return to their own class history and their movement? These workers could not deny that their wages, education, Health and social welfare are better and higher compared to the workers in Iran, India, and China; and all of these are a result of many revolutionary workers proceeding from the Paris Commune, the First International, and the October Revolution. These achievements are disappearing amid the storm of capital's brutality. There is almost nothing left from all the great uprisings and revolutions. The frozen cemetery of the Trade Union movement and its dead unionist movement as well as its shameful disgrace of compromising with the wage-slavery system has reached the point that the capitalists are about take their own government to court. What audacity! We must not endure such a black and catastrophic scenario. The tolerance of this shame by the working class of Germany is nothing but relinquishing with an appalling readiness to slaughter all of their achievements in the face of the wage-slavery system.

Workers, Let's Get Organized Against Capital!

Coordinating Committee to Form Workers' Organization (Tehran Region)

June 3, 2008

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# The Experience of Occupying a Factory and Its Impact on the Workers



By: Farideh Sabeti

This event took place in 2007 in Germany, and became one of the most successful actions of the working class due to its request for international solidarity. However it had remained only an action and was not able to spread itself as an alternative against capitalist system which was closing workplaces and transferring them to other countries where there is no limit to exploitation of the workers

The Bike System workers occupied the factory for 115 days. During this period, these workers managed the production with international solidarity. But they did not succeed in sustaining it. This type of action has disappeared from the memory of the working class for a long time in the highly advanced West. Under the deep influence of both right and left reformism, workers have not learned or have forgotten how to find the appropriate way to deal with their

issues. For several decades the job of the worker has been confined to either work and work, or pay Unions' dues; and the rest of the decision-making etc became the duty of the Unions' officers.

In Germany after World War II there has been massive amount of reconstruction to repair the damages and destruction caused during the war resulting in an economic boom for capitalism, this was termed "economic miracle". The mega-concerns used advanced technology resulting in efficiency of production and consequently, reduced production time, and made possible mass production with lower expenditures. This enabled the expropriation of labour that had not been paid. This issue determined the price of commodities by calculating the average time of production which provided for the maximizing of the profits. On the other hand, where capitalism received enormous profits they were able to share a tiny bit of the surplus-value with the workers,

that is, the working class of Germany received a tiny bit of the expropriation of labour that had not been paid for. Consequently this resulted in a higher standard of living. This recovery instead of motivating workers to move forward to demand reduced working hours, better working conditions, retirement benefits, etcetera; disarmed the working class which became numb and inactive. There were no more talk of workers' councils or worker's solidarity, nor any self-management with worker's control; these became items of the past.

Additionally all anti-capitalism and abolition of wage-labour activities that Marx had shouted about never came to their minds. The nightmare of capitalism had fallen on society as the best method of production and way of life.

Despite all of this, the Bike System workers had a positive experience, working together, equally through self-management and they realized that work can be dynamic, enjoyable and most importantly without exploitation. During those 115 days of occupation and self-management, they received many messages of solidarity from across the world, from America, Africa, Asia, and Europe. This made them more determined and happier. The Bike Strike had sent bicycles to America, South Africa and Brazil. This solidarity felt good like a smile after a painful moment.

But as it has been said, these workers were not considering to consolidate their action or to offer an alternative to capitalism. They thought without a capitalist buyer they could not sur-

vive. These workers did not have any horizon but the horizon of capitalist production. Because they could not find a buyer, they carried out a symbolic action which brought positive impact and outcomes.

One of the workers was saying "We gained something from our action; we are proud of this action as it has brought us self-consciousness; we are showing what is happening to us and we understand when a person works twenty years on the same production line, they become slow. That person cannot even recognize their real intuition." We comprehend the alienation and fetishism in a society that has turned into the norm of society.

"The bike system produced immense solidarity which cannot be wiped from the memory. We will never forget it. Now we have something to tell our grandchildren. We were just a tiny company in Nordhausen where workers occupied the factory."

Another worker was saying "I would do this action over and over again because I want to show that this situation is intolerable. We made a small storm in the entire country which could inspire other workers in other places or factories to do the same. Maybe in the future they could succeed. We experienced how we can be together in a very difficult situation. Nobody wants to lose such an experience."

"Now I know if something like this happens somewhere else and my colleagues want to strike to protect their work place and job, I will step forward and help them financially to continue with their struggle."

There were many discussions among the workers about how to pursue

and continue with this strike. Only a few of them were members of the Trade Union; there were some Union representatives from the Metal industry which were acting in two different directions. On one hand they were supporting the workers but on the other hand they were attempting to control them. However the workers realized to be organized is the best and the most important issue is unity and workers solidarity.

The idea of the self-management of production of the Bike Strike System was presented by anarcho-syndicalists and had been accepted by the workers. These workers did not have any problem being supported by the left and the anarcho-syndicalists, and welcomed them. The workers established an association which had to be active for at least two years. Other workers including office staff, purchasers, buyers and sales staff joined the action with the factory workers. The association was paying the utility bills and the workers' wages. Each worker was paid €360 for 36 hours work per month so that they could claim the supplementary benefit from unemployment office.

