

RED FLAG

MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM



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



This year, on International Working Women's Day, we salute all the women class fighters who have given leadership to the struggle against fascism, imperialism, and exploitation and for a communist world. Only the end of capitalist wage slavery and class society can bring us a world free of sexism, where we can share-and-share alike and live together in relationships of respect and comradely struggle as free human beings.

BUILDING COMMUNIST LEADERSHIP AT BOEING

SEATTLE, WA--"The union just waits for the company to attack and then reacts," complained a Machinist and *Red Flag* distributor to the candidate for the International Association of Machinists (IAM) Boeing district president. "The union has no strategy."

"The union doesn't have--and cannot have--any answer to the crisis of capitalism," added a comrade. "In fact, they are part of the system."

"You got that right!" agreed a third.

There are 33,000 workers in the IAM Boeing union. Three people--from the select few dozen that are eligible--are running for president in a special election March 6th. The past president resigned after the contract extension debacle.

No candidate ventures outside the confines of trade union philosophy. Each candidate tries to outdo the other crying for more democracy and to stand up to the company. None, however, can come up with a convincing plan to address the bosses' assault.

"The only plan that can work is to grow the International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP) in order to mobilize the masses for communism," a party member argued.

"I'm sick of the whole joke," agreed a fourth, a friendly union official who distributes a few of our papers. "Your plan is the only one that makes sense."

If this plan makes sense, now is the time to join. Mobilizing the Masses for Communism requires the active participation of every *Red Flag* reader and friend.

Will Unions or Communist Union Leaders Make Workers Better Off?

This friendly union official was

bombarded with demands that he support the establishment candidate. He refused.

"So they're threatening your career in the union," observed a comrade.

"Who cares!" he answered emphatically. This from a worker who has spent many years trying to be a principled, honest, anti-racist union leader.

Then we got to talking about unions and union leaders. We both agreed the Tennessee autoworkers (see box page 4) would be no better off if they had a union and certainly not if they had a joint company-union "workers" council.

He has often said the union would be better off if some of our comrades led it. This time our comrade argued, "It wouldn't matter."

"Unions are reform organizations. They are forced to be part of the capitalist system. We need a different kind of organization. We need a bigger ICWP. We need a party to mobilize the masses for communism."

"That sounds about right!" he admitted in front of friends.

Communist Political Leadership

When a fifth worker who distributes more papers heard about this conversation, he had some questions.

"I understand winning official union positions is not the goal. It's like the government. Democrat or Republican, it is still the same system. That's why I told my daughter I don't vote anymore.

"Even if someone got in to do good for workers, they would be hemmed in by capitalism.

"But that doesn't mean we don't need leadership, does it?"

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THIS IS A THREE WEEK ISSUE

Russian, European, US Imperialists Fight over Ukraine

WORLD'S WORKERS MUST MOBILIZE FOR COMMUNISM TO DESTROY DEADLY CAPITALISM

Russia's military occupation of Crimea is a grim reminder that inter-imperialist rivalry inevitably leads to war. Imperialist war is a sick solution for a deadly system mired in a crisis of overproduction, which it can only resolve by destroying the productive capacity of rival imperialists: factories and workers.

Only communist revolution can end capitalism's uncontrollable and never-ending environmental destruction and its impoverishment and mass murder of the international working class.

Communism will eliminate money and wage slavery, the causes of corruption, exploitation and imperialist war. The working class as a whole, united worldwide through its communist party, will decide what's best for everyone and how we can produce everything that every human needs to live a decent and better life.

Ukrainian Workers Sink into Deeper Suffering and Misery

The current political crisis began when corrupt Ukrainian ex-President Yanukovich rejected closer ties to the European Union, instead accepting Putin's offer of a \$15 billion loan.

That triggered mass demonstrations. Violent police repression fueled the protests, which grew to 100,000 people. They evolved from wanting closer EU ties to demanding regime change. The US and the European Union embraced the

demonstrations, which included nazi nationalists, as another "flowering of democracy."

Like all capitalists, Ukrainian bosses increase their profits by exploiting and stealing from the working class. Rinat Akhmetov and Victor Pinchuk, two of the wealthiest Ukrainians, have accumulated their wealth (estimated at over \$30 billion) from the blood of Ukrainian workers. They are loyal only to their money and can easily swing to the imperialist master that can better protect their interest.

Workers in Ukraine are fed up with these capitalist conditions. They are frustrated, because under capitalism their lives will not get better no matter who runs the country. But many have dangerous illusions in "better" imperialists.

Ukraine and Russia: Trade, Energy, and Strategic Location

Russia threatened Ukraine with trade consequences if the country signed the EU deal, and suspended \$15 billion in aid. As protests escalated, the pro-Russian Yanukovich fled. A provisional pro-Western government was formed, composed of three parties, including open fascists. Ukraine, facing economic collapse, is looking to the EU and the International Monetary Fund for help.

The opposition, led by pro-western bosses, tells workers that joining the EU will better their lives, but any imperialist aid or loans will impose harsh conditions that will enslave Ukrainian workers even more to the capitalist system, as happened in Greece.

The fight to exploit Ukrainian workers reflects the worldwide fight for profits and empire among the major imperialist powers.

For the US, EU and Russian imperialists, the suffering of the working class is the least of their concerns. All they want is to control strategic regions to be well-positioned for the inevitable World War III.

The Ukraine is of huge strategic importance to Russia. Geographically it is an easy route for invading armies. If controlled by western powers, Russia's southern flank would be wide open. Russia will not allow this.

Ukraine's Crimean peninsula (now occupied by Russia) is home to one of Russia's main naval bases, allowing Russia to dominate the Black Sea and to project power to the Mediterranean Sea.

