

# RED FLAG

## MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM



THE NEWSPAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST WORKERS' PARTY \* [WWW.ICWPREDFLAG.ORG](http://WWW.ICWPREDFLAG.ORG)

# ABOLISH WAGE SLAVERY: MARCH ON MAY DAY FOR COMMUNISM

## CELEBRATING A BIRTHDAY AND PLANNING FOR MAY DAY

EL SALVADOR—"We're having a surprise birthday party for the comrade who works in the factory. We want you to come, and we can take the opportunity to talk about *Red Flag*." We couldn't refuse this offer of a delicious luncheon and a good political discussion with workers. We traveled the long distance on paved roads first and then on dirt roads. These are hard areas to access, but they are where our comrades live.

We got to the destination. The lunch was an exquisite delicacy, soup and baked chicken, and for dessert, pie and mangos. We socialized with the families of these worker comrades, with the goal of strengthening relations with them. They received us with all possible cordiality, beginning the process of getting to know each other.

We asked, "What do you do to leave home and get to work at the factory everyday?"

The comrades answered, "We wake up at 3:30 am to be able to get to work at 6:30 am. In the afternoon we take the same route, from Monday through Saturday."

"And how much do you spend on transportation?"

"\$2.50 a day," a worker answered.

"That is, you spend \$60 a month. And food?"

"Look friend, it's better that I don't calculate the cost because I'll get discouraged and I know that we earn poverty wages. I have a serious problem with my kidneys from not getting up to drink water during the

day, since in the factory the daily goal for my team is very high and if I get up, we won't meet it." The majority of these comrades also suffer from gastritis because they don't eat well or on time. They also suffer from anxiety due to the economic difficulties that they have every day. A worker said, "I live with daily headaches because of the exhausting work."

"I want to go to one of these communist meetings outside the country like our co-workers went to last time. They came back well informed about the reality of communist ideas. With my children, I couldn't go, but we have to think what to do for next time so that I don't stay behind," commented a woman worker. We pledged to plan how to take care of her children, so that this single mother could come to a future cadre school. This is an example of the collective fight against sexism.

These stories are extreme but real situations, which the working class lives through and that came to light in the middle of the joy of the birthday celebration.

As the luncheon ended, we invited our comrades to the May Day March. One of the young workers said he was ready to be part of the groups that distribute our literature, *Red Flag* and the manifesto *Mobilize the Masses for Communism*. This youth ended by saying, "I'm not marching with the union. This year I march with the red flags of ICWP."

## LOS ANGELES METRO: SMALL STEPS FORWARD ARE DECISIVE

"When I went to speak to the communists distributing their newspaper outside the Division," an MTA mechanic told a fellow worker who is a *Red Flag* reader, "I thought it would be very confrontational. But, the more we spoke the more I realized I didn't have that many disagreements with them. Later, thinking things over, I realized that I had more communist ideas in me than I had thought."

The conversation (see box, page 4) took place because this mechanic had read an article in *Red Flag* that exposed MTA assistant supervisor Richard Herpers as a rabid racist dog. He publicly and profanely verbally attacked a mechanic for not finishing a bus "on time."

The article got a good response from hundreds of MTA workers at eight divisions where we distribute *Red Flag*. At Division 15, where the incident took place, mechanics made copies of the article and distributed them on all three shifts.

### MTA bosses were forced to retreat

A couple of days later, the supervisor Frank met with the mechanics and told them that they were not under any obligation to finish a bus in a given time. He said that MTA considers safety its priority and they could take two days to change the brakes on a bus, instead of the one as Herpers was demanding.

[See Metro, page 4](#)



## See Inside:

[Exploitation or Work?](#) page 2

[ICWP Second Anniversary Dinner Builds Communist May Day,](#) page 3

[Red Flag Readers Build Unity in Texas Factory,](#) page 13

[Honduran Prisoners Killed While Big Criminals Hold Power,](#) page 13

[El Salvador: Fighting for Communism in fmln Conference,](#) page 14

[Syria: Bosses Move Closer to WWII,](#) page 16

## Boeing Union Meeting Raises The Question:

### **EXPLOITATION OR WORK?**

SEATTLE, WA — The last Boeing union meeting was a spectacle to behold. The union leadership outlined their plans for the monthly joint Union/Boeing committee mandated by the new contract. The difference between capitalist wage slavery and communist collective work couldn't have been clearer.

Everyone knows it's bad news when management trots out production charts and graphs. Harassment and speed-up soon follow. Now the union is going to get in the game.

"We won't agree to any metrics that you don't feel are meaningful," said the union's committee chair after announcing that bar graphs are a way of life in the assembly areas. "Now that's fair, isn't it?"

He was met with stony silence.

"It's only words," said one shop steward and *Red Flag* reader. Deep down he knew better.

The die is cast. The bosses will allow the union to stay in heritage plants, while they build duplicate non-union facilities in the southern aerospace corridor. A huge supply chain, fueled by even lower-wage labor and punishing production rates, will provide sub-assemblies and parts.

As part of this deal, the unions will train a new generation to submit to backbreaking work conditions, while maintaining a no-strike regime. All industrial unions now follow this pattern: \$14/hour in new auto plants, union-sanctioned firings the first day if you don't keep up the pace on organized construction sites.

It had to end this way. The trade union reformism these traitors hold so dear dictates they must save capitalism from the crisis besetting it. "You can't bite the hand that feeds you" turned into "Feed the capitalist beast by reducing the masses to destitution."

Forget about raising our standard of living. "Creating jobs" is their new slogan. In this regard, there isn't a dime's worth of difference between their plan and the bosses'.

#### **Jobs Require Exploitation**

Capital only creates jobs if the bosses can exploit us. As the crisis deepens and the U.S. bosses face bigger competitors, the exploitation must increase ten-fold.

The demand for new jobs can only be satisfied if the attacks on us intensify. The demand for jobs limits us to a pitiful life of wage slavery.

The attacks are double on black and latino/a workers. The South's racist history planted the seeds that grew into the super-exploitive southern aerospace corridor. Hundreds of thousands of latino/a workers fill the aerospace sweatshops in southern California.