They contacted a lawyer and discussed the occupation. In the West, everything is about the law. The dominant culture is a pacifist culture. Even when they want to break the law, they have to justify it in legal terms.

Working in a factory without a boss or management was agreed by all. However, for production they needed at least 8 to 10 million Euro initial capital which the workers did not have. Because of the workers' solidarity and to overcome this problem they were able to ask their customers for payment in advance.

In This way, they solved the issue for the symbolic production of the bicycles.

These workers learned that to solve a problem, they needed to have a collective discussion with analysis. They discussed why the occupation could not be successful. Why is the policy of government against financing these workers for sustainable production? Why should self-management not take place and not be successful?

What they have learned from these discussions was – if we succeed in occupying the factories it is an example for other workers to do the same.

That would be the expropriation of capital moving towards a revolution. However, this experience could not and must not consolidate and continue; but be remembered as an example of the direct struggle of the working class against the attack of capitalism. The working class only in its own struggle against capitalists can gain consciousness and learn as seen from this experience. They'll discover the role of the capitalist government, understand the meaning of solidarity and the necessity of class unity and only then an anti-capitalist struggle for abolition of wage - labour becomes easier. This will become the tool for the workers and worker activists to help achieve above-mentioned demands quicker.

In retrospect, directing workers' actions against capital and their consequences are either successful like Argentina or Mexico, or not successful; either way they can be used for a worker's movement to progress in the future.

# Oppressed Egyptian Textile Workers Oppressed More and FIGHT BACK!

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MAHALLA EL-KUBRA, Egypt – Recent worker strikes in this textile town has turned into rioting as Egyptian police brutalize dissenting workers. Without union support, albeit unnecessary anyway, textile workers in Egypt are fighting back against Mubarak’s government with strikes and rallies. This particular textile factory is the largest in the Middle East and employs more than 20,000 workers who are now demanding wage increases. The minimum wage in Egypt has been stagnant at 3.26 Egyptian pounds per month since 1984 therefore the workers are now demanding that it be increased to 112 Egyptian pounds per month. Mubarak’s reforms which include increasing privatization and the lowering of taxes on business has

contributed to economic growth, however inflation is currently at approximately 15%. Rapidly increasing food prices combined with stagnant wages forces these workers to demand higher pay.

A strike last month ended with some government concessions on wages but continue to be grossly insufficient in meeting their demands so now workers are again dissenting and expressing their rage. Sadly, the repression of their dissent has been deadly with a 15-year old boy receiving two bullets to the head and another man succumbing to injuries inflicted at the protests. About one hundred other protestors have been injured by the brutality of the police and hundreds of others arrested and

put in jail. There have been increasing numbers of strikes in the past few years which have included tax collectors, doctors and teachers as well as many others. Originally the textile workers fought against the owners but now the anger is directed at Mubarak’s government which is a key ally of the United States. Furthermore the striking workers are not alone, that is, thousands of others have taken to the

streets in support of the workers despite the repeated threats made by the authorities.

“We are tired of promises that only hypnotize workers,” said Mahmoud Abdel Whab, who last month protested in front of the Mahalla mill. “I make 300 pounds [about \$54] a month and have worked here for nine years. I can only buy food. I can’t buy shirts. Next year my oldest daughter will start school. How can I afford those costs?” The workers have expressed that they want social justice for all workers.

The unrest in Mahallah results from intensifying frustration on the part of workers who are trying to earn

a living yet not even being able to feed their families. Currently 40% of Egyptian families are living below the poverty line of 2 dollars per day. World food prices have increased considerably over the past year, doubling in Egypt particularly, and so are taking a heavy toil on the working class. Government-subsidized bread, upon which the poor rely, is also not without its clamoring – fights and bribes abound to access this staple. Now very recently, in reaction to the strike the government has lowered some of the prices in an effort to create the appearances of a better situation and to appease the rest of the population into not provided support and solidarity to the thousands who are striking and protesting across the country.

Additionally it is important to note that the incredible cheapening of labour for textile workers in other countries such as China and India

has led to increased competition among textile companies. This competition therefore forces a burden on these workers who are earning a tiny bit more than the workers in other countries. It is absolutely imperative that workers around the world now understand that the cheapening of one worker's labour power has a direct effect on workers in other countries.

Fighting for basic subsistence is a current now alive among workers – never mind the ability to have a quality of life, an enjoyment of our existence, rather the attempts to earn wages just to purchase bread for our children, breaking our backs to enrich the few. This is how the capitalist system works and what it is truly meant to accomplish – the buying of labour as cheaply as possible in order that capital is generated for the ruling classes. When people are starving we fight and Egypt is a prime example

of this catastrophe. Only with a united front internationally can workers use their power to disarm the capitalists and force change. Change and emancipation are absolutely necessary for a world where deprivation and oppression are no longer.

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## Twenty Days of Haft Tapeh Workers on Strike

The strike of the Haft Tapeh workers reached its twentieth day. On the morning on May 26th, 2008 the workers of Haft Tapeh gathered as usual in front of the management office. Different sectors of workers; farming, harvesting, transportation, are continuing their resistance with hope, high spirits, and firm determination. In today's gathering more than 3000 workers were present.