Imperialists Inch Closer to World War

The Ukrainian crisis shows the limits of imperialists' soft power: diplomacy and economic bribery. These are normally used against vassals



or rivals to force concessions. When these are exhausted, war is the imperialists' only option.

Thus, when the new Ukrainian regime rejected Putin's diplomatic overtures and economic offer, his only option was military intervention.

Putin's move smashed the US bosses' illusions that strategic Ukraine could easily be plucked from him and used to encircle Russia militarily and curtail its aspirations for greater global power.

Now the decline of US influence has been exposed. Germany, not the US, is positioned to broker peace negotiations. "Short of war there is little that the US can do on its own to punish Russia," editorialized the *New York Times* (3/5/14).

European Union Is Divided over Ukraine

Poland and some other countries support the US agenda. In contrast, Germany's agenda is to bring Ukraine closer to Europe in order to bring Russia closer to Europe too.

The German bloc sees China as its main rival for markets, energy and other natural resources. It plans to stem Russia's pivot to Asia and its possible military alliance with China.

This bloc realizes that its soft power is no longer effective. Its economic aid is losing impact because of bigger donors (like China). Economic power alone is not enough in Asia.

The German bloc sees the US increasingly as a rival. A policy paper issued by the European Council of Foreign Relations emphasized, "Europe cannot leave Asian security to the US," allowing the US to dominate the Asia-Pacific region.

The European Foreign Affairs chief argued that a stronger European defense policy must be "threefold: political, ensuring that the EU can live up to its global ambitions; operational, giving Europe the capacity to act on the ground; and economic."

In short, the world's imperialists are preparing for future wars while babbling about peace. Ukrainian workers and the masses everywhere should realize the only solution to all their problems is not a new government or capitalist democracy but rather a communist revolution to destroy the capitalist system for ever.

**Celebrate
International
Workers Day,
Thursday, May First!**

**March under the
communist
banners of ICWP
for a world
without borders,
racism, sexism,
wage slavery.**

**We'll produce to
meet the needs of
the international
working class.**

Join ICWP!



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Sweep out Garbage: Bosses and Politicians

BUILD ICWP IN BRAZIL AND EVERYWHERE



Fabricio Chaves, a 22 year old youth, was among thousands of protesters in São Paulo, Brazil, who had gathered to protest the billions of dollars the bosses are spending for the World Cup while tens of millions of people struggle to survive deteriorating living conditions. A group of Military Police (MP) surrounded Fabricio and, as eye-witnesses reported, the MPs were yelling “Mata, Mata!” (Kill, Kill!). Fabricio was bleeding profusely; the police refused the ambulance access to the site. After a long delay, Fabricio was taken to a hospital and under heavy sedatives the police got a “confession” from him saying that he was injured because the police acted in self-defense. Moments later he died. A group of lawyers who tried to represent Fabricio’s family received death threats.



The rulers in Brazil are scared that youth and workers will bring their anger and fury to the streets of Brazil during the World Cup. The bosses have every reason to lose sleep. The majority of the workers in Brazil are black. They have faced centuries of racism and are fed up with the system. Fabricio Chaves joins Fernandão, Amarildo, and Diaz – all black youth killed in demonstrations in February. To construct freeways, stadiums and parking structures,

over 350,000 families, most of them black, were left homeless as MPs with guns and bulldozers flattened their homes.

The bosses are desperately attempting to contain the simmering anger of these black workers by portraying black youth as criminals or gang members, and by sending in MPs every night with helicopters and mounted police to terrorize favelas (poor neighborhoods) where the black workers live. This systematic brutal racism against black workers traces its roots to slavery imposed by the Portuguese capitalists who imported to Brazil 87% of the slaves brought to the Americas.

However, the working class in Brazil is not taking these attacks passively. A massive wildcat strike by the street sweepers in the Sanitation Workers’ Union in Rio de Janeiro is still going on. The workers defied the union misleaders. What started as a strike for better wages has now taken a direction that has the potential to threaten the very existence of the bosses and their profit system. The wildcat strikers are confronting cops and blockading freeways. Slogans are emerging that say, “We only collect garbage; the only garbage is the bosses and their politicians.” (see photo)

The striking street sweepers were joined by 30,000 petroleum workers employed by Rio de Janeiro Petrochemical Complex (COMPERJ). These workers make less than \$200 a month, and work long hours in dangerous conditions. They go hungry for days in offshore rigs. There is no sanitation, and health care is nonexistent when they get injured. Hungry for change, these workers organized their strike against the wishes of the union. They occupied freeways, costing the bosses’ economy over \$25 million a day. This power to threaten the bosses’ profits emboldened more workers to occupy freeways. On the third day of the strike, the bosses and the union mafia fired on the workers, killing two.

Brazil’s economy is largely dependent on providing minerals and other natural resources to China. Due to the crisis of overproduction in China, its trade with Brazil is declining. The workers in Brazil are being forced to pay for this crisis. However, as witnessed by the massive demonstrations by the youth and the constant waves of wildcat strikes, the working class is in motion for change.

Last May and June, masses took to the streets, first demanding that a new fare increase not be implemented and then demanding free transportation for all. In Sao Paulo and Rio, youth opened the metro gates, as a mass tactic to let workers into the transit system free.

When youth massively organize to make transportation free for all and workers think of the bosses as garbage, we can see that they want a different society.

Our party has a huge opportunity to spread the seeds of revolutionary change in Brazil. Communism will bury the bosses and we will build a society based on the needs of the working class. *Red Flag* readers in Brazil need to take leadership and join ICWP, just like the workers in South Africa and in El Salvador. Our anger at the capitalist system which murdered Fabricio Alves in Brazil, massacred miners in South Africa, and murdered masses of Bangladeshi garment workers must be converted into building ICWP with renewed energy and determination.

