



# RED FLAG

**MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM**

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

# March on May Day

**THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST WORKERS' PARTY**



INVITES YOU TO MARCH WITH US  
UNDER THE FLAG OF COMMUNISM  
THIS INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' DAY  
WORKERS FROM THE U.S. (SEATTLE,  
LOS ANGELES, OAKLAND),  
MEXICO, INDIA, EL SALVADOR,  
SOUTH AFRICA, SPAIN, HONDURAS  
**JOIN US!**

## **WORKERS IMAGINE LIFE IN COMMUNIST SOCIETY**

EL SALVADOR.— “You have to be careful not to attack the co-worker, but instead the capitalist system,” stated a worker who came to a Party meeting for the first time.

In a place along the Pacific coast of El Salvador, the ICWP industrial collective met. Comrades from three different garment factories, teachers and students came to the meeting. In a context where the bosses' attacks are intensifying, we need to continue with these activities for the political development of all the members of our party.

We began the meeting with an international report, analyzing the contradictions between the US capitalists, their relation with Russia, and the immigration policies of the Trump administration and how this all relates directly to the workers in El Salvador. Many maquila workers have emigrated or plan to emigrate to the US. The deportation of Salvadorans and the intensification the repression against immigrants will cause many of them to return or to enter the maquilas. These workers have felt the brutality of capitalism in their own flesh and blood. We need to organize for communism!

“How do you imagine life in Communism?” is a common question in these meetings. Each time there are new opinions and ideas about this. We talked about how transportation in Communism will be organized to avoid traffic, pollution, and loss of time. We began to come up with new ideas about how housing will be in a new communist society, with collective housing complexes where our basic needs are met, and which are near production centers.

This discussion ignited the spirits of the men and women maquila workers. Every one of them expressed their disagreement with the system. Verbal assaults, the production chart, overtime without pay, tricks in how the wages are paid, and many more things made our comrades furious.

“The supervisors say that before we worked faster and they paid us less,”  
[See EL SALVADOR, page 4](#)

## **YOUTH MOBILIZE WORKERS FOR COMMUNISM**

SOUTH AFRICA — The youth collective of the International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP) here has been going to factories, to universities to talk to the workers, convincing them to join ICWP, to embrace communism as the only tool that can free the working class from the ravages of capitalism.

**We recently visited a steel factory.** We managed to meet with the workers for thirty minutes for their lunchtime. We invited them for the May Day. We told them about ICWP, what we do, who we are, and how we can benefit the workers as a whole.

Before our meeting, the workers held their own meeting. As we listened to their grievances, we compared their situation with any workers around the world, also betrayed by their unions.

The guy who is supposed to “represent” the workers was nowhere to be found. The workers are trying to reach him. No one can find him. At the same time, this guy has been hired by management supposedly to negotiate for the workers against management!!

We shared with the workers that this situation has been riddled with corruption from the start. Clearly the workers were not meant to benefit. The people who were meant to benefit are the ones who are now running away from the workers.

The steel industry around the world has been losing jobs because of the crisis of overproduction, which is caused by capitalist competition.

In order for the capitalists to get more profits they are waging a campaign to radically exploit the working class. The workers complained about their difficult living conditions. They have worked there for over eleven years, but they are still not permanent. We hope to see some of these workers coming to May Day.

Workers came in numbers to listen and welcome us. The short message emphasizing our line was quickly picked up. One worker congratulated a  
[See SOUTH AFRICA, page 4](#)

**THE FUTURE  
OF WORK  
PAGE 2**

**WORKERS  
NEED  
COMMUNISM  
NOT UNIONS  
PAGE 3**

**GUATEMALA:  
CAPITALISM  
IS GUILTY OF  
MURDER  
PAGE 5**

**THIS IS A  
TWO-WEEK  
ISSUE**



## THE “FUTURE OF WORK” MUST BE COMMUNISM

“Does it have to be communism?” asked a friend. “Couldn’t there be a fairer capitalism where everyone’s basic needs were met?”

Yes, to the first. No to the second – and don’t be fooled by “Universal Basic Income” schemes.

If everyone’s basic needs were met, who would slave for pennies in capitalism’s worst jobs? How would capitalists use desperate unemployed workers to force down all workers’ wages? How would they maximize profits amidst their system’s deepening crisis?

That won’t be a problem in communism. Humans need useful work. We need to feel connected. When nobody is exploited, few will choose to loaf around.

