

RED FLAG

MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM

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

Los Angeles

MAY DAY 2015



South Africa

ICWP
El Salvador

South Africa

INDUSTRIAL WORKERS MEET TO DISCUSS COMMUNISM

SOUTH AFRICA—We are happy to report that ICWP is getting active on several different fronts here. The workers from Reclam, a metal recycling firm, some of whom are *Red Flag* readers, requested a meeting around the ideas of discussing communism and how we can win more workers to revolutionary communist ideas. This was the result of patiently distributing *Red Flag* to the workers inside the factory.

We also struggled with comrades to distribute *Red Flag* among the auto factory workers. One of the comrades went to the largest VW plant in Africa. The comrade described that the workers at VW and Goodyear plants are very interested in communism. As the comrade was distributing RF, several workers requested him to come back the following week so he could talk to more workers of VW. These workers promised to organize their coworkers so the comrade can have a large meeting with the workers interested in ICWP and *Red Flag*.

Another young comrade described an interesting experience he had riding in a taxi (a van for transporting workers). He was holding a copy of *Red Flag* and the passenger sitting next to him saw the front page. This passenger was very excited when he read *Mobilize the Masses for Communism*. "This is exactly what we need," said the passenger. As it turned out the passenger is a young college student. The comrade gave him a copy of *Red Flag* and exchanged phone numbers. This young student did come to the next club meeting and we had a meeting around dialectical materialism.

A recent meeting was attended by the comrade who distributed *Red Flag* at the industrial locations who came with a very bright young worker and a comrade who is not very active but very passionate about communism. The presence of the young comrade and a very encouraging voice message from a comrade in the US motivated us to do more. The inactive comrade has

See SOUTH AFRICA, page 4

El Salvador May Day:

ADVANCING IN THE FACTORIES

EL SALVADOR—In a meeting to evaluate the May Day March, a worker said, "I read *Red Flag* all the way through because I am interested in knowing the Party's ideology fully." This was the first time this worker had participated in a meeting. He was also in the May Day March with the workers' collective of the International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP) in this country.

He added, "I had always attended the workers' marches but had never participated organizationally as a member of a contingent, until this year when the comrades of ICWP contacted me and invited me to march with the Party, and I did so. I hope to continue coming to the marches and meetings."

Another worker said, "This year we felt more represented as a Party, in quality and quantity. In addition to the literature, we brought banners, megaphones, and prepared chants. We are improving every year."

Likewise each and every partici-

pant in the meeting explained whether they read all the articles in *Red Flag*, or if they read only the articles they consider more important or which reflect struggles in the factories in other parts of the world.

Men and women workers from two factories attended the meeting this weekend to evaluate the activities in which they participated as organizers of the ICWP here. "We have advanced more than what I myself thought we could," stated a worker leader. "To see this number of participants who have come to the meeting, I think that we are on the correct road," he concluded.

Part of the meeting consisted of analyzing the newspaper editorial. Each person read a paragraph. At the end of the reading we analyzed how we must confront the bosses' system, and talked about when and how to build ICWP where there are struggles in favor of the working class. You could feel the enthusiasm. It put in bold relief that the organized struggle to build a communist system through the

See EL SALVADOR, page 4

**EXTREME
WEATHER:
EXTREME
SOLUTION
PAGE 2**

**LESSONS OF
JANITORS'
STRUGGLE
PAGE 3**

**FIFA SCANDAL:
KICK ALL THE
BOSSES OUT
PAGE 4**

**COMMUNISM
WILL END
PRIVATE
PROPERTY &
UNEMPLOYMENT
PAGE 5**

Climate Extremes Point to Extreme Solution

MASSES MOBILIZED FOR COMMUNISM WILL DEFEAT DROUGHT, FEAR AND EXPLOITATION

“Is the California drought real?” asked a *Red Flag* reader. “My daughter says we’re all going to become refugees like the 1930s Dust Bowl refugees.”

The capitalists lie so much that it’s hard to believe anything they tell us. But there really is a drought. If anything, it’s more serious than we’re being told.

The mountain snow packs were at about 10% of the old normal in 2009 when the current drought began. Now they are close to 0%. California’s main source of surface water has run dry.

More underground water, therefore, is pumped from the aquifers. But when aquifers are emptied, they collapse. Even an end to the drought won’t refill them.

Incredibly, California has not stopped Nestle and Starbucks from mining this water. They bottle and sell in places that are not affected by drought!

The anarchy and insanity of capitalist production know no bounds. Capitalists’ needs to maximize profits are called “rights” and protected by law and armed force. Workers’ needs – like a steady supply of clean water – are not.

Technical solutions to social problems are only developed and used if they are profitable – or if they are in the “national” (imperialists’) interest.

Communism, and only communism, can meet the needs of the masses. The world we fight to win has been severely damaged by centuries of capitalism’s institutional greed and imperialist war. We will build a new world by

unleashing the creativity and collectivity of the working class to surmount every obstacle.

In a recent study group, four people – none engineers! – tossed around ideas for using solar energy to power desalinization plants. Then a comrade said, “In communism we would mobilize mass meetings where workers could come up with many more ideas to manage drought or other problems. And then they would try them out in practice.”

And if an area becomes truly uninhabitable (due to drought, rising oceans or nuclear war) communism will help everyone resettle. They will be welcomed and their talents put to good use. Relocation wouldn’t be a social disaster like the 1930s Dust Bowl refugees in the US or the drought refugees in east Africa in 2011.

“Climate change should be called climate deregulation,” commented a friend. “Nature developed a lot of mechanisms to stabilize climate, like coastal rain forests, and capitalism is killing them all off.”

The effects go beyond “warming.” We’re also seeing more extreme weather events, like recent torrential rains in Texas and the heat wave that killed thousands in impoverished villages across India.

Capitalism can’t handle the consequences. Some Gulf States and Israel are “solving” water problems with energy-intensive desalinization plants. But Palestinians in the West Bank don’t get the water they need, and over 90% of the water in occupied Gaza is contaminated.

