

MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM

**THE WORKING
CLASS
CAN BUILD A
NEW FUTURE**

**THE INTERNATIONAL
COMMUNIST
WORKERS' PARTY**



The International Communist Worker's Party calls on the international working class to join us in mobilizing the masses for communism.

Mobilizing the masses for communism--this is our guiding principle, now and in the future. This is the principle by which we are organizing to overthrow capitalism, and the principle by which we will build communism.

We fight for *communism* because only communism can free us from what Lenin called capitalism's "horror without end."

Only communism can end capitalism's ruthless exploitation of the working class and the resulting intolerable working conditions, environmental destruction, unemployment, poverty, crime and disease.

Only communism can end the capitalists' vicious schemes to divide the working class through racism, sexism, ethnic hatreds, and the persecution of immigrants.

Only communism can smash the bosses' rush to fascism, the capitalists' solution to the contradictions of their increasingly crisis-prone system.

And only communism, by eliminating the capitalists themselves, can end their imperialist rivalry and destructive economic competition, competition that regularly produces economic crises, bloody regional wars and eventually world war.

Communism is a system in which the working class collectively runs society and production is for use, not profit. There will be no bosses, no money, no privileges, and no personal wealth or private property. Everyone will work for the common good, and share in the results of the collective labor. Communism will free the masses to make the decisions that affect us all.

From Tunisia to Egypt, from the greater Middle East to Europe, masses are on the move. Now,

more than ever, we must fight for communism, not for "democracy," not for "national independence," not for "progressive" or "reformed" or "enlightened" capitalism.

And, most importantly, not for "socialism," however "radical" or "left-wing" or even "anti-imperialist." Socialism keeps the wage system and commodity production. It is, in fact, state capitalism.

We mobilize the *masses* (the working class and its allies) because only the masses of working people have both the need and the power to overthrow capitalism and build communism. A communist revolution must be the work of millions—billions—of communist workers. For this reason ICWP is a mass Party. We invite all who agree that a communist revolution is the only solution and are willing to act collectively on that belief to join the party.

Communism cannot be brought about by a palace coup or the dramatic deeds of a small band of revolutionaries. It cannot be the work of one nation or ethnic group. We reject the misleading slogan "the people" which joins together workers and bosses; there is no room for any capitalist exploiters, no matter how supposedly progressive, charismatic, anti-imperialist or patriotic.

Industrial workers and soldiers are central to our revolutionary strategy. They cannot, however, carry out a revolution on their own. Communism cannot succeed without all sections of our class and its allies.

Finally, we *mobilize* the masses because only their full and active participation can unleash their power and creativity. It is not enough that millions are won to passively "approve" or "support" communism (say, by voting or attending rallies). The masses must take up the

cause of communism as their deepest commitment, making communist ideas their own and developing them as their understanding advances.

As dialectical materialists, we realize that mobilization must be practical as well as ideological. For example, it is not enough that communists realize that there is only one race, the human race. They must fight racism in practice and live, work, and struggle with people of other so-called "races" and ethnicities. In the same way, it is not enough that they read and agree with our paper; they must help write for it, produce it, and circulate it and use it to organize class struggle to expand our revolutionary forces.

THE GREAT REVOLUTIONS TEACH US HOW TO WIN

Mobilizing the Masses for Communism has led to our greatest victories, and failure to do so has led to our greatest defeats.

The first big victory was the *Paris Commune of 1871*. The Commune was established at the end of the Franco-Prussian war. The French National Guard rebelled and armed the workers of Paris. The workers and soldiers chased the French bosses and their government out of Paris. They set up what they called a democratic worker's republic.

The Commune attacked nationalism, handed factories to workers, and freed education from religion. However, they failed to abolish the money system or expropriate the national bank.

RED FLAG



The mobilized masses fought valiantly. The Commune failed, however, to mobilize workers for communism. Instead of carrying the fight to victory, they negotiated with the government in exile. The capitalists dragged out these negotiations while they rebuilt their army. When the bosses were ready, they attacked the Commune and slaughtered 25,000 workers.

The Commune taught us that mobilizing the masses for communism means that the working class needs its own communist party. The workers must smash the bosses’ state, not try to take it over. Learning from the Commune, the Russian communists established just such a party thirty years later. That party led the fight to crush the Russian capitalist state.