DON'T BEG FOR JUSTICE, FIGHT FOR WORKERS' POWER

LOS ANGELES, February 26—On the second anniversary of the murder of Trayvon Martin, ICWP participated in a march against the racist murder of black youth. We distributed the following leaflet linking Trayvon Martin’s murder to that of Jordan Davis. Two years ago, Davis was in a car with three friends outside a convenience store in Jacksonville, Florida when Michael Dunn parked and yelled at the youth to turn down their music. When they turned it down and then back up, Dunn shot his gun ten times at the youth and their car, murdering 17-year-old African American Jordan Davis at point blank range.

“This isn’t a black and white issue; it’s a subcultural thug issue” was the statement of Michel Dunn’s attorney after Dunn’s trial for the murder of black teenager Jordan Davis. After the “loud music” trial in Florida was finished Dunn was convicted of everything but the murder of Jordan Davis, leaving many people to question if justice was served. Last year’s Trayvon Martin trial was another case where a young man was gunned

down due to nothing more than the color of his skin. What do these racist attacks on working class children mean?

Under the capitalist system, racism and stereotyping of young black men as “more prone to violence” or “thugs” are some of many racist messages perpetuated in the media and instilled in the minds of people like George Zimmerman

and Michael Dunn. These issues go way deeper than Florida’s controversial stand-your-ground Law. Racism is a tool used to serve the needs of the bosses by making workers of one “race” and/or background think that they are superior to another.

Jordan Davis’ parents’ response to the verdict was “we do not accept a law that would allow collateral damage to our family.” Reducing the lives of black youth to collateral damage is doing the same thing that the US has been doing to children who die daily in wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

What people need to understand is that we will never have true justice until we abolish this system. We need a revolution that will do away with racism, wage slavery, police, and wannabes like Zimmerman or Dunn and the only way that can happen is by organizing Black, white, Latino, Asian and all our working-class brothers and sisters in the ICWP. Only after a communist revolution will children who have been killed from the Middle East to Florida and from Emmett Till to Jordan Davis, the latest victim of this capitalist system, have true justice.



U.C. Workers:**ONLY COMMUNISM, NOT TRADE UNIONISM, WILL ELIMINATE POVERTY**

“Victory! Service workers reach historic tentative agreement,” screams the headline on the web page of AFSCME local 3299. This is the result of 18 months of negotiations between the University of California system and the union representing 8,300 campus service workers.

The four-year agreement includes a 4.5% wage increase paid two months after ratification. For two years these workers had no pay raise and this first raise will not increase their take home pay because it will go to pay for pensions and retiree health care. Currently employees contribute 5 percent of their wages to such fund. The new contract raises it to 9.5 percent.

The agreement also calls for a 3 percent wage increase for 2014 through 2016 and a 2 percent step increase each of those years until employees reach their position’s top pay. Some might need one, two or three steps to get there. The ratification bribe was a \$200 bonus.

The union calls it a 20 percent wage hike. But, it is only 9% for those at top pay and 11%, 13%, and 15% for others, depending on what step they are at.

However, if we factor in the US official inflation rate of 2% and the unofficial one of at least 8%, we get a different picture:

With a 2% annual inflation, this “historic” wage increase is reduced to a meager 3% for those at top pay and 5%, 7%, and 9% for those with step increases. But, using the 8% unofficial inflation rate, which is much more real, it becomes a pay cut of 15% for those at top pay, and 13%, 11% and 9% cut for those with steps increases.

This is a far cry from what AFSCME 3299 President Kathryn Lybarger triumphantly hails as “a historic agreement with UC that will pull thousands of its full-time employees out of poverty.”

According to Lybarger, “99 percent of the UC service workers... (making an average salary of

\$36,000 per year) are income eligible for some form of public assistance.” If anything, the contract will inflate their salary (not their purchasing power), which will make them ineligible for public assistance, while increasing their taxes.

Although UC had last year record profits of hundreds of millions of dollars, the workers benefits “... will be paid for with revenue from auxiliary enterprises on UC campuses, including student housing, parking and food services,” said a UC spokeswoman.

This is a blatant attempt to divide these workers from the students and faculty, who will pay more for these services. But, workers’ parking and food will also go up.

Capitalism can’t give us a fair wage or dignity

Capitalism exists to make the bosses profits by paying us less than what we produce. Thus, no matter how much they pay us, we would still be exploited, and wage slaves subjected to the bosses’ racist disciplinary actions, suspensions and firings.

To keep us exploited, the capitalists pay us just a subsistence wage, barely enough to keep us alive so that we can continue to work and raise the next generation of wage slaves. Wages are the chains that bind us to the capitalists.

As their worldwide economic crisis deepens, the bosses worldwide are grinding tens of millions of workers into the most crushing poverty. However, the millions of our class brothers and sisters in open rebellion against these attacks show our potential to fight for a different world.

The alternative to the bosses’ wage slavery is Communism. In communism, we will all contribute with our brains and hands to collectively plan and build a world that meets our needs. Communism will not have bosses, wage slavery or money. We will all gladly lend a hand to produce what workers need, not for a pay check but because it will make all our lives better.

To achieve this, we need to join and help build a mass ICWP, and spread *Red Flag* to more workers, students, teachers, and soldiers so that they help mobilize the masses for communism.

**Impotency Of Trade Union Politics Visible Across the U.S.**

Volkswagen workers in Chattanooga, Tenn. rejected the United Auto Workers (UAW) last month, 712 to 626.

