



RED FLAG

MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM

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



**MAY DAY
EL SALVADOR
2013**

SWEATSHOP WORKERS WELCOME COMMUNIST IDEAS

EL SALVADOR—Youth and adults organized in the clubs of the International Communist Workers' Party carried out a successful day of work to bring communist ideas to the men and women workers of the maquilas, or Free Trade Zone. After planning and discussion, the collective brought *Red Flag*, a leaflet titled "Who's Stealing from Whom?" and the pamphlet *Mobilize the Masses for Communism (MMC)* to more workers who daily suffer inhuman working conditions, insults, and abuse by the bosses due to the capitalist system.

We invited them to join the communist movement that ICWP is building internationally to free the workers from the capitalist executioners. We want them to become involved in the work organized by the clubs of comrades who work in the maquilas, to involve more workers in the struggle against capitalism and organize them in the struggle for communism.

These workers are the architects of future mass strikes that will stop the production for the bosses' profits and orient workers to the communist goal of meeting the needs of the men and women of the community.

The day began early with the mobilization of all the comrades charged with the work of distributing the communist material at the maquilas, having already finished organizing security and

logistics.

We left for the maquilas with high morale and spirits, with revolutionary chants and jokes to shorten and enliven the journey.

When we arrived at the factories we already knew what to do. We began to hand out the communist literature, distributing it to the masses of men and women workers who had just left a hard day's work.

Our material ran out quickly because so many workers received it gladly, interested in our communist literature. We were very pleased by this. Some workers already knew *Red Flag* and did not hesitate to take it to keep informed about the work that ICWP is organizing worldwide.

Many workers approached us to ask for a leaflet, *MMC*, or a newspaper, saying "Give me one," or "I want one!" as a woman worker told us as she left the factory. We later met a couple who had just left the factory and had gotten the paper. They were reading *Red Flag* together with great interest while waiting for the bus that would take them home.

We met some comrade workers, very few, who did not like the literature or did not take it. However, we understand that this is a job which involves closer ties and a persistent approach to the workers so that they shake off the erroneous capitalist ideas and join the struggle for communism

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Janitors are Learning: TRADE UNIONISM CAN'T GIVE US THE COMMUNIST WORLD WE NEED

"We janitors have many problems in the buildings where we work. The supervisors harass us every day. Many of us are being fired. But the union representatives don't come around. We pay them to defend us and the company pays them under the table to betray us," said a janitor.

In the last contract, these "famous leaders" negotiated a 20% pay cut for temporary workers from the \$15 an hour paid permanent workers. The bosses tricked these workers, promising that if they did not go on strike and brought friends and relatives to work when the permanent workers struck, they would get those workers' positions. There was no strike, and the bosses betrayed them by reporting it to the union.

The "retribution" of the union: betray the temporary workers

In "retribution," the traitorous union leaders, in addition to this wage cut, gave the companies control of dispatching the temporary workers.

Before, the union dispatched temporary workers when requested and, once dispatched, whether they worked or not, they received four hours' pay. Now the company dispatches them without respecting this.

Betrayal of the temporary workers betrays us all

Unfortunately, furious at the temporary workers' planned betrayal, we did not see that the bosses would use this to divide us and attack us all. Now, we cannot get sick, injured on the job, or disabled because when we return, they deny us our positions, replacing us with temporary workers. They do this especially to permanent workers with high seniority.

Capitalism creates these divisions, because for the multimillionaire companies—ABLE, ABM, DMS, and UBM among others—this is good business. They save a lot paying the temporary workers from \$2.60 to \$3.00 less an hour. Also, their health insurance costs \$500 a month compared with a permanent worker's, which costs almost \$800 a month and covers their family.

When permanent workers lose their positions, they become temporary. To get health insurance, pension and benefits, the temporary worker has

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RISING INEQUALITY: NEED AND OPPORTUNITY TO MOBILIZE FOR COMMUNISM

"I'm a big supporter of capitalism but there are moments in time when capitalism can go into overdrive and it is important to have measures in place ... that ensure we avoid excesses in terms of income and wealth distribution," said banker David Cole.

Cole helped to write "Global Risks 2014," the main discussion document for the World Economic Forum's annual Davos summit, which opens as we go to press. The bankers, corporate executives, and political leaders who gather at Davos, Switzerland will focus this year on rising global inequality as a cause of social upheaval.

These bosses are especially worried about what they call a "lost" generation of jobless and frustrated young people. From Greece to Thailand to Brazil, young adults have been in the forefront of a massive wave of social protest.

"Disgruntlement can lead to the dissolution of the fabric of society, especially if young people feel they don't have a future," said Jennifer Blanke, chief economist for the World Economic Forum.

Even in the United States, *"Low- and middle-income Americans don't appear to be on the threshold of revolt. But the middle-class squeeze continues to tighten, and it would be imprudent to consider ourselves immune."* This was economist Robert Frank's warning to readers of the *New York Times* business section (1/11/14).

How Much Inequality Should There Be?

Capitalist defenders like Cole, Blanke and Frank want as much inequality as possible so bosses can compete successfully for maximum profits, without inciting the masses to rebellion.

Most of us, however, want "equality." But what do we really mean by that? And is "equality" the best word to describe what we really

want?

"Fair Play" versus "Fair Share"

William Galston (*Wall Street Journal*, 1/15/14) claims that liberals and conservatives agree that "the objective is equal opportunity." He quotes Abraham Lincoln, who said that the main goal of government should be "to afford to all an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life."

This is the "Fair Play" interpretation of equality, which William Ryan contrasted with a "Fair Share" interpretation in his still-useful and very readable book *Equality* (1981).

Ryan described "Fair Play" as the dominant ideology. He wondered why it has such a strong hold on many workers and others who end up with the short end of the stick. He set out to demolish the "Fair Play" arguments that many *Red Flag* readers will recognize as some of the main arguments people put forward against communism.

Is Life Really Like a Foot-Race?