The second great victory was the **Russian Revolution of 1917**. By that time the Russian communist party had hundreds of thousands of members including many in the Russian army in the trenches of WWI. These hundreds of thousands mobilized millions to overthrow the liberal capitalist Kerensky government and establish the Soviet Republic.

The Russian communist party, known as the Bolsheviks, declared communism as their ultimate goal.

Fourteen imperialist powers sent troops to help the liberals and monarchists attack the Soviets. The Bolsheviks organized more than five million workers and peasants into the Red Army to



smash the monarchist-imperialist coalition.

Employing the principle of mobilizing the masses for communism, they organized among the soldiers of the invading armies. Every invader witnessed big revolts among rank-and file soldiers, forcing them to withdraw.

During the civil war, the Bolsheviks organized society under what they called “war communism,” on an emergency basis. They requisitioned food, jump-started production and bypassed currency that inflation had made useless. As an emergency measure, they eliminated money, but they didn’t think that the masses were ready to do this long term.

After the war was over, Russia was in chaos and there were rebellions of workers, peasants and soldiers. The Bolsheviks retreated to the New Economic Policy, which meant more openly capitalist relationships. They mobilized the masses to seek personal gain, not communism. Workers were mobilized to produce more and earn bonuses; students to get higher grades and white collar jobs; and soldiers to get medals and promotions.

Believing that workers were not ready for communism, they opted for socialism. In reality, socialism is state capitalism because it keeps money, banks, wages and production for sale. When you reject that people can be won directly to communism, you have no choice but to accommodate capitalist relations.

Defeating the Nazis in WWII was a great achievement of millions mobilized most significantly by communists. However those communists lacked confidence in the working class. They decided in 1934 that to defeat the fascists they would have to ally with “lesser evil” capitalists such as the USA and Great Britain. This decision meant that the struggle was organized around nationalism and a confusing classless “anti-fascism” rather than the fight for communism.

As a result, the defeat of the Nazis in 1945 laid the basis not for world communism but for a new Soviet empire that called itself socialist but renounced world revolution. The ultimate failure of the Bolsheviks’ revolution was clear in 1989. But in fact Russian communism had been dead on its feet for many decades, once the de-

At our pre-May Day dinner a young Iraq vet talked about what he thought would win his twenty-something friends to communism and our party.

“When you talk to people on the street, they all say they need money to buy food and a roof over their heads for themselves and their families,” he began. “That’s why I joined the army. I was working three jobs and still couldn’t meet these necessities.

“If you want to mobilize for communism, you have to convince people that they can have some ‘security.’” By that he meant that they would get some food, a roof over their heads and the basics of life.

“There’s plenty of food at the Safeway around the corner,” offered another comrade. “But it’s under heavy guard. If you’re hungry and go there, take some food off the shelf and try to leave the store without offering any money, you’ll get jumped and then hauled off to jail.”

We agreed that if we want to abolish money, we have to distribute food without expecting any money in return. One idea is to keep the supermarkets open, but as distribution centers. All the people whose jobs now currently involve collecting, guarding and transporting money would be freed to do useful things, like delivering food to older people who can’t come in to collect it.

cision was made to mobilize the masses for socialism, not communism.

The third great victory was the **Chinese Revolution of 1949**.

The Chinese Communist Party was founded in 1921 in a secret meeting of a handful of intellectuals on a boat in a lake near Shanghai.

By 1931, it had formed a workers’ and peasants’ Red Army, liberated a large area in central China, and declared a Chinese Soviet Republic. Less than a decade later, the Red Army had marched 1000 miles to the north and had begun mobilizing millions of workers and peasants in the war against the imperialist Japanese invaders. Less than a decade after that, the Red Army, now tens of millions strong, defeated the Chinese capitalists and their US imperialist masters.

Most of the founders of the Chinese Communist Party agreed with their Soviet advisors that China was not ready for communism; that communists should ally with the capitalists and fight for national liberation and capitalist democracy. They said that workers, and especially peasants, were too backward to be mobilized for communism.

But the masses, inspired by communism, proved them wrong.

However, when the Japanese invaded China, in 1931, even the left wing of the Communist Party agreed to postpone communism and form an “anti-imperialist” alliance with the national capitalists. But the capitalists soon double-crossed the communists and attacked the Red Army. The Communist Party remained loyal to

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An excellent article in the 1968 Peking Review described a model for communist education. One story from the article: a teacher described how, under the old (socialist) system, he would lecture about a diesel engine for eight hours without the students learning much. “During the second half of my lecture they forgot everything I said during the first half.”