These workers again emphasized their demands and persisted with their struggle till their demands be met. Their slogans today were; "we won't give up." "Livelihood and living are our rights," "Monthly wages are our right", "Shafie, Zibadar

resign, resign.", "Shame on Saedi and get lost from our city", and etcetera. At today's gathering the workers were especially emphasizing the point that their struggle would reach a new dimension indeed, and that they will chose new ways of continuing their ongoing struggle.

The workers on strike were shouting that they will respond to the silence of management and its government. In recent days, many other workers from different sectors of labour and production have announced their class solidarity with the workers of Haft Tapeh and asked for immediate fulfillment of their demands.

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May 24, 2008

# Shoe Workers Strike in Vietnam

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Hai Phong City, Vietnam – Almost 7,000 shoe workers walked off the job with demands for higher wages. As inflation is skyrocketing across Vietnam, more and more workers are striking as a strong sign of increasing struggle to take back some of their labour value from the employers. This past year alone consumer prices have risen 21% in Vietnam. The Taiwanese-owned shoe company which provides footwear for brands such as Timberland and Prada for export to Europe and other parts of Asia is currently paying the workers approximately \$50 U.S. per month. The workers are now demanding a reduction in working hours which are currently 13 hours per day, coupled with wage increases to \$62 per month. When the same workers held a strike last year for increased wages, the company threatened to fire the workers and close the factory but then it did make some concessions.

It is increasingly clear that not only do the companies profit enormously with the cheap labour of the workers, but they too resist the nature of the economics of capitalism whereby there is a constant struggle between labour and capital. Labour resists through workers using their labour power to strike and the employers resist 'giving back' some of the profits or surplus value which must always continue to increase. Increasing wages denies the employers their profits. A more formidable example of this is the current movement of production from China where the currency is appreciating and the government

is beginning to implement some labour regulations which will erode the profits; so some companies are moving more towards inland China as well as Vietnam and other places where the wages are even lower.

However, in order to survive, that is be able to afford the basics - rice, shelter etcetera – the workers struggle and fight back with their only reliable weapon, their labour force. As prices rise their wages are eroding, their purchasing power is diminished and the only means to secure a decent living is to fight for higher wages. The global economy has a powerful ripple effect whereby its ups and downs are weathered most by every single worker around the world. This means that workers in Canada who earn in two hours what workers in Vietnam are fighting for in one month must realize the connection, that is, that they must support workers internationally. Workers from Western countries who earn wages that enable them to earn their living much better than workers in developing countries must understand that they could instantaneously be in similar situations, and it has happened. On numerous occasions factories in North America have from one moment to the next have picked up and left for countries where labour costs are lower thus allowing them to increase their profits. It would be foolish to think that workers in more developed countries are truly better off when lay-offs persist, wages are frozen, benefits are repealed etcetera. An international struggle must take place.

Workers living day to day must fight for immediate demands such as wage increases and better working conditions but also must realize the source of the crisis – capitalism which is based on workers selling their labour for wages, therefore the struggle must also maintain a clear vision of abolishing wage-slavery. This translates into the necessity for an international anti-capitalist worker organization as all workers are linked together by a vicious system – capitalism, and more importantly are linked together through their labour force which holds the means to injure and even destroy the root of this human devastation called capitalism.

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# Petrotrin Oil Workers Work Stoppage

May 8, 2008 – It is now the second day of a strike for 6,000 workers of Trinidad and Tobago's state-owned Petrotrin in protest to health and safety issues and fears of job cuts. Some of their grievances date back for four years including the neglect of the company to deal with health and safety problems that had resulted in prior work stoppages.

As recently as one month ago there was a suspected gas leak at Trinmar Oil Company (owned by Petrotrin) where 300 workers were evacuated and nearby homes were infested with the smoke and heat. It is important to note that nothing was being done initially when workers complained of nausea and burning eyes until the workers complained and then the union stepped in and forced the evacuation. Four nearby residents went to the hospital due to

exposure to the toxic smoke. Due to the potential for much more serious problems, the Oilfield Workers Trade Union (OWTU) has called for an emergency evacuation plan for the residents who live near the energy companies. Shortly following the evacuation, the OWTU held long



negotiations with management on longstanding issues of medical and pension plans.

It is apparent from these activities that the workers continue to labour in unsafe conditions and for this

reason they are using their labour power to force the company to address these serious problems. Not only does the company profit from their labour but it neglects to implement safety measures for the workers. While it is unclear if the union addressed this issue during negotiations it seems obvious that they didn't otherwise this more recent work stoppage would never have been necessary. As a key industry the oil workers have great strength to leverage their power in making their demands. As workers they are not alone as being brutalized by a system that compromises lives for money, for capital. The labour strength is necessary to fight back and must be utilized to not only fight for current issues such as health, safety, wages, but also to open up the stage for widespread international anti-capitalist activity.

