

# RED FLAG

## MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM

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

## GARMENT WORKERS: OUR LIVES AND WORK HAVE NO PRICE



“How much you have is how much you are worth!” This is the yardstick capitalism uses to take the value of human beings. And, of course, since the capitalists have lots of money: they are worth a lot. We workers, on the other hand, have nothing: we are therefore worthless.

This is capitalism’s logic and that of all class societies. The oppressors, the exploiters – parasites who live off the sweat, blood, and tears of those of us who work – are the most important people in the universe. The rest of us are nothing.

That is why our class needs communist logic to fight o build a communist world where we – the producers of all social value – will be the most important. Without bosses, their exploitation and money, we will contribute to society according to our capacities and commitment and will receive according to our needs.

In communism there won’t be any privileges for anyone because no one will be more important than anyone else. We are all important. All contributions will always be welcomed and appreciated, regardless of how big or how small. The important thing is to contribute to the well-being of the world’s masses.

In order to make the revolution and build the communist world we need, we workers must understand and value our social worth as a class. We are indispensable in society because without us nothing moves or gets produced.

The capitalists don’t produce anything. They are leeches living and growing rich off our labor. We can and must overthrow them to liberate ourselves from their wage slavery.

### **Without our labor, nothing would be produced or have value**

Let’s take a pair of jeans. The cloth that garment workers sew is a product of a long labor process: from planting the cotton seed, to harvesting it, to transporting it, and weaving it into cloth.

None of this could happen without our labor. The cloth itself, however, has very little use value until it is made into things we can wear. Even the pieces into which the cloth is cut to make the clothes only take on their full use value when they are made into garments.

Only the garment workers’ labor power can achieve this. Now the pieces are at the machine. Here we can see that money really is useless. The boss can put a million dollars at each sewing machine and a thousand years can go by and the pieces will just rot there.

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## LIBERATING THE MEANS OF PRODUCTION OPENS NEW POSSIBILITIES IN MINES AND FACTORIES

**A hundred thousand South African workers have wildcatted during the last two months. The South African regime murdered over fifty of these strikers.**

The government and media singled out forty strikers at the Kumba Iron Ore’s giant Sishen mine for special attention. Their crime: they seized heavy mining equipment including giant trucks and bulldozers during the two-week blockade of the mine. With this simple act, the Sishen Forty raised a key question: “Whose mine is this anyway?”

The strike has cost 120,000 tons of lost production a day. Kumba, a unit of Anglo American, is Africa’s largest iron ore producer. As threatening as this is, it isn’t what most shook up the Board of Directors, which includes representatives from JP Morgan, Citigroup, Ford, Lockheed Martin on the U.S. side and Airbus parent company EADS, the World Bank, the Bank of England and the Royal Bank of Scotland on the European side. Whether they knew it or not, these Sishen miners

are implicitly questioning the capitalists’ right to own the factories, mines and mills. The bosses’ “ownership” of these means of production dooms us to a life of selling our labor: a life of grinding exploitation.

Last week South African police arrested the forty strikers in a pre-dawn raid to reclaim the mining equipment for their masters, the company bosses. “Criminal charges of extortion, intimidation, theft, malicious damage to property and contempt of court have been laid,” management said. The company fired the rest of the wildcatters.

### **State Power**

Since then a huge debate has swept the South African press over the rule of law. Naturally, International Capital hides its right to exploit behind the “rule of law.” They demand government repression and murder of those who defy their rule.

Liberals bemoan the “post-apartheid state’s increasing reliance on law, order and administration, and less [reliance] on the anti-colonial and democratic idealism of its founding political and moral vi-

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## Turkish Workers Say:

### “WE WON’T BE SOLDIERS FOR IMPERIALISTS!”

October 24, 2012--The Turkish workers and the Middle Eastern masses in motion are posing a vexing dilemma for US imperialism and its allies.

“The United States will repeatedly face the same security dilemma it faced in Libya and now faces in Syria: either finding some way to intervene with military force, or standing by—both with unpredictable and highly negative potential consequences,” wrote Anthony Cordesman, a military analyst at the influential Center for Strategic and International Studies (10/9/12).

The US rulers are at odds amongst themselves about how to deal with this dilemma. They understand that China is the main threat to their world hegemony. They see the need to concentrate their forces and attention on the Asia Pacific region.

They, therefore, consider any Middle Eastern military adventure a waste of valuable resources which are needed for their Asian endeavor. Nevertheless, they can’t just abandon the oil rich Middle East, the cornerstone of their world domination since World War II, to the China-Russia-Iran axis.

The US imperialists’ grip on this region, however, is becoming more and more shaky as they and their allies become more isolated. They are caught in a vicious Catch-22. They are damned if they fight for it and damned if they don’t.

#### Turkey: A staunch US ally is becoming more unreliable

US bosses thought that Turkey, a nation of 75 million people with the fourth largest army in NATO, would spearhead the military intervention in Syria. Although Prime Minister Erdogan and some in Turkey’s ruling circles covet this role, others are opposed to it, including the former First Minister Yasar Yakis, a close friend of Turkish President Gul.

The masses in Turkey are also opposed to war. Recently in Ankara, Turkey’s capital, thousands of anti-war demonstrators shouted “We don’t want to be soldiers for the imperialists.”

Further complicating the situation, there are 23 million Turkish Allawites and Alevites, many of whom are strong supporters of the Syrian president. There are also 15-20 million restive Turkish Kurds seeking autonomy or independence, and several armed Kurdish groups fighting for it.

A Turkish invasion of Syria would have to pass through Syrian Kurdistan, the home of 1.5 million Kurds. That means Turkey would have to station troops there to secure its supply lines.

Turkish soldiers would face a quagmire fighting Kurdish guerrillas on both sides of the border. “Syria could be Turkey’s Vietnam,” warns Mr. Yakis.