The California governor is asking Californians to “pull together and save water.” But super-exploited gardeners who tend luxuriously landscaped Beverly Hills man-

sions are not highly motivated to take shorter showers when they arrive home in South-Central LA.

Four elite economists and psychologists explained (*New York Times*, 5/15/15) that traditional capitalist motivators – “changing the material cost” – won’t work to change people’s behavior.

What works, they say, is “leveraging social concerns.” But according to them, that means appealing to personal pride: wanting others to admire you or fearing public shaming. Capitalist economics and psychology, rooted in capitalist social relations of production, are mired in individualism.

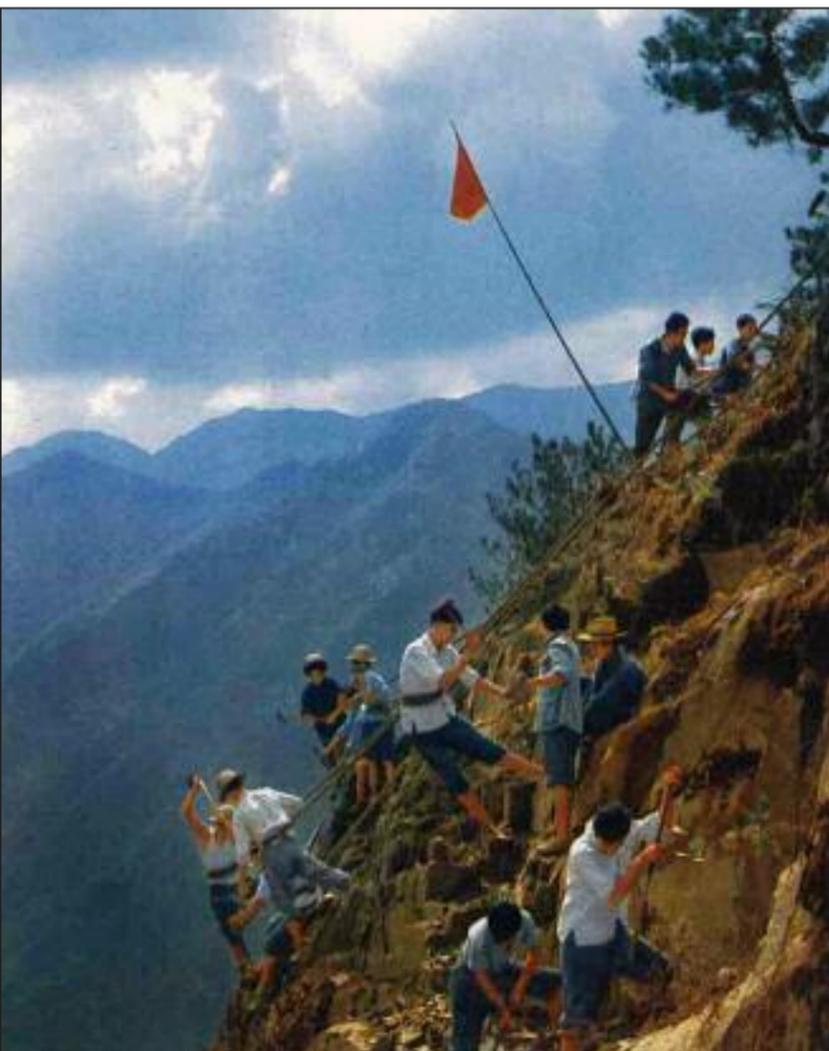
Communist social relations are the opposite. “We will create community, solidarity, feelings of identity among people,” said a friend who thinks about this a lot.

Communism does not separate “academic experts” from workers. It does not separate our understanding of production (economics) from our understanding of the producers (psychology). Communist political economy does not separate production from power.

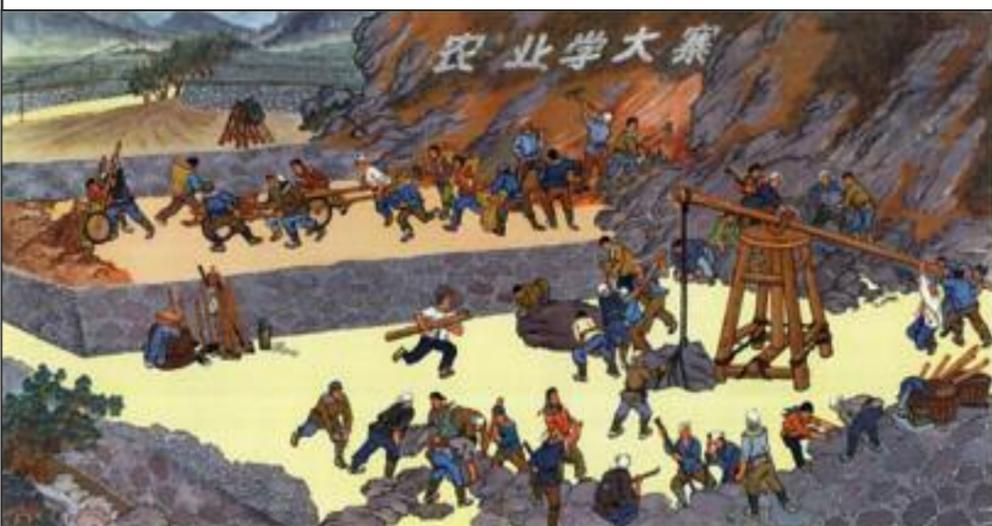
Communism is rooted in collectivity. On a very deep level, this is what it means to be fully human.

Neuroscience has begun to identify feedback loops in the brain in which social behaviors (mothering a child, acting in solidarity) stimulate pleasure circuits. That, in turn, generates cravings to engage in more social behavior. “Capitalism is built on destroying that, making us think and act selfishly or from fear,” explained the same friend.

Communism is built on “thinking for yourself but acting for others” and not out of fear. If this is how you want to live and who you want to be, join the International Communist Workers’ Party!