Most can see this happening. The new South Carolina plant is fresh in our minds. Yet, some still hope this can be reversed without a revolution.

"The workers at the new 787 plant will see what we [union] workers have and demand the same," one reader recently argued during the meeting. "Eventually, they will come to realize they have to organize."

Not likely. The union leadership plans to weaken our resolve and drive our wages and benefits down to South Carolina's level. Just like

Auto.

#### **Work for the Working Class**

Is the answer to racist unemployment to fight to be exploited by the exploiters or to work for the working class?

Mobilizing the masses for communism means all will work according to their ability and commitment and get according to what they need. After the revolution, work will no longer be repetitive drudgery endured under threat of privatization. We will unleash the creativity and productivity of the masses for our collective good.

Work and jobs are different things. A job in this system is inexorably linked to exploitation and wage slavery. Collective work is a communist concept freeing us to advance our class and its allies.

We all have experience working for our families and communities. Communist work is that kind of labor of love on an international scale.

#### **Fighting for Vision of Communist Work In A Capitalist Jobs Crisis**

Unemployment and underemployment mean misery for 17 million in the U.S. alone and hundreds of millions worldwide. It's an immediate life and death issue for many hundreds of thousands.

But now, many "lucky enough" to have jobs live an unnecessarily short and brutal existence (see box this page). Whether we fight for capitalist jobs or communist collective work is also a life and death question.



Our *Red Flag* networks can become the nucleus of a different type of battle. We won't tolerate another set of bosses. Creating jobs will not be an excuse to buy into production quotas. We ask every reader and friend to help us plan this struggle.

We'll carry this fight to the union, the shop floor and the streets. We can turn the boss/union gang-up at Boeing into its opposite, laying bare the difference between bosses' exploitative jobs and communist work. Our campaign can help lay the basis for eventually freeing us from wage slavery with communist revolution.

### **EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT BRINGING MANUFACTURING BACK AND IT'S BAD NEWS FOR WORKERS**

EVERETT, WA, 2/17--Obama spoke at this huge Boeing assembly plant highlighting his plan to create factory jobs. "Our goal," he said, is to "create opportunities for hard-working Americans to start making stuff again."

Republicans have also become born-again champions of American manufacturing. Mitt Romney says he'll "work to bring manufacturing back" to the U.S. by being tough on China. Rick Santorum promises to "fight for American manufacturing" by eliminating corporate income taxes on manufacturers and allowing these companies to bring back their foreign profits tax-free as long as they use that money to build factories.

We only have to look to Greece and China to see what kinds of jobs these capitalist politicians want to create.

Athens is burning and still the biggest capitalists are demanding more austerity. All told, wages and benefits have been cut in half, while more than half of those under 25 have no jobs at all. The suicide rate has increased by nearly a half.

More than a hundred thousand strikes in China testify to inhuman factory work conditions. Apple employs 700,000 in its Chinese factories. Many workers live in dorms and are regularly woken in the middle of the night to satisfy increased production quotas.

And those jobs Obama brags are coming back to the U.S.? The vast majority are in non-union, low-wage, no-benefit plants spanning the southern corridor. As reported, this center of low-wage manufacturing is lowering the standard of living of all U.S. workers.

The bosses are serious about reestablishing industry in the U.S.-- if for nothing else but to guarantee military production. As their crisis deepens, their plan is to rebuild their manufacturing might on our backs.

Manufacturing jobs are not the answer. We need communist collective work not tied to exploitation.



**JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST  
WORKERS' PARTY (ICWP)  
WWW.ICWPREDFLAG.ORG — (310) 487-7674  
E-MAIL: ICWP@ANONYMOUSSPEECH.COM  
WRITE TO: P.M.B. 362  
3175 S. HOOVER ST., LOS ANGELES, CA  
90007, USA**

## ONLY COMMUNISM, NOT REFORMS, CAN MEET WORKERS' NEEDS

### MARCH ON MAY DAY WITH ICWP

Masses around the world are increasingly unable to live in the old way. From Greece to Mexico and the US, workers, students and soldiers are rebelling against a capitalist system that can't meet our needs. They are looking for alternatives.

The world over, millions are unemployed. Millions more live on less than \$2 a day, while more are forced into slave-labor jobs. As Obama promises better times, millions in the US are losing their homes, jobs, health care. Wars rage in Afghanistan, Syria, and Sudan, killing thousands and displacing millions. The US imperialists, like a wounded tiger, are in decline and desperately planning their next military invasion to defend their empire.

Whether these bosses next invade Syria, Iran or prepare to take on ascending China directly, the workers of the world will pay in blood for the continued existence of murderous capitalism-imperialism.

Worldwide, mass movements are protesting the bosses' attacks. May Day will be mass in many places. ICWP members and *Red Flag* readers will march side by side with these furious masses, bringing them our manifesto, *Mobilize the Masses for Communism*.



May Day is a day of struggle for the international working class. It began in 1889, when the Second Communist International proclaimed it International Workers' Day. It represents the fight for workers' international unity and for the 8-hour day, a reform demand that was supposed to create jobs. Since then, workers around the world have marched on May Day for both reforming capitalism and for revolution. However, no reform, can make capitalism meet the needs of workers.

The only way to meet our needs is to eliminate wage slavery, the bosses' borders, imperialist war, racism and sexism with communist revolution. Communism must become the conscious goal and passion of thousands and then millions of workers around the world. These conscious fighters will become the basis of a mass party of a new type and a world where thousands lead revolution. They'll develop communist relations, producing and distributing exclusively to meet the needs of the international working class. There won't be bosses, profits, money or exploitation.

This year, many groups are calling for strikes and marches on May 1st. This is a tremendous opportunity to reach out to them with *Red Flag* and our manifesto, *Mobilize the Masses for Communism*. In doing so, we must forthrightly confront the capitalist ideas that hold our friends and co-workers back from seeing communist revolution as the only solution.

Many groups, including unions and "Good Jobs, LA," that are participating in the May Day activities are calling for reforms: immigration reform, education reform, against the cuts and for "decent" jobs. This is an illusion. The leaders are traitors who are consciously trying to divert masses of angry youth, workers and soldiers from the only possible solution for workers to the capitalist crisis:

communist revolution.