#### NATO’s drums beating the retreat

After Syria shelled a Turkish town, killing five civilians, NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) called for consultation (article 4 of its Charter) and not for armed intervention (article 5). This indicates that there will be no escalation at this time.” (www.alternet.org)

NATO’s Secretary General expressed solidarity with Turkey, but stressed that Syria can have only one solution - a political solution.

Even the European Union is divided. On Saturday, October 13, the German Foreign Minister stopped in Istanbul on his way to China to make it clear that Germany expected the Turkish government not to escalate the Syrian crisis.

#### Gulf Cooperation Council, arming the Syrian rebels, is divided

Iranian President Ahmadinejad visited Kuwait last week to participate in the first Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Summit. The week before Iran’s Foreign Minister was in Qatar discussing the 48 Iranians abducted by the Syrian rebels and “bilateral relations.”

No wonder a prominent pro-Saudi daily wrote



regarding Syria, “In fact, it may not even be possible to reach unanimous agreement even among these six countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE), due to the differences in their stances.” (Raghida Dergham, 10/12/2012)

#### The buck stops at US imperialism

Israel and Iran used to be the US bosses’ policemen of the Middle East. They lost Iran long ago and Israel’s usefulness has diminished tremendously. Wish as they may, they can’t count on others to do the fighting for them.

“Syria is too powerful a military machine for the United States to directly challenge without a massive use of force,” Cordesman bemoans.

US bosses, however, have fewer and fewer options and will have to eventually commit their troops to wider wars in the Middle East and Asia Pacific. This is the logic of a system based on profits and empire.

Our logic points to our need to join the capitalists’ armies to win the soldiers to turn the guns around for a communist revolution. Our logic calls for the creation of a new world where communist collectivity will rule to make sure that human life is the most valued resource in the world. Join the International Communist Work-

## GARMENT

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But, when a garment worker sits at the machine, the pieces are transformed by our labor into pants, dresses and coats that we use to fulfill our need to protect ourselves from the elements.

#### Capitalism’s exchange cheapens everything we produce, including our lives

The bosses transform the use value we produce into exchange value, putting a price on everything, including our lives. For the bosses, everything revolves around money because their system is based on producing profits from our wage slavery.

For the capitalists, a coat only has one value, the exchange value or price they assign it. If we don’t have that amount of money, they would rather shred the coat and see us freeze to death, than give it to us.

What is the price of a human life to them? One, twenty, fifty, a hundred or more lousy dollars?

What is the price of one of our loved one’s lives? Of our children, our parents, our class brothers and sisters internationally? These lives have no price. They are invaluable!

Our labor power should also have no price. The use value of the things we produce cannot be measured by money. It’s invaluable! With their slogan, “Sell it or let it rot!” the bosses deprive the working class of that use value.

In a communist society the use value we produce – instead of enriching a handful of blood sucking bosses – will be used to feed, shelter, dress, cure, educate and improve the lives of the world’s workers.

In this boss-dominated world, tens of millions of workers die yearly of hunger or sicknesses that could be easily cured or prevented. Three billion more live in abject poverty on less than \$2 a day. Millions more die in the imperialists’ bloodbaths.

That is why our struggle should not be to get a “better price” for our labor, but to abolish the wage slavery which forces us to sell our labor

power to the bosses. We will then use the value we produce to meet the needs of all of humanity.

That and only that will put an end to the horrors of capitalism. Communism, and only communism, will liberate us to fully value our work, producing the things we need while developing and deepening the widest communist social relations. That’s why we need to join ICWP.



The struggle against wage slavery in the sweatshops of New York, 1909.



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



## POLITICAL ACTION THAT COUNTS: THE FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM

CALIFORNIA, USA — “Propositions are a gateway drug,” said a comrade, speaking from experience. “You start campaigning for fair housing and then they hand you door-hangers for the Democratic Party.”

The last *Red Flag* exposed the Big Lie of Prop 32: that the unions and the Democratic Party are the “workers’ voice.” The Bigger Lie is the whole ballot initiative process. It builds the illusion that the masses have a real role in political decision-making under capitalism.

“This is our big chance to end the death penalty and stop killing innocent people,” some say. But every year capitalism kills five million innocent children who die of preventable infectious diseases, and millions more from malnutrition. It’s estimated that someone dies unnecessarily each week in California prisons

“This measure would give thousands of three-strikes prisoners a chance for re-sentencing,” said an activist who’s working night and day for it. “Actually,” she added, “it’s only a very tiny reform. It barely scratches the surface.”

“If Prop 30 doesn’t pass, we’ll be bankrupt by the end of the year,” declared a college official. “If it does pass,” he murmured, “we’ll be bankrupt in a couple of years anyway.”

Another proposition “gives consumers the right to know whether there are genetically-modified organisms in their food,” said a supporter. “It will make it more of a free market.” Way to go, capitalism!

But many see through the lies. Liberal student activists complain that classmates refuse to register. “It’s just a lesser evil,” they hear. “Vote don’t count.”

“Even union members may be questioning labor’s reliance on elections,” admitted the California Federation of Teachers president. That’s why the initiative process is so useful to the capitalists this year. It’s a tool for mobilizing the masses around capitalist business-as-usual while trying to convince us that organizing workers to vote can “overcome the influence of the wealthy and powerful,” to quote the CFT President.

The capitalist bosses overrule provisions they don’t like. They find other ways to carry out policies that voters reject. “Promising to stop spe-

cial-interest money is akin to pledging to halt the Santa Ana winds,” wrote conservative *LA Times* columnist George Skelton.

Obviously there won’t be anything like that in communist society, when there’s no money, period. No barrage of half-truths and outright lies with different “messages” for different audiences. No “devil-is-in-the-details” legal trickery. No competing sets of bosses trying to manipulate the masses for their own advantage.