Social ties will replace money as the link between production and use. Our dedication to work will flow from our sense of responsibility to each other.

Workers will organize their own work to make it safer, cleaner, easier. Who will do tasks that nobody wants? Those who are most committed to serving the masses – especially communist leaders.

People will gain confidence in the communist society that is meeting their needs. They will be inspired that nobody lives better or worse than others. More will become communist leaders.

### Work in Communism and Capitalism

US capitalists lie about nearing “full employment.” Still, they worry about “the future of work.”

A recent study predicted that nearly half of today’s jobs will be gone in 25 years. Both manufacturing (“blue-collar”) and professional (“white collar”) jobs will be automated. There will be some new jobs building and servicing computers and robots, but not many.

In communism, nobody will need “jobs” in order to survive and flourish. We’ll all share the products of our collective work, according to need.

At first there will be a lot of hard work. We’ll be building communism on a planet devastated

by capitalism and its deadly wars. We’ll have to support our sisters and brothers everywhere who are still fighting for communist power. But later, when we don’t have to work as hard, we’ll have more time for other things.

More workers will meet and study to make decisions that affect our lives. We’ll spend time strengthening social ties. We’ll get enough sleep and exercise. More of us will do scientific research. More will practice arts and crafts and music.

This is impossible under capitalism. Capitalists don’t automate work to relieve drudgery. They must do it to reduce the unit cost of their products so they can compete for market share. Their rate of profit tends to fall, so they must try to sell more. Competition sharpens. That leads inevitably to the massive destruction of human and other productive resources – including world war.

Meanwhile, masses of unemployed workers can’t buy stuff that capitalists must sell. Capitalists expanded credit to get around that. But now many workers can’t even make minimum payments.

Capitalists also shift production from necessities to luxuries, since those few who do have money have a lot. But this contributes to the sharpening of class contradictions. Masses of struggling workers (employed and unemployed) grow increasingly angry.

The *New York Times* (*NYT*) dedicated a recent magazine to this crisis and the idea of solving it with a “universal basic income” (UBI) plan. In UBI, everyone gets unconditional cash payments. Pilot projects have been tried in parts of Kenya, Finland, Namibia, Macao and Iran. It’s up for discussion in Latin America. Mexico City may write UBI into its new city constitution.

High-tech US billionaires, the *NYT* reported, are “obsessed with basic income... as a palliative for the societal turbulence its inventions might reach.” That means: massive unemployment and extreme inequality created by the “computer revolution” could trigger rebellions and even workers’ revolution.

We’re organizing for that revolution, with communism as the goal.

**“Basic Income” may sound like a radical idea. It’s not.**

**In India**, the fascist Modi government released a report in January proposing to replace subsidies of essentials like food and fuel with a “standard basic income” (SBI) of about 7,620 rupees (\$112) per person each year.



The money would go directly into banks, aiding the bankers. But a third of Indian adults have no bank account. They couldn’t get “their” money. And the report admits it would be too costly to lift all Indians above the poverty line.

This report hypocritically proposed giving a “basic income” only to women. It says this would recognize non-wage labor (housework) as a real social contribution. But even a maid in Kolkata makes about 5000 rupees per month, about eight times the proposed “basic income.”

When communism abolishes wage-labor, distinctions between wage-slavery and unpaid domestic work will disappear. The material basis will exist to end the gender division of labor and sexism in all aspects of life.

**Free-market guru Milton Friedman** peddled UBI. Arch-racist Charles Murray pushes it now in the U.S..

Murray proposes grants of up to \$10,000/year/person (plus \$3000 for health insurance) to replace ALL federal welfare and social-services programs and “the bureaucracies that oversee them.”

Compare this to the official 2016 poverty level (about \$12,000). And over 1/3 of the total US population (official count) would lose food assistance. About half would lose some kind of federal benefit. Everyone’s basic needs would NOT be met.

The *NYT* articles sparked a lively e-mail discussion. One friend wrote:

**“Work seems fundamental to life**, in a way that capital is not ... For me, ‘to work’ and ‘to live’ are linked, and they are unconnected to ‘making a living.’”

We shouldn’t believe, he continued, “that one must deserve one’s share of the collective access to scarce resources [or] that goods, no matter how cost-free to produce, should not be available unless paid for.” That is: everyone should get what they need, period.

That’s why we must rely on more new communist organizers to mobilize masses for communism – starting right now, as we prepare for May Day.