No, argued Ryan. Most of us never get to the starting line. And "the heart of the matter" is that the prizes in this supposed "race of life" are "laboriously produced ... by the bulk of us who are nonstarters."

"I don't know about you," Ryan declared, "but I never agreed to make prizes for rich people. Nobody even asked me." He concluded that "equality of opportunity is, inevitably, a pathway to inequality."

Does "Fair Share" Mean "Equal Results"?

Fair Players often pretend that their opponents want everyone to get the same or even be the same. Some people think that's what we mean by communism, so let's be clear that it's not.

All people are more alike than different, but our differences are real. As Ryan argued, nobody

in their right mind would want everyone in society to get the same amount of time on a kidney dialysis machine. We don't all need the same number of calories in our daily diet.

Sharing: The Fabric of Communist Society

Instead, said Ryan, "The idea of sharing... is the basic idea of equality."

"Most of the good things of life" are either freely available in Nature (like air) "or have been produced by the combined efforts of many persons, sometimes of many generations. As all share in the making, so all should share in the use and the enjoyment."

Our goal, therefore, should be "holding resources in common, to be shared amongst us all – not divided up and parceled out, but shared." Ryan used the example of a public library: nobody should be excluded, and different people take out different numbers and kinds of books.

That's communism, folks, though Ryan wouldn't have said so.

To get there takes armed revolution, not just revolt. It takes ending exploitation, not just the most extreme poverty. And yes, it means tearing apart the entire "fabric of society" woven from money and private property.

Instead of advocating "equality" (abstract and unclear), why not say we're for "sharing," which people understand. Better still, let's just say we're for communism – and explain what that means.

But Ryan was right about the need to win the masses away from capitalist ideology and to the idea of a society based on sharing. That's part of what we mean by MOBILIZING THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM.

And as we do that, the worst fears of the capitalists assembled at Davos will be more than justified.

SOUTH AFRICAN COMRADES: COMMUNISM IS "MUSIC TO OUR EARS"

The African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa is celebrating 102 years of its existence on January 8. The ANC from the beginning was a pro-capitalist party and its aim was to mislead the working class.

The South African government in 1913 passed the Land Act, which led to the formation of the segregation policy of apartheid. According to this law, the native people of South Africa were deprived of the right to possess land. The ANC wanted a dialogue with the government to amend the law.

The proposed meeting was postponed when inter-imperialist war broke out in 1914.

The ANC urged and recruited black workers to fight and die for the profit of British imperialists. The ANC told the workers that by supporting the war efforts, they would get a favorable deal. After the war those hopes were dashed as the racist rulers rapidly started segregating the society based on race.

The more than 100-year history of the ANC is a history of class collaboration. Even after coming to power, the ANC championed a new constitution in 1997 which kept aspects of the apartheid regime and its Land Act of 1913. In spite of such sell out

deals, the ANC gets landslide votes among black workers.

However, a very large number of workers view the ANC with contempt and disdain. The ANC's class collaboration has created conditions worse than what existed under apartheid. The only difference is that we have a small number of very rich black bosses and they use black police to suppress us with impunity.

They used to unleash hungry dogs at us under apartheid. Now they have helicopters hovering over our heads as they spray striking workers with tear gas and machine guns. Hundreds of thousands of workers in black neighborhoods are forcibly evicted to make way for glittering shopping malls, freeways and homes for the rich.

Under apartheid and now under ANC rule, the bosses have tried to silence and tame us by making life utterly impossible to live. When we protest, they sometimes throw crumbs at us to pacify us and the same bosses kill us in the street when we strike.



Lonmin, South Africa, 2012

We are like hungry tigers. Neither bullets nor a few crumbs can satisfy us. We only become angrier. We are hungry for power, power that comes from communist society where there are no bosses to chain us to wage slavery.

What we hear from ICWP about communism is music to our ears. Our base, the workers and the poor, want communist revolution, not reform, to end brutal police killings of workers demanding basic services like clean water and electricity. We are determined to bring the ideas of our party to the masses by translating *Mobilize the Masses for Communism* in various languages here: Zulu, Sotho, IsiPedi, Tswana, Tshivenda, Ndebele, Xhosa.



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SHIFTING SANDS SHAKE WORKERS' WORLDVIEW

SEATTLE, WA — We have had more in-depth discussions about communism at work during the past two months at Boeing than during the past two years.

Boeing workers have been embroiled in the latest contract extension struggle since November.

We no longer play out the old routine preceding a contract's expiration. Contracts never end now. They are extended. The company and the union open the contract every year or so.

This latest extension shifted the ground on which we stand. The need and feasibility of mobilizing the masses for communism was pushed to the fore.

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A *Red Flag* article in mid-December denounced "ceaseless votes" like those forced on us to extend the contract. It concluded, "Communism will succeed [instead] by the active effort of mobilized masses."

A friend who distributes the paper in the plant had continued this conversation with his 19-year old daughter. "You'll get no argument from me," he told a comrade. "Voting is an illusion of freedom! When my daughter asked if I voted, I said not any more."

"I understand when a people are denied something by the government and they finally get it after all we went through, you can get excited," he told her, "but I learned that it didn't matter that someone who looked like me was in the White House or any office. He still works for the capitalists."

"You have to mobilize the masses," he added.

He admitted this was not the whole communist strategy, as he understood it. We considered how communist factories could mobilize the working class, how this would create new relationships throughout society.

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More workers are paying attention to relationships. A new hire was particularly interested.

He saw how vicious capitalism was. The bosses pulled out all the stops to attack us this time. He began to wonder if his life had any meaning under this system.

"The capitalists throw us into these factories," he complained. "We form superficial relations at work to the detriment of more significant relations outside of work."

"Does it have to be that way?" asked a comrade. Capitalist relations of production corrupt every relationship. If we changed the mode of production we could change not only the relations at work, but in society at large.

Today the bosses own the means of production. Profit is their goal. We get jobs only if they can exploit us.

Communism would change exploitative jobs into collective labor. We would turn factories into centers providing for our collective material needs. Even more importantly, we could turn them into centers for education and social fulfillment.