And no voting, either.

**“From the masses, to the masses.”**

Communist leadership isn’t a popularity contest or a self-serving clique. It’s moving others to do what needs to be done for the international working class as a whole. We aim to develop millions upon millions of leaders: workers and youth like you!

Mobilizing the masses for communism means making political decisions collectively, as well as organizing production, distribution, and every other aspect of society. The International Communist Workers’ Party will organize the widest possible discussion, based on a huge network of communist cells with deep ties among the masses.

Some decisions are harder than others. For example:

Would the masses ever impose a death penalty? Or life sentences without parole? If not, what are the consequences for those who violently attack the masses? Would we develop genetically-modified organisms for food? When resources are scarce (temporarily or long-term) how will we use and allocate them?

We won’t always agree. But we won’t have opposing propaganda blitzes followed by a “majority-rules” vote. Instead, we’ll study issues scientifically using the tools of dialectical materialism. We’ll discuss them in the light of our shared communist principles.

The results of millions of

conversations will come back to the Party center. They will be analyzed collectively and discussed until there’s general agreement on a course of action. Maybe we’ll use new technologies to enable masses to watch, listen in, and participate all at once.

Growing confidence in our collective wisdom will make us okay with carrying out decisions, even when we don’t agree. Later, we’ll reflect objectively on the outcomes, using constructive criticism and self-criticism. When a decision turns out to be partly or entirely wrong, we’ll admit it and change course.

**What Counts?**

“I’m sick of all these calls,” said one of the few people who didn’t hang up on a union phone-banker. “I don’t blame you,” said the phone-banker. “I am, too.”

A comrade found herself explaining to a friend why our Party is against elections and voting, while she herself wore a “Yes on 30” button. “Sometimes we have to get involved in stuff like this as part of the process of building ties with people and struggling to get them to see our point of view,” she said.

The friend happily took a stack of *Red Flags* to distribute.

That’s political action that counts.



## MEANS OF PRODUCTION

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sion.” (Suren Pillay, University of Western Cape.)

Neither “side” questions the “right” of the bosses to own the mines built with the sweat of generations of workers. If you don’t question this “right,” racist exploitation is a given.

Of course, this right of bosses’ ownership is ultimately guaranteed, not by words in a law book, but by state violence. So, to take back the mines and factories we have to mobilize the masses to smash the bosses’ state.

Now we’re getting into the heavy stuff. Those of us lucky enough to be employed spend most of our day at the job. How would our lives be dif-

ferent if the mines, mills and factories were indeed ours?

We don’t pretend to have all the answers, but along with some friends from Boeing we came up with some ideas.

### What Would Airplane Factories Look Like Under Communism?

Every one of us remembers the orientation we got when we first hired in. They made you fill out forms and told you to obey the company rules.

Not long after this orientation, one comrade remembered, his friend’s son had a school project on how airplanes fly. His friend called up to ask our comrade for help. After all, our comrade worked in an airplane factory.

Our comrade helped out the best he could with his high school science knowledge, but it started him thinking. Why didn’t they discuss this at his

orientation?

His wife suggested they write a leaflet asking the CEO to answer the question, “How do you get an airplane to fly?” Then everyone started laughing.

The CEO would say, “First, you get a loan from the banks, then you set up a sales team. You hire bean counters to get the best price on building, machinery and raw materials and especially the cheapest labor.” Not much help with a science project!

Next issue we’ll continue the discussion: Capitalism produces for sale, while communism produces for our needs. How can communist factories become centers for science education not profit centers as they are now? How can this orientation produce not only planes, but more communists as well?

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## CHINESE BOSSES: “HERE TO MAKE A PROFIT”

Many around the world don't think China is imperialist. Others think that the Chinese capitalists will be nicer imperialists than the US. But capitalism-imperialism exploits workers for profit. The Chinese bosses capture resources and markets on the sweat, blood, and lives of workers from China to Europe, from Africa to Latin America.

“The Chinese are just here to make a profit,” said Paul Kameya, a 25-year-old Zambian miner. “We are slaves in our own country.”

We can't build a future based on hoping for more benevolent imperialists. As long as production is for profit, for buying and selling, workers' needs can't be met.

We must organize to get rid of all the blood-sucking bosses by building a mass International Communist Workers' Party to mobilize the masses for communism. Then all production will be planned and carried out by workers safely to meet our needs.

### Greece: Chinese Bosses Set Standard for Sharpening Attacks on Workers

Two years ago, the Chinese shipping company Cosco bought half of the port in Piraeus, Greece. Greek workers who unload cargo for the Greek shipping company in the other half of the port get up to \$181,000 a year with overtime. But workers on the Chinese-owned side get less than \$23,000 a year!

The Greek government profited by the sale of half the port to China, and from taxes on the increased traffic in Cosco's super-exploited portion of the port.

Work rules call for nine people on a gantry crane (used to unload cargo), but Cosco uses only four. Cosco does this through subcontractors who hire temporary workers, pay them low wages, and throw out work rules.

Cosco fired Dimitrios Batsoulis because he tried to organize a workers' committee to raise safety issues. Recently, he left the steering compartment of a crane when the heater broke on a

snowy morning. His hands were too cold and stiff to control the giant machine forty-nine feet above the ground. When he climbed down to get warm, his manager and a Cosco executive suspended him for slowing down operations.

Bosses worldwide use the Chinese imperialist “model” to sharpen their attacks on workers. Capitalism can't function any other way! The general-strike wave in Greece shows that Greek workers are not taking these attacks passively. But to end them, they need to destroy capitalism.

### Zambia: Workers Attack Chinese Bosses

Part of the \$billions the Chinese invest in Africa go to Zambia's important coal and copper deposits.