This cartoon from *India Resists* exposes the racism of the Modi government’s “Basic Income” plans



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## US Communists Built Industrial Unions

### THIS TIME LET'S BUILD A MASS PARTY

February 16—Boeing workers in North Charleston, South Carolina (USA) rejected the International Association of Machinists (IAM), the company's blue-collar union in the Seattle area, by a wide margin. It was not unexpected.

The IAM doesn't have motivated organizers like those who built the original industrial unions. Those workers were motivated by a vision of a communist future.

Highly paid union functionaries are a poor substitute. Trade unionism concedes power to the capitalists, fighting for only a few economic scraps. The futility of a trade-unionist strategy has become obvious as aerospace overproduction intensifies.

The bosses build planes if it is profitable and the market wants them. In communism, there will be no markets because we won't produce things for sale. Corporate bean-counters and CEOs will not make production decisions.

Communism will give the working class real power. In communism, the International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP) will mobilize millions to make decisions about what needs to be produced and how to do it. Our livelihoods will no longer depend on profits, sales and markets. Now that's real power!

To add insult to injury, Boeing bosses invited Trump to the rollout of the new 787 model. He crowed that the jet is an example of how to create American (low-paid) jobs. In fact, more of this plane is made by low-wage labor overseas than any other Boeing jet.

Trump offered a nationalist vision. What the workers got was a third of the pay of Seattle-area employees and fewer jobs than ever.

In communism, where planes are produced or

who produces them will be irrelevant. We will no longer compete with other workers for jobs. Indeed, there will be no jobs, only necessary collective work.

We will also not compete for better wages because everyone's needs will be provided for. Workers around the world can then welcome extra hands as equal partners.

#### Learn from Mistakes of Communists Who Built Industrial Unions

A communist vision like this inspired the Communist Party (CPUSA) members who built the first U.S. industrial unions. We have much to learn from their bravery and determination, but it would be an insult to their memory if we blindly repeated their mistakes.

At first, they built what they thought were revolutionary unions. Later, they allied with the very reactionary union leaders they had battled for over a decade. Their idea was to expand their influence among a larger number of workers.

John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers of America and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), had a different plan. Warned that communists were flocking into the CIO, he responded, "Who gets the bird, the hunter or the dog?" He wanted to use the communists as "dogs" for his own reactionary purposes. And that's exactly what he did! (See below)

Even worse, the CPUSA squandered the revolutionary enthusiasm of party cadre. Dozens died with communism on their mind, building unions that only served to bolster a fragile system during the Great Depression of the 1930s.

"They sold out," concluded a Boeing friend and active ICWP supporter, rubbing his thumb

and first fingers together. In fact, it was more far-reaching than individual comrades being bought off. The whole party shop organization was scuttled for the sake of these alliances.

The CPUSA discontinued party industrial meetings of members and friends. Without responsibility to these collectives, party union officials were free to make any compromise they wanted to maintain their alliances with reactionaries like Lewis.

#### What Now?

The shop papers were also abandoned. There was no need for shop papers to advocate for militant reform when party union leaders did the same thing. If the papers focused on communist solutions, they put the alliances in jeopardy.

In contrast, our goal is to develop more communist leaders. For this, shop meetings of party members and friends can be very helpful. Even better, these *Red Flag* shop collectives can produce and distribute *Red Flag* leaflets.

For example, fighting anti-immigrant racism has moved millions. May Day demonstrations in the U.S. will focus on this issue. They promise to be massive this year.

A *Red Flag* collective at any job site, school or barracks could produce a May Day leaflet that brings the immigration issue home to the shop floor. It can carefully explain how only communism will eliminate this bosses' weapon. Boeing workers in Seattle are working on such a leaflet.

On-the-job experience like this is essential. Writing, distributing and struggling over such leaflets will help develop more communist leaders. It's much more important to our future than any union election.

## No More Blood for Chump Change

### COAL, COMMUNISTS AND THE ARCH-BETRAYER JOHN L. LEWIS

The Communist Party USA was in the coal fields almost from its founding in 1919. From that first day, United Mine Workers of America (UMW) president John L. Lewis dedicated himself to stamping out their presence.

The communists' main strategy from the late 1920s to the mid-1930s was to build a red union called the National Miners Union (NMU). This "revolutionary" union was a mixed bag of militant reform and calls for a soviet America.

First, Lewis and his henchmen directly assaulted communist organizers. They killed a number of brave comrades in this decade-long battle. The UMW signed sweetheart deals with mine owners to undermine strikes led by the communists.