The bosses won't improve our lives. They can provide "jobs," not work. Only communism can give us work without the chains of exploitation. Jobs exploit and enslave us. Collective communist work will free us. In these times of crisis the bosses will only provide us with intensified slave-labor jobs. Their immigration "reform" is to guarantee super-exploited immigrant workers and soldiers.

Education reform is to create patriotic workers, soldiers, and teachers. We need to fight to eliminate borders and nations and build a communist world where all workers will be welcome everywhere. They could share their experiences in the struggle to build a communist society with others. We need a classless society where life-long education is tied to the life-long work of building communism.

Other May Day participants want us to demand our "rights." But we don't have rights, only needs that capitalism can't meet. They admit that capitalism is the problem, but oppose building a mass communist party to fight to destroy capitalism and build communism. This anarchism would leave our class defenseless and with no plan for victory. History shows that, when offered the communist alternative to capitalist crisis, workers will seize it and fight fiercely for it. Only a mass communist party with millions of communist worker-leaders, committed to serving the working class, can lead the fight for a society without exploitation.

Let's organize so that this May Day serves to galvanize the spirit of revolutionary communism among the masses of workers, soldiers and students. Join us in mobilizing the masses for communism. ICWP urges you to help build contingents to march for communism on May Day around the world and to spread these ideas. We call on *Red Flag* readers, friends, co-workers, students and soldiers to join our Party.

### COMMUNIST SPIRIT SHINES AT ICWP 2ND ANNIVERSARY DINNER

Sometimes it seems that time is flying or that it creeps like a turtle, but inexorably the hours come on time.

*Red Flag Will Triumph*

*Red Flag Will Triumph*

*Red Flag Will Triumph*

This song of the Italian communists written more than a century ago, resonated with fresh voices and with a new significance in the hall. In a multi-racial gathering we celebrated two years of the International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP). Many faces looked happy and satisfied, some others, tired and anxious. The meetings and the work during the day to prepare the event had tired them out. Above, on the stage, a woman in the chorus jumped and sang "The Workers United Will Never Be Defeated" with contagious emotion, without caring that the dish she had prepared with much zeal hadn't even been sampled by many, because it arrived a little late. After a meeting, she barely had started to cut the meat and chop the tomatoes, as the time until the dinner grew short.

Little by little, the workers were arriving, settling themselves at the tables decorated with red flags and balloons that motivated the more than 100 participants in the event, who enjoyed a delicious dinner. Next, the participants were moved with emotion on hearing the communist speeches and songs. One of the speakers invited everyone to massively distribute the document *Mobilize the Masses for Communism*, the political life-

blood of ICWP, in the factories, schools and military bases, and which was received with enthusiasm by many workers who pledged to distribute them.

The danger of imperialist war that looms over the world was clearly described as an opportunity to organize for communist revolution, and a speaker invited youth, men and women to join the army to organize to turn the guns against the bosses. We also had fraternal greetings from comrades of different countries where ICWP is organizing the struggle for communism. Spain, Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador.

That day, the sky also celebrated, the twilight of the evening painted a red arch through which clouds that burst out in several colors passed slowly pushed by the wind. At the dinner there were men, women, youth, older people, children, white, black, latinos, Asians, people from the Middle East. Some came later than others. A Vietnamese couple got there as we were singing the International, communist anthem of the workers. They seemed impressed. Iranian comrades came from other cities as we were starting to clean the hall. They apologized for not coming earlier. There was a family of latino workers with five members who drove more than 50 miles, and couldn't find the place. They watched from their car as the last participants left. Small sacrifices, great efforts for a celebration of this nature.

At the gathering a comrade said euphorically, "The party is consolidating, it depends on us to

defeat capitalism." There were veteran comrades who reunited, and remembered old experiences, and felt proud to see the new blood of the party, reaffirming their confidence and their loyalty. The mix of veterans and youth, and the involvement in the daily struggles, show that communism hasn't died, nor are we in "a dark night," knocking down the working class. The Arab Spring and the Occupy movement are already part of the history of this century, but the most important event to leave its mark without doubt is the birth of ICWP. Two years seem a lot for the effort carried out, but little for the work ahead.

It's time to leave. "Don't forget to come by when you come for a visit," reminded a comrade from Central America. A comrade from Mexico, on saying goodbye with an effusive hug, asked the other comrade, "How old are you?"

"62 years old," responded the other.

"How many more do you think you'll live?"

"Thirty years more, with a good quality of life."

"You have much to do for the party; we want to hear more from you," said the first, and they hugged again.

Measuring time in its essence, the bosses try to stretch their reign of power, but measuring the time chronologically, their days are numbered. And it will be time for the working class.

*LONG LIVE COMMUNISM! LONG LIVE COMMUNISM!*

## SO THIS GROUP OF OCCUPIERS WALKS INTO A BAR...

It was a dive. We shot some pool and tried to explain “Occupy” to a guy who was hitting on a female comrade. Then we settled down to talk.

“Hey Pedro,” Laurie started, “What did you think about that email exchange about how we could live without money?”

“You mean barter?” he replied.

“Or ‘share-and-share-alike,’” Laurie clarified. “What happens in a barter system when some people don’t have as much to contribute as others? It’s still unequal, if people aren’t receiving according to their needs.”

“I’m interested in what Keith said about finding a middle ground between capitalism and communism,” said Pedro.

Laurie paused. She hadn’t talked with Pedro or most of the others about communism before. Then she said, “I really agreed with Keith’s comment about people being willing to share with



those they consider family. We have to work on getting more people to see ‘the 99%’ as one family, not as different races or nations.”

Noticing that Nancy was listening, Laurie turned to her. “Like the world looks from space,” she said. “No borders separating people.”

Nancy smiled, but changed the subject. “What do you think about the elections?” she asked. Everybody was disgusted with both parties. “It’s really only one party,” Nancy suggested.

“Don’t vote, it only encourages them,” Laurie joked.

“I voted for Leonard Peltier,” said Mark. “He’s in prison for being a revolutionary. I wanted to make a statement. I get it why a lot of people don’t vote, but there has to be something else for them to do. But Laurie, you don’t really believe in voting at all, do you?”