Volkswagen supported the union because the company wanted a joint company-union “workers” council in the plant. All other 105 Volkswagen plants around the world have them. It needed a union to establish this council according to U.S. law.

The UAW was more than willing to go along. The union campaign praised this council because it “would increase productivity” (i.e. speed-up and fewer jobs). With friends like these, who needs enemies?

Various politicians from Tennessee came out against unionization. Their scare tactics worked when they pointed to Detroit, blaming the union for the loss of jobs and wages there. The UAW hogtied the working class with concession after

concession, while at the same time, the capitalists decimated the city. Just like the IAM, when the crisis hit they sprang into action to save the bosses and their system.

Trade unionism has shown its true colors during this crisis of capitalism. Mobilizing the masses for communism has been pushed to the top of the agenda.

For a letter from a Boeing worker that we were unable to fit in this issue, see our website: www.icwpredflag.org.

**BOEING from page 1**

“Of course not,” answered our comrade. “We need communist political leadership on the shop floor and in the streets among the masses of workers. Our tactics must serve that purpose.”

“Look,” continued our friend. “Everywhere in the world people are revolting. It’s already come here a little bit. It will come to this country in a big way.”

“You’re right! Masses are revolting. The key question is: are they aimed at a real solution? Are they aiming at a communist revolution?”

“We can’t wait until the mass revolts to come here. We have to build the leadership and base to mobilize for communism now.”

He agreed to help lead our *Red Flag* study group. The aim is to help Boeing distributors answer the questions of their fellow workers.

These distributors are zeroing in on the details of building our movement. When they join ICWP we’ll be on our way to creating the industrial leadership we need.

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South Africa:

ORGANIZE POLITICAL STRIKES FOR COMMUNIST POWER

On the eve of the World War I, in South Africa as in the rest of the world, there was tremendous ferment among sections of the workers and oppressed. At the same time, the war highlighted, in South Africa like in Europe, the bankruptcy of bourgeois nationalism and labor reformism. There were rebellions among various sectors of the South African population on the eve of the war.

In 1913 there were uprisings and strikes of Indian workers across Kwazulu-Natal. They struck in the mines and cane fields, railways and shops. Mahatma Gandhi, who had been in South Africa since 1893, pleaded for passive resistance. Nevertheless, the cane workers clashed with the police and workers were beaten and killed. Gandhi made an agreement with the government during the Natal uprisings, and called off the struggle of Indian workers with few gains.

On the Rand, in 1913 and 1914, the white gold miners led general strikes and the government killed over 20 workers. In Cape Town, 600 “colored” (mixed-race) stevedores struck for an 8-hour day and wage increases. The misleaders of the workers and oppressed were busy lining up support for the first inter-imperialist war on the side of the British overlords of South Africa, where more than 200,000 workers, nearly half of them black, fought in World War I; and more than twelve thousand died for British imperialism.

Fight Reformism Today!

In South Africa, unfortunately the reformist trade unions for the past twenty years have been organizing strikes premised on maintaining capitalism. Cosatu, the biggest trade union federation has been instrumental in strangling genuine and militant strikes by workers. The Cosatu misleaders have subordinated workers through their tripartite alliance with the bourgeois nationalist ANC and the revisionist South African Communist Party (SACP).

Workers in South Africa are beginning to see these lies for what they are. We have seen these betrayals by unions resulting in workers losing jobs. A similar situation exists in another plant in Uitenhage, Volkswagen South Africa (VWSA) where a big number of workers (1300) lost their jobs in the year 2000. The union leaders sided with the bosses in crushing the strike. Recently, a massive militant strike by a teachers union, South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU), demanding better pay was crushed by Cosatu because they saw the strike as embarrassing to the ruling ANC party. The teachers union suspended the strike indefinitely, resulting in the disillusionment and divisions in the teachers union.

There are serious divisions in the trade union federation manifesting themselves in two main factions. One faction is led by the biggest affiliate Numsa (National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa). This faction is calling for Cosatu to break away from the tripartite alliance and those opposed to the move. Even within the affiliates themselves these divisions are apparent. The class collaborationist politics in S.A. advanced by the tripartite alliance are an attack on the workers and the poor.

The class collaborationist tendencies in most countries all over the world lead, more often than not, to the killings of the workers. These are typical examples of popular fronts. This happens when workers support a bourgeois political/movement; when the bourgeois party wins in the elections, it ditches workers. As a



governing party it comes up with policies that are anti-workers. In South Africa today we are witnessing class collaborationist betrayals by the bourgeois ANC. Workers organized in their trade-union federations have become vulnerable. Cosatu has been paralyzed, weakened to such an extent that it is unable to implement its own resolutions, programs and campaigns. It has become a toothless bulldog.

This class collaboration and reformist policies have opened workers' eyes to look for the only alternative offered by the International Communist Workers Party (ICWP). The path of ICWP to build political strikes for communist power and not for reform is catching the imagination of the workers here like wild fire. Slowly but surely we are building the foundation of communist revolution. The distribution of *Red Flag* in various ways, writing for the *Red Flag* and studying, translating *Mobilizing the Masses for Communism* are among the ways we are building the party. Forward to Communist Revolution.

VENEZUELA: STATE CAPITALISM CAN'T MEET WORKERS NEEDS! WE NEED COMMUNISM!

The recent confrontations between the police and anti-Chavista groups in Venezuela reveal a tense struggle for the control of oil between the US imperialists and their equally imperialist Chinese and Russian rivals. The existing contracts that the government and the richest man in Venezuela have with China have enraged the US imperialists. They have created constant chaos in every part of the world where the Russian and Chinese bosses have interests: Iraq, Libya, Sudan, Syria, Venezuela, the Ukraine.