In the new, communist system, a veteran worker covered the same material in less than an hour He explained how the engine worked in clear, plain language. As he talked, he expertly took the engine apart and put it back together again.

The leadership of this “new type” of school “organized a number of meetings” to decide “which line it would uphold.” Veteran plantation workers and local tea growing peasants “spoke of the harm [inflicted by the old schools], which were divorced from proletarian politics, from workers and peasants, and from labor and reality.

They demanded, “Our school must not be run like the old bourgeoisie-dominated schools which caused our sons and daughters to degenerate into good-for-nothings unfit for manual labor.”

To date, *the Cultural Revolution* was the largest mass mobilization against a new capitalist ruling class hidden behind the socialist banner. In many parts of the country the Left seized power and began implementing communism in education, production and culture.

The top party leadership reacted not with enthusiasm, but with fear and horror. They eventually called in the army to suppress the revolt and demobilize the masses. They sent young revolutionaries into the countryside, supposedly to learn from the peasants, but actually to isolate them from the revolutionary ferment.

their capitalist/nationalist allies and even offered to join a coalition government with them. They refused, so the Communist Party took power on its own.

Even with the defeat of the national capitalists in 1949, the Communist Party failed to restore communism as their immediate goal. Instead, they built an alliance with the local bosses in what they called “New Democracy.” Later, they progressed to Russian-style socialism. By the mid 1960’s China was well down the same path that had led to the restoration of open capitalism in the Soviet Union.

History did not, however, repeat itself. Millions had lived under the communist “supply system” in the Red Army as they fought for power. This egalitarian system was popular with the rank-and-file, but not with party leaders who wanted to imitate the Soviet Union nor with the army officer corps.

The supply system was abolished in 1955. However former soldiers returning to villages throughout China brought the idea with them. They helped start the mass mobilization for communism that became the People’s Commune movement in the late 1950s.

The commune movement showed that workers know best how to meet the needs of our class. Masses of peasants mobilized to build irrigation systems. Communes organized cafeterias where all members could eat, so that individual households no longer paid for food. In fact, the masses implemented many aspects of communist relations in large local areas all over China.

This sharpened the struggle between capitalist and communist ideas inside the Party. In the early 1960s, tens of millions again took up the fight, impatient to achieve communism and angry at the leadership’s betrayal. This movement turned into a revolution—the Cultural Revolution.

These revolutionaries were defeated because they had no party of their own. Mobilizing the masses for communism requires the degree of political clarity and organization that only a party can achieve.

The main lesson we learn from these revolutions is that socialism is incompatible with mobilizing the masses for communism. We reject the theory that workers are not ready for communism; that they have to be led to it through stages like socialism or national liberation that make fatal compromises with capitalism.

THE PARTY
MOBILIZES THE
WORKING CLASS TO RULE

Communism is our goal from the beginning, and as soon as we take power anywhere we will mobilize the masses to build communism. Our mass Party, steeled in the collective struggle, will mobilize the masses to lay the foundations for a communist society.

Unlike the failed attempts of our predecessors in Russia and China, we *will immediately abolish money*, commodity production (producing goods for a market) and the wage system (in which workers are forced to sell their labor power or starve).

We will, therefore, abolish wealth in the capitalist sense. Workers will be motivated not by the prospect of individual gain, but by the possibility of living in a communist society, in which social relationships of cooperation, collectivity and share-and-share alike are primary. These relations will provide material experience that can develop into a framework for all other decisions.

We will organize production so that everyone has their basic needs (food, shelter, health care) met. We won’t be producing luxuries until

the workers of the world have the necessities. We will most likely be building a communist society from the ashes of capitalist world war, and at times we may not be able to provide very much, but we will share what we have. No longer will some starve while others eat their fill.

The basic principle will be that everyone works, according to their ability and commitment: young and old, men and women, soldiers and workers.

We do not expect anyone to spend every day doing manual labor, but everyone will do their share. Health care workers, even the most skilled, will take their turn changing sheets and cleaning toilets. Those who now perform these tasks will learn the theory of how to cure disease.

Breaking down the division between manual and mental labor, and between the “experts” and the rest of us is a principle established during the Cultural Revolution. It’s part of eliminating the material basis for the capitalist idea



that some people are more important than others and deserve a bigger say or an easier life.