# Mineworkers Walk off Job in Peru

For the third time in fourteen months Peruvian mineworkers have staged a national strike for better pay and benefits. Due to the various copper miners' strikes in Mexico, Chile and Peru over the past year, production has slowed; demand has risen thus leading to an enormous spike in the prices for copper. The miners that are currently striking number approximately 28,000 in total and are demanding more shares in the profits as well as better pensions and working conditions. These miners are the workers who produce the multi-millions of dollars in profits for the various companies which mine in Peru; accordingly the work stoppages have also resulted in millions of dollars lost in

production and damages.

The miners are using their labour power as leverage to struggle for better livelihoods; they are taking away their work through their strikes in order to force a positive response to their demands. While immediate demands are necessary an injection of a long-term vision for the workers should also take place whereby they understand the constant struggle against their employers as a natural struggle between labour and capital. As opposing poles in the capitalist system, labour and capital can never meet in an egalitarian fashion, rather capital takes as much as it can from the workers and then

provides them a pittance for their labour and production called wages. Therefore the long-term goal for all workers must break this system and abolish it thus abolishing wage-slavery and a brutal future; and implement workers' councils to organize production thus bringing to life the means to live without being tied to wages.

# Haft Tapeh: A Scene of Struggle between Labour and Capital

What happened to the Haft Tapeh workers and their children on May 16, 2008, was a brutal scene showing the reality of capitalist crime. The workers of Haft Tapeh arose to reclaim more of their labour value, albeit still very cheap, from the capitalists.

What these workers have demanded is nothing compared to the enormous wealth that they are producing and building. The Haft Tapeh workers were assaulted by various Armed Forces of the capitalist government of Iran. These Forces



not only assaulted the workers with batons but also much worse, the Forces attacked their young children.

The intensity of such brutality was to such an extent that the traumatized children were pleading for help from the adults. During this raid all of the vicious boundaries of capitalism were left behind. In this situation, the violence of capitalism presented itself to the workers who were screaming "We are hungry!!"

The capitalist government demonstrates the dark scene against the workers of Haft Tapeh and their families. However, on the same day, a number of workers who rallied

on the street in the centre of Shush City totaled more than 10,000. This number is double the amount of all the Haft Tapeh workers. Many other people from the city including other workers from other sectors had joined the rally. Despite knowing that there is a huge probability that they would be attacked for supporting these workers, they still joined in the rally. This event indicates that the working class movement of Iran, if not on a large scale, but at least to a large extent has spontaneously prepared the preliminary task to

begin their powerful struggle.

The Haft Tapeh Cane workers have been on strike three times since the beginning of this (Iranian) year. These strikes were continuations

of eleven strikes from last year. All of these strikes were faced with attacks from the capitalist forces; however, the workers struggled militantly with firm determination. The workers and their families were attacked by oppressive forces on this day. Despite the attacks, their resolve did not waiver.

On this same day, the workers blockaded the Shush-Dezful road. This action not only was an attempt to spread the news to other workers, but also a disruption to the daily structure of capital. Additionally, the hiring forces of capital also attacked the crowd of workers in order to repel them from their blockade.

However, the workers resisted firmly against the repressive forces which resulted in the workers taking back the road. The Governor who was present there attempted to speak but the workers interrupted him. They were all yelling "We do not want any more promises. We want our back-wages owed to us; down with the Governor, down with Shafie and Zibdari!"

Victory or failure of the Haft Tapeh workers becomes a fundamental link in the chain of the entire working class struggle in Iran. To gain a victory here requires widespread practical support by all workers in Iran, especially those who work in key industries. Workers of the Haft Tapeh cane factory need to exert their specific power against capital. This needs practical solidarity from all workers from different sectors of production. Currently the workers of Ahvaz pipe factory have responded to these actions positively. However in order for the Haft Tapeh workers to gain victory other workers for instance those from industries such as hydro, petroleum, transportation, still must come to their side. These workers all must strike by exerting their collective power against capitalism and force them to bow down to their demands. A victory for the Haft Tapeh workers is a victory of the workers movement in Iran and a failure for them would be a failure for the working class.

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May 18, 2008

# Council Workers of Grünerløkka: A Spark in the Darkness

May 01, 2008 - What will the fate be of the newly-formed Workers council of Grünerløkka in Oslo, Norway? This question has no clear answer, at least not yet for the enthusiastic activists who currently make up the council. To understand this council you must also understand the underlying class and anti-capitalist platform on which it was built.

The world is full of anger, pain and revolt due to the invasion of global capitalism onto the livelihoods of the billions of people who sell their labour. Global capitalists attack everywhere with full force while governments all over the world undermine the value of forced labour, paving the ground for increased surplus value, forcing billions of people into situations where they must choose this way to live in order to survive.

Fear of losing jobs, lack of any kind of socio-political means of subsistence, and cutbacks in health care and education have become daily discussions amongst working people. The capitalist system uses every opportunity to further their merciless and

cynical goals; from policing to the military and guns-for-hire security forces.

The entire political structure has become designed to accommodate predatory capitalism. The protector of the wage-slavery system on one side of the world uses extensive measures including war, torture and murder to eliminate any protest. On the other side different tools and mechanisms are used, amongst them the institutions we call Trade Unions.