Work would cease to be numbing drudgery. It would be at the center of the struggle for our humanity.

We get a taste of communist relations today when we organize collectives to mobilize the working class for communist revolution.

Then the comrade invited the co-worker and his wife to a party at the comrade's house. The following Monday the co-worker apologized for not making it. He wanted to hear about his fellow workers who came. Mostly, he wanted to continue the original discussion.

"I would have pulled back if you mentioned communism when I was younger," he admitted, "but all this [contract extension struggle] has confirmed capitalism isn't working!"

"I take it from our discussion about factories that you don't think China is communist."

"Nope, it never was," agreed our comrade.

The Chinese leadership didn't believe the masses could embrace communism. They built "new democracy" and socialism, not communism. The basic nature of production didn't change.

Millions saw this mistake and started the Cultural Revolution, the first mass mobilization against socialism's betrayal.

The active masses during the Cultural Revolution gave us a sneak peek at how communism could work. From their insight and sacrifice, we learned to have confidence that communism can succeed.

After a half-hour discussion of revolutionary history, our friend asked if there was a book he could read. We settled on Marx's *Communist Manifesto* and the manifesto of the International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP), *Mobilize the Masses for Communism*.

Now we must turn these in-depth discussions into expanded networks of *Red Flag* readers and sellers, and ICWP growth.

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organized under the International Communist Workers' Party.

As youth and adults in this communist effort, we feel satisfied when we take communist ideas to more comrades in struggle against capitalism. We met with workers who are carrying out strong work inside the maquilas and who took some *Red Flag* newspapers for their friends. We expect positive future results from this activity.

Today's work of the ICWP club inspired us to carry out other projects to take literature and communist ideas to more workers here. We returned home, but not before the comrades who participated in the activity shared a snack. We left happy, singing and laughing and anticipating with certainty that the fruits of this small activity mark the beginning of many more.

Fight for Communism!

**DESTROY CAPITALISM BUILD COMMUNISM ICWP
May Day, El Salvador, 2013**



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to work 110 hours a month. But, when a worker nearly reaches these hours, they don't get called to work. They call another person to work who is not even a union member, paying him/her \$8.50 an hour with no benefits.



Companies and Union collaborate to deny death benefits

One janitor, when claiming \$2,500 to bury her husband, was told that she wasn't covered with health insurance and had no "right" to anything. It turned out that for three years, the company had not reported all of the hours she worked.

Some janitors ask: Is the company trying to save the \$30,000 by not paying for her health insurance, or did someone in the union pocket the money?

Then we have the case of the late Amilcar. He died after eight months of hospitalization. They denied his wife the \$5,000 to bury him because he was not insured. While a janitor is disabled, to keep his/her health coverage, pension and benefits, he/she has to pay monthly union dues of \$8.50. The union never told him or his family about this.

Unionized workers are between a rock and a hard place

These workers are between pro-capitalist, rabid anti-communist unionism and the capitalist despots. But the solution to this dilemma is not to elect better union leaders or look for a better union. The solution is the revolutionary communist alternative.

Trade unionism does not advocate abolishing

capitalism, money, or wage slavery. The union contract only justifies, legalizes, and perpetuates the bosses' exploitation and slavery.

We need communism

In a communist world, no one will exploit anyone. No one will be "better" than anyone. We all have two hands and a brain to do manual and mental work. Therefore, no one will be anyone's servant. Cleaning is a social necessity. Everyone, including leaders, will clean where we live, work, enjoy ourselves, and gather.

We will eliminate titles and university degrees. The engineer and the construction worker, the doctor and the nurse, the agronomist and the farm worker will be the same person. We will all learn and do many things—that is how we will eliminate the division between manual and mental labor, between the city and the fields.

No one will order anyone around. We will eliminate this concept and practice, products of class society. Collectively we will make and put into practice all decisions. Communist leaders will be the first ones to set the example, persuading others to cooperate.

This is the world we long for and need. Unionism will never give it to us. Communism is our future. Let's fight for it by reading and distributing *Red Flag* and joining ICWP.

Lessons of 1983 Greyhound Strike: Part II

FINAL RESULTS NOT IN UNTIL COMMUNISM TRIUMPHS

The ATU is the same union Los Angeles MTA mechanics and service attendants have. The MTA drivers' union (UTU) is just as treacherous. As we prepare for a possible strike this year, we need to draw the right lessons from the Greyhound workers' struggles.

In the previous article, we explained that after 1974, facing stiffer competition from Japan and Europe, US bosses responded by attacking US workers harder.

Since then, these attacks have become increasingly more ruthless as they face the added competition of China, Russia and developing economies like India and Brazil.

The crucial role of the treacherous anti-communist union officials has been to prevent mass labor rebellions and the radicalization of the working class.

ATU officials throw Trailways workers under the bus, triggering Greyhound's attacks against its workers

Trailways, Greyhound's main competitor, paid its workers considerably less than Greyhound, which paid the highest wages in the industry. This changed with deregulation.

In early 1982, Trailways struggled to compete with the new, even lower-paying, non-union companies. It demanded a wage freeze from ATU (Amalgamated Transit Union). Afraid to lose dues-paying members if Trailways went under or laid off workers, the ATU hacks complied.

This gave Trailways a competitive edge. It launched a major price war against Greyhound, forcing it to lower its wages.

Thus, in the 1983 contract negotiations Greyhound demanded a 30% cut in wages and benefits, forcing the workers to strike. In spite of the workers' militancy against strikebreakers and the cops who defended them, they ended with a 20% wage cut and new hires earning 20-25% less. About 8,300 workers lost their jobs.

Competition keeps eroding Greyhound's position and decimating its workers

Greyhound's "victory" did not solve its prob-

lems. The competition got fiercer among bus companies, and among bus companies and the railroad and airline industries.

To cut costs and increase productivity, Greyhound laid off 1,500 employees in 1984. A year later it sold 120 terminals, laying off another 2,000. It then bought Trailways.