In this vein, the anti-Chavista bosses' sector, supported by the US empire, has declared an economic war and organized student street protests against President Nicolas Maduro and his politics of 21st Century Socialism. The student protests in 2014 resulted in eighteen deaths and many arrests, including that of opposition leader Leopoldo López, accused of inciting the violence. The lack of products such as milk, chicken and toilet paper is due to a boycott by the bosses who refuse to import these products as a way of putting pressure on the government.

On the other side, President Maduro rests securely on a base of enormous popularity among the poorest masses, the great majority, who have received a few more crumbs

from the bonanza of enormous oil profits. At the same time, up to this point, he has also been able to count on the total support of the army, which has received and controls a large part of these oil profits. According to Joshua Goodman of the Associated Press, “Maduro has placed more than 300 uniformed or retired officials in political positions, including one fourth of the cabinet....He has also increased soldiers' pay considerably.”

The Chavista leaders represent the current government of Maduro. This government is using the socialist idea that state control of the economy, according to them, allows them to control the prices of products and thus avoid a higher level of inflation. But in 2013, inflation reached 54%. That year, they sent soldiers to control the stores of the domestic electronic company Daka. They organized workers to participate in an auction of confiscated merchandise, but the thousands of people stormed the store in Valencia (in the center of the country), and looted the store. Among the looters were soldiers and police.

The Chavista government is a caricature of state capitalism. It has to ask permission to try to control the prices of the strongest business sectors, such as food, textile, shoes, toys and cars. This group of businessmen

are the ones that control part of the country, and they demand that private property in the means of production and exploitation be respected.

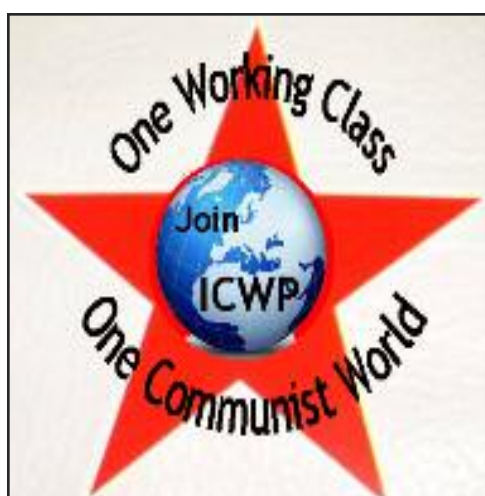
This internal rivalry is a reflection of the rivalry between the imperialists on a worldwide level. The government, faced with the possibility of having problems with the US market, which it accuses of being the instigators of a possible coup d'état, is seeking the support of UNASUR, the Union of South American Nations.

Destroy the profit system.

The working class shouldn't follow liberal leaders who promote the illusion that capitalism can be improved, giving us a few crumbs of the great wealth that a few people enjoy, nor to opposition politicians who are open defenders of exploitation.

There's no solution to controlling prices. To eliminate poverty, there's only communist revolution.

In a communist society, there won't be prices; we will eliminate everything that has to do with any form of monetary interchange. There won't be banks, money, stock exchanges, big or small businesses. Everything produced by the workers will be for the benefit of the workers. Production and distribution will be organized by the workers. If we need houses, we'll make more houses; if we need more rice or beans we'll concentrate on sowing these crops. Power will be in the hands of all, not only in the hands of a small group who makes the decisions about our lives. Join ICWP.



Politics and Math Education – Part 1

DON'T COUNT ON CAPITALISM

“Rocky invests \$50,000 in bonds and stocks...”
 “A piggy bank contains dimes and quarters...”
 “How much will a \$3000 TV cost if you get a 15% discount?”

Such typical math problems are supposedly “relevant” but they are only relevant (and class-biased!) in today’s capitalist world. What young people really need to learn is to fight for a world without money – a communist world of sharing.

Some teachers make up problems using real-world data to expose how vicious capitalism is:

“The CEO of Yum Brands gets \$3,280,352 per year. A Pizza Hut worker gets \$7.50 per hour and works 25 hours per week. Find the ratio of the CEO’s pay to that of the worker.”

More profound math problems can explore racism, rates of exploitation, and more.

Such problems can open up discussions and help identify students who are most open to communist ideas. However, students know that this is not the “real” curriculum because political questions are not on the test. And what else is supposed to matter in school?

“Why do I need to learn this?”

Some aspects of mathematics (proportional reasoning, formulas) are actually used on the job or in daily activities like cooking or sports. Most school math isn’t.

Math teachers often say that studying mathematics develops critical thinking, logical reasoning and the ability to work with abstractions. It can and should, but not as it’s usually taught.

Most math textbooks are organ-

ized into chapters and sections, each with a list of “objectives.” Each subsection mainly consists of “step by step” worked examples and boxes with “rules.” Long pages of exercises are variations on the examples. If any mathematical system, logic, or purpose connects these isolated topics into a coherent whole, it’s a closely-guarded secret.

Students are supposed to learn “the steps” for each type of problem. Sometimes they lose “credit” if their work and answer are mathematically correct but don’t follow “the steps.” Thus mathematical reasoning is discouraged. The true lesson is to follow instructions.

This isn’t how math is taught to the children of the ruling-class!

Working-class students “need to learn this” in preparation for routine jobs where they’ll be shown how to do a task, and then do that task over and over again, whether operating a machine, flipping burgers, or filing papers. The boss “thinks,” the worker follows instructions.

Workers are only supposed to think “critically” about how to do the job the boss gives them.

Likewise, math students are only supposed to think “critically” about what set of “steps” to use for problems posed by the book or the teacher.