Forty Zambian workers were killed in a mine explosion in a mine owned by China Nonferrous in 2005. In 2010, Chinese supervisors at the Chinese-owned Collum mine shot at least sixteen miners who were protesting low wages. Eleven were injured, two critically. The Zambian government arrested the managers, but then dropped all charges.

Last August 4th, fed-up workers at Collum struck against low wages and unsafe conditions, including no safety equipment. The owners were refusing to pay the legal minimum wage (\$220/month). The angry workers ran over one Chinese supervisor with a trolley, killing him. They seriously wounded another. Sixteen miners were arrested. These charges haven't been dropped.

Racist imperialist exploitation leads workers to rebel. These rebellious workers must mobilize for communism.

### Peru: Miners Fight All Exploiters

The Chinese invested \$15 billion in Latin America in 2010, including in mines in Peru, the world's fourth-largest mineral exporter.

In 1992, the Shougang group bought Hierro



Peru, Peru's largest iron ore producer. They cut the Peruvian work force in half and brought in workers from China. Instead of building new houses for workers as promised, they divided existing houses in half, forcing two families to share a dwelling built for one. Wages are only \$14/day, among the country's lowest. Average pay for miners in Peru is \$33 a day. Seventy percent of the ore is exported to China and other Asian countries.

Last March, three workers were killed by the Humala government troops when they joined thousands to protest new laws to imprison any of the 50,000 informal (individual) miners caught mining. An individual miner can get \$200 a month, nearly double Lima's minimum wage of \$117 a month. President Humala, elected as the “workers' friend,” always sides with the mine owners.

In June, miners at Hierro Peru joined others throughout Peru in a strike wave that continues to demand safer conditions and higher wages from US, Chinese and Peruvian mine owners.

### Worldwide: Destroy the profit system!

Imperialists and local bosses everywhere are the enemy of all workers. We have the same fight: to rid the planet of the scourge of racist capitalism-imperialism by building a communist world.

## STUDENTS: OUR FUTURE IS IN THE FACTORIES & THE ARMY, NOT COLLEGE

“My friend says that she supports Obama because if Romney wins, we won't be able to go to college because it will be too expensive,” said a high school student at an ICWP house forum.

Another person said, “They use the Republicans as the ‘boogey men’ to try to make us think we have to support the Democrats even though they are attacking us, because the Republicans will be ‘even worse.’”

“The rising cost of education is caused by the crisis of capitalism and the war budget. Both the Democrats and Republicans agree on the war budget, and the cuts will continue,” said someone else. She added, “Students at Community Colleges and Cal State Universities can't get their

classes because they've laid off so many teachers and closed classes—while raising tuition.”

Another person pointed out that even for those who go to college and graduate, official unemployment was 9.4 % in 2011, and twice as high for black and latino students. Underemployment (not getting enough hours) was officially 19%, and for black and latino students, 51%.

The illusion that going to college guarantees a good paying job is being shattered—no matter who is President. The crisis of the capitalist system includes an overproduction of college graduates: the bosses don't now have enough jobs in graduates' fields of study. This system is incapable of meeting our needs.

However, the bosses do plan to train and hire millions of skilled workers for their war industries, paying less than half what older workers were paid.

The most realistic course of action for young students, workers, and soldiers is to reject all the candidates and the capitalist system and fight for a communist system where our future will be one of sharing, learning and building a society to meet our needs. In communism, there will not be unemployment or capitalist slave labor jobs, but instead collective work for everyone in running a society that values and guarantees the well-being of all workers.

Both Obama and Romney agree on at-

tacking teachers with “merit” pay, tying teachers' pay to student test scores. They both see the need for education reform to prepare youth to patriotically serve in the bosses' military and slave labor factories. Romney even said that, if elected, he would probably keep Arne Duncan, Obama's buddy, as Secretary of Education. Both candidates, and all capitalists use education to teach racism, nationalism, sexism, and anti-communism. This is the most dangerous lie of all: that there's no alternative to capitalism.

We discussed the coming military draft and the need for students to reach out to friends in ROTC and to join the Army to mobilize soldiers for communism. We also discussed the need for students to get jobs in factories to mobilize their co-workers for communism.

The bosses have spent over \$3.3 billion on this election to try to make us believe it matters, that capitalism can be made to meet our needs. The election decides which capitalist exploiters will dominate us for the next four years.

Workers on the move—from South Africa to Bangladesh—show us that it's up to the masses to decide history by our ideas and action, not by electing our oppressors. To guarantee that masses in motion worldwide mobilize to destroy racist capitalism and build a communist society, we need to spread *Red Flag* and *Mobilize the Masses for Communism*. Let's build the struggle to liberate ourselves and our class from capitalism!





## Communism is Our Heritage and Future – Part V

### JEWISH, CHRISTIAN, AND HINDU SECTS: LIMITS OF RELIGIOUS EGALITARIANISM

The slavery-based Roman Empire controlled the Mediterranean region two thousand years ago. But within this empire, some religious communities rejected slavery and lived according to communist principles. One was the Essenes, a Jewish sect with thousands of members.

Listen to Philo (20 BCE–50 CE), a Greek-Jewish philosopher born in Alexandria, Egypt:

“Some [Essenes] cultivate the soil, others pursue peaceful arts, toiling only for the provision of their necessary wants. . . . They alone are without money and without possession, but nevertheless they are the richest of all, because to have few wants and live frugally they regard as riches . . . Among them there is no maker of any weapon of war, nor any trader, whether huckster or dealer in large merchandise on land or sea, nor do they follow any occupation that leads to injustice or to covetousness.

“There is not a single slave among them,” Philo continued. “They are all free, serving one another; they condemn masters, not only as representing a principle of unrighteousness in opposition to that of equality, but as personifications of wickedness in that they violate the law of nature which made us all brethren, created alike.”

