



# RED FLAG

**MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM**

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



MTA Workers' Historic Task:  
**MOBILIZE FOR COMMUNISM**

An ICWP member passing out a leaflet at Division 10 condemning these latest police killings and calling for communist revolution said, "These racist police murders are a good reason to have a political strike against capitalism."

"You got that right!" answered the MTA operator taking a copy of the leaflet and *Red Flag*.

This operator, like the brave masses in Ferguson and demonstrators in many US cities, was expressing her anger and hatred for a system where workers' lives, especially black, latino and Palestinian, have no value. It is a sentiment shared by thousands of MTA workers.

It raises a very important question for the international communist movement: How do we organize this mass sentiment into a material force capable of changing history and the world we live in? How do we help mobilize MTA workers to mobilize the masses for communism?

**Let's Start by Building Communist International Solidarity**

An injury to one is an injury to all might be a "good" trade union slogan. Unfortunately, it is not good a communist one. It lacks the internationalism and class understanding needed to organize a movement capable of ending capitalism's wage slavery and reign of terror forever. Only worldwide communism can ever accomplish this.

For this we need communist international solidarity. We should organize communist political strikes against capitalism to condemn any attack against our class brothers and sisters and support their struggles: police killing

See MTA POLITICAL STRIKE, page 4

Protests Against Racist Cop Murders Must Be:  
**A FIGHT FOR A WORLD WITHOUT BOSSES, MONEY OR COPS**

The centuries-old assumption that young black men are public enemy number one is still alive. The Missouri rebellion over the police slaying of Mike Brown by Ferguson police builds on the anger from police murders, including most well-known, Oscar Grant and Trayvon Martin, and the pain of those less-known victims of police murder like Ezell Ford, killed by the LAPD in South LA on August 11. Also, the murder of Omar Abrego earlier this month, beaten to death by the LAPD in front of his home while still wearing his Amtrak truck driver uniform, makes it clear that young Latino men are under attack as well. Mass protests in the streets of the U.S. show growing anger at racist police murder—and the entire racist system.

**Capitalism Needs Racism**

Racism is the life blood of capitalism. A very few rich people—way less than 1%—make their money off of the work of the 99+%. Racism allows them to make billions by keeping black and Latinos in the worst lowest paying jobs, and all workers fighting each other over the crumbs. They use racist cops to keep us terrorized and racist lies to keep us from trusting each other and uniting against

them. When they shoot a young black man, they criminalize him, making him look like a thug in the pictures they post in the media. It's the same lies they tell about every group—for example, they tell black and white workers that immigrants are stealing "our jobs" and black and Latino youth that "all white people are rich."

**But the Bosses Have a Problem**

Racism works to divide and terrorize us and keep us in line. But this is a problem for the bosses if they need us to believe in their system or fight in their wars. This has created a situation in Ferguson that even the New York Times called "swerving from one approach to another." Police tactics of dealing with the protests have gone from bringing in tanks, automatic weapons, rubber bullets, and tear gas to attack the demonstrators to having a black Highway Patrol captain hugging protestors in the streets. The bosses, faced with angry masses, can't meet their demands for an end to racist policing. They can put a few black and Latino elected officials in office, but that's just decoration. The system is still racist to the core. On the one hand they need to smash the rebellion, but on the other hand they want to win our loyalty.

See FIGHTING RACIST POLICE MURDERS, page 3

**INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST INDUSTRIAL CONFERENCE PAGES 2, 3**

**GARMENT WORKERS STRUGGLE PAGE 4**

**SOLDIERS KEY TO REVOLUTION PAGE 8**

**GAZA: LEARN FROM MARIKANA PAGE 8**

# INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CULTIVATES COMMUNIST INDUSTRIAL COLLECTIVES

The sleeping giant has awoken. Millions of industrial workers around the world have struck, demonstrated, fought and bled: straining to break the chains that bind them to capitalist exploitation. This weekend we saw the first sprouts of growth of the International Communist Workers' Party in key industries, nourished by this mass heroism.

The feeling was akin to the elation described by Red Army troops after surrounding the Nazi 6th Army at Stalingrad during WWII. "I can't believe this is happening," is how a leading ICWP organizer put it, a veteran of a dozen-year "liberation" war herself.

We were keenly aware that our meeting was nowhere as momentous as Stalingrad. Accordingly, we spent most of our time planning concrete steps to expand this beachhead.

As we often do, we began with a general discussion of the present state of affairs.

We surveyed the mood of the working class worldwide. Differences exist around the world, but every country and industry is pregnant with communist potential.

The bosses' system is in economic, political and increasing military crisis. The old world order established after WWII is fraying. We are in a pre-revolutionary period as well as a pre-world war period.

After this discussion we got down to brass tacks.

## South African Autoworkers; U.S. Aerospace Workers; Salvadoran Garment Workers

The heart of the meeting consisted of three reports. Our new South African comrades gave the first.

A Boeing comrade presented a communist strike solidarity letter signed by sixty of his fellow aerospace workers and nearby soldiers to these comrades to kick off the discussion. (See box.) The international, anti-racist pictures of this "ceremony" were, to say the least, impressive.

A new recruit from Port Elizabeth, S.A., had worked in 5 auto subcontractor plants, each more exploitive than the last. He spelled out how each paid less than he and his daughter needed to survive.

He kept "resigning" hoping to find a job that would pay the bills. Now he realizes the answer lies in recruiting to ICWP to mobilize for com-

munist, not quitting one hellhole only to end up in a worse one.

He learned how to effectively provide communist solutions for his friends in different plants. Some worked in a union plant, others in a non-union plant. The initial approach may differ, but the only solution is communist revolution.

Another comrade explained that Mandela had not sold out later in life. He always served the bosses, just like the "revolutionary" leaders in El Salvador who now run the government.

The Boeing aerospace report focused on individuals we are trying to recruit. A young comrade, recently returned from the Seattle summer project, described how much more receptive Boeing workers were today than a couple of years ago.

Another young leader urged those his age to get jobs in industry or the army, key areas to concentrate on. A third outlined how young people who are not yet ready to enter these areas of work could help industrial concentrations.