Farmworkers in arid mountain regions of China fought drought in the 1960s and 1970s by reclaiming land, terracing mountains, and constructing irrigation systems. This 1974 poster (below) shows masses mobilizing to “struggle against crooked valleys and rivers.” The photograph (to the left) shows workers “learning from Dazhai” under a red flag. In the model village of Dazhai, unschooled rural communists figured out how to build dams, reservoirs and aqueducts. They were later attacked by leaders of the Chinese “Communist” Party for their efforts to live according to the communist principle, “from each according to ability – to each according to need.”



JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST WORKERS' PARTY (ICWP)
WWW.ICWPREDFLAG.ORG — (310) 487-7674
E-MAIL: ICWP@ANONYMOUSSPEECH.COM
WRITE TO: P.M.B. 362
3006 S. VERMONT AVE., LOS ANGELES, CA
90007, USA

Trade Unionism is a Dead-End Street

JANITORS MUST MOBILIZE FOR COMMUNISM

LOS ANGELES--“Good morning! How are you, Juan? How was the May Day March? Did the union mobilize a lot of workers?” asked the *Red Flag* comrade.

“No! The union did not organize people. The union leaders are traitors,” answered the janitor.

“I agree,” said the comrade. “They want to bury the revolutionary spirit of May Day. Next year it falls on Sunday and we will organize a communist May Day. We would like hundreds of janitors to march with us under the red flags of communism. We would like you to help.”

“Next year we will be fighting for a new contract.”

“Great! We could distribute thousands of our newspapers during your demonstrations and invite the workers to march with us.”

“June 15 is celebrated in the US as Justice for Janitors Day. We’ll start our campaign for a new contract with a mass march on that day.”

“That’s a good opportunity to start writing more in *Red Flag* about your struggle. Why don’t we meet to write an article?”

“That would be good; it can be at my house. I



want the new janitors to know the history of our struggles.”

This is what this worker wants the janitors to know:

Justice for Janitors Day was born in Los Angeles on June 15, 1990 when the police savagely attacked a peaceful demonstration, torturing and seriously injuring several workers, and causing several pregnant workers to have miscarriages. At least two workers died afterwards from their injuries.

It seems that this year the union will celebrate it on June 18th, not the 15th. Possibly that’s because they want to bury the memory of the workers who sacrificed so much to build the union. This wasn’t easy due to the betrayal that the same union leaders had carried out against the workers.

In 1983, janitors made \$7 an hour with medical insurance for the whole family. By 1986 the union representatives had helped cut the wages to \$4.25 an hour without any medical insurance. They came to the buildings saying that the bosses couldn’t pay more.

They did this to keep members who would continue to pay dues because the companies were getting rid of the union and hiring non-union workers for this wage.

In spite of this, a group of janitors, mainly from Mexico and Central America, saw the unionization of the industry as the solution to their problems. They began the arduous task of convincing workers to join the struggle for unionization.

After the police attack of June 15 on some 400 strikers, they won their first contract and about 6000 new janitors joined the union. Today they have about 22,000 members in the Los Angeles area and 225,000 in 30 cities in the US and Canada.

“But in the process we created a monster,” lamented the janitor. “We activists who were responsible for organizing the people wanted a voice and vote in the union decisions. We participated in the union elections and won all the po-

sitions, except the presidency. The international union leadership intervened and put the union in receivership, preventing us from taking our positions. They imposed a new president and his lackeys. Things have gone from bad to worse. Today we pay the union to defend the company,” concluded the janitor angrily.

This is what we communists want the janitors and all workers to know:

The union struggle is a dead-end street for the working class. It can never end exploitation. Only communist revolution can do that.

Trade unionism only administers the terms of our exploitation; it doesn’t eliminate it. Eliminating it requires ending wage slavery, ending our need to sell our labor power to the capitalists to survive.

For that we need to destroy capitalism, money and the market: nothing will be bought or sold. Our labor power will never again be a commodity that the capitalists buy as cheaply as possible and exploit to the maximum.

In a communist society we won’t need unions. There won’t be wages or benefits to negotiate. We will all contribute according to our commitment and capabilities and receive according to our needs, without sexism, racism or national borders to divide us.

Our goal is a communist world. Not only is it possible but we must and can achieve it. We make history, but not necessarily for ourselves. June 15, 1990 made history. But the benefits went to the capitalists and their union “leaders.”

These “leaders” now receive dues from 225,000 janitors which provide them fabulous salaries and luxurious life styles. The capitalists benefit from trade unionism that supports their electoral system, diverts us workers from communist revolution and traps us in reformism which keeps us enslaved.

The only way to make history for our class is by fighting for communism. We call on the janitors, and all workers, to join the International Communist Workers’ Party and the struggle to mobilize the masses for communism!

WE NEED THE POSITIVITY OF COMMUNISM, NOT THE NEGATIVITY OF REFORMISM

SEATTLE--Thousands of angry teachers across the state of Washington have been participating in staggered “walkouts,” rallies and marches this month. They are targeting the state legislature, which has failed to provide as many dollars to public schools as the state constitution requires. Plus, the legislature in Washington State determines public employees’ salaries, and they have not given teachers a cost of living increase in over 6 years. Voters overwhelmingly passed initiatives demanding teacher raises and money to lower class size. (Washington ranks 45th out of 50 in pupil-teacher ratio.) Yet the state refuses to carry out the law. This is real democracy in action!!

The bosses and their flunkies in the government will never be able to provide working class children with the education they need. Under capitalism, schools are like prisons where the children of the working class are sentenced to 12 years of mind-numbing propaganda and test taking.

When the working class takes power we will establish a different way of teaching/learning, using the ideas of communism. Children will not be segregated from the greater society. They will learn by participating, experimenting, and asking many questions! Everyone will be responsible for

the education of the next generation. Most likely, there will be dedicated skilled teachers who will be responsible for many parts of the child’s education. But they will be partnered with many others who have expertise in specific areas.