This still did not stop Greyhound's slide. Its number of passengers continued to decline from 57 million in 1980 to 30 million in 1986. While negotiating that year's contract, Greyhound sold most of its bus business.

The new owners demanded concessions from the union. The hacks complied, negotiating a contract that imposed a 28% to 48% wage cut on most of the remaining 6,300 workers.



Competition: most destructive force in history

Competition is inherent to capitalism. The capitalists must compete for markets, natural resources and cheap labor. Competition massively devours workers to produce maximum profits to enable some capitalists to remain top dogs. That is the unchanging nature of the capitalist beast.

The final result, however, is never final. There are always new challengers or the old challengers get leaner and meaner. Thus, the competition always sharpens and becomes fiercer.

On a global scale, competition leads inevitably to war: local, regional, and eventually world war. However, the final result of these wars is never final. New challengers emerge, and the process

starts over again. It is the unending cycle of capitalism: impoverishing and slaughtering workers.

Only communism can put an end to this vicious cycle

Communism is based on collectivity and sharing. Today, Party members endeavor to collectively make all important decisions affecting our lives. As we learn to mobilize the masses for communism, before, during and after the revolution, masses of workers and their Party will collectively make all those decisions.

Without money or markets, we will have no need for competition of any kind. We will collectively decide what, how, where and how much to produce. Collectively we will decide how to share and distribute the products of our labor according to need.

Workers can never win with trade union politics

No matter how massively and militantly workers fight, we can never win reforms. The bosses have state power – the media, courts, cops, army, schools--and the economic resources to defeat any reform struggle.

Sometimes they decide it is better economically or politically to make concessions. They understand it is just a temporary retreat. They know eventually they will take them back. For us therefore, it is not a "victory," but a delayed defeat.

Our criticism of the union hacks is not for not waging more militant reform struggles which could never be won, but for their anti-communism and pro-capitalist trade-union ideology which defends capitalism and blocks the road to revolution.

Revolution needs communist ideology. We must organize strikes – not to fight for reforms, but to learn how to fight to destroy capitalism. Critical to this is learning how to mobilize the masses for communism. This final result will indeed be final.

The next article will deal with what we mean by a political strike against capitalism.

VETERAN FARMWORKER COMRADE TALKS ABOUT EDUCATION AND WORK

We have talked about education and work in communism. As part of this discussion, I want to tell about some small experiences that I had in my youth.

Since capitalism is a system of exploitation, it is full of contradictions. One of many is to make the youth believe that an academic education is the solution to their future economic problems. But we know that many students who finish their university studies face mass unemployment that makes it impossible to find a job for which they studied, even more so if they never or almost never put into practice what they studied.

Many other youth have not been able to continue their studies for economic reasons, because it has been impossible for their parents to pay the costs that this entails.

In my childhood, due to my family's extreme poverty, I could only study to the third grade of elementary school, leaving me with only the desire to continue studying. I was doomed to be a simple day laborer in the fields doing everything for the miserable wage of 30 cents per shift for a whole day's work. They paid the adults 60 cents per shift, but because I was a minor, the boss paid me 30 cents. But he made me do the same amount of work as the adults.

When I became an adult, I went to the city to

look for a better job and a better wage. Going from place to place I found myself with a friend who worked as a carpenter in construction who, on seeing my pitiful conditions, asked me if I would like to be his helper at work. I gladly accepted. He made the necessary arrangements in the union and that's how I began to work as his helper. I wanted to learn and he wanted to teach me. I did my best, so that in just six months I could do any job related to carpentry. And to my great satisfaction, the union declared me a journeyman carpenter.

Since we are discussing education and work in communism, it seems to me that this will be a good way for youth and adults to learn, not only carpentry but countless other jobs. Children and youth should study until they learn to read and write enough to learn and understand history, science, mathematics, etc., since we don't want an illiterate society. But we must always relate this study to physical work, to combine theory and practice. Otherwise it would be as someone said, "that you could only be theoretical," but then what is conceived is not always realizable in practice. Or a person could only be practical, but in such a case, things are only done as routine. So theory and practice need to be linked.



I know that in my experience, my teacher and friend was teaching me what he had learned, and now we were correcting and improving the theory.

Under capitalism, the laborers, those who haven't studied, are at a disadvantage compared with those who studied, but they are the ones who do the heaviest and lowest-paid work.

Parents want their children to study as much as they can; they don't want them to end up being laborers. It is not that this is an unseemly job, but since for the bosses a laborer is synonymous with ignorance, this benefits the bosses to pay miserable wages to these workers.

Communism will be different. There will not be laborers, because, assuming that those who know will teach those who don't know, anyone can be trained to do any work. Thus the contradiction between physical and mental labor will disappear, along with the term laborer.

Cambodia Garment Strike:

WORKERS NEED COMMUNISM, NOT UNIONS OR POLITICIANS

Four hundred thousand garment and shoe workers in Cambodia organized a strike on December 24 for a wage increase. The strike was led by a coalition of unions. It began with 200 workers who protested in front of government offices where union leaders and government representatives discussed the price of the work to which the workers will continue to be subjected.

In Cambodia seven hundred thousand workers, 90% of them women, labor for western brands like GAP, Adidas, Nike, and Puma. They also produce for big stores like Kmart and Target, among others.

The minimum wage in Cambodia is \$80 a month. The workers are asking for an increase to \$160 per month. The government has only proposed an increase to \$100.

Garment manufacturing represented a profit of \$5.1 billion for the companies in the first 11 months of 2013, according to the Cambodian Minister of Commerce, 22% more than in 2012.

For the current government of Prime Minister Hun Sen, the union of the garment workers in struggle and the national Party of Rescue of Cambodia (electoral opposition party) are a challenge, but for the workers they are a trap.

And now, as the legacy of the socialist movements, the union organizations lead us to the slaughter and propose to the workers that an increase in the minimum wage is the only solution to their situation of poverty and wage slavery.