Before the maquila workers gave their report, a young leader presented a slide show on South Africa. An eye-opening clip of furious women expressing their hatred for the governing African National Congress (ANC) followed.

A comrade translated their angry comments from Xhosa to English: another from English to Spanish. Maquila workers commented that the clip convinced them that they were fighting for the world's workers, not just for themselves. They weren't alone.

The Salvadoran garment comrades decided to meet among themselves more frequently. Up until now, most meetings have been with the area leadership.

These more timely discussions are necessary to overcome obstacles like little free time and money, in order to discuss the paper and base-building. They promised wider *Red Flag* distribution, more frequent articles and after-work social events.

These reports inspired comrades around the world to make concrete plans to enter the industrial working class. For instance, three different groups of teachers from Mexico plan to survey their students to find relatives and friends that already work in industry.

## To the 220,000 brothers and sisters in the National Union of Metalworkers (Numsa) on strike in South Africa:

We, the undersigned, express our solidarity with Numsa Metalworkers and Engineers that have shut down a large portion of South African industrial production. Your fight is our fight!

Like you, we have to deal with a huge subcontractor sector that super-exploits workers. Your labor brokering is our employment agencies.

Like you, we are chained to longer and longer contracts.

Like you, these contracts abolish our ability to legally strike.

The working class around the world demands the fruits of our labor. To secure these fruits we have to ask the question, "Who has the power, the bosses or the workers?"

To gain this power we have to break the limits of economic trade union strikes. We have to build for political strikes against the bosses' system.

The bosses' system, capitalism, thrives on exploitation. The internationalism we need must aim to replace factories dedicated to the bosses' profits with ones dedicated to production for our class's needs.

We join you in our common fight for workers' power.

## Hard Communist Work Ahead

We proposed another international industrial workers' conference in about a year's time to insure our progress. We'll use the Party's new pamphlet *Bigger Industrial Working Class: Bigger Communist Potential Worldwide* in every club to launch our preparation for this conference.

All of us, including comrades from Honduras and Spain, left the conference aware of the hard, practical work ahead if we hope to have the kind of conference the working class needs.

The bosses want the industrial working class to go to sleep. That won't happen if we expand on the small breakthroughs represented during this weekend.

This conference showed us the possibility: The international industrial working class can be the engine of communist revolution.

Read our new pamphlet:

**BIGGER INDUSTRIAL WORKING CLASS:  
BIGGER COMMUNIST  
POTENTIAL  
WORLDWIDE**

At [www.icwpredflag.org](http://www.icwpredflag.org)



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## COMRADES INSPIRED BY THEIR EXPERIENCES AT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

### From El Salvador:

“This meeting was important for us factory workers, because we realize that workers worldwide suffer the same wage slavery,” stated a young worker from the maquila factories here.

“These have been days dedicated to the working class. We have felt strong and with a lot of energy to continue the struggle for a new system, communism,” said a worker leader.

An excited worker emphasized, “I had read in our newspaper *Red Flag* about the struggles that the workers in South Africa carry out as well as in other parts of the world, but to listen to the comrades in person was really very inspiring.”

The young worker said, “I want to share one of the small struggles that the collective of comrades organized in the International Communist Workers’ Party in this country began and which expanded to the rest of the workers inside the factory where we work.”

In one of the maquila factories in El Salvador the boss wanted to force us to work during the (bosses’) holidays of August 5 and 6 which,

based on the bosses’ law, are days off. He told us workers that we had to work those days as normal work days, not for extra pay, but for our regular pay.

The boss passed around a piece of paper for the workers to sign saying that they agreed to work on the holiday. However, the workers immediately organized around the leadership of the workers in ICWP, and decided not to sign the paper. Later the supervisors came to collect the pages and saw that 90% of the workers did not sign—that we had left the pages blank.

When the boss saw the blank pages he had no other option than to accept the workers’ position of resting during their leisure time. That is how the capitalist bosses try to super exploit the labor power of the men and women workers so that they keep the maximum profits, not caring if the workers have the right to rest.

In the communist system the factories will exist to produce based on need, without overproduction. The workers will have the time they need to devote to overcoming obstacles in work and to enjoying social recreational activities together with the other members of society.

This effort is nothing more than an example that workers organized with communist ideas have the strength to defeat the bosses. Distributing *Red Flag* has been very helpful, although not without obstacles. But we must continue.

We are organizing ourselves as ICWP once and for all.

### This was an experience of a **From South Africa:**

life-time. Moving from one continent to the next. I thought that meeting with the ICWP members from various countries around the globe sealed my whole experience.

Having comrades welcoming us from the airport was overwhelming. Driving hundreds of kilometres to our abode was superb. I cannot for the life of me forget the hospitality displayed by our hosting family in particular and the rest of the community in general. Each day that passed by was eventful, beginning with the meeting with the farmworkers.

I was particularly impressed with each of these meetings, where comrades were giving their all, interacting, engaging, information-sharing and educating. I thought that the translations did the trick and we were able to articulate our views with ease.

The three day meeting itself was welcoming, not intimidating at all. I thought that time-keeping and introducing each discussion made a world of difference. It was simpler and easier to express oneself at any given time. Enough time was allocated to every discussion on the agenda. Although this was our first meeting we felt like we’d been with ICWP for years.