Also, students will not be separated into social groups according to their age or abilities. They will be encouraged to help others in the collective succeed, rather than strive for individual glory. Since communism will not have wages, or money at all, and everyone will receive what they need, the goal of education will not be the illusion of making a huge salary and buying an expensive car or home. People will train to provide services and useful production for the needs of the masses, not for the profits of the banks and corporations.

Finally, education/learning will be a lifetime pursuit. Not like capitalism, where you are given a specific amount of time to “learn,” then you have to pass a test. If you fail, you are discarded and punished.

It’s time for us to realize that capitalism has no answers for us. It is like a bad apple, rotten to the core. It cannot be saved. It has to be thrown away. We have to free ourselves from the negativity of reformism.

When we share the ideas of communism with other workers, we all move forward. They ask

us “What will education be like under communism?” Some of us are reading *The Road to Life* by Anton Makarenko. The stories in this book show how useful work can become the key educational tool. They are inspiring.

There are other examples. Readers should share their ideas and experiences in *Red Flag*. This is a very important area and many people are interested!



Read our pamphlet:
Communist Education for Classless Society
icwpredflag.org/EDU/EdPamE.pdf

FIFA Scandal

EVERYTHING CAPITALISM TOUCHES, IT DESTROYS!

“Look out for yourself!” That’s the mass line of capitalism. “We all need each other” is the communist motto. Those differences are often overlooked, but a big story like the FIFA scandal exposes them as night and day, and shows the need for a communist movement and **Red Flag**.

No matter what angle the capitalist media take, they write the masses out of the story. Read the press in Russia, Asia, Africa and parts of the Americas and Sepp Blatter, the head of FIFA, is a hero and a victim. Read the press in the US or Western Europe and he’s a demon.

Is it Personality or Media Rivalry?

Centering the discussion on Blatter’s personality downplays the titanic break that is shattering the world order and making world war inevitable. US imperialism is no longer on top. Look at the world’s most popular cultural event, the World Cup. The last two venues were in South Africa and Brazil. The next two are planned for Russia and Qatar. The sites reflect the growing influence of the BRICS (the up-and-coming imperialist powers) against the interests of US imperialism and its allies.

Centering the discussion on the inter-imperialist rivalry helps explain the US’s need for full-spectrum media coverage of the FIFA charges. The pressure from the mass movement against racist police murder, however, has forced their hand. The mass anger that has swept the US has

exposed the always false claims of the US to represent fair and just governance. Exposing the reality of its racist brutality, these demonstrations have not only weakened its influence among its allies but also damaged its ability to recruit youth to its Armed Forces.

Is it Media Manipulation?

The US desperately needs to restore its image as the defender of fair and just governance. It’s a hard sell. They can’t stop police terror or discipline the banks, but they’ll “root out” FIFA’s misconduct! Without a willing media it would be an impossible sell. **Red Flag** has a vital role to play, countering all this.

This story could also center on the fact that everything capitalism touches, it destroys. The “beautiful game” with few rules and hardly any special equipment invites people of all body sizes to play and excel. It emphasizes the reality that “we all need each other.” It builds community but it has also built capitalism.

Football (“soccer” in the U.S.) is the center of

a growing sports economy that accounts for 2% of global GDP. It has long ago attracted major capitalists like Coca-Cola who pay (bribe) FIFA \$30 million to secure the rights to promote their drinks in Asia, Africa and South America. It has also attracted smaller capitalists, like the drug cartels who make easy money fixing games—prey-

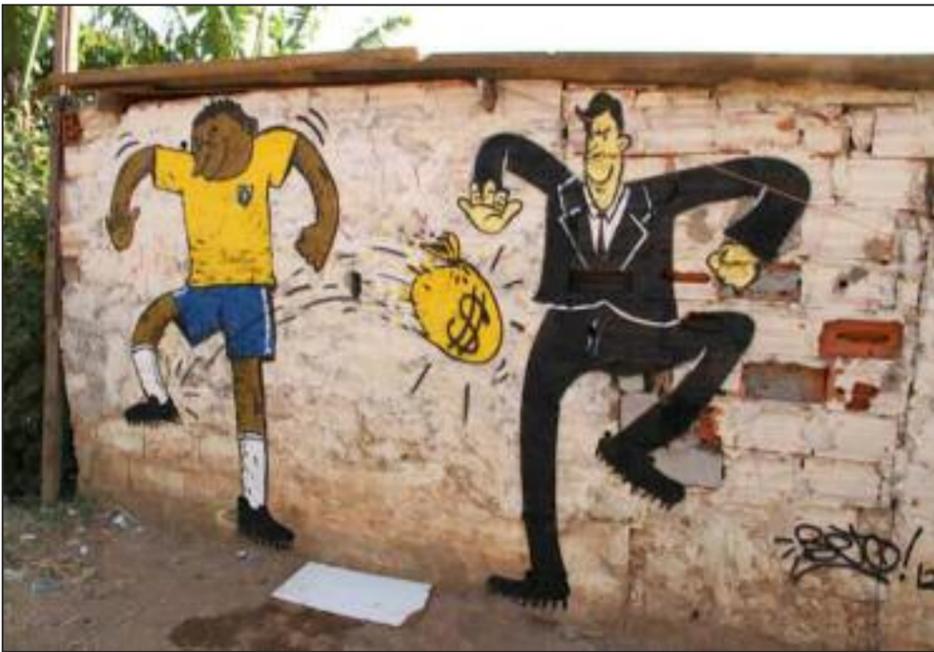
ing mostly on smaller teams in weaker leagues, like Eastern Europe, for example.

Or is it the Masses in Motion?

At the center of the FIFA scandal story is the mass activity of football fans. Most soccer fans are workers. It was the uprising of the Brazilian fans demanding hospitals, not football stadiums, that signaled trouble for Sepp Blatter and FIFA. In Turkey, Bestikas fans (who played a major role in the Gezi Park uprisings) face a government ban against political chants. In England fans protested against a mega TV deal with the chant: “They don’t care about football. They don’t care about fans. All they care about – **is money and brands!**”

The fans are in motion, but they shouldn’t be fighting for either side. African football associations’ defense of Blatter is an equally blatant attempt to confuse the masses in capitalist regimes which are increasing attacking the working class. Our role is to win fans—and all workers—to fight for communism—not to reform the beautiful game.