Last year, Cambodian garment workers carried out 131 labor reform strikes. This is also not the solution. We know that with a wage increase comes an increase in the price of everything we

consume, reversing the wage increase, creating a capitalist vicious cycle in which we workers always lose. Our goal must be the destruction of capitalism once and for all.

The workers in Cambodia have been among the most militant fighters in Asia. After World War II, millions of them confronted their exploitative government and the profits of the French imperialist bosses and then the US bosses during the Vietnam War. From 1965 to 1973, the US imperialists dropped 1.9 million tons of bombs on Cambodia, which was supporting the Vietnamese nationalists in their struggle against the US.

Today, in this epoch of sharp inter-imperialist struggle, the Cambodian capitalists are fighting like caged dogs to determine who can exploit the workers more and get more profits for their imperialist cronies.

Workers Everywhere Have Same Enemy, Same Fight

The conditions in the sweatshops in El Salvador, in Bangladesh and in Los Angeles are the same as in Cambodia. We have a common enemy, capitalism, which exploits us and keeps us enslaved to a machine and a wage so that the owners of these machines enrich themselves and live off our work.

A garment worker in Los Angeles commented: "A few weeks ago we did not have work; we worked two days a week and had to look for work in another factory. Once some 10,000 pieces came from the company Lucky but there wasn't



anybody to do the work. We garment workers are important, but the bosses treat us like garbage and throw us away when they don't need us anymore."

In Los Angeles, thousands of workers do not receive the minimum wage of \$8 an hour, since they are paid by the piece. This seems to workers in other places to be a lot of money, but the reality is that to survive and pay monthly rent of \$1,000 or more, several families have to live together.

We workers do not have to follow the bosses' game and their unions tied to economic reforms. We do not accept the electoral parties in Cambodia, or the FMLN in El Salvador or Lopez Obrador in Mexico, or Obama in the US. We workers need to build our own International Communist Workers' Party, ICWP.

We propose that workers worldwide join the Party to be able to organize millions to take power and to build a communist society, where there will no longer exist bosses or money or exploitation.

POL POT REGIME WAS NEVER COMMUNIST

Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge (KR) brutally ruled Cambodia from 1975-79. Since then, Pol Pot has been a poster child for anti-communism. But Pol Pot was no communist.

Saloth Sar (later Pol Pot) came from a landowning family closely tied to the King. As a student in Paris after WWII he joined the French Communist Party, an electoral, trade-unionist party that supported nationalists in former French colonies like Cambodia.

Sar returned to Cambodia in 1953, seeking alliances among southeast Asian nationalist movements. In 1963, he became the leader of a tiny party which rejected Marxism, declaring peasants (not workers and soldiers) the key revolutionary force.

In 1968, Sar took the very anti-communist step of isolating himself in a private compound with personal guards, setting himself above his comrades.

A 1970 US-backed coup installed Lon Nol as Cambodia's military dictator and supported him with an invasion of 20,000 US and south Vietnamese troops. Soon, two million people (out of seven million) were homeless, and rice production dropped by over 80%.

The Khmer Rouge started growing rapidly. Its leaders limited new membership to poor peasants, although they themselves were mostly from student or middle-peasant backgrounds. Real communists welcome the masses into the Party. We struggle to build communist working-class understanding, developing all members into leaders.

The 1972 KR Land Reform policy aimed to create equally-sized private plots. Their 1973 policy turned peasant villages into cooperatives that owned property jointly. Both policies were essentially small-capitalist.

Neither top-down reorganization mobilized rural workers for communism. Further, a ban on individual possessions (not just the means of production) ridiculously caricatured communism, considering the precious few items that most people owned.

At the same time, the KR exposed its anti-working class character by attacking cultural minorities like the Chams, attacks which soon extended to all Cambodians. Such racism is a hallmark of capitalism's "divide and rule" strategy.

Meanwhile, the KR supplemented its aid from China with profits extracted from forced labor on

rubber plantations.

In mid-1973, the KR controlled two-thirds of Cambodia and half its population. It besieged the capital, Phnom Penh.

When the Chams rebelled, the KR responded like true capitalists by crushing the uprising and building more jails in which rebels were tortured.

When the KR took power in 1975, it evacuated all urban workers to the countryside and forced them into slave labor in the "killing fields." Its policy was to "eliminate money," but it had foreign trade, calculated state expenditures in US\$, and bought food in Thailand for its cadre with \$100 bills.

US imperialists collaborated with their new Chinese allies in backing Sar, now calling himself Pol Pot. Carter's national security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski explained: "I encouraged the Chinese to support Pol Pot... Pol Pot was an abomination. We could never support him, but China could."

US, European, and Chinese imperialists continued to "recognize" the Khmer Rouge throughout the 1980s, long after it lost real power.

Pol Pot a communist? No way!

Protest of Police Murder of Kelly Thomas



Jan 18—Hundreds of youth and workers protested outside the Fullerton, California, Police Department after cops Manuel Ramos and Jay Cincinelli were found not-guilty of second-degree murder and involuntary manslaughter after they beat unarmed, homeless Kelly Thomas to death. Thomas was schizophrenic. He was taped pleading and yelling for his life during the attack.

Thomas was white, the victim of the same racist police terror that has murdered black and latino youth in growing numbers. Capitalism unleashes and protects its killer cops to terrorize the working class more in these times of crisis. Communist revolution will eliminate this terror and build a society without bosses or cops, where the mentally ill will be protected and integrated into society so they can do useful work.

WILL THERE BE A STATE IN COMMUNISM?

In a recent discussion a comrade described *how, in State and Revolution*, Lenin explained that since class society began, the State has been an arm of the rulers to repress the masses. Engels explained that the state began as an armed group separate from the masses to defend the private property of the rising exploitive class. Slavery, feudalism and capitalism improved their state apparatus by adding to this crucial armed element the ideological justifications of exploitation.

The capitalist state includes the police, courts, army, prisons, politicians, schools, and mass media. It guarantees the bosses' power over the masses through armed repression; it administers the bosses' policies, and wages the ideological struggle, using the mass media, schools and universities.