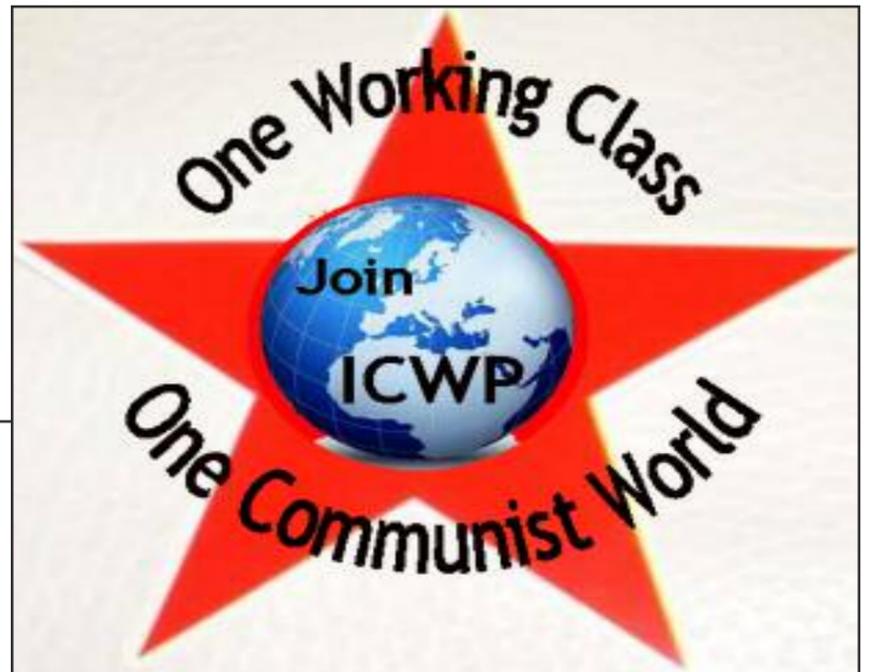
The young lions were roaring all over. Roaring young lions are a life-blood of our party. Without them we are doomed. Pass my revolutionary regards and comradely greetings to all.

Phambili nomzabalazo wabasebenzi Phambili!!!  
Onward, the workers’ struggle, onward!

This is my first time traveling out of South Africa to attend my party’s meeting. I recently

joined the International Communist Workers Party. The meeting consisted of comrades from many countries. I arrived at the location of the meeting and we were welcomed by another member of the party and his family. They are truly good-hearted comrades who welcomed us with warm hands and treated us as one family. It was so unbelievable to receive such a welcoming from the comrades who you never met or saw before. I even asked myself is this for real? Then I observed that it’s the way of communism, truthfully.

Everywhere we went we were one family. We did everything together. Even when one comrade buys a cold drink or something to eat, he or she buys it for everyone and shares it. I observed that this is a reflection of communism. We were discussing every aspect of communism and struggle for three days. Words cannot express the camaraderie and unity I saw amongst party members.



I was very angry when I saw how people were struggling here for very basic things, yet they have so much love in their hearts. I could see the pain and hurt in their eyes and smile on their faces.

This made me hate, in fact, despise the capitalist system beyond measure. It hurt me to see really old people have to sell some small goods, up and down the streets, so they can buy themselves something to eat or support their families. It is so unfair and cruel.

I hate the capitalist system. Sometimes when I see these sufferings in people I would just look at them and smile though inside I am crying. I told myself that after what I saw I will be more committed and dedicate the rest of my life to fighting for communism.

The poverty, the suffering of these good people must come to an end. I have zero tolerance for capitalism and I am committed firmly to building ICWP.

## FIGHTING RACIST POLICE MURDERS, from page 1

### The War at Home

The same racism that excuses a plague of police murders of black and Latino youth justifies the mass murder of our sisters and brothers in Iraq and Afghanistan. It will be used to justify world war when the US launches a war against Russia or/and China to defend their empire. The same tanks that were used to attack workers in Iraq and Afghanistan are now being used to attack protestors. The St. Louis County Police who drove those tanks were trained by the Israeli military—perpetrators of mass murder in Gaza. From Gaza to Ferguson, they use their weapons to terrorize and control the working class. But workers made those weapons and working class soldiers use them. With communist ideas in the lead, we can use those same weapons to make a revolution to take power and build communism.

### We Need Communist Revolution

Under capitalism, the cops protect the profits and property that the rich have stolen from the working class. They terrorize workers to try to keep us from rebelling and making a revolution to end this theft of the value we produce. Communism means no police, no bosses and no money. It means the working class producing and sharing what we produce only for the benefit of the workers. Because we won’t be ruled over by a few bosses who get rich off our labor, but instead will be building a society where we share what we produce, we can actually end racism. We won’t be fighting each other, but working together for the good of all. We invite you to join us, to build an international communist movement of workers, students and soldiers to fight for that world.



## Fighting for Air Conditioning in a Garment Factory

### YOUNG COMRADE GETS A LESSON ABOUT CLASS STRUGGLE

I recently got a job in a small clothing factory in Los Angeles, where we make shirts that sell for \$56 dollars each. The cutter gets \$1.20 each and the sewer gets \$2.50 per shirt. The rest goes to cloth, rent, air-conditioning, a few other expenses, and, of course, big profits—close to a million dollars per season.

Last Wednesday the boss got the air-conditioning bill, and decided, in the middle of a heat wave, to turn off the a-c for the workers while keeping it on in her office. Rivers of sweat were pouring off of me, and some of the women started getting dizzy. One of the women put a wet towel from the restroom on her head to cool off, and the boss told her she was making a mess on the floor and to put it back.

I heard scissors slam on the table, and Marcia said, "That's it!" She went from worker to worker, and told everybody, "Turn off your machine! We're walking out!" Although some hesitated at first, we all walked out together. "She can't do anything without us!" Marcia told us as we left the factory and walked to the bus.

On Thursday, the boss called an emergency meeting. Before she could even begin, Marcia made a speech. She confronted the boss, telling her, "You just sit there and look pretty, while we, who are the base of your profits, are killing ourselves in the heat. And you deserve to have a-c?"

The boss asked us, "What exactly do you want?"

"Turn the a-c on or we're all walking out again!" was her response.

She turned it back on—but at 80 degrees for us, while her office was still like an icebox.

On Monday morning, the boss called a company meeting—with one thing on the agenda. "Have you noticed," she asked, "that Marcia isn't with us? It wasn't working out, so I had to let her go."

"Why?" asked another worker.

"It's confidential," answered the boss. But she wasn't fooling anybody.

She did, however, scare a lot of people—as if they weren't already scared enough.

If we hadn't all been so scared, we would have spoken up with Marcia during the emergency meeting on Thursday. It would have been a lot harder for the boss to take it out on all of us. Since Marcia was the only person who spoke up, she was an easy target.