The mobilized fans who champion use values like hospitals in Brazil and parks in Turkey, and access to games over money and brands (in England) are a sign of political awakening. The US capitalists are responding to this, as well as their declining power in the world, by launching an ideological campaign to restore their image. Our answer is building **Red Flag** and the ICWP. We know it is a David and Goliath battle. We also know that David won!



SOUTH AFRICA

from page 1

now become very active as we seriously discussed dialectical materialism to identify internal weaknesses and how to overcome them.

We are struggling to focus so that we can be consistent. We have a wide base of workers who are **Red Flag** readers, but we have to guarantee that the same workers get the paper on a consistent basis. This requires more discipline, commitment and above all honest and collective struggle with each other to overcome our internal weaknesses. The results are very encouraging. We have a long ways to go but we are going in the right direction.

EL SALVADOR from page 1

ICWP is taking place in several parts of the world and that it is necessary and urgent to make this in favor of the working class struggle bigger and more determined.

“We need to know and understand the difference between reform and revolution,” a young party leader pointed out. The discussion of this point expanded and many spoke about their ex-



South Africa



El Salvador

periences in unions and electoral parties.

Another point, discussed above, was about **Red Flag**. How are we reading **Red Flag**? We discussed the urgency of increasing the distribution and how to politically help comrades and friends read and analyze the articles that we read. We discussed how to grasp that **Red Flag** must fulfill three functions: to inform, to agitate and to organize the working class.

At the end of the meeting, we invited the work-

ers who participated recently in the Party’s activities to join the International Communist Workers’ Party. Two women workers said that their experience showed them that the Party is like a family and that with no reservations because of reading **Red Flag**, they had joined the Party. Likewise a young worker musician was delegated to compose two songs for ICWP, a mission that he most gladly accepted.

Fight Against Evictions Shows:

NEED TO DESTROY SYSTEM OF PRIVATE PROPERTY

EL SALVADOR—The morning of June 3rd was no ordinary morning for the inhabitants of the community of El Espino, Antiguo Cuzcatlán. Hundreds of people confronted the police and the judge who tried to evict them from the community where they have lived for more than 80 years. They prevented the eviction for the moment, but the struggle continues.

The need for a roof over their heads or a place to build a home causes millions of people worldwide to occupy land that is “legally” not theirs. Excluded, invisible and mistreated for decades, these people live an experience which is one more example of how savage capitalism is. These culprits are the same ones who evict the workers in Spain, who take homes away from the workers in the United States, and who displace millions for their wars. The culprits are the capitalists.

At the end of 2014, a court ruled in favor of the millionaire Dueñas Family, ordering the eviction of hundreds of people. What is their intention? To build a new addition to a shopping center.

These damn bosses couldn’t care less about the lives and dignity of these men and women workers. We cannot have hope in the judges or in “justice”: they respond to the interests of the capitalist

class.

The struggle for communism will eliminate production for profits and private property. Homes will be a priority for the whole working class. We will work collectively for the needs of all. The Dueñas and all the capitalists will be things of the past.

This morning, the residents of the community blocked access to the houses. The judge, with his role as a rat in the service of the bosses, gave an ultimatum and said that they had an hour to leave or he would use the police force.

No one moved. On the contrary, dozens of people went to the main street that gives access to the shopping center and blocked access to it for an hour. The police inspector is well-known in the community. A youth said, “This pig is bringing us hunger! He met with the rank and file leaders of this community and then out of nowhere he showed up with a truck and never came back.”

The fierce resistance forced the judge to retreat. The judge angrily declared that some members of the police did not obey orders that by law they should have carried out. However, the director general of the police assured him that next Tuesday all the force of the state would be at his disposal. They have opened a dialogue, but

everything indicates that the eviction is imminent.

From the Presidential Palace, led by the FMLN, came a communication saying that the president would fully support the people in the community. However, that’s ironic since the UMO (Anti-Riot Unit to Maintain Order) follows the President’s orders.

Around one o’clock in the afternoon, a comrade and a friend of the International

Communist Workers’ Party went to the community. About 100 people had gathered and were talking about what would be the answer.

“We have to have consciousness, class consciousness. This is an abuse by those who for years have mistreated us: the rich. They are our enemies,” said a resident, while every one applauded.

“Here there is no other solution but to fight. Either we let them kick us out or we fight,” said another.

“We are here to support you. This is a class struggle. I would like to see the Dueñas themselves try to evict you. They are nothing without their guards,” we said when they permitted us to speak.

Shouting “The People United Will Never Be Defeated!” the rally of the residents ended. They made it clear that on Tuesday they will fight again against the police forces.

Afterwards, we talked to some people. One of them asked, “Who are you?” We answered that we are the International Communist Workers’ Party. He lifted the sleeve of his shirt and showed a tattoo with the hammer and sickle and said, “We are the same.” We decided to meet to organize a plan for Tuesday for possible attacks and we made contacts in case they decide to evict them before they said they would.

With rage and motivation, we plan to mobilize people and take a communist leaflet to this community. The solution to this problem is not to prevent the eviction, nor is it a deed of land. It is the total destruction of private property. This is only possible by mobilizing the masses for communism. *Red Flag* will be in the community with our clear line. We cannot sell the illusion that everything will be better with reform. We can only make it clear that we have to fight directly for communism, and the destruction of capitalism.



Capitalist Crisis Creates Mass Racist Unemployment

COMMUNISM WILL HAVE MEANINGFUL WORK FOR EVERYONE

The International Labor Organization (ILO, part of the UN) published a report in May that confirms what every *Red Flag* reader knows, namely that capitalism treats workers like disposable garbage. The numbers back this up.

For a start, it reports that three quarters of the world’s workers do not have a permanent job. Even in the U.S. over 40% of those employed are part-time or temporary workers.