Math education in capitalist schools trains us for the capitalist workplace. It reinforces the idea that we should let a few people decide what we must do, even when they’re deciding how best to exploit us for their own profits.

“What is it used for?”

A community college Algebra teacher asked groups of students to make up questions (not necessarily mathematical questions) using information given in story problems. Some asked factual questions like the ones they’ve often seen, where the answer could be underlined in the given information. But others rose to the occasion.

For example, one problem described a chemist mixing a weak acid solution with a stronger solution to get a medium-strength solution. “Is it safe to mix them?” one asked. “What is she going to use it for?” wondered another.

Our communist party ICWP needs thousands and millions of workers, young and old, who think about what’s safe and what’s useful for our international working class. Who can analyze the quantitative as well as qualitative aspects of things. Who can learn and teach and develop the theory and practice of communism.

They won’t learn all this in capitalist classrooms, even those few with communist teachers. It must take place as we mobilize for communism in the class struggle now and in the classless society of the future.



LETTERS

You’re never too young to learn about communism

During a conversation among a group of MTA mechanics, one worker was complaining that his children didn’t appreciate the luxury which, according to him, they enjoyed. “They eat three or more times a day and have the privilege of choosing their clothes and sleeping in five hundred dollar beds,” and he went on listing the luxuries and privileges which, in his opinion, his kids had and didn’t appreciate.

Then he continued, “I, on the other hand, went hungry. I was the youngest of six siblings in a very poor family. When things went well, we ate once a day, and what we ate was bean soup in which the beans were notable for their absence. With the soup there were one or two tortillas which we had to wait in line for, because a cooked—or half cooked—tortilla had no opportunity to see the light of day before it was devoured by an army of hungry and ragged children of the free world. After dinner was pure torture; my poor mother gave us a little piece of raw sugar and told us to sleep on our stomachs, so we wouldn’t feel hungry. We slept on the floor. Times were hard,” he concluded.

This is a brief version of what millions of immigrants have lived through, better and worse cases, since thousands and thousands don’t survive and die of poverty. But what’s even worse is that there are still millions of families who are struggling in poverty and instead of living, die every day clutching their stomachs to survive and continue an indefinite torture.

This is democracy and the free world that the bourgeoisie preaches about so much as the best of all systems. How many hopeful voices

LETTERS

LETTERS

are raised asking for changes, and the bosses’ class responds with jail, torture and bullets. How much longer will we let this circus continue, where the big thieves, torturers and murderers are respected persons and the workers, those who grow the basic food, build the houses, make the clothes, are considered to be nothing?

It may be true that some of our children have had access to things that everybody should have. But that doesn’t imply that they’re immune, they and their children, to a life of poverty and imperialist wars in the future, especially these days, when the economic and political world crisis is sharpening.

The lesson is obvious. It’s not about teaching our kids to be thankful or to value and appreciate what they have, but to teach them communist ideas so they come to the conclusion of the important necessity of joining ICWP to build a new communist society. In this society the workers will be all, and the bosses will be only a bad and sad memory of the past.

Various comrades who talked about this agreed, that it is never too young to be a communist and to begin the process of becoming a fighter and revolutionary fighter. The comrades agreed to distribute more Red Flags and struggle with their family members to read our literature and make future plans to involve their spouses and children in political-social activities. Quantitative changes become qualitative changes.

--For a communist world

MTA Union Buffoons and Traitors

Victor Baffoni “The Buffoon”, James Williams and his gang of union officials together with MTA

CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

management deprived the membership of legal alternatives and benefits. Some of you might remember the LC233 fiasco.

For those who don’t have an idea how this came to be: in 2000, bill LC233 was passed, as we know it. The bill stated that operators could use up to half of their sick time to take care of an ill family member. For many years this information was kept secret from the members.

In 2006, an operator found out and asked the above-mentioned union officials to make the membership aware of it. They refused! Seeing the disregard of our leaders, the member disclosed the information himself. If you ever used LC233, it is not thanks to all the current members of the General Committee.

These are the same people that are about to negotiate our new contract. They are all career union hacks whose motivation is only to stay off the seat.

Funny things you may say. For the last few years, the Buffoon has been telling us that our strike fund was only \$600.00 a month. The new UTU constitution still says it is \$1,200.00. This part of the constitution was re-written before The Buffoon and Williams wrote their lovely letter claiming they “pressed the SMART International for a decision on the matter.”

The fact is that the Buffoon and Williams had originally called the International and tried to get an approval for a new interpretation of the constitution to read that it only approves \$600.00 for our strike fund and were denied.

Recently they sent us a letter telling us how “hard” they had to worked to insure that our strike fund is going to be \$1200.00 a month.

--MTA driver

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Organizing for May Day; Taking the Past into the Future

Greetings. I come again from El Salvador to share a feeling with you. The last Sunday of last month we met in the home of a comrade of ICWP. In this meeting were men and women workers from workplaces in the city, young students, farmworkers, and men and women workers from the maquilas. We shared positions and approaches about the international political situation and prepared for May Day, International Workers' Day. At the end of the event, thanks to a comrade, between laughter and conversation, we had lunch.

But beyond that, I spent a moment observing and listening to this laughter and these talks. I stopped to understand the moment. The struggle will not end until the communist revolution is won through our International Communist Workers' Party. That's the only way to stop hunger, poverty, slavery, oppression, imperialist wars for power and money—the only way to kill capitalism.

Clearly it's not easy and it won't be, but observing the comrades full of conviction, I know and feel that we are continuously bringing the future closer to the present. We live in difficult times, with traitors who now shout, "For those fallen in the struggle, we will win." Maybe they think they will do that with capitalist reforms. And yes, I say traitors, because they betrayed history, humanity, the future. They betrayed their ideals and sold their ideals and convictions. Now they accompany capitalism, sowing death, throwing rocks and hiding their hands.