Another lesson is about the need for a plan—and collective political struggle. Individual heroism only gets us so far. We've got air-conditioning (at 80 degrees), but we're all so scared now that she can turn it off any time she wants. Also, in these types of struggles our goal should be to politically educate the workers about the nature of capitalism and pull them away from fighting for crumbs but instead struggle with them to mobilize for communism.

This was a real learning experience for me. I've been in ICWP for four years, but this is my first factory job. This was my first time being involved with workers in class struggle on the job.

Before this happened, I could see that the



woman who led the walk-out was somebody I should give **Red Flag** to. I was trying to figure out how to do it—fearing how she might react. Turns out, when I gave her the paper, she told me that she and her husband had been involved in the guerrilla in El Salvador. Communist ideas were not strange to her.

The lessons of the fmln in El Salvador and the fight for air conditioning in Los Angeles are the same: fighting for reforms gets us nowhere. Workers around the world are fighting back but they need communist analysis and a plan that doesn't get stuck in reformism. In a communist world, everything—even air conditioning—will be distributed according to our needs. No one will sit in a cool office while others are sweating. No one will live in luxury while others are starving. We'll share what we produce for the good of all.

--Young Comrade

## MTA POLITICAL STRIKE from page 1

in the US and US bosses' genocide in the Middle East, Israel's mass murder of Palestinians, and South African workers on strike, etc. Our strikes should clarify the masses' vision of the communist world we need and strengthen their commitment and determination to fight for it.

**The bosses' message to all workers: don't rebel or we will wipe you off the streets.**

As we go to press the US bosses' militarized police deployed with heavy weapons have been unable to stop the brave Ferguson rebels from demonstrating, just as Israel's heavy bombing has been unsuccessful in breaking the fighting spirit of the Palestinian masses.

As a possible strike looms over LA MTA, these bosses are also taking a hard stand to try to break our fighting spirit. They hope their union henchmen will do the trick. If this fails, the same brutality used against Ferguson demonstrators will be used against us and our supporters.



Mass Protest Against Racist Police Murder, Ferguson, Missouri

The bosses' choices for us are:

"Submit passively to the fascism of our new contract which changes many rules to facilitate and expedite your firing or go on strike and be treated like the Ferguson demonstrators! Live constantly under our wage slavery's dreadful whip of losing your livelihood or face our cops or military if you rebel!"

**Rebellions and political strikes are not enough**

Rebellions are good. Political strikes against capitalism and for communism are better. Yet, neither is enough. History has brutally proven this to be the case.

Massive anti-racist rebellions by black workers against racist police killings exploded in many major US cities during the 1960s. US bosses put down these rebellions mercilessly, killing many. Fifty years later black and latino workers, are fighting the same fight.

"Protesters demand new prosecutor for Ferguson case," joyfully screams CBS news. Whether true or not, unless the Ferguson masses see the need to fight for communism, fifty years from now they will be waging the same fight. The same holds true for Palestinian rebels, South African strikers and the masses in motion



everywhere.

**Our message to the masses: let's fight for communism!**

Over 750 MTA workers read every edition of **Red Flag**. Many question capitalism and are considering communism as an alternative. We in ICWP, other **Red Flag** readers, and these MTA workers have an historic responsibility: Will the masses in Ferguson and worldwide continue on the unending tread mill of reformism that has perpetuated capitalist racist oppression for over 500 years, or are we going to help them end it with a communist revolution?

A political strike at MTA against capitalism and for communism would be a beacon to the world's masses in motion who hate capitalism and fight heroically against it but need communist ideas to really change society in our class interests.

Let's not shy away from our responsibility. Join ICWP and let's help mobilize the masses for communism by organizing a communist political strike!

## SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT: STRAIGHT INTO THE HEART OF THE CAPITALIST BEAST

In case anybody had any illusions, Boeing CEO McNerney set the record straight. His immediate job is to attack us workers. The capitalist system he serves demands it.

McNerney said he wouldn't retire when he reaches 65 this month.

"The heart will still be beating. The employees will still be covering," he told reporters and Wall Street analysts July 23rd. "There is no end in sight."

The shop floors erupted, forcing the newly elected International Association of Machinists (IAM) District president Holden to react. Knowing his "mandate" consisted of a mere 4% of the eligible votes among union members, he set out on a crusade.

"This is less about how a single person feels and more about a corporate leadership culture and attitude that need to change," said District president Holden.

You'd have more luck changing the spots on a leopard.

What we need to change is our strategy. We must shed the illusion that capitalist "culture and

attitudes" can ever be reformed to serve our interests.

We have to prepare for political strikes that mobilize the masses for communism.

### The Union Becomes Less Relevant Every Day

In the midst of this debacle, the union passed out a survey. It asked how we felt about pensions and other contractual issues.

Angry workers interrupted some company crew meetings. "What the hell is all this about?" cynically asked a Machinist. "Pensions are dead and gone. A new contract won't come up for ten years!"

On the same day as the union passed out this lame attempt to show some relevance to our lives, workers grabbed *Red Flag* and circulated our communist solidarity letter for 220,000 striking South African Metalworkers. (See page 2)

The union is more than clueless. It is actively trying to pull the wool over our eyes. Its job is to protect the bosses' system.

### Anti-Communism Is The Bosses' Tool

That is why the IAM newspaper featured an anti-communist quotation that we were supposed to believe attacked McNerney.

"Not even communists treated us with such arrogance," said someone who identified himself as an immigrant from a former communist country. "They at least pretended that they care about workers."

To be sure, he did not come from a communist country. He came from a socialist country. Socialism is not communism. Socialism is another form of capitalism.

The form of capitalism is irrelevant. Every capitalist ruling class is hell-bent on



attacking the working class. They have no other choice as the system's economic crisis works its way around the world.

Eventually, even this scorched-earth policy won't save their profit-driven companies. The bosses will be forced to militarily attack their foreign competitors, squandering our lives in addition to our livelihoods.

### Setting The Record Straight

So let's really set the record straight. Communism will change the foundation of society.