These days the organizations which operate under the pretence of protecting workers are utilizing efficient weapons. Global capital is used against any breath of anti-wage-labour class struggle. These institutions extinguish any voice of dissent by workers in the negotiations between labour and capital. It has become a routine of concessions at the expense of the working class. This has efficiently built barriers against any anti-wage-labour struggle. On the global level the working class movement is

forced into different brutal sectors of the bourgeoisie. In short, they do whatever they can to prevent the emergence of the working class movement.

The workers council of Grünerløkka is a spark in the darkness of ruling capitalism, in one of the world's most powerful Trade Union nations. We who make up the Workers Council of Grünerløkka are worker-activists in Norway. We have tried to push back the daily onslaughts that pummel our lives and through many years we have tried to diffuse all of the betrayals by the Trade Unions. It has become apparent that we have to find another way out.

Most of us who are forming this council are working in our neighbourhood day-care in Oslo. We witnessed the continually decreasing quality of living in favour of capital, and the loss of jobs in favour of profits alongside increased workloads and stresses for the remaining employees. Our response to this brutal slashing was to protest, but all of our activities were stopped by the Trade Unions.

An example of this occurred in January 2008 at a union meeting in Grünerløkka. The public service union of Norway in its recent bargaining negotiations with management had agreed to freeze wages for two years. Most of the workers at the day-care demanded increased wages along with other demands. We asked our union representative to report these demands to our union. On January 31st we sent our workplace representative to our local union to present our demands. We found that the union had brought other unionists, even retirees, to present themselves against us.



We, the representatives of workers, could not find any opportunity to represent our workplace. All of the union people, in the name of workers, made the decisions, not us. We who formed the worker council of Grünerløkka are continually facing attacks by both union and management. A few of us have even tried to influence from within the union but have not succeeded. Therefore we decided to resign from the union on a particular date. Up until now, many other workers from other day-cares have supported us and joined our council. The council has had two meetings thus far; and every time we experienced our members' determination to continue and develop the movement. On our last meeting on March 28th we decided that the council would announce its

formation on May 1st. The formation of such a council within a society that is a hub of right-wing reactionary reformism is a hope for many workers and activists that are fed up with Trade Unionism.

The Worker Council of Grünerløkka has published its first manifesto which emphasizes the internationalist approach. The founder of the council announced their ambition to connect with other workers across Norway and in Scandinavia in order to develop an organized cross-country council of workers against capitalism and the wage-slavery system. The council also emphasizes its process of creation as an inseparable linkage to the class struggle. Furthermore, we are going to respond to other cases of

exploitation that are taking place in Norway and around the world. We stand shoulder to shoulder with all workers everywhere in the struggle against global predatory capitalism.

To send letters of support and find out more information, please contact:

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## Swedish Nurse Employees Announce Strike

During the last two decades the Swedish health care sector has been enduring worsening cutbacks from capitalists.

During this period, the numbers of beds in the hospitals have reduced to half; additionally the Nurses and Nurse Practitioners have faced 30% staffing cutbacks. The wave of current privatization across Sweden has deteriorated the health system and consequently has brought huge burdens on the rest of the employees. During this period and parallel to the daily reductions within the health care facilities for different reasons which includes the worsening work conditions are consequently affecting the socio-economic and psycho-social symptoms such as unemployment, addiction, lack of social security and job security. In this situation, nurses and other hospital employees in this field are under two different destructive factors, on one hand,

the increase of the numbers of patients and on the other hand, cutting the number of employees in the hospital. Conditions such as this create a situation of unrest. During the last two decades the wave of workers struggling within this sector was more powerful than other sectors, and either shows itself in the long-term as a strike locally or across Sweden. The impending strike for 300 hospital employees in Uppsala-Sweden is an example of such dissent and unrest. This strike, however, has important characteristics. The fundamental and obvious one is the spontaneous organizing of the nurses outside of the Union framework. Three hundred nurses organized this strike through their direct network and council discourse during a short period. They called this dissent "LÖNEUPPRORET 2008". Their demands are;

1. Immediate wage increase for all - 5000 Krona.

2. 5% wage increase starting in January 2009.

3. The minimum wage must increase from 18000 Krona to 23000 Krona every month.

LÖNEUPPRORET 2008 has announced that if their demands are not met, they will collectively resign from their jobs and emigrate to other nations for work. More than 30,000 health care workers in Sweden support these demands and are giving the same deadline to their employers. At the same time about 4800 nurse students support this strike.

On the other side of the coin there is their union that is trying to make a conspiracy against this strike. The Union made a proposal that the nurses should consider a lower wage increase either for this year or for next year. The union hirelings asked from both the municipalities and the county councils to immediately respond to this strike as well as give

their support to the Unions demands. Also, the union presents its demands to nurses, but the nurses throw such proposals from union into the garbage and insist on their own demands. Consequently, the union had to make some changes to their demands by increasing them to a 1700 Krona monthly wage increase for this year, and a 1700 Krona increase for next year and 22000 Krona as a minimum wage. These are also being rejected by the nurses.