This mass mobilization for production requires breaking down the barrier between education and work.

Under capitalism, fulltime expert teachers do teaching. Under communism everyone will share their experience and knowledge with young and old. Everyone will learn both the skills and the underlying theory of work.

Farmworkers and agronomists, machinists and engineers will not only learn from each other, they will actually be the same person. Every student will be a worker and every worker, no matter how experienced, will be a student, their entire lives.

All jobs will be necessary; the communist commitment to the collective will help everyone understand the importance of even the boring or dangerous aspects of work.

Another priority is to defend and extend the revolution. Communist revolution will not spontaneously spread to every part of the world. There is always uneven development. Mobilizing the masses for communism means putting the interests of the international working class above all else.

As history has shown, capitalists will not hesitate to attack communist workers with all the armed might they can muster. We will require a standing army based on mobilizing the masses for communism. Military strategy and tactics will flow from this guiding principle. This



STORIES OF STRUGGLE

The following anecdotes highlight and describe some of the day to day struggles of bringing Communist ideas to the working class.

Reality Cries Out for Communist Mobilizations

Sometimes it seems more realistic to play down the communist solution to the specific attacks on our fellow workers and us. It seems that we'll get farther if we militantly mobilize without making such a big deal of questioning capitalist assumptions.

Then reality sets in. The lead-up to our Boeing summer project features just such an example.

Our union's main line of attack against the company's shift to low-wage, non-union plants is to pursue a National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) complaint. The scores of Red Flags we distribute in the plants did not say, "That's fine, but we have to supplement the lawsuit with militant preparation for a strike next fall."

A number of workers openly argue that the union is placing the emphasis on labor law because the mis-leadership doesn't really want to fight the bosses on the picket line. We go farther, saying capitalist law is a deadly con and must be replaced by masses mobilized around communist principles.

Is *Red Flag's* insistence on a communist solution just so much extra baggage making it harder for us to mobilize militantly during the next strike? Quite the contrary: our communist analysis allowed us to escape a trap.

The judge demanded the company and union

meet to work out a compromise. The union jumped at the chance.

Secret meetings are now in progress. Every media outlet from the Seattle TV and newspapers to the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal has floated trial balloons suggesting the shape of that agreement. In exchange for an empty promise of some union jobs on a hypothetical program years in the future the union will sign a no-strike agreement for at least a decade.

We already derailed a no-strike regime a couple of years back. This time, the union leaders hope the law will give them the political cover they need to ram this through.

Communist mobilization shows us the way out of the capitalist trap—now and in the future.

El Salvador

When the comrade told me, "We're going to meet with the comrades from ICWP," I had no doubts about carrying out the task with her. We needed to organize the final details and go to the May Day march in San Salvador to take communist ideas to the workers.

First we went to the northern part of the

country. There was little transportation due to vacations, but this wasn't an obstacle.

Afterwards we walked several kilometers and arrived at our destination. The comrades were waiting for us enthusiastically. We shared the

food and talked about how we would march. The youth there said that they wanted to distribute the ICWP literature.

Other comrades were assigned the task of security, which they carried out with great responsibility during the activity. This made the youth feel more secure when they distributed our newspaper *Red Flag* and the leaflet, because they knew that behind them were the alert and vigilant comrades ready for anything.

The buses on which we traveled to the capital were stopped by the police, since there were many checkpoints. We took precautions with the literature since some people were searched.

We finally got to the San Salvador. Thousands of workers received our newspaper Red Flag and the leaflet which is always well received by students, rural and city workers, teachers and professionals.

At the end of the march we felt satisfied, since we distributed our material without any difficulty. It encourages us that the workers received it with pleasure and even asked for more. When we see that they stop to read it, we understand that our efforts were worth it. Once more it has been shown that we, the members of ICWP, are the ones who carry out the work of taking Communist ideas to the workers.

Mobilizing Transit Workers for Communism

We passed out a leaflet at an informal meeting we just had with transit workers on a bus. It said, in part: "ICWP is organizing a Summer



armed force will not be separate from the working class, physically or ideologically. Only a disciplined mass party can organize such an armed force.

The international bourgeoisie will attack the revolution indirectly as well. They will finance all manner of saboteurs and counter-revolutionaries. We will also have to deal with decadence and serious crime inherited from the rotten capitalist system.

The bosses claim that they need laws and cops to deal with individual crime. We won't rely on laws and cops. We'll mobilize our class to protect each other from criminal behavior and to deal with those who persist in attacking their class brothers and sisters.