“No, I don’t,” she said. “Why would asking people what they want individually be a good way to decide what’s best for the group? You really need to get them thinking about what’s best for the group, not just for themselves.”

Mark jumped in. “I’ve wanted to ask you about this. If we aren’t going to vote, what process SHOULD we use?”

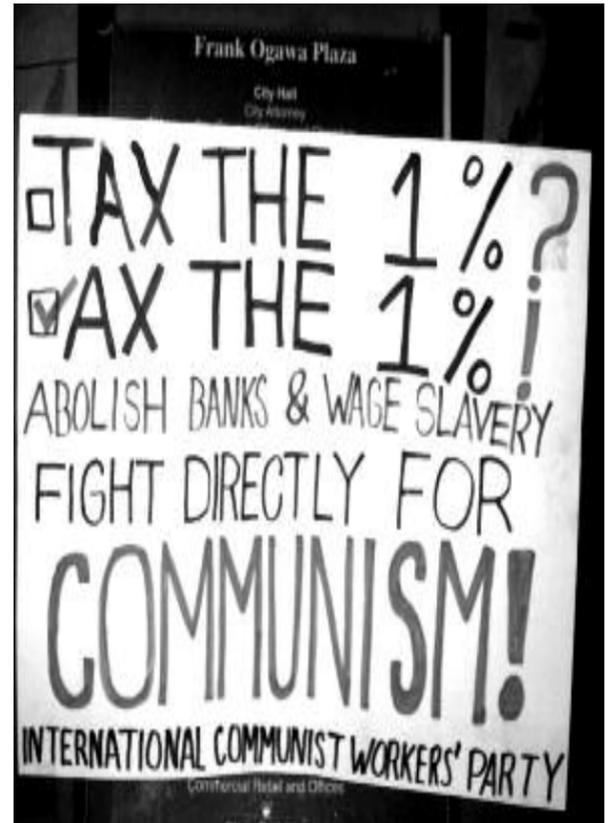
“More like consensus... the way we try to do as Occupy. But all the local groups have to be connected in an organization with a center – I’d call it a mass Party. So huge numbers of people, worldwide, can be part of the same collective process.”

“That means leaders,” Mark said doubtfully. “How would they be chosen without elections?”

“Every group has leaders, even Occupy.” Laurie was warming to the subject. “People who are more committed, who take on responsibility, who others respect and look to.”

Mark wasn’t satisfied. “What about people who are really active but only because they’re pushing their own agenda?” he countered. “How do you keep them from dominating things?”

“By mobilizing the masses, getting people to think about how they want things to be and how to get there,” Laurie replied. “People who know what they’re fighting for won’t let anyone take



over. If you want anarchism, you have to mobilize the masses for anarchism. If you want...” she hesitated.

“Communism,” Mark filled in.

“Then you have to mobilize the masses for communism,” Laurie concluded, more confidently.

“But there has to be a process,” Mark insisted.

“The main thing is substance, political struggle, not process. One big job of leadership is to organize and guarantee the widest possible political discussion. The more people agree on the main things, the more they’ll cooperate even when they disagree. No process can guarantee that things will turn out the way we want. The only way to do that is to...”

Mark got it. “... mobilize the masses,” he chimed in.

It was getting late. “Was this a good place to hang out, or was it too noisy?” Pedro asked. “I wish the others could have heard this discussion.”

“Maybe next time at my place,” Laurie offered.

### LA Metro from page 1

#### How Should the Workers Measure Our Victories?

The fact that this mechanic has moved closer to communism is a victory. That mechanics made and distributed copies of a communist article is a victory. That more mechanics now read *Red Flag* is a victory. Many might think that since these victories are small, they are insignificant. But from a historical perspective, they’re monumental. We can’t forget that “a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” It may be small, but it is indispensable.

The fact that the supervisor temporarily retreated is a reform. Long term, reforms are always the bosses’ victory. Reforms might cause the bosses some inconvenience, but they never attack the capitalists’ shackles that enslave us. Reforms can lull us into passivity or fool us into believing that capitalism can be reformed to meet our needs. Reforms, therefore, strengthen capitalism. They will never destroy it.

Fighting the bosses, however, is always good, when it is led with a communist perspective to move workers closer to communism.

The reason we have not destroyed capitalism is not because we need higher wages, a shorter work week or longer vacations. The main reason is the bosses’ anti-communism, deeply ingrained

in us, that prevents us from fighting for the only solution: communist revolution.

That’s why we workers need to wage class struggles, not to fight for reforms, but to raise our own communist class consciousness and that of the masses.

#### How can we win masses of workers to communism?

MTA workers and many others ask us this question. The above-mentioned incident is an example of how to do it: organizing class struggle around communist principles.

This could grow exponentially with a political strike against capitalism which shuts down LA transit. That is why members and friends of ICWP, in and outside MTA, are organizing for such a strike: one that shows all workers, soldiers and students the need for a communist revolution to smash the bosses’ wage slavery, reign of terror, racism, sexism and wars.

Many MTA workers have asked us, “When is the strike?” More MTA workers need to join ICWP, distribute *Red Flag* and *Mobilize the Masses for Communism*. This and only this will create the unity, and the communist political understanding, and the leadership necessary for such a strike. Such a strike by itself won’t end capitalism-imperialism but will put our class on a firmer footing on the communist road.

**Stella:** Would you like *Red Flag*? It’s a communist newspaper.

**Cliff:** Sure. Thanks. Here’s a donation. I’ve seen you here before, but I never got it. Then, last week, you had something about the place where I work. I read a copy someone took inside.

**Stella:** What did you think?

**Cliff:** I liked it. I don’t usually like to get involved in politics, but I agreed with it more than I thought I would.

**Stella:** Many people who don’t get involved in “politics” are in motion around the world. Take the Occupy movement and the so-called Arab Spring.

**Cliff:** Yeah. But I was disappointed by the apathy of the politicians. They saw all these people in the streets in Occupy and they didn’t do anything.

**Stella:** I don’t think that’s apathy. The politicians are on the other side, trying to hold on to what they’ve got. Why should they care about us? They’ve got theirs.