Around the world, 70% lack credible “social protection” (roughly, social security). Fully 39% lack any affiliation with a healthcare system, and this rises to 90% in “low income” countries (like most of those in Africa). 88% of unemployed workers have no unemployment insurance. Half of those of pensionable age receive no pension at all, and many in the ‘lucky’ half do not have enough to live on.

In communism, these percentages will drop to 0. Right from the beginning, our first priority will be the struggle to provide everyone with his or her needs (food, shelter, healthcare, transportation, meaningful work and comradeship, etc.). Everyone will share, regardless of their work, study, or family situation, regardless of their skill level or educational achievements, and certainly regardless of their gender or racial/ethnic background.

These necessities will be provided free of charge – there will be no money. In return, we ask everyone to pitch in and work for the common

good.

What will these people do? At the beginning, help mobilize to provide the basic needs promised. Housing and sanitation in particular will be a challenge. Billions of workers do not live in conditions fit for human beings and have no access to healthcare (the ILO estimates a shortfall of 10 million health workers). Millions will learn what communism means in practice.

Once everyone is taken care of we can do even better. Safety, including inspection and maintenance, will be a priority. We’ll make better food and more comfortable housing and public transportation. Centers of production will be clean, bright and airy. Maybe we’ll plant flowers inside them or have musicians play while we work. Why not? We can do whatever we want! We’ll be free at last.

Creating More Communists

In the ICWP, which operates on communist principles, we already put some of these ideas into practice. In ICWP, we have work for everyone; everyone contributes as much as they are willing and able to.

First there are the basic duties every member carries out – reading and circulating the paper and other literature, attending meetings and events, and winning friends, family and co-workers to our party.

In addition every member has one or more special tasks to carry out. These may be temporary

or long term, possibly requiring some form of expertise (e.g. language skills), possibly not. For example: putting out *Red Flag*, making signs for a march, writing a leaflet, providing transportation or security.

We are open to whatever suggestions members have for tasks. Everyone can contribute something, and we are not afraid of ‘wasting’ (by capitalist measures) our time with tasks that overlap or seem superfluous. For example, we might write two leaflets and then collectively combine them to produce a third. We might have more than one person keeping track of events in a particular area or a particular school or particular workplace.

Almost everywhere youth unemployment is catastrophically high – capitalism has no need for most young people (except in wartime). ICWP, on the other hand, welcomes youth because they have an important role to play. They bring energy and enthusiasm and will be the leaders of the future. Of course more experienced comrades will spend time mentoring them but at the same time the youth will relieve them of some of their tasks.

In fact everyone, young or old, experienced or not, is valuable to our party. Join now and contribute according to your ability, we need you! Together we can end the capitalist nightmare documented in the ILO report.

TALKING TO MTA BUS DRIVERS ABOUT COMMUNISM

COMMUNIST LEADERSHIP VERSUS CAPITALIST CORRUPTION

LOS ANGELES--“Here’s a story for you,” said an LA Metro bus operator.

The operator told a comrade about a recent union run-off election. The incumbent won by 8 votes out of 300.

“I didn’t vote,” said the operator. “One candidate is just a gangster and the other blew me off when I asked for a copy of the contract. But I got a piece of mail returned in the outer envelope used with ballots, with my name on it. Inside was a ballot marked for the gangster. And the same thing happened to other people I know.”

It seems that the widespread fraud has been exposed enough that the election may be nullified. As our friend said, that will make no real difference for most MTA bus operators, who are not part of either corrupt clique.

But, as the comrade told the Metro worker, the story raises interesting questions about leadership.

In the International Communist Workers’ Party, there are many opportunities to take leadership. We are not in competition with each other. All members (friends too) are encouraged to give communist leadership to co-workers and the masses.

Sometimes decisions must be made about who should take on a specific responsibility (like leading the *Red Flag* editorial collective). These decisions are made openly. Everyone involved gets to express opinions, including the “candidates.”

No secret ballots! Instead we struggle for consensus: an agreement that most support and that those who disagree can “live with.”

Today communist leadership brings responsibility but no privileges except the great privilege of serving the masses.

But we have seen examples in the 20th century

where communists in power became personally corrupted much like union leaders today. Some say that the failure of socialism was due to these corrupt individuals. We disagree.

In hindsight we can see that socialism was another form of capitalism. It preserved the core of capitalism (money, wages, markets, commodity production) and with it privilege and the potential for corruption. Communists managed this system, thinking they could evolve it into communism. They were wrong. Instead, socialism corrupted them into capitalists.

In the future, when the masses hold and use power to build communist society, privilege will be flat-out unacceptable. There will be far fewer opportunities for comrades in responsible positions to use the positions for personal advantage. If someone does try to live better than the rest, it will quickly become obvious.

As today, the masses will hold ourselves and each other accountable, especially comrades in responsible positions. That means regular open discussion, criticism and self-criticism to help each other correct bad tendencies and improve our work.

There are many stories from revolutionary China in the 1950s and 1960s, especially during the Cultural Revolution, that show how masses were mobilized to try to fight corruption and abuse of power. But the material basis of their society was socialism, which made it impossible for them to succeed.

The process of developing more and better communist leadership is happening right now. Step up at Metro and everywhere!



Distributing *Red Flag* to MTA drivers, 2011 Summer Project

\$15 AN HOUR CAMPAIGN: REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

LOS ANGELES--A transit worker was talking with a *Red Flag* comrade at a transit division.

The driver said, “I really liked the article about the mechanic this week. It’s not only the mechanics. They treat drivers the same way. They constantly harass us; constantly find things to use against us.”

The *Red Flag* distributor said, “I’m glad you liked it.”

“One thing,” the driver continued, “is that they want us to call the fare out, to make people pay who don’t pay. But some of the passengers get mad and you never know what they’ll do. When passengers don’t pay the fare, MTA knows because they count how many passengers ride the bus and compare that to the money they collect.”

“MTA raises the fares and makes the other passengers pay more. Really, most of the transit money comes from federal money, not from fares.”