All of the evidence is indicating that these nurses in clinical research are insisting on their demands. These nurses are remembering that their

fellow health care workers in Finland - when almost 13,000 nurses threatened to resign before November 19, 2007 if the government did not increase their wages 24%. Also, the Swedish nurses are witnessing what is happening in Denmark where the nurses rejected a 12.5% wage increase and followed with a high wage increase.

"Akademiska sjukhuset" - this research hospital is the largest research hospital not only in Scandinavia but in all of Europe. The announcement of the strike by the nurses of this hospital on April 21, 2008 brings chaos to the entire

health system in Sweden; for example, 1700 daily surgeries have been re-scheduled. At least 50 important surgeries have been delayed. Twelve of the seventeen hospital emergency departments are being shut down. If the nurses' demands are not met, they will be on strike on Monday April 21st, 2008 and every week this costs 10,000,000 Krona per week for the government and employers.

## Soccer World Cup 2010 Worker Struggles



The 2010 Football (Soccer) World Cup will be held in South Africa. Workers who are building the Stadium are demanding better pay and have begun an 'illegal strike'.

They are currently being paid builders' wages rather than 'engineering' wages, which is having their wages commensurate with other stadium workers increasing their wages from R10 per hour to R19 per hour.

The South African Construction firms have a deadline in building

the stadium and have now threatened to terminate the workers if they continue the work stoppage. According to Basil Read the Construction firm this is the third illegal strike taken against them in 2008.

In March 2008, the Vice-President of South Africa's biggest builders' union with 280,000 members held a meeting with FIFA president Joseph Blatter to present to him

the "Fair Games - Fair Play: humane working conditions" campaign." He was quoted as saying "The workers, especially those labouring on the construction sites, need a wage that will enable them to live, enjoy a safe and healthy workplace and social benefits as well. We have no doubt that FIFA can help significantly to reach this goal." Furthermore the FIFA website states that "Fortunately, no fatal accidents have occurred to date during the building of the World Cup stadiums." Less than a month after this the workers began their strike. It is clear that workers are the only ones who direct their own struggles and that no matter what the Union's assert; again it is the workers who know what they need and can truly engage in a struggle for decent living wages and working conditions.

# The South African Transport Union, a Handmaid of Capital

By: Nancy LaPlante

April 2008 - Earlier this month workers in South Africa refused to unload a ship carrying weapons which were destined for land-locked Zimbabwe.

The South African Transport and Allied Workers Union, part of the larger International Transport Workers Federation (ITF), has declared that it will neither unload nor assist in the transportation of the arms to crisis-ridden Zimbabwe.

The shipment of weapons from China, which is reportedly carrying three million rounds of ammunition, 1,500 rocket-propelled grenades and 2,500 mortar rounds is currently out of South African waters and it is not certain if it has indeed been recalled to China or is heading to Angola which in the past has been an ally of Zimbabwe. Both the United States and Britain have made statements against the election dilemmas within Zimbabwe and the shipment of weapons. The fact that the workers have refused is comprehensible in that as human beings the workers do not want to contribute to any bloodshed. However, before assuming any sort of ethical or moral stance made by a huge trade union it is important to consider the obvious.

One must question if Trade Unions are now refusing to unload weapons then why is this not happening to weapons destined for other war-torn countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan, and Somalia etcetera? In understanding that the Trade Union



is not representing the best interest of workers; then it is not so surprising that the union is following the agenda and politics of another group of bourgeoisie. This is obvious even when Trade Unions support anti-imperialists such as Robert Mugabe instead of the American or British imperialists it would not make a difference for the working class. If any trade union follows other interests of the different sectors of the bourgeoisie rather than the interest of the workers; it would become an anti-worker activity and a tool of capital. So why now do they refuse? It may be important to consider the current economic and political situation in the region.

Zimbabwe is currently reeling from serious economic issues such as

80% unemployment, inflation rate of 100,000%, average life expectancies less than 40 years and similar to other countries, catastrophic food shortages. Furthermore a recent presidential election on March 29th, 2008 to this date still demonstrates no winner. Current President Robert Mugabe who has ruled the Zanu-PF party since 1987 is insisting on a recount, which the opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai states is a ploy for an intentional delay to fraudulently repress opposition supporters and declare himself the winner. Furthermore South African President Thabo Mbeki who is currently mediating between the Zimbabwean leaders, continues to exercise his "quiet diplomacy" despite the criticisms of many groups and leaders internationally against Mugabe. Mbeki's government stood behind the permission that was given to transport the weapons through their nation to Zimbabwe. The leader of the African National Congress in South Africa Jacob Zuma who receives support from COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions), has distanced himself from Mbeki's stance on Zimbabwe with open criticism of the election crisis as well as the shipment of arms.

It does not take a rocket scientist to understand the simplistic nature of conflicting capitalist ideologies vying for the labour power while embroiled in the political turmoil of the region. The nature of this refusal is interesting in that it raises obvious inconsistencies with how Trade Unions are full players in the capitalist political game; on one hand they do not want to supply weapons to a country where human rights are

constantly violated yet everyone knows that the weapons trade has been occurring around the world for many years; therefore in many cases the trade unions are involved. The reason for such a contradiction is that unions are supporting one sector of the bourgeoisie against another one; therefore, the working class are forced to follow on the heels of capitalism. On the other hand they are using the workers' power for their own gain or to show support for another bourgeois participant.