**Cliff:** They’ve got OURS too!

**Stella:** That’s exactly right. They got what they have off of our labor, and its time that we organized to take it back for the whole working class.

**Cliff:** Whoops. That’s my buddy honking his horn behind us. See you next time!

## RED FLAG READERS BUILD UNITY IN TEXAS FACTORY

TEXAS--In a factory where they make windows, a worker complained to Human Resources about how badly a supervisor treated her. The response she got was only more harassment. They took her off the machine she operated and put her in different places, doing the hardest jobs, jobs that only men do.

In the last job that she carried out, her hands hurt excessively and she asked to be moved to another position. The supervisor refused, arguing that he didn't have a man to do it. She again went to Human Resources and they sent her to the doctor. The doctor diagnosed inflammation of the tendons and asked that she be put on another type of job.

Things got worse. The supervisor made fun of her and in Human Resources there was already a report that she was inefficient as a worker and that she had previously had an accident at work.

To show that she was the victim of a despotic supervisor, she started to collect signatures among the other workers. A reader of *Red Flag* told a group of workers, "We can't let this happen and we must respond. This could also be the beginning of a big struggle. Everything depends on what we do and how we do it, but everything needs organization. It's in our hands to stop production as a response to this attack."

"This is what I was saying. We have to organize a strike!" exclaimed a young worker. Everyone looked at each other with skepticism and kept silent without responding to the proposal of a strike. The group of workers signed the petition, willing to make a fight. Doubtful of the other workers, they went to their work stations and commented to the other workers about the incident, hoping to get more support.

Regrettably, the worker quit the job two days later due to a nose bleed. The doctor who examined her said it was a symptom of a stroke due to so much stress.

The capitalist crisis forces the bosses to raise the levels of exploitation and repression. In appearance everything is under control with the fascist measures, but the workers show their discontent and class solidarity every day. An attack against one is an attack against all. The idea of stopping production in defense of a co-worker is a very political act that we should spread among the workers.

Communist ideas must be spread massively through *Red Flag*. Four readers of *Red Flag* in this factory must make the difference in the short term in the struggle against the system that robs and kills us every day. Strikes in times of capitalist crisis should be focused against the capitalist system, because in whatever place we work, the essence of exploitation will be the same.



## WORKERS DIE IN PRISON WHILE THE BIG CRIMINALS HOLD POWER

HONDURAS, Feb. 15—It was 11 pm and, like any other day, about 900 prisoners slept in their cells, when all of a sudden they were surprised by a big fire never before seen.

This occurred in the prison of the city of Comayagua, Honduras. Three hundred sixty prisoners died, without the authorities doing anything to prevent it. It is the biggest prison tragedy in the world today. The causes are under investigation, and among the hypotheses, it's understood that there could have been premeditated participation by the prison authorities.

In Honduras, as in most countries, the prison system is in a state of collapse, where there's an overpopulation of prisoners, forcing them to crowd together and where they're subjected to the cruelest possible treatment of a human being.

In this particular situation, the state allocates \$US 0.65 for the daily nourishment of each prisoner and there are no rehabilitation programs, nor health care. We can't forget that the prisoners are usually brothers or family members of the working class and that the state and its allies, using their power, resort to the threat of sending anyone to jail who opposes their interests. But it's ironic to think how in Honduras the jails are full of prisoners who are accused of stealing a chicken or something insignificant, but you don't find any of the corrupt who've stolen millions of dollars or committed serious crimes, including crimes against humanity.

The capitalist system doesn't care about the people in prison, who in many countries don't constitute a source of production and exploitation. Instead, the capitalists see them as a burden for the state, which shamefully considers this stratum of society as a scar, for which they have no compassion. In a communist system there won't be jails for our class sisters and brothers, since the conditions of exploitation and repression won't exist. The bosses, death squads and counterrevolutionaries will end up before a firing squad.

What hypocrisy, to not want to understand that these people are the product and reflection of a society to which the capitalist system has subjected us throughout many years, to live without opportunities, marginalized, in discrimination, racism, sexism and the cruelest exploitation.

As communists we see these events against with indignation, seeing the capitalist system like the prison system in deep decay. Sooner rather than later it will pass into a new system for all of society, a communist system, a struggle that all the comrades of the International Communist Workers' Party are willing to carry forward.

**Family members of prisoners killed in prison fire in Comayagua protest their murder at the hands of prison authorities.**

## GENTRIFICATION: USC VS THE NEIGHBORHOOD

What is "gentrification"? It's the buying up of "low rent" areas to "improve" them. What it does is displace the residents of the neighborhood and make it too expensive for them to return to the areas they used to live in. If your rent used to be \$1000 before the "improvements", then after the "improvements" you could still move back "home" but for 2, 3, 4, 5...times your original rent. What can we do to fight giant monster private industry that is in bed with government and stay in our homes in the neighborhoods that we know, near our friends and families? In the current system? Nada.

Can we appeal to The University of Southern California, the largest private employer in Los Angeles County, who stands to make millions and millions of dollars from throwing us out of our homes? No. They are here to make money first and they will do it any way they can; education and self-improvement are the main commodities that they sell to us, but housing and real estate will serve them as well—as long as there is money in it, they will send us to the desert for all they care.

Can we ask for help from the city govern-

ment—the very entity of elected officials who campaigned for our votes promising to help us with our problems, but then just helps corporations strip us of every last cent, our shelter, our security, and access to our family, friends, and neighbors? No. They make money from the increased tax revenues from building and selling of property that is now not affordable to the people who once lived on those streets but now are displaced without any elected official or corporation on their side.

Can we call upon community activist groups, funded by state government or corporations, to help us make the needed reforms to get us through hard times? No. They rely on funding from the very places that are kicking us out of our homes. They hire third-party companies to write reports to appeal to the government and USC to change their plans because somehow they will now see that the impact of their community improvements is actually detrimental to the neighborhood and people's lives. They still try to work within the broken system of capitalism.

Can we rely on religious institutions to guide us through the quagmire of corruption? No.

These institutions preach pacifism and working within the system. We will never get what we need from capitalists.