Other sources indicate that Essene women and men were equals. The Old Testament referred to groups like them, and so did the 1st-century Roman-Jewish historian Josephus and his Roman contemporary Pliny.

The Essene community was probably massacred by Roman troops who crushed the Jewish Revolt against Rome in 66 CE.

Some say that Jesus’s family and other key people around him were Essenes. And the Apostles of Jesus are said to have lived by communist principles:

“The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul. . . . Neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. . . . Neither was there any among *them* that lacked: . . . and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.”—Acts 4: 32-35

According to the author(s) of Acts, as the Apostles gained adherents they were increasingly persecuted by King Herod and the Roman authorities. They soon dispersed as missionaries in remote lands, where most died. Unlike the Essenes, they didn’t establish a stable communist community.

The communism of the Essenes and the Apostles was compromised by their mystical religious philosophy. The Essenes emphasized living what they considered a godly personal life. They, and especially early Christians, taught that “life after death” meant more than earthly life.

Another religious distortion of egalitarianism was the centuries-long Bhakti movement in India. This cult preached that all people were equal in the eyes of God. It rejected traditional Hindu discrimination based on caste or creed, and had no priests. It welcomed even the lowest-caste (“untouchable”) men and women. It was a broad popular movement whose teachers spoke in the languages of the masses.

But the Bhaktis’ core idea was single-minded devotion to one personal God. They showed little interest in reforming (let alone revolutionizing) the highly hierarchical societies in which they lived. Instead they focused on personal “transcendence.”

Religion says that we are all brothers and sis-



Ruins of Essene communist settlement at Qumran

ters as “children of God” and that the “true community” is in heaven. In the modern world, religion continues to misdirect the egalitarian, collective aspirations of the masses into a quest for personal “salvation” and heaven.

In contrast, scientific communism recognizes a material basis for solidarity among the oppressed. It will create the material basis for the long-desired “beloved community” through revolution, abolishing money, markets, and commodity production.

Today some revolutionaries continue to cite religious texts to justify anti-capitalism and find hope for a communist future. We work with these friends and welcome them into the International Communist Workers’ Party.

However, even anti-capitalist religious faith obstructs the dialectical, historical materialist understanding that we need to mobilize the masses for communism.

Next article: *Asian Peasant Revolts and Radical Challenges to Feudalism*

## Communism or 21st Century Socialism?

### THE WORKING CLASS NEEDS TO TAKE CONTROL OF THE WORLD

“Venezuela will continue its road of democracy and 21st-Century Bolivarian Socialism,” said Hugo Chavez, President of Venezuela, after again winning the Presidential election on October 7th for another six-year term.

The concept of 21st-Century Socialism was formulated in 1996 by Heinz D. Steffan, German sociologist and political analyst, resident and professor at the National Metropolitan University of Mexico. This concept is based on democratic capitalist economic development, support for small business, and support for the Venezuela-based transnational corporations and the use of rank and file organizations to gain support for government policies. Chavez accepted this formulation and on January 30th, 2005, during the Fifth World Social Forum, adopted it as his strategy.

This 21st-Century Socialism is different from the socialism that Russian and Chinese revolutionaries fought for in the 20th Century. V. I. Lenin and the Bolshevik Party saw the need to build a communist party of the working class that included soldiers, industrial workers and farmworkers. They saw the need for armed struggle to defeat the bosses and honestly thought that socialism was the road to communism. Mao and the Chinese Communist Party cadre and base elevated the struggle to the need to implement communist practices, especially during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

Unfortunately even that socialism brought from its birth the germs of its own destruction. It

kept wages, money, banks, inequality and exploitation, thus making it state capitalism. Today we can see and learn from their great advances and mistakes to advance and fight directly for a real communist revolution.

Socialism of the 21st Century is nothing more than pure state capitalism, designed to fool the workers. This is what it was planned to be from its inception. It leaves intact the exploitation of workers. The capitalist class, pro and con, is free to enrich itself from the theft of wage labor. The banks continue to reap huge profits from investment capital. Religion is used like opium against the working class. And even more important, the biggest part of oil profits goes into the pockets of the Venezuelan ruling class. That is, the apocalyptic horsemen of capitalism gallop freely under Chavez’ banner.

Millions of workers in Venezuela and other parts of the world support Chavez and see him as a revolutionary. Many people think this is the road to liberate the working class. They see the crumbs that Chavez gives out to the working class (taken from the surplus value workers created), his alliance with Cuba and his opposition to the US as revolutionary signs. He is using some of the immense resources created from the oil bonanza to create new jobs and increase wages—to gain workers’ loyalty. He has confiscated some unused lands and given them to farmworkers to grow and sell what they produce in the markets. He has also given some subsidies to the basic food basket and health of the popula-

tion.

However, facts are stubborn things. You can’t liberate the working class leaving alive exploitation, money and poisonous capitalist ideology. You need communist ideology and a communist revolution to eliminate these evils.

Our Party, the International Communist Workers’ Party, although small and emerging, has the audacity to build only one mass party worldwide, based in the working class (workers, soldiers, students, teachers, farmworkers, and other allies) to fight directly for communism. Our political line is to build a mass base to spread and practice communist ideas and to take power through an armed communist revolution.

We envision a world without capitalists, without banks or money, without borders, and without exploitation. A world where there are only workers, producing and sharing to meet the needs of the international working class.

To the workers of Venezuela and other parts of the world, we invite you to follow the example of comrades in El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Spain, and the US who are building the ICWP. We invite you to struggle to spread communist ideas through our manifesto *Mobilize the Masses for Communism* and our newspaper, *Red Flag*. *Red Flag* readers everywhere must organize study action groups about the communist politics of ICWP.

The second part of this article will discuss Venezuela’s oil and the struggle among imperialists.