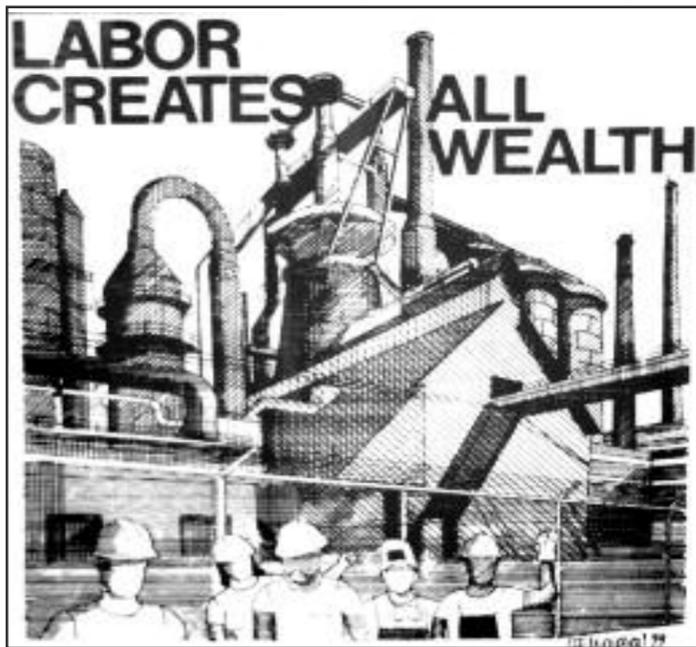
There will be no corporations. Industrial facilities will be organized to produce what we need, not what the bosses can profit from.

The whole culture will change from the factory floor up. Separating mental from manual labor is profitable. Collectivity serves another purpose. It strengthens the working class.

Profit requires the whip hand of fear: fear of losing a job. Communism will provide according to need.

Attitudes will change. We will go to work to provide for the common good, not be forced to sell our labor to the profit-hungry exploiters.

Communism will not change the unchangeable corporate culture because there will be no corporate culture. Corporate culture will no longer poison society. Communist production, attitudes and culture will return our humanity.



## SLAVING FOR WAGES, WE MAKE CARS, THEY MAKE PROFITS! LET'S ABOLISH THE WAGE SYSTEM!

The auto industry is central to the economies of advanced capitalist countries. Including road construction, oil, steel, rubber and glass industries that produce for its needs, the total organization of auto production adds up to about 13% of the Gross Domestic Product of the major economies.

Because of this, *Driving Over A Cliff*, a detailed analysis of the industry, claims that "the auto industry is a massive generator of economic wealth..." What a lie!

It is a lie of omission. Really, it is the auto workers who are the massive generators of economic wealth. The capitalist state, its intellectuals and reporters, repeatedly wipe out the central role of the working class in modern society. They want us to believe we are marginal.

Today, auto is a global industry which, like all other industries, has been gripped by the general crisis of capitalism. It's a crisis that raises some startling questions. Why, for example, does VW pay its German workers \$67 per hour, while paying its US workers in Chattanooga, Tennessee, only \$27 per hour in wages and benefits?

Yet, this series of articles on the world's auto workers raises even more startling questions. Why do we need a wage system, period? Why do we need capital for investment? Why can't we produce for social need, not private profit?

They call it a crisis in capitalism. We feel it as a crisis in wage labor... trouble paying the bills, uncertainties about the future, our need for more

wages means that it's our crisis. Yet despite what we feel, it's the needs of capital that dictate our situation.

In capitalist production, profits are not enough. They need the biggest market share they can get to beat their rivals. And they need the highest rate of profits to attract the investment they need to automate production and capture the biggest share of the market.

In all this they need us--the working class. But not as partners. They want us as wage workers. In capitalism no worker gets a job unless it generates a profit.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor, the average U.S. auto worker gets \$37 per hour (\$22 in wages and \$15 in benefits). In that hour they produce about \$240 worth of product (the statistics call it "value added"). The capitalist puts out \$37 per hour and gets back \$240. Not a bad system - for the capitalist!

To appreciate what a great deal it is, let's take 100,000 auto workers (there are actually more). Let's just look at one 40 hour shift (most plants run on two or three shifts). The wage and benefit investment for the capitalist is  $\$37 \times 40 \times 100,000 = \$148,000,000$ . The "value added" for the capitalist is  $\$240 \times 40 \times 100,000 = \$960,000,000$ ! And they say the industrial working class is marginal!

Of course, that \$960,000,000 doesn't all go into the pockets of the auto industry magnates. To begin with, it only exists as credit (fictitious

money) until the cars are sold. That's one reason market share is important. Then it has to be used to pay interest to the bankers for all the credit advanced, to pay the suppliers of the steel, glass, tires and energy that were used in production. Still, there is a sizeable chunk of cash concentrated in the hands of the auto bosses.

That "chunk" is not money as we know it: it's capital. As such, it's social and political power and can be used, invested or disposed of any way the capitalist likes. It's that capital, for example, that allows VW to move some production from \$67 an hour in Germany to \$22 an hour in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

No such freedom for us workers. Our wage is all but spent before we get it. First off \$15 an hour out of the \$37 is siphoned off to pay for benefits. We only get to see the \$22 an hour, which translates into about what a family of four would need to meet "living wage" standards in Chattanooga, Tennessee or Detroit, Michigan.

This constant struggle to pay the bills and barely survive is a cycle that demands our attention so much that we could lose sight of the political, more general and important cycle. This is the cycle that sees our labor power creating their power and their power controlling us—even though we are the majority, ultimately with the decisive power! The wage system empowers capitalists and enslaves workers. Who needs it?

**Next:** *How capitalist crisis affects workers globally*

## From Gaza to Honduras to the US:

### ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE

PASADENA, CA, August 5—Fifty people gathered today in a quickly-organized street protest with slogans calling for an end to US support for the massacre in Gaza, and for a warm welcome for the refugee children fleeing poverty and violence in Central America. The main speech highlighted the theme that “another world is possible.”

*“A world based on cooperation, not competition*

*“A world where there are no rich and poor, no oppressor and oppressed, and no one is marginalized;*

*“A world where everyone lives in the abundance that the earth provides; without money and without possession, but rich, free, and serving one another.”*

Homemade signs reflected a broad range of politics (see pictures). Some carried quotes from the Old and New Testaments, such as: “Woe to them that covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses, and take them away.” (Micah 2) Others simply said “Peace” or “Stop Killing Kids.”