The capitalist state will be destroyed by communist revolution. Communism will be the first system since pre-class society in which the majority will rule—all of us, the whole working

class.

The way communist society will be organized is that our party, made up of millions of communist workers, will lead and organize every aspect of life, involving millions of other workers, eventually everyone, in carrying this out. Our mass party will lead in fighting for, implementing, defending and spreading communist ideas and production to meet workers' needs.

Everyone will have a say in collectively deciding and carrying out how and what we will produce, learn, fight, and how we will live. The Party, mobilizing masses, will guarantee the administration of society, the ideological struggle and development (learning) and also the fight against the enemies of the working class and to spread revolution, which will need a mass Red Army. All of those will be aspects of our state or government.

There were many questions. Will we have courts? Jails? A White House or Kremlin? Most

thought that we will not have any of these. Instead, we communist workers will mobilize more and more workers to resolve problems and deal with anti-social behavior. Leadership and all other meetings will be at work, in homes and neighborhoods, not special office buildings. We will all share in deciding and carrying out what we decide.

Eventually, when the enemies of the working class have been eliminated everywhere, the need for armed force will decrease until it isn't needed. When Marx talked about the state "withering away" under communism, this is probably what he meant. But even once force is not needed (which will take a long time), we will still need a mass party to lead and guarantee the practical and ideological development of everyone and of society. That will be the state.

We encourage other comrades to share their ideas about how we will organize communist society.

LETTERS

LETTERS

LETTERS

CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

MTA KILLS AGAIN

Jose "Joe" Faundez, 52 years old from South America, a part time bus driver at division #9, of the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority, dropped dead in front of supervisors and other operators.

Joe showed up to work about 4:15am on Thursday, January 16th, signed in and went to set up his bus at the bus yard. He must have felt pain in his chest and came back into the office to notify the supervisor, Cynthia Garrett. The supervisor told him, "It is not my problem; go report it to the radio dispatcher." Joe's heart was already in a delicate condition and the response and attitude of the supervisor were the final blow. He was not able to walk away from the window. He fell to the floor. As operators tried to help Joe, Supervisor Miss Anthony instructed all the operators present, "leave him alone and go on..." There was medical equipment at the division but it was not operational.

Cynthia Garrett (supervisor) suffers a supe-

riority complex. She usually does the work assignments but this week she was checking the sign-ins of the operators.

We can only speculate what was going on in Joe's mind but we can presume that he felt he needed to notify management that he would not be able to finish his assignment and to ask for help to seek medical assistance. Knowing the pressure that management is applying to the operators, Joe did not want to take the risk of using his cell phone to call the paramedics and then get penalized or even fired for doing the right thing in this case that would have saved his life.

If he had been under medical observation for his heart he would not have hesitated to seek medical help without taking his time to notify management. But he walked from the yard and tried to be responsible in notifying management that he wanted to be checked out and was not going to complete his work.

It is obvious that Joe did not deserve what

he was told, and he never expected it. The supervisor's response and attitude took its toll on Joe's heart; it was not able to handle it.

It is obvious that management does not care about its labor force. This is not the first such incident. There are numerous accounts of operators having been directly stressed out by management and having to get medical attention. Does it make anybody wonder if it is systematic to get rid of employees!

Is preserving our jobs more important than preserving our very own lives? Is the fear of getting fired greater than the fear of losing our life? Up to when are we going turn a blind eye to all the obvious hardship that operators are suffering?

If you are interested to start talking about the contract negotiations and what happened to Joe, go to the UTU General Committee Meeting at Feb. 7, at the Doubletree Hotel at 120 S. Los Angeles St., Los Angeles

—Transit Worker

Learn, Unlearn, Relearn!

Society demands substantial change in the face of the worldwide problems and this will only be possible through the training of the whole person through "education." This means that we need to consider that school is more than schooling, it includes all the ways that we are socialized: institutions, families, culture.

It can be said that the deterioration of a destructive society responds to an education based on inequality. In Salvadoran schools, the children of the rich are prepared to be bosses and the children of the poor to be workers or soldiers for the wars, to accept their functions... SHUT UP, learn individualism, competitiveness as a basis to live, better or worse.

The school should combine the knower and the doer in one person.

This will be possible by conducting study

groups, action conferences and summer projects with an education in which the work is FUSED: mental and manual, molecular biologist and nurse, for example, preventing a situation where only a small group has deep scientific knowledge. We must break down the barriers that divide experts and masses and end the idea that some people are more important than others and therefore should have an easier life than others.

Remove barriers between study and work, teacher and expert, student and apprentice. Workplaces must become centers of learning instead of isolated classrooms.

This enormous challenge can be carried out when we teachers no longer come to school to develop programs, but instead to form transformed generations, not divorced from the storm of life, from theory and practice.

Ché would say, "To build socialism, we need socialist men and women."

Marx: "To build communism, we need communist men and women."

Teacher: To transform education we need transformed teachers willing to learn to learn.

Unlearn.

Relearn.

—Comrade Teacher in El Salvador

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BUILD COMMUNIST NUCLEI IN THE ARMY AND FACTORIES

Comrade soldier, I read your interesting letter, "Would you pull the trigger?" in the previous issue of *Red Flag*. I appreciate your desire to hear the opinions of other ICWP comrades about some of your doubts.

First, I would like to express my admiration and pride at having comrades who will be the backbone of our future Red Army. I would also like to say that I agree with your observation that current conditions aren't the same as those present during the War in Vietnam. During that period there was a mass reformist movement, where soldiers found support as well as solidarity with their discontent and refusal to fight for imperialism, which created massive rebellions inside the army.

Nevertheless, in my opinion, the economic

crisis wasn't as sharp or as deep as the one we are now experiencing. The appearance that soldiers are happy to be sent to battle zones in exchange for a few dollars more reflects both their feelings of powerlessness and lack of communist political consciousness.