Communist mobilization will not only deal with the decadent remnants of the capitalist system, but will, over time, diminish and eventually

eliminate such dangers. Billions will learn through practice the value of collectivity.

Relying on the working class, through its Party, means a high degree of social organization against less serious anti-social behavior as well. Everything from guaranteeing that people don't cherry-pick the best cuts of meat to making sure that the people whose turn it is, pick up the trash on Tuesday, will require collective struggle. This stands in stark contrast to the external discipline of guards, bosses, markets, pay checks and unemployment lines.

For example, during the Honduran General Strike in 1954, the communist-led strike committee shut down all the bars in Tela for the duration of the strike. They did this not through some legal maneuver, but by a collective decision, carried out by the masses of workers. When we take power, the working class, led by its Party, will decide what is in the interest of

our class, and will mobilize the masses to carry that out.

The other great priority is eliminating racism. Successful mobilization for communism, now and in the future, requires smashing the capitalists' vicious racist schemes to divide the working class. We must build deep ties among workers whom the bosses want to keep separated and take advantage of the militant leadership developed among our most oppressed class sisters and brothers.

We'll educate children from the time they can reason that there is only one race—the human race. And we will not tolerate open racism, whether in word or deed. For example, should a group of racists be foolish enough to demonstrate openly, we'll empty the factories, barracks and classrooms, mobilizing the masses in the streets to physically put an end to racist organizing.

STORIES OF STRUGGLE

Project to take communist ideas to the masses of workers, students and soldiers. We need your help. We invite you to participate in the activities of this project and to invite others to distribute Red Flag, visit workers, come to study groups, and take extra copies of the paper to your friends. We also ask that you contribute economically to the project so that all of this is possible.”

Continuing political struggle and discussion made this meeting possible.

I remember when I first asked the workers to contribute economically to ICWP and **Red Flag**. I thought they would laugh at me or think I was crazy. But they took it seriously. We now collect hundreds of dollars from these workers to support **Red Flag**. They also help distribute the paper and participate in other activities.

After we emphasized the importance of the summer project and what the participants would learn from it, I asked if they were willing to pitch in more so that we could pay for a participant to come from another country. Everyone again said yes.

This level of political commitment isn’t automatic or spontaneous. It’s a process of struggle in which a group of workers are moving towards communism, seeing **Red Flag** and ICWP as their own.

Little by little they’re becoming communist leaders. There are contradictions, doubts, wrong ideas, but our ideological struggle for communism continues in theory and practice.

Turning the Guns Around

When I was organizing in the military, I had lots of political conversations with one particular fellow soldier. We had a common enemy in our unit: this rotten capitalist system that placed us in a common field bound to be cultivated in friendship and politics.

Before I finally gave communist literature to this friend, we had dozens of conversations. We expressed anger at our immediate situation. We both hated our military leadership. We were angry at how U.S. imperialism was carrying out its wars with soldiers who didn’t agree with the war in the first place.

But we must go even further, and root out the material basis of racism. When there are no wages, there can be no racist wage differentials, which currently give the capitalists a huge economic incentive to maintain racism. In allocating food and shelter, the Party must ensure that no group receives more or less than what they should have.

Capitalism is in general a highly divided, segregated, and partitioned society. Mental labor is divorced from manual, skilled from unskilled, men from women, youth from age, countryside from city, immigrant from ‘native,’ and so on.

Communist mobilization is the antidote to capitalist compartmentalization. Communist mobilization will guarantee that people play many different roles in society no matter what they had done under capitalism. In addition, the Party will mobilize the working class to inte-

Of course, there are always disagreements. We shouldn’t pretend that building a communist revolutionary movement is easy, but struggle over contradictions that surface strengthen relationships.

When we came back, my friend attended a May Day dinner and witnessed the enthusiasm of communists fighting for a common goal.

During the following year, he came to meetings and helped inspire other comrades to join the military to organize for ICWP.

At one meeting, we were talking about how he first saw our paper. Thinking about what “mobilizing the masses” means, someone asked who else could have seen the paper. All of a sudden he got excited and said, “Yeah, don’t you remember Smitty, Johnson and Rodriguez? We could have given them the paper. They would have liked it.” It was then that he started saying “we” and not “you guys.”

The next year, my friend was the one on stage at the May Day dinner giving an inspiring speech calling for soldiers to turn the guns around.