One sign read, “Capitalism kills kids from Gaza to Honduras and right here” and another quoted Marx, “From each according to ability, to each according to need.” These were picked up and carried by friends of friends, not by Party



members.

One sign said (in Spanish) “Everyone will be welcome in a communist world without borders.” A good friend was a little shocked to see this, but happily surprised to see that nobody objected.

The event was organized at a Party-led study group that meets monthly in a comrade’s home. We wrote the main speech collectively, with very open struggle.

One comrade suggested that it use the word “communist” for the world we want to see, but another said that he and his friends didn’t agree with that. Actually, the speech did not describe communism since it said nothing about revolution or the need for a party to unite the masses and organize political struggle.

We should have worked harder to guarantee that *Red Flag* was distributed to put forward communist politics clearly. However, communism did come up for discussion, for example when a group went out for dinner afterward.

Many of us are involved in

churches and other mass organizations. That’s how we were able to mobilize our friends and their families and friends for this event. “Thank you for doing this,” we heard again and again.

One friend brought a petition to Congress and got several dozen signatures, but the energy for the protest didn’t come from a fight for reform demands. It came from outrage at what we’re seeing every day and from a growing openness to the idea that we need to work for radical, maybe even revolutionary, change.

It was an eye-opener for some of us who are communists and atheists to see

how our friends use Biblical language to express political views we share.

*“Do not look to the strong, to those who are wise in the ways of empire and domination; do not follow after those who trust in their own superiority.”*

*“For it is the weak in the world who shame the strong; it is the low and despised in the world, ... who reduce to nothing the Great Powers that grind the face of the poor and destroy the earth for profit!”*

And our religious friends happily read words from the Internationale:

*“We have been naught, we shall be all; the world shall rise on new foundations!”*

Though this event was not very large, it had a qualitatively mass character with important elements of communist politics in the lead. Our next study group will surely have much to say about this.

Meanwhile, the potential exists to get a few more people to participate in the study group, and possibly to consolidate a small Party club as well.

## SUMMING UP LENIN’S IDEAS ON DIALECTICS

*This column finishes our discussion of Lenin’s contributions to dialectical materialism.*

### The “Law of Uneven Development”

Previously we discussed Lenin’s view that dialectics means that change happens by revolutions and breaks in continuity, rather than only by smooth and gradual increase and decrease. Lenin made an important application of this idea in his argument that imperialist powers cannot divide up the world without wars. The economic and military strength of the powers taking part in the division “does not change to an equal degree, for the even development of different undertakings, trusts, branches of industry, or countries is impossible under capitalism.... Is it conceivable that in ten or twenty years’ time the relative strength of the imperialist powers will have remained unchanged? It is out of the question.”

Deals that imperialists make about who gets to exploit what labor or resources always break down, because some powers are getting stronger and demand more while some are becoming relatively weaker, but refuse to give up what they control. In the 20th century, Japan, Germany and the US were rising powers, challenging the old empires. Now China is a rising power, challenging the US, in line with the dialectics of imperialist rivalry.

### Universal Connection

From his study of Hegel, Lenin put a big emphasis on the idea the “all-sidedness and all-embracing character interconnection of the world.” Every actual thing or process has complex connections with many different things and processes

in the world. A full understanding of anything, therefore, requires that all these connections be explored, a process that can never be fully completed.

Lenin took an ordinary drinking glass as an example of the many aspects of a thing. The glass is a cylinder, but it “can be used as a missile; it can serve as a paper weight, a receptacle for a captive butterfly, or a valuable object with an artistic engraving or design, and this has nothing at all to do with whether or not it can be used for drinking, is made of glass, is cylindrical,” etc.

Which aspect of the glass is important to us depends on our needs and interests. Someone who wants to get a drink of water doesn’t care what color the glass is, but does care whether it has any holes in it. “A full ‘definition’ of an object,” however, “must include the whole of human experience, both as a criterion of truth and a practical indicator of its connection with human wants.”

### Lenin’s Understanding of Idealism

Leaving out important aspects of something or giving too much importance to other aspects is a mistaken way of understanding something that called “one-sidedness.” Lenin argued that we should consider idealism to be one-sided, rather than just stupidity or ignorance, as the old, pre-dialectical materialism had seen it.

Lenin concluded that Hegel’s “thought of the ideal passing into the real is profound, ... it is clear that this contains much truth.” The old, mechanical materialism saw ideas not as causes but only as effects of what is real, and denied that ideas can have results in the world. Lenin saw

that ideas can become real if they motivate people to create something new, a concept central to the fight for communism. The error of idealism was its failure to connect the process of realizing ideas with matter and nature. “Intelligent [i.e., dialectical] idealism,” he wrote, “is closer to intelligent [dialectical] materialism than stupid [dead, crude, rigid] materialism.”

### Dialectic Logic and Practice

Lenin’s notes show his materialist reinterpretation of Hegel’s ideas about practice, that is, purposeful human action. The path for learning the truth is “from living perception to abstract thought, and from this to practice.” Even the principles of dialectics have been extracted from billions of repetitions of practical actions and then “serve people in practice.”

### Lenin’s Influence on Dialectics

Lenin’s leadership and his own study and writing about dialectics had a profound influence on philosophy in the international communist movement. Lenin insisted that the party organize study of Hegel, but also of Plekhanov. The Bolsheviks decisively rejected the reformist, anti-dialectical philosophy that had been dominant in European socialism prior to the Bolshevik revolution in 1917. Unfortunately it took long struggles until the early 1930s for the main ideas of dialectics to be formulated and adopted in the USSR, formulations which were subject to decisive weaknesses, as we will see.

**Next column:** The politics of mechanical materialism in the USSR

## LETTERS

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## CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

**Anonymous thoughts of a driver**

As an employee of MTA, I join with the struggle that *Red Flag* is making. Here, the problem is that many are already slaves of MTA and its low wages. Taking advantage of the economic situation and their prestigious name as a company, MTA hires workers paying them poverty wages.