In those days, the soldiers' movement was combative, but it was also spontaneous. There wasn't a serious plan to destroy capitalism, which is the cause of war.

Now, we have the advantage of having ICWP organizing within the armed forces, with a communist political line, well defined on the question of the key role that soldiers have in revolution.

We emphasize the pre-eminent need to build revolutionary communist nuclei in the army and

the factories. They will guarantee not only the triumph of the revolution, but, more importantly, the installation and final victory of communism.

We are like a chess player, at the point in a game where he is putting his pieces into position for checkmate.

Finally: to your question about what to do in a moment of combat where you find yourself face to face with the adversary. I hope, comrade, that today, while there is still time, you work, maneuver, influence and motivate other soldiers to prevent that situation. Remember that we, as a party, are doing our part. However, if, in spite of everything, that moment arrives, remember and never forget that ICWP needs you alive.

—Greetings from a communist worker!

My Experiences in Leafletting Sweatshop Workers in El Salvador

Last week a group of ICWP comrades carried out an activity that had been planned for a long time. Five comrades distributed *Red Flag* and leaflets to garment workers leaving factories in the free trade zone. (See article, page 1) We took advantage of the trip to create an atmosphere of comradeship and trust.

We began to distribute our newspaper *Red Flag* and the leaflet to the workers who hurried out of the factories and received the literature with great interest. Some read it while they walked and others carefully put it in their pockets to read more quietly at home. Only a very few people were indifferent to the literature. We distributed about 100 *Red Flag* newspapers and 150 leaflets.

We arrived at the factories a little before the first group of workers leaves work; the second group leaves an hour later. We divided into pairs, and one comrade was the look-out, to be aware of what was happening around us.

A factory guard approached a comrade and asked for a newspaper to find out what we were distributing to the workers. This shows the subjugation in which the factory workers are kept. The bosses try to prevent them from reading literature that helps them realize that they are victims of wage slavery and exploitation.

At the same time, the literature shows them that we need to organize to direct a struggle against the boss and the system, to win a communist system, in which there will be no bosses or slaves. Instead there will be humanity respecting humanity, working now not for a boss but to meet the needs of all of humanity without social classes.

I think that the activity was good, but we should improve the distribution of the tasks, that we shouldn't wait until we are already at the place. A criticism that a comrade made that seems correct to me is that we shouldn't give newspapers to the same workers to whom we have given the leaflets, because the literature ran out very quickly with many workers not receiving it.

We should do the same thing in the universities, because it is also important that university students realize that the capitalist education system is only preparing them to go and sell their labor power and generate wealth for the bourgeoisie. They need to feel identified with the working class since they will be part of the working class in the future. We need all the sectors in the fight for communism.

—El Salvador Youth



Popular Militias in Michoacán, Mexico, Raise Questions about Self-Defense: Need Communist Answers

A mass movement has arisen against the extortions and different abuses of the masses carried out for about a decade by criminals linked to drug trafficking without the government doing anything against this abuse.

Opinion surveys show the majority of the Mexican population supports the self defense groups.

People felt alone and the self defense groups helped them regain their liberty. The arrival of the federal forces (the police and the army) provokes a question: "Why now?"

On February 24, 2013: "When we began there were 15 of us in the morning, in the afternoon we were 3,000 and at 8 pm we were 5,000," said Commander 5. That day the self defense arose.

Something crucial was the entrance to the Apatzingán, stronghold of the Templars, and where the main economic activities of the Tierra Caliente developed. For years they made everything more expensive. Why didn't the government come before? Now it is a nuisance, say the self-defense groups.

Capitalism is in a permanent fight for business, whether it is legal or illegal. The working class is violently subjugated in trade wars and real wars so that workers sell their labor power in the worst conditions, even those of slavery.

In the case of Michoacán, the conditions of subjugation went to the extreme. "They had to rebel and the conditions existed. The cattle ranchers and immigrants from the US put up the money, the laborers would protect the remote

areas in a strategy known as rural defense, and the rural population would be ready to leave their homes when necessary to defend the communities. At the beginning, remember, Commander 5 worked directly with Dr. José Manuel Mireles. Today, he is one of the 30 leaders who advise the self defense groups." (*Excelsior* 1/20/14)

"They got involved with important people like cattle ranchers," say the self defense groups, so it's not strictly a movement of workers. However, the workers' mass participation means a great opportunity for organization as a class against the capitalists.

The self defense groups see clearly the risk that they run if they disarm; the government, however, has decreed that they must disarm.

The hypothesis of the weakness of the State against "the criminals" is not credible, and neither is it a "failed state." In truth the State has gotten stronger, with a bigger army and more police, arms, and laws against the population. The same violence linked to drug traffic is used to subjugate the working class, control migration, etc.

The drug business is more profitable than others, so that the capitalists fight over it. Their profits enter into official circulation and nourish the legal businesses. It's all capitalism! Let's organize to get rid of the commodity system!

Let's spread communist ideas among the self defense groups and all workers through *Red Flag*.

—Comrade in Mexico



JAPAN RE-ARMAMENT REFLECTS GROWING US-CHINA TENSIONS AND FUTURE ASIA-PACIFIC WAR

The increasing conflict between China and Japan over the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands in the East China Sea has Japan's nationalist leaders pushing strongly to change their constitution to allow full-scale rearmament of the country.

Article Nine of the Japanese constitution, written mostly by the United States after World War II, prohibits Japan from having a standing army. Today Japan is totally dependent on the US for protection from foreign aggression.

Recent international events have shown the US to be weak and unable to resolve matters around the world. Given the circumstances of China's rising military and a nuclear-armed North Korea, Japan doesn't think one nuclear-powered aircraft carrier and fifty thousand US troops stationed there are sufficient.

This is also the perfect excuse for the US to help rearm Japan and to consolidate a strong ally in a region. It will be a big step by the US in its strategy of pivoting to Asia to contain China's fast rise to world power. US rulers hope that a re-armed Japan will help stop the threat that China represents to the US as the once-dominant world power.