Red Flag: Yes, the money comes from taxes all workers have to pay. Really, transit should be free for everyone. Everything should be free. For that to happen, we need a communist system where everyone will get what they need and there won’t be money or bosses who take it all for themselves.

Driver: Well, you know, I am against raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour.

“Why?” asked another worker.

D: “Let’s say you own a business with 100 workers. Let’s say you pay them \$9 an hour. Now the government

says you have to pay \$15 an hour. So you pay the workers more. And then what do you do? You raise the price of the things the workers make so that you can keep as much profit as before or even more profit. So we have to pay more for things if they raise the minimum wage.

RF: So even when we fight for higher wages, even when we get a little bit more, they raise the prices, like you say. Capitalism is set up to make money for the capitalists. Wages are meant to keep us working and chained to them. They just pay us barely enough (and often not enough) to survive and keep working, not enough so we can stop. The boss takes most of the value we produce for his own profit. That’s why we need to fight to get rid of the wage system, not for higher wages.

D: Even if they pay \$15 minimum, that doesn’t mean that those of us who make a little more than

the minimum will get a lot more. I think they want more people working for the minimum so the rich can keep more money. I guess its not that I’m against raising the minimum wage—it’s just that it won’t make things better”

RF: You’re right, it won’t solve the problem. The only way to get out of the vicious cycle is to get rid of the wage system with communist revolution and produce for human need. We can all work with no wages and no money. We can produce everything we need and share it. That’s communism.

The workers had to go in to work but hopefully the conversation will continue.

It will take a mass party to mobilize millions of workers for communist revolution for a world where we only work to fulfill our needs—with no money or wages. We invite these workers to join this fight.



Bridging the Gap Through Communism

I read an *LA Times* Special Report (22 May 2015) entitled "US Military and Civilians are Increasingly Divided." Being a veteran myself, this naturally caught my eye.

To briefly summarize, the report claims that numerous studies have found that there is a real disconnect between those who serve and those who have not. The report goes on to make its own claims on what it believes are some of the contributing factors to this ever-growing estrangement.

A couple of things stood out from the report to me. First, a research study from 2011, found that if you did not have someone fighting in Iraq or Afghanistan that you personally knew, you were less likely to follow news about the wars going on and that you most likely didn't think they were worth fighting.

And secondly, a statement in the report that most civilians have a "let someone else do it" attitude about the US's imperialist wars. As a student from Stanford worded it, a "lack of patriotic fervor and generally anti-military ...sentiment."

As an ICWP member with prior service, I thought I could add some new light to this topic. To me, it is obvious that this is an ever increasing problem.

The bosses fight their wars, which only serve them. Since these wars only help bring more poverty and despair to the masses, the masses have no reason to jump for joy at anything military related.

Unfortunately, the US has structured things, so that there is certain disconnect between those in the armed forces and those who are

not, probably because they know that someday they will try to use the military to protect them against the masses.

Because the bosses have their own agendas separate from those of the masses, this contradiction has arisen. It is imperative though, that we not forget that soldiers are our comrades. Under communism the soldier/civilian contradiction will not exist since the goal of all communists is the same.

For now though, we must continue struggling with both sides, through communism, to see themselves as comrades and not as separate entities. That way when the time comes the masses can count on the soldiers to turn the guns around and help end capitalism.

--Red Vet



Read our pamphlet:
***Soldiers, Sailors, Marines:
Crucial to a Communist
Workers' Revolution***
icwpredflag.org/MIL/mpe.html

"The Army and the Government Lie"

Last weekend, two of us young comrades planning to join the military to organize for communism met with some veterans who had done this work before us. At the meeting we discussed the insights learned in the army. We've learned not to let the drill sergeant get to our head so they could brainwash us. Also a veteran comrade told us to be ready for boot camp physically and mentally. That way we'll be harder to break, and it won't get to us. The mee-

ting was very beneficial for us. Comrades really spoke with wisdom and made me and the homie strong so when we go and ship off we're gonna go with a strong mentality and know the deal.

We had a lot of minds with experience. Everybody was polite and we grilled hamburgers and shared them. We talked a lot about the military and what they do during training. There was a comrade who had been to Iraq a couple of times. There were older and new people with recent experience. We also talked about being open-minded to new ideas, so you could connect with new people on their level while including ideas about communism.

It's right to do what we are doing because the army and government lie. It hurts them to tell the truth and here we are discussing what the truth is. Because the biggest lie is the truth.

—Future Red Soldiers

Capitalist Laws Help Corporations Steal Labor and Resources

Capitalism has gone too far now to save itself. The performance of work to create value or the creation of wealth is too far separated from who gets the reward from that work.

At this time, even the intellectual right are beginning to realize that. That is the reason why the economist Richard D. Wolff is so popular now.

The capitalists accomplished this foolish situation with law. First, they set up entities (countries, cities, etc.) and put themselves in charge.

Then they told everyone else what the law was (Rhodesia [now Zimbabwe], Canada, United States). The indigenous people who may have been on the land for thousands of years were legally found to be without legal rights within these new entities.

The capitalists could then legally exploit the resources of that land. An example is the "opening" of the western United States where the "sooners" were allowed to own the land they settled. Indigenous people ("Indians") were legally excluded from settling on the land they once occupied.

TPP (Trans-Pacific Partnership) is the final solution to the legal grab of resources by the worldwide capitalist class. It is the ultimate use of the law to steal both resources and labor from the whole world. The newest and final entity created to accomplish this is the legal framework of the TPP, which allows corporations to sue countries and governments at any level. It is the ultimate theft of any rights that individuals might have through a representative government.

Not only must the TPP be stopped, but capitalism itself must be rolled back and possibly eliminated.

A new system must replace what capitalism has spoiled, one where there is no class of people who can sit around and collect the benefit of everyone's labor from people cooking hamburgers to fixing cars or handing out nuts and bolts in a hardware store. The legal entity that allows that is the corporation.

—Reader

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LET'S MOBILIZE FOR A MASS COMMUNIST MAY DAY IN 2016!