They also spy and make rules to drown the same workers. The rules can supposedly be used by the workers to defend themselves, but they are a double-edged sword because they help the same MTA to get rid of workers.

On the other hand, the workers do not want to join because they have their families to maintain and they have to survive by lowering their heads in reproach and facing constant threats that they will be fired if they do not respect the rules.

These are sometimes absurd because those who make them are not in the street with the people who get on the buses. They see everything from their offices on the screen and it is easier to write rules about how to treat the people who live daily the aberrations of some people, the humiliation and abuse suffered by a bus operator earning a poverty wage, which is what they pay.

MTA tries by all means to tell the drivers that they should treat people as nicely as possible without mistreating them and without racism, and that they should protect these passengers. In this, they are correct, but the question is "Who protects the drivers from racism and mistreatment?" MTA does not do it. They don't care if we are mistreated psychologically, verbally, or physically.

They say they are guarding the safety of the passengers but what really interests them is that they not get sued: that is, the money they would lose. All the drivers need MTA to defend and support us, something which MTA is very far from doing. They prefer to put us between a rock and a hard place, paying outrageously low wages.

In the street, we are humiliated and who guards our rights? NO ONE. Question: Is this freedom of speech and equality that they preach so much in this country, where they say there is no racism and that we all have rights?

A right to what? To be mistreated, humiliated without anyone to defend us, for some miserable green pieces of paper that only serve to corrupt the society. The millionaires appreciate this green paper called the dollar more than life.

It's too bad that our society has chosen to be so low and that we are miserable because of this paper and coins that, since they are not food, cannot be eaten. Our future is uncertain with this rotten money.

--An MTA driver

**Subject: MTA contract**

In the drivers' contract is an item that you should mention for all operators to know. It needs to be changed. Any operator hired after Sept. 7 1991 with 23 years who is under 55 would have no medical coverage if they retire. Even age 55-57 they would have to pay 50% which would be \$500 out of pocket. Recently Vice General Chairman John Ellis retaliated against his Secretary of L.C.A for being against the contract and at the Sportsman Lodge contract meeting spoke out against it. He then stripped him of authority to represent the members of Division 8. We can't trust the committee, who also in their latest bulletin said a minority of members turned down the contract.

--A Driver

**"Whose schools?"**

During a forum at the American Federation of Teachers convention in July, there was some sharp struggle. Many teachers expressed their anger at school closings, standardized tests, and racist inequality in the schools, but they wanted to fight to "defend public education."

A comrade said, "It's not public education. It's capitalist education, and we shouldn't defend it. The schools in capitalism have never served the working class and they never will. We should instead fight for a revolution for communism where schools and everything else will serve the working class."

Another comrade said, "These aren't our schools. They never were. We shouldn't be fighting to reform the schools. We should be fighting to destroy the whole system and build one that meets the needs of workers everywhere."

Another speaker commented that you can't build a revolutionary movement by organizing people to fight for reforms.

A panelist responded to these statements by saying that if we used words like communism, we would turn off many teachers and others. Ironically, this professor's talk had been so packed with jargon that few in the audience could make sense of it.

Our experiences at the convention proved the panelist wrong. Teachers and other public workers gladly took our communist newspaper and pamphlet. Some donated money and will go to our website. Many praised us for our ideas and actions.

We have renewed confidence that in this crisis of capitalism, masses of workers, soldiers, students and teachers will take communist ideas as their own.

—LA Comrades

**Questions about raising communist internationalism**

The article and letters about the Seattle summer project were an inspiring example of how

young people advance by taking political struggle to the workers. The article also made a helpful point about the importance of study groups which prepare comrades for political practice and then meet again to analyze it.

However, it isn't clear from the articles or the letter that the study groups actually dealt with what we mean by building communist solidarity. We don't call for trade-union solidarity where unions send money to other unions on strike, or organize consumer boycotts of products made by scabs. But I don't think we should call for Boeing workers to "help" workers in South Africa, either. That's charity. I think communist solidarity means building the only movement through which we can ALL break the chains of wage slavery. Did the study groups discuss these ideas before they went to Boeing or evaluate the discussions they had afterward?

It would also have been helpful for the article to have explored what *Red Flag* readers inside the Boeing plants did with the letter.

How many asked others to sign? What reactions did they get? How many did sign? What conversations about communism happened? Did the effort move anyone closer to joining the Party, or lead more workers to take papers?

Another article or letter should answer these questions.

We used to follow a "parallel tracks" strategy: putting forward reforms while distributing communist literature. Worse, we approached workers around reforms and raised communism "later." The encounter described, in spite of its exemplary boldness showing confidence in the masses, seemed to represent these old strategies instead of "mobilizing the masses for communism."

We are struggling to figure out how to mobilize for communism around particular issues like the South African metalworkers' strike. Seattle was the one place where comrades took advantage of this excellent opportunity. We should try to learn more from it.

—Reader

**SOLDIERS FROM PAGE 8****Build ICWP Among Soldiers Now from Ferguson to Iraq**

This shows that there is fertile ground to recruit soldiers to ICWP, which, different from the past communist parties, this time is fighting to take power to build communism directly.

The bosses have problems like in Ferguson where the police are incapable of stopping the rebellion. The bosses have had to call out the soldiers of the National Guard, the majority of whom are workers or the children of workers. With political struggle, these soldiers can understand that they should side with the rebels. If our Party had a base among the workers in Ferguson and beyond, and among the soldiers in the National Guard, there is no doubt that this rebellion could lead to an armed insurrection for communism.

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# SOLDIERS KEY TO COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

Historically during the armed clashes between oppressor and oppressed classes, the rulers' armies have always gone into battle well armed and well trained. In spite of this, many of these armed forces have hesitated to attack the workers and in many cases have become neutralized.

But when tenacious, consistent communist political work has been developed with the soldiers, when there are communist organizers within these bodies, in decisive moments these revolutionary bases will be capable of bringing the mass of the soldiers not only to become neutral but to join the ranks of revolution, to fight shoulder to shoulder with the workers, farmworkers, students, and others.