But we will not forget these names; they will not forget our names, our struggle, our newspaper **Red Flag**, the workers' struggle. We are not taking the easy road, or agreeing to play with these rules of the game. We are not for "transforming" anything; we are for changing everything. Our struggle will always be in force; our struggle is infinite. We will continue fighting, wherever it is necessary; we continue and will continue fighting.

All those who are missing, the brothers and

sisters, the fathers and mothers, the sons and daughters, the husbands and wives, all the men and all the women are not really gone. In this meeting, I met them as they walked around with every one of us, with you and with me. I observed them in the gleam in people's eyes, in every desperate shout of comrades' mouths. They walk with us, in every step of every struggle, in every fist, in every flag waving in the sky. They walk in the ruins and the flames, between life and death every day. They are in every old and new battle. Let's go all together toward the future, toward communism.

Comrades...human dignity is a duty. We must organize ourselves, mobilize ourselves and fight against capitalism. We are no longer a ghost; we were present and we are still present. The comrades are not gone; they go with us hand in hand and that makes our fist stronger.

We only have one road...onward to victory!
--Red Poet

Building a Red Army

Daniel and Joseph, 18 and 17 years old, are two young men who will enter the army soon. Both are open to the idea of organizing within the military to push communist revolution forward. Before entering they are both committed to be prepared physically and ideologically. They agreed to get together on a regular basis.

Last week the two met in a restaurant with members of ICWP. In the meeting questions were asked about the army, communism and revolution. The two young men were asked to write about the meeting.

Daniel wrote:

I am a young man that will enter the army soon. Last week I had the opportunity to meet with Marcos, an Army veteran and Carlos, a young man from El Salvador, both members of ICWP. They talked about communism. There were things I did not understand until I heard what Marcos and Carlos had to say. I asked them questions and they spoke very confidently about communism.

When people hear of communism, they hear bad things about it; therefore they do not support it. Who will support what appears to be bad? People like Marcos and Carlos who know about communism help others understand that communism would be better for humanity. What people need to hear about communism are good things, the truth, and that would be better. People do not know that if they come together and fight for something you really want it will be fulfilled. Many are suffering right now because they do not know that there is something that can help them live a better life.

Joseph wrote:

At the meeting at the restaurant, we discussed communism and revolution. There were doubts in my mind that were clarified, like when do we form the organization and when do we make the move? They said the move would begin when more party organization exists in each factory and in each barrack. And when the government sends us to war we will rise against them.

I also asked, what would happen if after the revolution other countries want to invade us? They replied saying that we have history to learn from like the Soviet revolution in Russia. After the revolution fourteen invading capitalist

armies tried to destroy it but failed. The Russian working class heroically defended their revolution and repelled the invading forces.

*I think that through the use of **Red Flag** we can be more connected and learn more about communism. I thank Carlos and Marcos for bringing all of this information to a seventeen year old who will soon be part of the army.*

--Inspired comrade

"Why Communism?," asked my mom.

I am a young girl who is interested in communism.

I was invited to a youth study group where you can talk about communism. As we talked, I was asked how I felt about it. I responded that I honestly feel like communism is the right way to go. It's the true meaning of freedom and equality. I have decided to call myself a communist, and I believe that one day the working class will have what we have always wanted. Before the meeting I told my mom about it. She asked, "Why communism? Why are you interested?"

My reasons are many. I have seen how much the working class has suffered. I want justice, I told her. My mother was surprised about it but liked the idea. To my surprise my mom's dad was a communist and so was her mom. My mom told me that maybe that's why I also have my mind set like that. It's wonderful to know that someone in your family thinks or wants the same thing.

By the end of our conversation she asked me, "How is everything going to work without money?"

My response was, "We won't need that anymore, no more wages for our labor. In other words, we will not be making things that we can't even use or buy. We want to make things for ourselves, not for the rich. We will be working to make what we need!"

My mom was proud of how I was thinking. She told me that her parents never forced her to become a communist. But as we talked, she said that I might just change her mind.

--Proud to be a communist

Reform, Citizenship, or Revolution

In what country do they live better?

During the farmworkers' strike in the 1970's in California that lasted for five years, while the striking workers fought in the fields against scabs and bosses, the pacifist leader César Chávez was going around behind the politicians asking them to do him the favor of supporting the cause. That is how he spent his time and the strike did not win. This led

to strikers becoming annoyed and tired of following the pacifist and defeatist politics of Chávez; they began to commit acts against the growers' property and against the scabs. Chávez hypocritically denounced these acts publicly as vandalism, but in private he was glad that they happened.

Three years after winning the strike, we had practically lost what we had won in five years of striking, and the bosses recovered what they had lost in concessions to the workers in the contracts. That is how reforms are under capitalism.

There is a saying, "From the frying pan into the fire." Millions of people go from one country to another looking for a better life than the one in their country of origin, which is unbearable.

For example, many working people continually come to the United States, some "illegally" and others "legally" supposedly to become citizens. But ironically thousands and thousands who became citizens are leaving the US daily. After it cost them so much to become citizens, they are going back to their countries of origin.

One of the reasons for this, according to Channel 39 newscast on Feb. 18, 2014, is high taxes and the high cost of everything. That is life under capitalism in any country.

However, if any conscious worker has an alternative to all this, other than the struggle for communism, he or she should take advantage of it. For my part, we can only put an end to this social disorder through revolution for communism and the death of capitalism.