## LOS ANGELES TRANSIT: CLASS STRUGGLE HEATS UP!

“Oh yes, we all signed the petition. But it’s been a long time and we don’t know what they’re doing with it,” commented a driver outside Division 18 about a petition circulating to force the union to reopen their contract.

“When we shouted down the contract, we should have gone on strike the next morning. Then they said they were going to mail ballots to our homes but when we started talking, we found that

none of us had received one. So who cast the votes?” said an angry driver outside Division 18, speaking on the same subject.

The anger is widespread. Over 1400 drivers signed the petition. This is a clear indication that the MTA workers are beginning to move against the MTA and US bosses’ reign of terror and their treacherous union officials.

Slowly but surely we are heading in the direction of joining the hundreds of millions of our class brothers and sisters rising up worldwide against the ravages of capitalism, from South Africa to Greece to Spain to the Middle East to Honduras to Chile to China.

“We need something like that here!” said a driver, commenting on the inspiring struggle of the heroic South African miners. This sentiment was shared by many drivers and mechanics, women and men, of all “races.”

### MTA workers gearing up to take on their treacherous UTU union officials

This is an important step toward breaking the ideological chains that bind us to capitalism. The union officials have lost their credibility and MTA workers are moving against them.



Many believe that our problems would be solved by replacing the current corrupt union officials with honest ones. Some are even ready to decertify the UTU and vote in a new union.

We are confident that many will eventually come to agree with us that the problem is capitalism. That trade unionism will never solve our problems. That only communism will.

### Many MTA workers are beginning to agree with us

“I like the article on the political strike, but how do we get other drivers to see it that way?” asked a driver at Division 3, commenting on the last editorial in *Red Flag* calling on MTA workers to organize a political strike against capitalism and for communism.

“Why not take papers for your friends and talk to them about it. People can change,” said the *Red Flag* distributor. “OK. Give me two more papers,” said the driver.

### How do we get MTA and other workers to massively see it “that way”?

It is already happening. Sometimes change takes place incrementally, that is imperceptively. But it *is* happening at MTA. Small changes lead

to changes changes.

Over 700 MTA workers regularly read *Red Flag*-- about 10% of the MTA workforce. But we only go to 7 divisions which means that between 25 to 30% of the workers at these Divisions read *Red Flag*.

Who would have imagined this less than three years ago when we started distributing our paper here? As we constantly remind ourselves and others: Have confidence in the working class.

No bosses’ propaganda can fool forever the most advanced and revolutionary class in history. Workers will grasp the clear logic of communism and rise up to mobilize the masses for it to destroy the bosses and their murderous inhumane system forever.

### Trade unionism or communism: That is the question

MTA workers now are opting for trade unionism. Workers move at first influenced by their experiences. The reality of the class struggle, however, will prove the validity of our communist analysis.

Many MTA workers who agree with us are already helping decide this question on communism’s side. They are helping spread communist ideas, distributing one or more copies of *Red Flag*.

Some think that change is happening too slowly. They can accelerate it by distributing more papers and getting more workers to do the same. They should also join ICWP and organize study-action groups to recruit more fighters for communism. This will definitely speed up the change!

### LETTERS

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### CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

#### Opportunities in Aerospace

“Whoa, there’s still communists in the country,” said a young machinist who had gotten *Red Flag* at the factory gate for the first time.

“Yeah, there are,” said his co-worker, who had also gotten a copy.

The first guy started criticizing the paper’s wording and style.

“Nothing’s perfect,” said his friend. “I guess they’re still working on it.”

“Well, it’s really interesting. I’m going to show it to my friends,” the machinist replied. Then they had to start work.

One hundred thirty workers took papers at this aerospace factory that day. The company is hiring now because they’re a year behind on their productivity quota. This is a great opportunity for young comrades to keep your mind on the movement, get a job in a military industry, and organize for revolution.

—Red worker

#### “Will I stop being a communist because I like rock music?”

I wondered this after leaving a rock concert in Spanish. Being inside the concert, the music absorbed me to the point that without realizing it, I was singing, shouting, and jumping like everyone else, who were mostly young.

In seeking an answer to my question, I remembered a discussion with some comrades who live in other countries, after our recent Communist School. The topic was about the music of Mozart, Beethoven, and others, and since it sounded interesting to me, I would like

to follow it up in *Red Flag* as a means of communication.

The discussion was because a young comrade likes classical music and Cubist painting. When he mentioned this, most of the people there criticized this kind of music as bourgeois, elitist and unnecessary for our society, as many argued. The young comrade defended his position over and over, giving some arguments like: classical music is used today as therapy, etc, which is useful in society. But this scene seemed like a trial, since most of us in the meeting were over 45 years old. We continued without hearing and understanding this young comrade’s concerns.

This young man participated in the Summer Project, and in the Communist School, giving leadership, and sharing his desire to work for ICWP and inspiring us with his energy. He continues his work where he lives. I do not think that the main contradiction in the struggle with the workers is the kind of music you like, how you like to dress, or what religion you are, when we have so much in common, like putting an end to this capitalist system that promotes sexism and drugs in its songs, to mention some of the evils which we will face and need to resolve now, during and after the communist revolution.

Today we can find classical music very accessible on the radio and on the internet as well as all other kinds of music. There are concerts with the same clarity as going to see a pop music artist. In the museums, there are free exhibitions and plays in schools presented by the students. I really do not know how damaging classical music can be in a communist society or even more in this system where you could

choose what music to listen as a communist. In the mornings when I start my day and I need to relax from the stress caused generally by financial or family problems, I like listening to classical music. I do yoga with background music and many times I fall more in love with my partner and with life, even though life under capitalism is difficult.

Comrade Red Rocker



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

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



## LETTERS

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## CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

## LESSONS FROM THE BETRAYAL OF THE STRUGGLE IN SOUTH AFRICA

The murders of South African miners by the police in the summer of 2012 are an outrage to all. It is, however, an especially egregious event in the hearts and minds of those who fought very hard for decades to end apartheid in South Africa.