Communist Organizer Emma Tenayuca  
San Antonio, Texas, USA, 1936

In the 1931 strike in western Pennsylvania, the NMU drew out more than 40,000 miners including a large number of black workers. Soon after, they joined the famous Harlan County strike.

Black workers made up the core of the NMU organizers and party leaders around Birmingham, Alabama. Later, Mexican-American coal diggers led the charge against guns, bayonets and clubs during the famous New Mexico Gallup mine strike.

In each of these strikes, the party emphasized "the revolutionizing of striking workers, not just gaining material results." In keeping with this goal, "the first thing the party considered was [recruitment]."

Communists launched educational campaigns everywhere in the mine country. Many miners could not read. At study groups, those that could would read out loud everything from the *Communist Manifesto* to the CPUSA's *Daily Worker*. Thousands joined.

Throughout this time, Lewis and the UMW asserted that they would fight "Communist propaganda in the American trade union movement just as viciously as they fight strike-breaking non-union coal operations." In practice, more so!

Lewis earned a front-page picture in the *Daily Worker* with a caption labeling him "The Arch Betrayer."

Lewis and Co. couldn't stop the CPUSA. Time



May Day, 1930, Phoenix, Arizona, USA

and time again, miners— particularly black and Latin miners— turned to the party. The red unions were not successful in the trade union "material gains" sense, but the vision of communism inspired masses.

Lewis only succeeded when the CP publicly abandoned the revolutionary vision for an alliance with their arch-enemy in the CIO starting in the late '30s.

Could the red unions and their reformist illusions have been replaced with a direct mobilization for communism? It seems that many in the rank-and-file were ready. The united front squashed that possibility.

Much blood was spilled to learn that nothing short of mobilizing for communism will do. Now it is our turn. We will not forget!



## WORKERS WHO FIGHT FOR HEALTH CARE NEED A COMMUNIST VISION

LOS ANGELES March 10— Three hundred workers, patients and doctors rallied today at LA County-USC Medical Center. They protested Trump's proposal to gut healthcare for the masses while giving the rich big tax breaks.

Many gladly took *Red Flag*. They were interested to talk about a communist system without money where everyone will get the health care they need. In communism the health and health care of the masses will be one of the main goals of society, not something to be thrown away for the profits of the rich.

AFSCME is the union that organized the rally and press conference. It calls for defending "Obamacare." But Obamacare left over 28.5 million people in the US without health insurance in 2015. It doesn't cover undocumented immigrants.

Co-payments and health insurance costs are rising. Many plans have already cut out services. This will only get worse with "Trumpcare." More workers will die.

AFSCME, Bernie Sanders and others say "single payer" is the solution. The government, not insurance companies, would pay for a minimal level of health care for all.



England and other countries already have "single payer." There, the masses of workers, unemployed and the elderly effectively have rationed care. The rich get much more complete health care by buying private insurance or paying cash.

Capitalist health care is racist and sexist and generally anti-worker. Black, latino/a, immigrant and women workers in the US generally get worse healthcare while that of all workers is under attack.

The capitalist profit system cannot and will not provide the healthcare that workers need. Workers' deteriorating health and health care are part of capitalism's attack on workers' lives.

This is due to their drive for profits amidst a crisis of overproduction and their need to prepare for more wars, including world war. For US imperialism, a declining world power, workers and our health are always expendable – and even more so now.

To guarantee the masses' health and health care we need communist revolution

and a communist society. Masses will be mobilized to produce for workers' needs without money or profits.

We'll get rid of the dangerous chemicals that pollute our air, food and water. We'll end the stress of capitalist wage slavery. No resource will be spared to care for the sick and injured and to prevent disease.

Communist society will combine "mental" and "manual" labor. In China during the Cultural Revolution, doctors, nurses, janitors, patients and their families all participated in health teams to understand, diagnose and treat patients.

A fully communist society will go further. Even the most skilled and knowledgeable (like today's doctors) will clean bed pans. Everyone involved in patient care will learn the theory and practice of caring for the sick.

Health and the science of health care will become mass questions, not the property of a few. Collectivity and communist social relations will guarantee this.

Does this prospect inspire you? Then join us!

### EL SALVADOR from page 1

said an industrial worker. The bosses and their supervisor rats pressure the workers more each time using the excuse of a wage increase.

"I don't let them harass me; I tell her that if she wants to put some one else in my place, to go ahead, but I'm not going to be killing myself for a dollar more," stated a woman worker.