Broken or not capitalism is not the right system for the working class. It will only ever serve the 1% that owns everything. Everyone else is on their own. When we realize that organizing together, working as a unified 99% to defeat this system and change it to communism (one that doesn't use money or capital for production of commodities to be sold on a market), then and only then will we win the struggle against the bosses and change our lives forever—for the better.

In capitalism, can we count on continuing difficulty, struggle, poverty, health problems, infringement on our homes and neighborhoods, lack of protection against crime, racism, oppression, and war that we have experienced throughout the history of a capitalist state? Yes and it will continue to cycle until our revolution for Communism. Join ICWP to change the system through organization, awareness, struggle, critique, and revolution.

## FIGHTING FOR COMMUNISM IN FMLN CONFERENCE

El Salvador—"In this country, the rich pay the same taxes as a worker who makes minimum wages (\$225 a month), and that's not fair," said a worker. This took place during a conference about "Monetary Evasion in El Salvador," given by an economist from the Dominican Republic. This activity was organized by a pro-fmln union, whose goal was to pacify the workers telling them that "the government doesn't have money, so don't ask for it, don't demand it, and don't go into the streets to struggle."

The capitalists don't pay taxes, they do double bookkeeping and declare loses. The telephone company takes in more than \$462 million annually, making a profit of \$151 million, and pays \$500 in taxes a year!! The multinational airline TACA in their annual report declares losses and the state has to compensate it, when it's known that they make juicy profits.

In a fiscal year, El Salvador produces \$21 billion. It's distributed like this: \$13 billion are net profit for the capitalists; the workers get \$5 billion in wages and the state keeps \$3 billion in taxes. All of this wealth comes from the working class.

The speaker asked, "Can the companies produce without the owner?" The answer was a

forceful "Yes!"

"Can the companies produce without the labor of the workers?" The answer was stronger, "NO!"

The speaker pointed out that the only way to defeat these economic injustices is for the fmln to win the elections. "The fmln hasn't done anything to prevent this," said a comrade from ICWP. The speaker responded that the fmln couldn't do anything, that it had to win the elections of 2012 and 2014 to continue with the changes. He also added that we have to guarantee that workers spread these facts to get a good response in the elections, and that there was no need to be radicals.

The comrade from ICWP insisted that "the only option for the working class is the radicalization of the struggles against the bosses' system." Many of the workers present were in agreement with continuing the struggle against capitalism. The speaker seemed very upset by the contradiction evident between his reformist proposal and the communist proposal of ICWP.

To end the presentation and seeing the enthusiasm of the workers, the conference speaker quickly pointed out the imminent third world war.

"The alternative of this country and of Latin

America is to ally with China since the USA is now in complete economic decline and the only option that the US has is to intervene militarily in Latin America and we're not talking about a lot of time until this could happen. That's why we have to define ourselves as have Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Ecuador. With the support of the BRICS, they'll confront this intervention. El Salvador has to open itself to relations with China since that's the only option to survive in the face of this imminent confrontation."

This scenario of World War III, as has been discussed in *Red Flag*, is practically inevitable, and since the working class needs to put an end to capitalism, we can't ally with one or another of the imperialists.

The change we need is to build Communism. That's why more workers from factories and schools, farmworkers and students are organizing with the communist ideas of ICWP.

In the communist system, there won't be private companies. We'll put an end to the exploiters. Production will be based on the needs of millions of workers not the profits of a few. EVERYONE: PREPARE THE RED FLAGS FOR MAY DAY

### LETTERS

### LETTERS

### LETTERS

### CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

#### Talking with Shipyard Workers

For the past few months, ICWP has been distributing *Red Flag* at NASSCO shipyard in San Diego. We have had a chance to talk to workers coming off the day shift. Some have read several issues and contributed some money, some are not interested and some are hostile. The disagreement that we hear most often is that communism won't work or has already failed in other countries. But is capitalism working? We have heard from some electricians that when their work on the current ship is finished, they will probably be laid off. Since capitalists do business for profits, not to serve the working class, they are bound to behave that way. With the capitalist economic crisis still raging, getting another job may be a neat trick.

A key idea that we haven't made clear to many workers is that communism is completely different from socialism, which existed in Russia, China, and North Korea. Socialism has wages and inequality, money, privileges for leaders, and a repressive government—in other words, it is a form of capitalism! Socialism eventually fell apart in Russia in 1989, turned into undisguised capitalism in China in the 1980s, and repudiated Marxism in North Korea in 1977.

Unlike socialism, communism is a system that serves the working class, without money or bosses or borders. It welcomes and unites all workers to produce what we need. It frees workers to fully develop society and our own talents to serve the working class.

Ships and shipyards will still be needed under communism, but will be run by workers to serve our needs. If electricians finish their work on one project, they can move on to another pro-

ject or another kind of work without losing their livelihood. Since people get whatever they need under communism, without wages or money, there will be no such thing as layoffs.

We in ICWP ask shipyard workers to keep telling us what they think of *Red Flag*, and we promise to do a better job of explaining why communism is the only future for the working class. Join ICWP and fight for that future

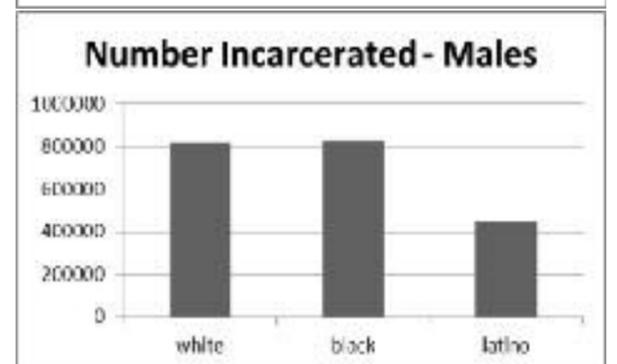
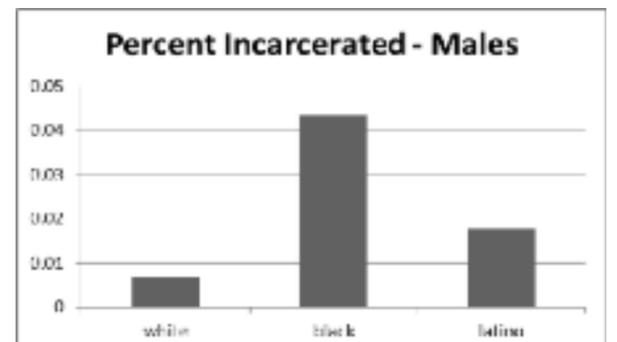
--San Diego Comrades.