Many people of good will waged political and economic struggle to support the South African workers' fight against racist apartheid, discrimination, and white supremacy. This included boycotts, pickets, letter writing, organizing sit-ins, teach-ins and other acts of solidarity.

The support for the anti-apartheid struggle was based on the idea that ending white racist rule in South Africa would be a positive step forward for humanity, and in particular for black people all over the world. The idea that a black-majority society would be condemned to semi-slave lives was intolerable.

Many black Americans felt this way. Many black Americans organized for years to support the African Liberation Movement. Organizations such as the African Liberation Support Committee and days such as African Liberation Day were formed for the explicit purpose of supporting the liberation movements in southern Africa. There was a collective joy and relief when racist apartheid rule ended and when militants like Nelson Mandela were released from decades of imprisonment in cruel South African jails.

Those who are politically conscious are now angry about what they have seen in South Africa. The regime murdered miners who were striking for better working conditions, a crime in and of itself. To have the state attempt to prosecute those miners for the police murder of their comrades was even more absurd. And to have these crimes come at the hands of the South African government is the last straw. What is going on here? Where is the revolution? How could this happen?

The answer apparently lies in laws of revolution and in the history of the South African struggle. With the end of apartheid, the South African communist party (SACP), the Coalition of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), and the African National Congress (ANC) formed a political alliance to rule the country. The capitalist state remained unchanged, and the nation pursued a false anti-imperialist orientation. There was no nationalization of the major industries. There was no break with capitalist economic relations. There was no movement to organize Soviets of workers and peasants to rule the now non-apartheid state.

Instead, blacks were hired into the military and into other vital parts of the government while some South African blacks gained ascendancy into economically powerful positions. There have been anti-immigrant riots in South Africa against Africans from other nations who migrate without documents, seeking work. South Africa has positioned itself with na-



October 1: Protests at the Commission of Inquiry into the police murders at Lonmin's Marikana mine.

tions such as Brazil and China for economic gain within the international capitalist system.

In other words, no revolutionary change occurred. Those who supported anti-apartheid were hoodwinked, tricked, lied to, and fooled.

The South African movement committed a blunder and that blunder was laying hold of the capitalist state without smashing it and building a communist society. This is the basis of Lenin's book, *State and Revolution*. The South African movement betrayed those who fought and died valiantly for decades to overthrow apartheid. Instead, a capitalist government was established under the guise of "fighting for socialism," when, in fact, no socialism was built and none is on the horizon.

Those who supported the anti-apartheid movement must share the bitter lessons from this experience: that national liberation without communist revolution will lead to capitalist degeneration and reaction. It is time to support a communist revolution in South Africa and to oppose the ANC, COSATU, and the SACP government. Those who opposed apartheid have this responsibility, as they were the international supporters of those who now hold state power in South Africa. Those same political forces who received support in the anti-apartheid struggle are now the murderers of the militant miners in the summer of 2012. They must go!

Building a workers' communist movement in South Africa must become the order of the day.  
--A Reader

**Red Flag responds: We thank the comrade for this helpful letter. However, nationalization of the mines would not solve anything for the South African workers, or workers anywhere. "National Liberation" is a fight to put new "national" capitalists in power, not to destroy capitalism and build communism, as the writer correctly advocates.**



Working People Have No Nations!

## NATIONALIZATION OF INDUSTRIES IN MEXICO SERVED THE CAPITALISTS

The nationalization of natural resources under capitalism only serves the interests of the national capitalists. It doesn't help the working class. This is what workers have experienced in Mexico. Even further, under socialism, it was the same. Lenin was emphatic on that point. He said that: the na-

tionalization of land in Russia proposed "the ideally pure development of capitalism in agriculture." It would only accelerate capitalist development. "Nationalization of land has nothing in common with socialism."(Lenin).

The policy of advocating the nationalization of natural resources, in general, is an integral part of the "struggle for democracy" which the fake left raises. The vestiges of revisionism fight together with their allies, the state capitalist politicians, against the "neoliberals" over the best way to exploit the workers.

In 1938 in Mexico, capitalist politicians like Lázaro Cárdenas utilized a mix of policies which were fashionable in the world, some of which were influenced by the achievements in the Soviet Union. They nationalized some industries. Their "nationalizations" are an integral part of the nationalism which opposed colonialism, fighting for the power of the national bosses over the imperialists.

Nationalism was supported by the communist movement, which wrongly believed that the participation in such struggles of the working masses, led by the national bourgeoisie, paved the road for the emancipation of the working class.

This confused the working class. This confusion was aided by the revisionist line adopted in the 7th World Congress of the Comintern in 1935, which called on the working class to ally with supposedly "lesser evil" capitalists, who were presented as progressive. The national capitalists learned to take advantage of the intellectual trick derived from this fatal error. There are no "progressive" capitalists! They are all exploiters.

When the Mexican oil industry was nationalized in 1938, this was not revolutionary. And there was no expropriation of the oil companies. The nationalization decreed by the government compensated those corporations, paying for them mainly with public funds and donations from workers. This benefitted those functionaries who have administered PEMEX and associated businesses in the Mexican ruling class.

The worst thing about this was the ideological confusion it created, which is an obstacle to the development of workers' communist class consciousness. In whatever part of the world, from Mexico to South Africa, our line of mobilizing the masses directly for communism has to make explicit our opposition to the trap of nationalization. The only way to make it "our oil" or "our mine" is with a communist revolution. Then, with no capitalists and no profits, we'll share all the resources for the well-being of the international working class. Then it will be "our world!"