No Issue Too Small for Communist Struggle

Our ICWP club jumped into a faculty-led struggle against a new law that speeds the privatization of community colleges, making them less affordable.

We put forward communism in mass meetings, many conversations, and a leaflet that students received warmly on four campuses. The liberal leaders’ message was that some “social goods” like education should be available for all, not for sale. We attacked the whole capitalist system of private property and exchange, not just the “privatization” of education.

“The capitalist rulers are using this crisis ... to transform community colleges to meet the needs of their class to prepare for war on the backs of the working class,” our leaflet explained.

It asked students to “*question the very founda-*

grate every neighborhood and region under our control.

These anti-racist material mobilizations will lay the basis for the essential ideological mobilization. This means meetings, discussions, debates, and demonstrations where workers consciously identify and expose racist and sexist practices and ideology, making class-based, communist plans to fight them.

Mobilizing the masses for communism guarantees “the earth will rise on new foundations.”

WE LAY THE BASIS FOR COMMUNIST POWER TODAY

At the moment, it is the capitalists who have state power. We live under the dictatorship of the bosses.

Nevertheless, the basic principle of mobilizing



tions of capitalist education and build a mass movement to destroy this deadly system with communist revolution. ...

“Under capitalism, some profit from scarcity and crisis while others suffer and starve. Under communism, we will all share hardship and we’ll all share the abundance our class will create.

“Community colleges are not ‘great equalizers’ They are illusion factories that teach us to sacrifice to get an education so as to escape from the working class.

“This has always been a cruel hoax, but in today’s world it’s a deadly trap. Capitalism has nothing to offer most of us but racism, exploitation, and bloody imperialist wars.”

“Oh, oh, you go on and tell it!” exclaimed one student when she read the leaflet.

We are struggling against the idea that students need “liberal arts” (training for mental labor) rather than “vocational education” (training for manual labor).

We explained the need for communist education to transform the world starting now, and how education in communist society will be tied to the labor we do for the collective good of the masses.

Many are outraged at the capitalist ethic expressed by AB 515 supporters: “when times are tough, those with the most should get more.” They embrace the communist ethic that rejects privilege and fights for the collective good of the masses. The Party’s base has grown around this small campaign.

the masses for communism still applies, even though the conditions are much more difficult. The communist movement in the past was able to mobilize millions under these conditions, and so can we. But we will not repeat the mistake of mobilizing the masses for something other than communism.

Mobilizing workers for communism means first of all, having them join the communist party—the ICWP.

The Party’s primary job is to mobilize millions for communism, before, during and after the seizure of power. These mobilizations enable the Party to grasp what is good for the working class as a whole and organize the struggle to make it happen.

The ICWP is a mass Party; we will never erect artificial barriers to prevent workers from joining and giving leadership to our Party.



The Party needs the experiences and ideas of masses of workers and their allies. The struggle for communism is a mass struggle, not the property of a few. We welcome the contributions to the development of our line and practice of everyone who understands and agrees with the basic ideas of communism and revolution.

Communists learn on the job. Indeed, when workers join our Party with a commitment to mobilizing the masses for communism, they will more likely become active leaders, not just passive members.

The work we do today trains us for the exercise of power.

The bosses' hold on state power is deceptively fragile. Masses are necessary, even essential to dislodge the ruling class from their perch. But two groups are key to mobilizing the masses for communism. When industrial workers make communism their own, they remove the linch-pin of the whole capitalist system. When they are joined by masses of revolutionary soldiers (with their guns), that will be the end of capitalism.

The bosses' dictatorship involves more than the armed might of their State. It spreads to a galaxy of reform groups and ideologies. Our present day tactics must take this into account, while remaining true to our guiding principle.

In the past, communist parties often mobilized around reform struggles, typically strikes by trade unions and mass movements against racism and imperialist war. Individual communists often devoted far more energy to building the strike, the union, or the mass organization than to building the Party.

The theory was that, in the heat of the struggle for reforms, workers' consciousness would be spontaneously transformed. Like socialism and national liberation, reform was supposed to be a

“stage” that led to revolutionary communist consciousness. This theory never worked.

In the United States, for example, the Communist Party built the CIO almost single-handedly. However, they never came close to seizing power because building the union became their goal. During the McCarthy era, AFL-CIO leaders, supposedly fellow unionists, joined the government's anti-communist crusade and drove the communists out of the unions they had built.