It is also interesting to note that many mainstream media outlets lauded the stopping of this shipment of weapons. Of course ordinary citizens commend the idea of not exerting violence on people, however, the media which is owned corporately, i.e. by the bourgeoisie, stands firmly with their rulers. Yet since when do the media side with the working class? Well in fact they are not doing this, because in citing countless strikes, work stoppages, there is always criticism of unionized workers who are supposedly inconveniencing the public, such as

in many strikes by transit workers (for example both in New York and Toronto); so one must question why all of a sudden are the writers for the big newspapers taking this position? Simply put, they are reflecting the perspective of another ruling class group. For example a recent editorial in the Los Angeles Times writes,

"What is extraordinary about this incident is that African civil society -- journalists and judges, human rights groups and unions, backed by U.S. and British diplomats wisely working behind the scenes -- made it palatable for these African governments to do the right thing." ("Stopping the Weapons Flow, L.A. Times April 24th, 2008").

And public opinion of course as stated previously obviously agrees. Therefore to take this stance is both a reflection of the West's bourgeoisie as well as gathering public support for the stand that the union took in South Africa.

This sudden refusal to unload weapons by the union is not a sud-

den moral awakening but rather a complicated result of politics and economics of the bourgeois in these regions as well as their mega-capitalist allies in the West.

At the rank and file level, however this could be seen as a way to stop the capitalist exchange of resources as the weapons trade is an enormous generator of capital. This is true indeed, however, the masses must know that capital or capitalism is not confined to this or that region of the world. The very relation of buying and selling labour power is a global relation. The working class must fight with their local immediate capitalist aggressors while realizing that the struggle is international because capitalism is international. This work stoppage like all other worker actions is a monkey wrench in the wheels of capitalism and is a clear sign that there is power in the disruption of the economic exchange and provides a spark that could ignite a fiercer battle against the violent nature of the global bourgeoisie.

## Workers Killed and Injured on the Job

June 9, 2008, Stellenbosch, South Africa: Five workers have died and thirteen have been injured when a sub-contractor was demolishing a wall at an old wine cellar in Stellenbosch in the wine region of South Africa.

A 150 ton concrete slab fell on the group of workers when an interior wall was being removed in the 60-year-old building. One of the injured men will never be able to use his legs again, another lost his fingers and several others had fractures in their arms as well as head injuries. Neither the main contractor nor the sub-contractor who was one of the

injured even knew the names of the workers. It is suspected that the workers were literally picked up in the streets. It is probable that this deadly incident will end up in the courts with demands for millions of Rand in compensation.

This unstable building was being remodeled and renovated when it collapsed. It has since been completely demolished due to its severe instability. The viciousness of this fatal incident highlights the push for profits over safety. Workers need to survive and so are ill-fated to work in dangerous conditions with extremely low wages.

The time that they put in creates an enormous amount of wealth that is never left in the hands of the producers of the wealth, the workers. While both the government and employers seem to regret these situations due to the inevitable loss of profits and the ensuing lawsuits, the system chugs on and it will only be a matter of time before other workers die while they wage-labour. The systemic class system is the foundation for such brutal conditions and so at the heart of the matter, the root injustice must be fought, that is, capitalism and its base wage-labour.

# It is Time to Wake Up – Unionism is Dead and a Worker Movement Crucial

Around the globe workers are resisting with work stoppages, strikes, blockades, worker councils, as well as factory takeovers and self-management. Unfortunately most of these activities are impeded by both the lack of vision of what they are fighting for in the long-term, not just attempting to get their immediate demands; as well as being stifled by the intervention of the union officials. The unions by their nature must work within the capitalist legal framework through a hierarchical bureaucracy that develops and negotiates contracts, and sways rank and file union members to accept its ever-increasing concessions. While in our brief lifetime memory we have not known union wins for the workers, it is important to emphasize that the union has NEVER been the container for a true working class struggle.

What is this really achieving? Well the workers apparently according to their current reality do not have other alternatives so they agree to deals and contracts that cut their wages, claw back benefits, reduce vacation time and other employer-friendly compromises. These concessions are seen time and time again. For example:

- The Toronto Transit Commission workers in Toronto went on a brief two-day strike when they disagreed with the deal that their union had negotiated; and following this, they fell back into the agenda of the Amalgamated Transport Union.
- Autoworkers have lost significant gains such as the right to strike at Magna, lost vacation and benefits at Ford and yesterday

GM workers just received word that thousands of workers will be losing their jobs. Their union the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) has been successful in persuading the workers to actually accept abhorrent contracts as well as in showing their true colours as the friends of management. And do we really think it is possible that the CAW leadership would encourage factory take-overs and self-management? This is what needs to be done but the union is not the answer, it is the rank and file that must determine their own fates.