--Comrades in Mexico



**CAPITALIST CULTURE FROM A COMMUNIST PERSPECTIVE:**

Please send in drawings, photos, or written contributions (no more than 300 words).

**Capitalist Lies**

Each issue will discuss one of these Top 10 Lies.

**Top 10 Lies We R Taught**

1. Communism is dead.
2. We have "freedom" of speech, beliefs, expression.
3. Cops are your friends/trust them to protect you.
4. We have "equal opportunity."
5. The U.S. smashed the Nazis.
6. Bad people go to jail.
7. We need to vote to change things.
- 8. Capitalism runs on "supply and demand."**
9. The government checks and balances ensures that nobody has too much power and our government works for the people.
10. Slavery ended because of "anti-racism."

**Television Review:****Jerry Springer:**

Karl Marx believed the most powerful members of a society are the ruling class who set up the culture of a society in order to provide, what they consider, to be the best interests of that society. In other words; **the class that rules determines a society's culture.** This is true of the current capitalist pop culture.

Popular culture refers to something with mass appeal. Examples of pop culture on TV are survival, reality, and talk shows such as the *Jerry Springer Show* (and *Señorita Laura* in Spanish).

The *Jerry Springer Show* debuted in 1991 and has been signed up through 2016. It is seen on nearly 200 US TV stations, has over 2.1 million viewers in the US, and is viewed in countries in Europe, Asia, and Africa. It is videotaped and distributed by NBC Universal Television which is owned by Comcast (51%) and General Electric (49%).

The *Jerry Springer Show* showcases the unacceptable people in society. Guests are typically minimally educated, blue-collar (working class) people confronted on a television stage by a spouse or family member's adultery, homosexuality, prostitution, hate-group membership or other controversial situations. These confrontations often lead to shouting profanities, chair-throwing, fist fights, and women pulling hair and removing clothing. Towards the end of the show, the audience questions the guests, often mocking and insulting them and ridiculing those with physical deformities and mental disabilities.

**The Truth of the Matter:**

Capitalism is an economic system in which private ownership of the means of production creates goods and services for a market in order to make a profit. We've been told that the price is determined in the market by a model called "supply and demand." "Supply and demand" makes us feel cared for. That when WE NEED something it will be produced to fit our demand and the price will reflect the abundance or scarcity of the product.

Capitalism's "supply and demand" laws are false. Price is determined at the point of production, not in the market. How much it costs to produce things drives the price. The bosses get workers to produce more for as cheaply as possible, but they constantly hide this so workers don't unite & organize. The bosses worldwide are in a dog-eat-dog competition leading to overproduction and flooding the market with goods that people can't afford to buy. This becomes a "crisis" to them because their markets shrink and their profits fall. Capitalists would rather destroy goods than get them to people who need them. The bosses don't produce for "use value" – to meet needs. They care about the "exchange value"—whether or not they can sell it and make a profit.

Today 1.3 billion people suffer from hunger worldwide, while the current world production of food is enough to feed 10 billion people. In the US, recent figures count about 3.5 million homeless in the streets and 12 million unoccupied homes.

Meaning: we produce enough food to eradicate world hunger and have produced enough homes for every person to have a home. However, under capitalism, the rule is "no sale, no use"—no matter how much we demand.

WE NEED communism, a system designed to produce for needs and not exchange. Why do we need to pay for the things that are necessities for our lives and well-being? Let's think together in the International Communist Workers' Party, the party that will help create a communist society that will truly supply for our needs.



**We produce more than enough food to eradicate world hunger, yet 1.3 billion suffer from hunger worldwide.**

What is the political message of the *Jerry Springer Show*?

It is that workers are stupid, immoral, have deviant lifestyles, dysfunctional families, and are incapable of running society. Working class viewers of this show may be led to distrust and even hate their own class and to accept the ruling class and status quo.

The International Communist Workers' Party is organized to bring communism to the masses and for a revolution to get rid of capitalism. The political message of ICWP is that workers are capable of running a communist society collectively without money.

Workers, trust and believe in your class! Read and distribute *Red Flag*. Join ICWP.

**MOVIE REVIEW:****The Campaign**

In the film *The Campaign*, Will Farrell and Zach Galifianakis portray Cam Brady and Marty Huggins, rival candidates for Congress in the state of North Carolina. Cam is brazen, lewd, and unfaithful, while Marty is naïve and "cares" for the people. Marty and his campaign manager are backed by rich CEOs because they think he'd make a great puppet for them in their plan to build a factory employing only imported Chinese workers.

A message in the movie is that immigrant workers take American workers' jobs, disregarding that borders really only serve the bosses. Bosses benefit from forcing immigrant workers to accept lower slave wages and worse working conditions than their documented and native-born counterparts, by constantly threatening deportation. They pit workers against each other to hinder multi-racial unity. In contrast, the bosses are free to move capital and money across borders with no problems. Only when the world's workers understand that we must unite, will we be ready to overthrow capitalism and build communism.

Another message in the film is that communism is a joke. It dismisses it as silly fantasy. We wonder what would happen if they took time to explain communism: A system where all production is solely for human need and where profiting from someone's labor is not possible, because money won't exist. Also non-existent will be rich or poor people and, of course, no CEOs. A system where the masses collectively decide what is produced, how it is produced, and how much of it is produced. Where everyone will receive according to their needs and contribute according to their ability and commitment.

In the film, Marty was favored to win, until he learned the CEOs' real plan and objected. Marty rejected any more money from them, so they began funding his opponent, Cam. They propagandized against Marty and Cam won.

Now for the fairytale ending: when Cam also learned of the CEOs' plan, he withdrew so Marty could win. In reality, it did not matter who won because the capitalist ruling class, including politicians, control the entire system and they work together to ensure capitalism's survival.

THUMBS DOWN: Your time will be better spent organizing workers of all countries to join ICWP so we can build a party to create our ideal system.