A communist approach to class struggle always illustrates—through words and deeds—how workers can rule.

Every day, on the job, in the schools, in the neighborhoods, in the barracks, our class is under attack in a million different ways. We respond to each specific attack, but not by fighting a futile battle to reform capitalism. Each attack (speed-ups, cutbacks, racist police terror, imperialist war) shows the true face of capitalism, and cries out for a communist solution.

An ICWP transit worker describes how he does it.

“Networks, networks, networks,” he urged. Networks of **Red Flag** readers that mobilize workers, soldiers and students to write, sell and financially support the paper. Networks that turn **Red Flag** into the “paper of record.” On his job, hundreds read the paper; many tens distribute extra papers; the contributions of dozens bring in hundreds of dollars every month. Such networks mean discussions about how to mobilize the workers for communism become unavoidable and frequent. Already, such debates are reflected in our paper.

Networks lay the basis for regular meetings to discuss and debate communist politics. These study groups will make our paper even more grounded in the working class, deepening our understanding and practice.

Red Flag study groups prepare us to enter and promote class struggle, giving everyone a better idea of what communist mobilizing means.

In the same metro division where **Red Flag** has become the center of political struggle, an older white worker was denied a job appropriate to his age. Many disliked him because he made racist comments. Our comrade has often fought with him to stop.

Nonetheless, a young black woman, a friend of our comrades, led a mass struggle to get him this job, fighting for the multi-racial unity of the working class against the bosses. Now we are organizing a victory party, urging him to apologize for previous racist remarks.

Communist-inspired struggles like these show how mobilizing the masses for communism can fight racism and racist practice—big and small—now and in the future. Those workers doubly oppressed by capitalist racism and sexism will provide invaluable communist leadership.

Mobilizing the masses for communism expands the arena of class struggle beyond the traditional areas of trade union politics. We can, for example, respond to the bosses' attacks by building for political strikes against capitalism.

We should never take sides in a

dispute between bosses. For example, supporting one clique of union hacks; campaigning for a pro-capitalist party (like the Democrats in the US); defending public or national education and industries against private ones; supporting the bosses of your “own” country against their “foreign” rivals; or supporting one lesser-evil clique of imperialists against their rivals. Such tactics stand in opposition to our strategy.

Similarly, “shortcuts” to mobilizing the masses with appeals to patriotism or to one branch of government to counter another (e.g. federal vs. state) lead workers straight into the arms of the bosses. In general, if a party mobilizes the masses, but not for communism, it ends up mobilizing the masses for some kind of capitalism.

Every one of us has to struggle just to survive under capitalism. We need friends to make it. In this common struggle we can expand the base of the Party. Unbreakable bonds are essential. Base building not only increases the forces we can mobilize in class struggle, but in and of itself, can recruit through illuminating how a communist society would work.

For example, we can build a base in a way that gives a taste of what communist education looks like. Study groups with our base can learn and teach the knowledge and skills that the bosses' schools won't teach, but we need to mobilize masses for communism.. Veteran comrades and people new to our movement can teach each other how to write a leaflet. We can learn from each other how capitalism works and how to solve the everyday problems that come up in mobilizing the masses for communism.

Our program of ***mobilizing the masses for communism*** is in many ways a sharp break from the policies of the old communist movement. We are just learning how to do this kind of communist political work. The old movement did occasionally follow this path. But it was persuaded that the times weren't right for communism and the masses were not ready for communism

The ICWP believes that these arguments were always wrong, but currently there is less reason to believe them than ever. The mass mobilizations in North Africa and the Middle East have upset the bosses' apple cart, proving both the power of the masses of workers and the need for a communist vision. They are now spreading to Europe and Latin America.

In this climate, thousands—eventually millions—are increasingly receptive and we have no excuse for not bringing this vision to every struggle.

Mobilizing the masses for communism was never a more apt slogan. The massive and continuing financial crisis has shaken the faith of workers, and even members of the middle class, in the stability of capitalism. The continuing crisis of overproduction and the massive increase in unemployment have made millions realize that capitalism cannot even guarantee food on the table and a roof over their heads. And finally, sharpening imperialist rivalry leading to endless bloody “small” wars and the obvious preparations for much larger ones—up to and including World War—makes it clear that workers have nothing but our chains to lose by smashing capitalism.

Join us in mobilizing the masses for communism. We have a world to win.