#### Red Flag Readers Study Racist Capitalism

We started our campus *Red Flag* group this semester with a discussion about the article "Build Class Consciousness: Destroy Racism" (v. 3 #2, p. 16) The students, who have grown up in this very segregated city, were very surprised to see how many white families are living on the edge. It made a strong impression on them that white workers, too, are oppressed, exploited, and in need of communist revolution. The article made it very clear that we need to look both at the absolute numbers and the percentages to understand the interrelationship of racism and class oppression in capitalist society. We need to talk more, though, about how communism can and will end racism.

"Would the same patterns hold with prison populations?" wondered one student. We did some research. Not exactly! The incarceration rate for black men is about seven times the rate for white men – what you see in the percentage graph below. The rate for latino men is about two and a half times the rate for white men. The "numbers" graph does look different, because there are only slightly more black men in

prison (823,000) than white men (822,000), and more white men than latino men (445,000). White men are definitely a minority of all male prisoners in the US, though there are more of them than most of us realize.



So the general point holds: we need to look both at numbers and percents to grasp the reality of racist capitalism. But racism is especially intense in the US criminal injustice system.

Prison statistics from the US Department of (In)Justice  
<http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/cpus10.pdf>  
 General population statistics from the US Census Bureau  
<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/cats/population.htm>

--Comrade Readers

## SUBSCRIBE TO *RED FLAG* - \$20/YEAR

Name \_\_\_\_\_ I want \_\_\_\_\_ copies per issue

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Send to P.M.B 362, 3175 S. Hoover, Los Angeles, CA 90007



**THIS IS THE PAPER OF THE WORKING CLASS. WE GET NO FUNDING FROM THE BOSSES, THEIR FOUNDATIONS OR NGOs. PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY TO HELP PAY FOR THE COSTS OF PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION.**

**Fighting for a Communist Political Line**

Several days ago I got together with an activist from Europe who is in the group "Degrowth." We traveled together to several places and talked to a number of farmworkers. We discussed many different topics also. These included genetically modified seeds, government funding, how capitalist education serves capitalism, poverty in rural areas, paternalism and the pollution of our food supply through the use of chemicals and unsanitary conditions.

After traveling with her for several days, I asked her about Degrowth's program and goal. She answered that they believe in a change from below and that people must fight to bring down the economic system. She said that whether we are anarchists, EZLN (Zapatistas), ecologists, activists or "leftist" intellectuals, everyone must unite.

I responded that I agree about demolishing the capitalist system, but I wondered what Degrowth planned to do after doing that: what was it offering the working class? I said that there are leftist groups that promote the struggle against capitalism: some propose socialism and others talk of communism, but I didn't see what the ultimate goal of Contraction was.

A few days later, I told her that I belong to ICWP and that we fight for scientific communism and because of this, I didn't agree with the idea of uniting with the ideas and programs of the other groups, activists, parties or unions of the "left." The activist said that tolerance of all "left ideas" is fundamental to her group, and we should all respect each other. According to her, Degrowth has organized several congresses and they distribute their literature in the schools and they are also on the internet. She is an interesting, sincere person, committed to her activist work, and I gave her *Red Flag's* internet address.

The ICWP has a fundamental disagreement with Degrowth. We know that the working class must clearly understand that its deadly enemies are the bosses and all their servants (politicians, etc). Many people with good intentions have been won to the ideas of the pseudo-leftist groups and are capable of dying for these groups' causes. The capitalists push the illusion that we should all unite, and this is a great danger to the working class. We must understand what political line best responds to the needs of our class. Our party has been developing through decades of ideological struggles and practice. The ICWP understands that only a communist line will lead to a better world, a world where the working class, led by a mass communist party, controls everything. Workers will give according to their commitment and receive according to their needs. That's why we invite you to help build a better world and join us in our fight for communism.

--Young Comrade from Mexico

**Theory and Practice**

Our task as members of the International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP) is to prepare the masses of workers, not only in theory but also in practice, to mobilize for communism. Theoretical preparation without practice is an incomplete task. We know that a person could be only practical, but in such a case they only do work through routine. A person can also be only theoretical, but then much of what they think about constantly would be unattainable in practice. So it's necessary, then, that there be a bond between theory and practice. The problem consists in knowing what the theory should be and how to put in into practice.

The following is only a small example of the myriad of instances in which theory can be put into practice. This constitutes the class struggle in preparing the masses for communist revolution.

Let's suppose that a worker is unjustly fired from his job. This worker without a doubt won't have enough food for his family. He'll feel deep distress, as well as anger and hatred against the boss or supervisor who fired him. He'll feel impotent in the face of the situation, not knowing what to do. But if this worker knows members of ICWP and he talks to them about the situation, the member must help him to at least publicly denounce the abusive boss who fired him. They'll ask for the necessary details to write a leaflet about the incident, a leaflet that both would distribute in the area where the boss or supervisor in question lives, or, depending on

the forces, organize a protest in front of the offices or home of the boss or contractor.

This action, perhaps, could help the worker get his job back, but in case he doesn't, this would encourage other workers to do the same with the help of Party members. That is, denounce the abuses that are committed where they work. To the extent that these actions are having a positive effect, because they will, there will be more and more workers who will see it as important and necessary to join the Party, since this is the party that's truly willing to help them; and most important is that they would be becoming more conscious about the significance of the class struggle for communism.

Abuses like those mentioned and others like stealing hours of work, discrimination, speed up, keeping workers' pay, etc are frequently committed against both women and men workers in the centers of work.

The struggles against the bosses about all the abuses committed against the working class, are part of the class struggle from which we can't abstain. Because in this class struggle is precisely where workers begin to become steeled, to become accustomed to struggle, and to prepare for communism. In every struggle, we must always put the fight for communism in the front, because this is the real objective for ICWP.