Members of the US ruling class have expressed concerns that rearmament of Japan could destabilize the region and fears that other countries in the area will follow Japan's actions. But at the same time the US needs Japan to build a strong military to be ready in the event of a US-China confrontation.

The new nationalist Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is wasting no time and is not going to wait for US approval. On May 30, 2013 Japan's council of national defense approved a draft for full-scale rearmament. It will also change the name of the JSDF (Japan Self-Defense Forces) into the Army of National Defense.

Prime Minister Abe needs two-thirds of Parliament for approval, but he faces strong opposi-

tion within Japan's population. He is trying to counter this resistance by building nationalist pride against China among Japanese workers and the rest of the population. This is a move used by capitalist-imperialist bosses around the world to pit workers against each other.

Japanese opponents of rearmament mainly come from a strong pacifist tradition that emerged there after World War II. They need to understand that Japan's strategic location will make it impossible to avoid involvement in a US-China confrontation. The only alternative to fighting the bosses' wars for them is to join with workers in all countries in a revolutionary fight for communism.



Japan already has a large military although it does not presently function as a regular imperialist force that intervenes or invades other countries, as it did before World War II. It plans to create a branch similar to the US Marines in addition to its Army, Air Force and Navy.

Japan's military has almost 250,000 active service personnel, 60,000 reservists and over one million youth reaching military age annually. Many of these military personnel and youth must join with workers to help mobilize the masses for

communism, the only way to end imperialist wars forever.

On August 6, 2013 Japan launched the aircraft carrier IZUMO, the largest warship built entirely in the country since the end of World War II. Another carrier, to be launched in 2016, will further strengthen Japan's naval power in the region.

Japan's nuclear policy calls for the restart of a nuclear plant that will produce up to nine tons of weapons-grade plutonium every year, enough to make 2000 nuclear warheads.

Japanese defense spending will increase over the next five years to 23.97 trillion yen (\$232 billion US). This will give Japan the fifth-largest military budget. It plans to add drones, stealth aircraft, submarines and Osprey helicopters to its existing arsenal. The Japanese working class will have to pay through higher taxes and reduced social services and, worst, giving up their lives in the imperialist bosses' wars.

Whether Abe and the Japanese bosses dream of reviving imperial Japan or just want to protect themselves from China, one thing is very clear: the fight among imperialists always and inevitably leads to world war.

Workers in Japan, China, and worldwide have more in common with each other than with their greedy exploitative bosses.

We should not wait for the imperialists to start World War III so they can send us to die for their interest and profits. Workers around the world need and deserve the better life we can build when we destroy the bosses' imperialist system and build a communist society where no bosses and no profits will exist.

We should start organizing workers and soldiers now to get rid of the bosses and their imperialist system once and for all.

FREDERICK ENGELS ON THE LAWS OF DIALECTICS

One important contribution of Marx's comrade Engels to dialectics was his formulation of dialectical laws as general principles about change. He said that we should consider the world as consisting primarily of processes, not ready-made things. The laws of dialectics describe some of the features of all processes. As Engels put it, "dialectics is nothing but the science of the general laws of motion and development of nature, human society and thought."

Engels identified three basic laws of dialectics. In the last column we discussed one of these laws, called the "interpenetration of opposites." This law states that opposites are connected in such a way that the two sides have no sharp separation, but depend on and modify each other.

More is Different

Another of Engels' laws is the "transformation of quantity into quality." This means that increasing or decreasing the quantity of something far enough will produce a qualitative change. Water boils or freezes, qualitative changes in liquid water that take place if the water's temperature is increased or decreased far enough. Mass mobilization vastly increases the capability of people beyond that of a small group. Engels wrote that "the cooperation of a number of people, the fusion of many forces into a single force, creates ... a new power which is essentially different from the sum of separate forces."

Engels' third law is called the "negation of the negation." Engels also called this the law of "development through contradiction." The negation

referred to here is "dialectical negation," which means transforming something into its opposite as a result of the contradictions that it contains, destroying it or partially preserving it. A seed growing into a plant, a process that destroys ("negates") the seed, is a simple example of this negation. Engels described dialectical negation as "the true driving principle of all development—the splitting into opposites, their struggle and resolution."

The law of the negation of negation says that when a second dialectical negation follows the first, the result is always somewhat different from the situation before the first negation. The plant that grew out of the negation of the seed will normally produce many seeds, and each is likely to be somewhat different from the original seed.

This law says that historical change is not reversible and doesn't go in circles. Engels uses the example of the development of capitalism in England, which involved the capitalists seizing the property of many small producers, which was a dialectical negation. When the working class overthrows capitalism, it will seize all the capitalists' wealth and resources, produced over the centuries by the working class. This overthrow will lead to communism, however, and will not lead back to the original small-scale production. The second negation produces a new result.

By rejecting socialism, our movement is now involved in negating the negation. Attempts to negate capitalism by going through socialism

have all led to defeat. The working class can use the knowledge that socialism doesn't work to make the next revolution a fight directly for communism, negating the socialist attempt to negate capitalism.

What Makes the Three Laws Be "Laws"?

Engels thought that the three laws are proved by a large variety of cases from human history and thought, and from natural science. He particularly emphasized examples from chemistry and biology. It is important to understand what he means by calling these general conclusions "laws." As Engels (and Marx) used the term "law," a law can describe a necessary tendency that is always present but not always fully realized. Marx's law of the falling rate of profit describes a constant tendency for the capitalists' rate of profit to fall, although this tendency can be temporarily overcome by various means, like lowering workers' wages.

Enemies of dialectics accused Marx of trying to deduce that the victory of communism is historically necessary from the negation of the negation rather than from the scientific study of capitalism itself. Engels denied that this is possible or that Marx tried to do it. Instead, he saw dialectics as representing a comprehensive view of the world and a method for "advancing from the known to the unknown," a tool for understanding how processes develop.

For more material on Engels' dialectics, see the articles on the dialectics page at <http://ICW-PRedFlag.org>