## Historically Soldiers Have United with Workers for Revolution

These are not illusions. This is the history of the class struggle. There are many examples. The Paris Commune of 1871, when soldiers joined with the workers and took power. In Russia in 1917, communist Bolshevik soldiers brought the bulk of the Czarist army to join with industrial workers to take state power. In China in the mid twentieth century, soldiers and workers united, overthrew the Chinese oppres-

sors, and took power.

There are many other examples in different countries where soldiers have refused to shoot the oppressed. Why? Because they belong to our class. But if the work of spreading communist political consciousness is not carried out, then the bosses, with threats or lies, can win the soldiers to their side. For all of these reasons it is urgent and necessary to carry out this military work. Not doing this will lead to failure.

## Is it possible to win the soldiers to communist ideas?

Is it possible to win the soldiers to communist ideas? We already know that several communist parties achieved this. Like workers, soldiers live under a brutal dictatorial regime, justified by military discipline implemented by corrupt officials, in many cases associated with drug gangs, paid assassins, etc. Soldiers are ordered to risk their lives and kill other class brothers and sisters for the bosses' profits.

In many countries the living conditions of the soldiers are rotten. The food is bad, the officials charge for the uniforms, etc. Protest can mean a beating, humiliating punishment, imprisonment, even death. This happens in all bosses' armies today, at different levels, but in all

armies the soldiers are unhappy.

In the US, in addition to the big rebellions of soldiers during the Vietnam War, today we know stories of soldiers who join together to protest being mistreated, soldiers who get together to talk about communism, soldiers who are forced to go to war, and soldiers who know that the recruiters' promises are lies.

## Soldiers Unite Against Brass Today

For example recently a group of soldiers was punished when they arrived late to a formation because another official sent them late. The sergeant wanted to punish them very severely. He gave them a paper to sign accepting their guilt. One soldier told the others, "I'm not going to sign it. I'm going to tell them that it was other officer's fault, not ours."

There was a struggle with him that he shouldn't act alone, but instead collectively. Then all the soldiers agreed not to sign the paper. And they didn't. They turned in a blank piece of paper. The next day the officials demanded to know why they hadn't signed. The soldiers answered that it was not their fault that they were late. Days later it was announced that the punishment was suspended. [See SOLDIERS, page 7](#)

## Pro-Palestinian Activists Must Learn from Marikana:

# THE FIGHT AGAINST ISRAELI APARTHEID MUST BECOME A FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM

As we go to press, Israel has resumed its bombardment of Gaza. Negotiations in Egypt between the Israeli and Palestinian bosses have been broken off. The Egyptian bosses, like the Saudis terrified of the masses in their own country, hope to calm the current crisis before it sweeps them away. However, as German Communist poet Bertholt Brecht wrote, "Those at the top say: Peace and war are of different substance. But their peace and their war are like wind and storm."

The current genocidal bombardment has cost more than two thousand, mostly civilian lives, including close to 500 children, and overwhelming devastation. But Palestinian resistance to the current attack follows 66 years of occupation and a seven-year-long blockade of Gaza itself which—before the current attacks—kept its economy in a state of controlled collapse, with a 40% unemployment rate, and critical scarcities of hospital supplies, building materials, electric power, clean water and sewage systems.

Protests around the world have denounced these attacks and US funding for them and have called for a "Free Palestine" with thousands in the streets from London to Los Angeles to Cape Town. In the U.S., solidarity activists concentrated on an Israeli ship docking along the West Coast, delaying its arrival at least at one port. **Red Flag** and our South Africa pamphlet have been present and received a good response at these protests.

## Workers of the World Unite!

The movement for a Free Palestine rests on the bourgeois idea that the workers have more in common with "their" bosses than with workers of another "race," nation or ethnicity. It gives the Palestinian bosses getting rich off the blockade a free pass, as well as the Israeli bosses whose wealth depends on the exploitation of the workers—Jews and Arabs—of Israel. The national liberation narrative, the need for a national homeland, is the same narrative that Zionism provides for the state of Israel. It guarantees a permanent

state of war, fascist measures within Israel, and genocidal attacks on Palestinians.

From its inception, the International Communist Movement supported national liberation struggles against imperialism from Vietnam to El Salvador to South Africa with horrific results for the working class. We must reject this ideology and replace it with communist internationalism

The only way out of this dead end is communist revolution, which requires working-class unity—the idea that workers everywhere have more in common with each other than they do with the bosses of "their own" race, nation or ethnicity. We call for the unity of Hebrew and Arabic speaking workers throughout the region to overthrow the capitalist class. We call for a world without nations, without borders—a communist world.

## Marikana should end all illusions in national liberation

Israel Palestinian solidarity activists have called Israel an apartheid state, with a ruling class of one race and explicitly racial laws which make second-class citizens of Arab/Palestinian Israelis.

They have organized a movement of boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS), to pressure the Israeli government to end the occupation of Arab lands and to respect the rights of Arab/Palestinians. They argue, with Desmond Tutu in Cape Town last week, that "the withdrawal of trade with South Africa by multinational corporations with a conscience in the 1980s ultimately brought the apartheid state - bloodlessly - to its knees..." Clare Short, former



September, 2012, Workers in Marikana, South Africa, confront police after cop murder of 34 striking miners

U.K. cabinet minister, says, "the boycott worked for South Africa, it is time to do it again."

The boycott did work for South Africa—for the capitalists! It guaranteed that the struggle against apartheid, which had the potential to be a fight against the whole capitalist system, would be limited to pressuring the bosses to eliminate the most blatant features of racism while keeping capitalism intact. It didn't bring capitalism—the source of racism—to its knees! Only communist revolution can do that.

Surely Israel is an apartheid state. More importantly, it is a capitalist state. As the struggle in South Africa has taught us, putting an end to apartheid has not put an end to wage slavery. Life for the working masses in South Africa is as bad as or worse than it was under apartheid; a few black bosses and politicians have not ended racist capitalism.

The murder of 34 miners in Marikana two years ago at the hands of the police of the "New South Africa" shows us that fighting for an end to apartheid, or "national liberation" without ending capitalism with a communist revolution maintains the racist profit system and its murderous class rule. Learn from Marikana! Fight for Communism!