LOS ANGELES, CA—Next year May Day falls on Sunday. The ICWP Los Angeles Steering Committee has decided that our worker and student contingents will march together, as communists, under the red flags and banners of our Party.

Starting now, we are making plans for a mass march. Each club must have a plan that includes study groups, protests, mass distribution of *Red Flag*, recruitment, and a general invitation to the march.

The members of ICWP call on all workers, friends, relatives and all the readers of *Red Flag* to make May Day 2016 a day to mobilize the masses for communism.

We will raise high the red flags of communism to show the rest of the working class that we can build a communist world without bosses, borders and exploitation. We will destroy the current capitalist system that threatens our lives with constant economic crises and with the bosses' plans for World War III.

With communism, we will eliminate money and classes. There won't be any means of control over another human being. The relationship of boss-worker will be destroyed. We won't have the situation where some live in exaggerated luxury while others have nothing to eat. We'll work to meet our needs, not so that a few can live well off our sweat.

In the capitalist system, only a handful of human beings control the vast majority of all the wealth of the world. The rest of us have barely enough to spend on paying the rent and buying the food that keeps us alive so we can go back to the capitalists' factories the next day.

Between boom times for the bosses, there have been serious economic crises when they need to eliminate workers via their many wars. With two world wars, in the wake of the deaths of millions, two communist parties arose with millions of members to take power in Russia and China. It is up to the workers of today to make a real communist revolution, forming a worldwide Party of

millions.

For the working-class majority, a future rich in humanity awaits us, but first we have to struggle to learn how to defend our class. The bosses are predators and will not easily give up their privileges. We workers have to organize for a communist revolution.

Marching next May Day as communists will be a great advance for our party and our class because we will boldly put forward our vision of a new world. It will also be a big blow to the bosses who think that the world belongs to them and that no one opposes them.

Let's organize more workers, soldiers, students, and their families to take to the streets on that day to remember the martyrs of Chicago and all those who have fought for a better world. But more than anything, we'll say to the workers that we're not asking the bosses for reforms, but instead we'll take power away from them and build our own communist world. Join us!

Intensifying US-China Strategic Competition:

WORKERS WORLDWIDE MUST WAGE WAR FOR COMMUNISM, NOT FOR BOSSES' PROFITS

"The *Fiscal Times* is reporting that war between the US and China is 'inevitable.' *Red Flag* had this analysis for 3 years!" texted a *Red Flag* reader.

US and Chinese imperialists are like trains heading toward each other with growing speed. They want workers to get on board. Instead, workers need to collectively mobilize to derail the imperialists and fight to build a world that advances on new tracks.

We need a world that is not based on competition and profit, a communist world where the creativity of millions of workers is freed. Then we can collectively meet all workers' needs. We will make starvation, exploitation, racism and war things of the past.

The Chinese imperialists' train will run on their new Silk Road, which actually includes high-speed rail tracks from Shanghai to Berlin.

Their Silk Road has a dual purpose: to make them obscene profits and to rapidly mobilize their military in wartime. They have up to 60 silo-based ICBMs capable of targeting almost the whole US. Five years ago, China talked about building a blue-water navy. Today, it is building that navy with world-wide reach.

The China Development Bank recently unveiled plans to invest \$890 billion in 60 countries to fund over 900 projects. These include coal and gas, mining, electricity, telecommunications, the building of roads, dams, bridges, high speed rail and ports.

The Chinese bosses are advancing in Latin America, which US imperialism has traditionally considered its "backyard." China recently concluded 35 deals with Brazil, including financing for oil, air planes, iron ore and a mega rail project. It is financing the canal in Nicaragua.

Last January, Beijing hosted a meeting with CELAC (Community of Latin America and Caribbean States) which includes all the Americas except the US and Canada. There China offered billions in investment for projects to build infrastructure, super-exploiting workers and taking natural resources in the process.

The US response is increasingly belligerent. The Council on Foreign Relations says that cooperation with China will have to be replaced by

"intense US-China strategic competition."

The Chinese and Russian bosses are allied and increasingly open in confronting the US. China has been artificially enlarging reefs and nearly submerged islands in the oil-and-gas-rich strategic South China Sea. They are building air strips and military installations on them.

Last week, an editorial in the Chinese state-run *Global Times* said that unless the US stops opposing Chinese sovereignty claims to these islands, "war will be inevitable." The US has responded with military threats.

Russia is also advancing globally. The US Army War College recently warned that in future conflicts, Russia or other rivals "will seek to engage the United States globally, including in Latin America and the Caribbean... Now is the time for the United States to coordinate with its partners in the hemisphere regarding how best to meet that challenge."

To do this, the desperate US rulers want to fast track the TPP (Trans Pacific Partnership). This economic and trade treaty pointedly excludes Russia and China. It consists of 12 Pacific Rim countries, including the US and Japan, which produce about 40% of the world's domestic product and a third of its trade.

The US goals are to open these countries to further its investments, increase market access for

its companies, and gain allies to confront rising China and Russia. However, the signing of the treaty is still in question.

Workers like the *Red Flag* reader quoted above see that this openly sharpening contradiction is leading to world war. Many are tempted to take sides. Many cheer the growing economic and military power of China and Russia as a blow to hated US imperialism.

Others mistakenly think that capitalists-imperialists could become doves, or that the US and China can peacefully share the world.

This situation is fraught with danger and opportunity for the international working class. *Red Flag* readers and friends should seriously consider joining ICWP, spreading *Red Flag* and becoming communist leaders.

We need a mass ICWP and Red Army worldwide to concentrate on mobilizing our class brothers and sisters in uniform and in industry to fight for communist workers' power, for a communist world where no one profits off our labor.

Every war in today's world is a war for the imperialists' profits. Our war must be to get rid of capitalism with its profits and wars.

In communism, we workers will build roads and bridges, trains and ships, not to bring products to market for profit, but to make our lives better and bring us closer together.

2015 Communist Summer Projects in Los Angeles, Oakland & Seattle

HELP BRING *RED FLAG* TO WORKERS AND SOLDIERS

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