--Veteran Comrade

*This new poem was read at a recent Red Flag anniversary dinner.*

**To My Friends: The Communists**

Although I have my doubts about the way you bring about change, I must commend you for your efforts to reveal the truth about this world.

That the working class are being persecuted by the rich.

That war is taking away every young soul to benefit the greed of those filthy politicians.

I commend you brothers and sisters, for you are bold enough to tackle, to wrestle with this devil we call capitalism!

I commend you for being fearless, for being the voice for the voiceless, for being the strength for the weak, because those on top seem to think that we don't exist!

So I am in solidarity with you because like myself you are freedom fighters and are willing to die so future generations can relish in equality and justice.

So together we shall fight all these demons who plague our minds with lies.

My only wish is that you never give up never submit to their hatred never allow yourselves to be led astray and when times get tough don't give in!

My friends

My comrades, these are difficult days, they're only going to get worse.

But if you are afraid to die, if you are afraid to bleed, if you are afraid to say something

Don't bother listening to this poem, because it wasn't for you!

—Rastafar



In the wake of revelations after twenty years of disgusting racist child abuse by a teacher at Miramonte Elementary School, parents and teachers responded furiously to the administration's failure to protect the children, and then attacking all the teachers and staff at the school. At the protest of about 150 parents, students and teachers, *Red Flag* and *MMC* were very enthusiastically received. Many people made it clear that they hate capitalism and like the idea of communism.

**BOSSSES MOVE CLOSER TO WWII:****WORKERS AND SOLDIERS MUST PREPARE TO TURN THE GUNS AROUND**

As *Red Flag*'s last editorial pointed out, the conflict in Syria is the product of the capitalist system's dog-eat-dog competition for maximum profits, which inevitably leads to war.

As these bosses' geopolitical interests collide more and more, a point will be reached at which a line is drawn and their conflict becomes global. The expanding civil war in Syria shows that the capitalists-imperialists are steadily approaching this point.

The US bosses are bent on regime change, while China and Russia are adamantly opposed to it. They all claim to be against foreign armed intervention. Both sides, however, are pouring arms and military "advisers and trainers" into the country. Russia and Iran are arming the regime. The West is arming the "rebels."

The US bosses are calling for the creation of "humanitarian" corridors and safe zones that "would require air power..." They are also calling for a joint Arab League-United Nations "peace keeping force" (*NY Times* Editorial, 2/25/12). They want to repeat what they did in Libya.

**Syria and Iran, intricately linked, are crucial geopolitical assets**

Without them, the US bosses can't hope to reassert their control over the Middle East's oil to stem their decline and project their power well into the 21st century.

Without them, and Middle Eastern oil, neither China or Russia can aspire to replace the US as the world's dominant power. Both sides are determined to spill the last drop of workers' blood for their empire and profits.

**China is preparing to confront the US militarily**

Chinese imperialists say that so far they developed while abiding by the West's world order, but now that order wants to limit China's development. "It's unavoidable that China now sees the need to confront it. The Syrian issue can be seen as an unintentional confrontation point." (*Global Times* 2/27/12)

Another editorial responds to the West's nega-

tive reaction to China's plans to double its military budget by 2015. The Chinese imperialists stated, "As China has stepped into the frontline of international political confrontation, it must speed up its national defense power." (*Global Times* 2/29/12)

Addressing Obama's "Pivot to the Pacific," the editorial says, "The involvement of great powers will add intensity to the Asia-Pacific situation. Right now, China cannot rely on diplomacy for defense."

**Russia is also militarizing**

"We have adopted and are implementing unprecedented programs to develop our armed forces and modernize

Russia's defense industry. We will allocate around 23 trillion rubles (about \$800 billion) for these purposes over the next decade," wrote Putin in "Why Russia needs to rebuild its military" (2/21/12).

He pointed out that with "ever new regional and local wars breaking out [and] the basic principles of international law being degraded and eroded...Russia cannot rely on diplomatic and economic methods alone to resolve conflicts."

**Communists don't welcome war but we won't be paralyzed by it**

As communists we know that world war is inevitable under capitalism-imperialism. We can't stop the bosses from unleashing this unimaginable suffering, destruction, and death upon the world's masses. We can, however, alert and prepare workers to organize the enormous anger and hatred that will erupt among the masses to fight for communism.

It is a gigantic but not impossible task. The Russian workers, led by communists, did it during World War I. The Chinese workers followed the Russian example in World War II. We can do it too.

**What will it require?**

We need a mass Party steeled ideologically to be able to face and defeat the anti-communism



and racist patriotic fervor that the world's rulers will try very hard to incite among the masses of workers, soldiers and students.

We must not wait until it happens. The antidote to this bosses' poison is a working class armed with communist ideas and determined to fight for communism.

We must therefore wage now a relentless struggle to win our co-workers and friends to massively distribute *Red Flag* and our manifesto *Mobilize the Masses for Communism*.

We must massively reach the youth, future recruits for the bosses' militaries and war industries, with our literature. We must win them to join the bosses' military to organize soldiers, sailors and marines for communism and to turn the guns around.

We must lead workers, soldiers and students in political strikes against capitalism: strikes that raise internationalist communist slogans to inspire the masses worldwide and lay the basis for a worldwide struggle for communism.

Join International Communist Workers' Party and march with us this May Day, May First - in Spain, Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras and the US - to take this message to masses of workers and their allies and move our communist revolution forward!



ICWP has published our manifesto *Mobilize the Masses for Communism*. It's available in English and Spanish. Order your copy or copies. Please send donations for the costs of printing and mailing. We also ask for your suggestions and criticisms.

Write to : PMB 362  
3175 S. Hoover St.,  
Los Angeles, CA 90007

**THIS MAY DAY  
INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' DAY**

**IN SPAIN, MEXICO, EL SALVADOR,  
HONDURAS AND THE U.S. THE  
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST WORKERS'  
PARTY URGES WORKERS, STUDENTS,  
SOLDIERS AND THEIR ALLIES TO:**

**MOBILIZE THEIR FRIENDS TO STRIKE  
ON MAY DAY FOR COMMUNISM**

**MARCH WITH ICWP AND TO HELP SPREAD  
RED FLAG AND OUR MANIFESTO  
MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM  
TO TENS OF THOUSANDS**