- Frontier airlines in Denver, Colorado, cut wages and benefits (temporarily supposedly) because the airline was filing for bankruptcy protection. The workers accepted this proposal.
  - Union leaders for Mexican autoworkers stated that they had agreed to wage cuts that are one half of current hires; this agreement was to convince Ford to move one of its plants to Mexico. It has been commented that their wages are near that of Chinese workers. The tyranny does not end there.
  - In 2006 government workers in Germany had their work week increased at same pay through a deal between their union and government. The strikes that they had undertaken were not successful.
- ☒ GM workers are currently blockading their corporate offices in response to the recent announcement to cut 2,600 jobs – the reason for the cuts are that the demand for pick-up trucks has declined significantly due to the rising gas and oil prices as well as the

high Canadian dollar. As one worker has stated that is unsure about his nine-year-old son's future and said "“I don't know,” he said jokingly, “Get a paper route?” Another worker stated that they have to put all their faith in the Union – “BUT CAN THEY REALLY??” – Clearly not. Economic troubles for the manufacturing sector in this part of Canada are nothing new for this region or even for other parts of the globe.

These examples elucidate the obvious – the bourgeois fight for profits is global therefore the worker's fight must be global. One company moves plants and factories to other countries in order to increase revenues without a thought for the people that are producing for them – they are expendable because it is well-known that there are many more workers across the world in a country with very cheap labour costs and other economic woes that are more than willing to be hired. Again this demonstrates the absolute need for an international working class movement. Workers in all industries especially key industries must understand and appreciate their links with workers across the globe. Workers everyday are losing their jobs, having wages reduced and benefits cut in order to keep their jobs which are constantly being threatened by the ability of a company to move far away and hire cheaper labour. Workers on both sides of this scenario must fight back simultaneously for the same cause – emancipation and the end to wage-slavery. The union is not the answer, in fact, the union and all social democrats stifle the nature of the workers, the people, to be aware of the reality and to struggle for a decent life.

Above are small but significant

examples of many others amidst the current state of affairs with workers. The members of the bourgeoisie including corporate and government bosses write the laws and it is with these laws that the unions are using to negotiate. So it should not be surprising that the tactics by the Trade Unions have not worked, do not work and never will work to promote the working class struggle.

The workers in key industries have a duty, a responsibility to fight for gains that have been fought generations before. The history of worker resistance must not be forgotten but it seems that it has disappeared from our memories. And our children and grandchildren will be ashamed of our stagnation and our deficiency in battling the system. The union cannot provide a formidable front against employers and even less against the capitalist system in general.

Where is our defiance? Are we that ignorant to consider ourselves

exempt from the worsening working conditions in other countries? Why do we blame workers in other countries such as China and Mexico for stealing jobs? Shame on us and our stupidity! Workers in other regions and countries are faced with the same ugly reality, that we must sell our labour to management. So maybe our wages permit us to be consumers and to afford to buy a few toys beyond the basic subsistence items; well if we lose our jobs when a company decides to relocate south where labour costs are much lower, then are we really that different? It is this highly complex global system that manages to manipulate and destroy lives in order to churn out profits. Consciousness of our ability as workers to bring this system to a halt is noticeably absent from our current deteriorating situations. Consciousness of capitalism and its deleterious effects on humanity must be grasped by all humans who wage-labour for a boss.

The workers in key industries such as transport, auto, electrical etcetera, must understand the ultimate importance of their resistance and responsibility to other workers who are more vulnerable to greater exploitation. It is time that we understood the absolute and immediate need to defy the bosses and the unions and to fight a fight both for ourselves, for other current workers in other countries and most importantly for future generations of wage-slavers; but also with a long-term goal that adheres to a truth and existence that dwells outside of the capitalist structure. Right now and right here the union is useless; it is nothing more than a sales agent for employers wherein it contradicts itself through identifying itself as the representative for the workers. The time is now to wake up and fight back, leaving both the union and the capitalists in the dust.

## Diamond Workers Strike in Namibia

June 2008 – Approximately 200 workers of Lev Leviev Diamonds (LLD) factory have been striking for four days without the support of their union. Among their demands is the removal of the general manager Mike Nesongano who has created a hostile working environment and for higher wages. Additionally the employees are exposed to X-rays that are being conducted on them to deter diamond theft. The administration is refusing to inform them of the levels of radiation that they are receiving.

A court order has been implemented to keep them 400 metres

away from the factory in order that they not interfere with the remaining 250 workers who continue to toil inside the factory; and so have been continually squatting under a nearby tree. Management refuses to speak to them and the union is opposed to the strike. In 2006 the workers had begun work stoppages but with the intervention of the Mineworker's Union of Namibia the strike ended and negotiations began to turn the contract employees into permanent ones. Currently, both the Union and Management have been in prolonged negotiations at this point.

LLD is one of the world's largest cutter and polisher of diamonds and is one of the industry's first to operate across the value chain from mining to cutting, polishing and retailing. The owner of this factory is Lev Leviev, a billionaire with major control in Africa-Israel investments. This recent strike demonstrates the power of the Union to stifle the struggle of the workers' to break out of the unionist confines and fight for their own livelihood and for even a small piece of the enormous profits that this company extracts from the workers.



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