--Farmworker member of ICWP



COMMUNIST AND CAPITALIST CULTURE

To join study groups that will be discussing this topic contact us



This story is set in the year 2159. The natural resources of the earth are about to run out, so society lives in extreme poverty, in overpopulated cities around factories where they build the police robots that the system uses to rule the society. The working conditions in that factory are similar to the working conditions of the people in the maquilas today, conditions of slavery and abuse.

Because of these conditions on Earth, the bourgeoisie decides to emigrate to a space station, Elysium, where there is an artificial environment, with trees, green fields, clean air and water. There are also chambers where people can be cured of every illness, but they must be detected by a special tattoo as being a citizen of Elysium.

In spite of the technological advances in medicine, the people on Earth don't have these chambers; they are only for citizens of Elysium. People on Earth pay large sums of money to go to Elysium as undocumented to seek a cure for their children, but Elysium doesn't let undocumented people in, and when ships try to enter the station, they blow them up.

One day, a worker in a factory, whose childhood dream was to live in Elysium, had an accident and received a dose of radiation. His supervisor could have prevented the accident, but the boss said not to because it would hurt production. Things like this happen every day in factories; production is more important than human life.

After he suffered the radiation, the doctor at the factory, who was a robot, said he had five days to live, and gave him some pills to alleviate the symptoms. He decided to seek a cure on Elysium.

The worker met up with the people who sent undocumented people to Elysium with special citizen tattoos, but since he didn't have the money, they required that he get them some special information in return. The worker accepted and they equipped him very well for the mission, some other men went with him, and he tried to get the information that was in the brain of another man who was the boss of the same factory.

The worker and his companions ambush the boss on the way to Elysium, and after a fight in which some of his friends and the boss die, the worker gets the information transferred to his brain.

The group which was sending the undocumented people to Elysium realized that the information in the worker's brain would reboot the system that controlled the station, allowing all the people on earth to be seen as citizens and have their diseases cured. They wouldn't take the information out of the brain of the worker and he decides to go on his own to get cured, and the others, seeing that the information that he carried in his brain was very important, decided to go with him.

Television Review:



The reality show "Cops" has been on TV for over 25 years. It profiles police on patrol in poor, high-crime neighborhoods where the only jobs in a community are drug sales, prostitution, or organized crime. They describe their experiences growing up in areas similar to those they patrol and talk about how they joined the force to "clean up the streets." Every episode starts with police responding to a disturbance at a home, which ends in arrest for the "bad guys," usually poor and/or minorities.

The bosses create shows like these to try to fool workers into believing that police are heroes and that we need them to maintain order in society. The police aren't our heroes. They serve to protect the ruling class. That the "bad guys" are depicted as deviant only takes us further away from the real questions. What type of system leads people to steal, sell and abuse drugs, join gangs, and resort to prostitution?

The answer is capitalism, and exploiting people's lives for entertainment is disgusting. All crimes known today are products of the pressure felt to survive under capitalism. In a communist society, we won't need cops because most crimes will vanish when we destroy capitalism. We will work together to solve our problems and support one another. The ICWP is the only law enforcement we'll need.

They arrived at the space station, and after a big fight and the death of the worker, they were finally able to reboot the space station. When the system was rebooted, it identified everyone on earth as a citizen, and sent thousands of curing chambers to Earth to cure millions of sick citizens.

This movie reflects what happens in this system. The bourgeoisie is living in the best conditions that money can buy, and although the proletariat is the class that generates the wealth for the bourgeoisie in the factories where they are exploited daily and where production is more important than human life. The workers are the ones who live worse.

But the task of the workers, when we understand the system, is to open the eyes of the other workers. This will not be achieved by a movie hero with special information in his brain. It will be achieved distributing **Red Flag** to the workers, and organizing ourselves, because the power of the proletariat is greater than that of the bourgeoisie. Together we are an indomitable force capable of building a communist system, where we can get health-care. We won't need money, simply we'll get medical care because we are humans.

Red Flag as an Example of Creating a True Workers' Newspaper

This article is part of a series the Page 16 Collective is writing in response to what Lenin outlines as the role of the party newspaper in *What is to be Done?*. He saw it as a tool to motivate, agitate, and unite our class. He argues that it is the best way to train workers [to take power]. To do this, we must create what he called a "militant preparedness." He continued by describing the paper's need to be ready at any time to support, and link, every worker-led action, with the aim of uniting the masses to build a fighting force necessary for decisive struggle.

To do this, we are required to do more than report on capitalism's crimes and expose inter-class antagonism and contradictions. This alone will lead some to an anti-capitalist outlook. However, we must guide this perspective toward communism and train the masses to understand our historical role; to shape our communist future. The ICWP endeavors to make **Red Flag** the paper of the international working class. As such, we have never limited ourselves to mere reporting. We have worked tirelessly to make **Red Flag** what we envision as, and what Lenin describes as, not a paper directed at workers, but a **workers' paper**. Our paper is written, financially supported, distributed, and read by workers.

We must ensure that our party and newspaper serve as examples of how we want a communist society to function. Therefore, we are obligated to use **Red Flag** to openly share and discuss our thoughts and views on issues of practical and theoretical importance. For Lenin, "the workers' newspaper is a workers' forum." We must continuously encourage comradely debate and criticism. This aids our collective and individual political development and helps us "stay on the same page," not only with members, but with all workers' struggles. We do this by sharing our experiences, challenges, and victories, in mobilizing the masses for communism. This, coupled with serious dialectical analysis, helps us further develop our political line and collectively determine and plan the next steps in our fight. Join us!



But the task isn't easy. There will be confrontations because the bourgeoisie is not going to give up the benefits that get them money that they accumulate thanks to the exploitation that we are subjected to day by day in the factories. We have to be aware that the road to this society that we dream of is not easy, but it's not impossible.