We continued the meeting by collectively reading an article from *Red Flag*. We studied the article about the distribution of communist leaflets outside the industrial complex where our club works. The comrade workers commented that

most of the literature reached the hands of workers in a factory where the workers are currently being verbally mistreated and production is being managed in a tricky way to pay lower wages.

On this occasion, one of the communist leaders of the industrial club called on everyone to be attentive to these attacks and to watch their backs. Usually, it is our leaders who respond to situations like this. However, they themselves are making a call to respond collectively to the bosses' attacks.

The situation inside the factories is difficult and requires collective work between the members of the party inside and outside the factories.

### SOUTH AFRICA from page 1

comrade on the work done by the young lions. Other workers who heard about this but could not make it wanted to know more as well. This will help in the long run.

"I am cutting steel like hell. I'm cutting the bosses and their lackeys into pieces. The meeting has galvanized the workers," said a factory worker.

**We are struggling against ideological challenges.** For example, one guy said, "If I don't get any benefit, I don't have any reason to join ICWP."

People have nothing and they are looking for anything that can bring food to the table. We explained as best we could that the solution should not be narrow or individualistic. Our solution is for the whole working class to the whole problem: capitalism. Some think that if they are getting paid, their problems will go away. But this

is not the case. As long as there is exploitation and brutality, their problems will continue.

Another challenge is religion, which is a tool the capitalists use to suppress the working class to keep themselves dominant. Some people have the outlook that it's ok for me to suffer in this life because religion promises another life where there is no anger, exploitation, suffering, poverty. But if you can get this in this life, which is what ICWP fights for, why not get it now, instead of waiting for something that you don't know will actually happen?

**We face the challenge of waging this ideological struggle to win the masses to communism.** They need to know that nothing will change if you are on your own. You need a mass party. You need a collective. If you are in a collective, you are not on your own. You have a way of exploring another idea. It's not easy, but you have a way to achieve it. You can make the lives of some of our class brothers and sisters a little

The distribution of our literature is being consolidated little by little. Our next step is to create new writers for *Red Flag* and at the same time increase the number of readers.

We ended the meeting by planning the Communist May Day. We talked about our experiences in past years and specific points to improve this time. We plan to increase the number of workers, farmworkers, and students who march under the red flags of our Party. The men and women workers are embracing communist ideas more each time. We are certain that we are on the correct side of history.

bit better as we fight for communism.

Another obstacle we are experiencing is our own understanding of communism. We need to constantly struggle with each other to consistently have collective meetings. These meetings have given us confidence to talk to people about communism with the clear understanding that we know what communism is.

When we talk to people, it's easy because it's something that you know, that you are living. It's not just theoretical. It's something that you practice, so it's easy for people to relate to you.

We are making slow but steady progress. If we are consistent about our work and meetings, that will help us grow as better communists and also be better representatives of the working class, of ICWP.

The interest of the workers is in top gear, thanks to the young lions. Viva ICWP Viva!!



## Guatemala— 40 Girls and Young Women Burned to Death:

### RACIST CAPITALISM IS GUILTY OF MURDER

GUATEMALA—On March 8, hundreds of children and teenagers mutinied in the “Safe Home of the Virgin of the Assumption.” The response of the Guatemalan state led to the deaths of 40 young girls and teenagers.

The state, servant and protector of the interests of capital, is not the only one to blame for this massacre. The capitalist system put them in that horrible place.

The “Safe Home” is a “shelter” for minors who have been linked to gangs, forced into prostitution, were victims of domestic violence, or who were abandoned by their parents at birth.

All the things that have led the youth to this place are economic and social. All have their roots in the capitalist system. It divides the working class, pushing sexism and racism, which leads to violence against our class, especially against girls and women.

This “home” functions like a jail for minors. It is a hell for those that live there. People have known for years that rape is committed inside there, as well as other kinds of physical and psychological mistreatment.

The infrastructure is deplorable. This place has the capacity for 500 youth but, until the riot, 800 girls, boys and teenagers lived there. The bathrooms are in a terrible state. Some don't have doors. This generates fear in the youth, making them vulnerable to one more rape.

The riot happened because of all the above and much more. About 80 youth managed to escape but later they were recaptured and returned by the police to the “home.” They were brutally beaten

and locked up.

In one of the modules there were 50 to 60 girls. Some of them, filled with anger, began to burn mattresses. A youth from the other module reported that from early in the morning he smelled something burning. The youth from the other module managed to knock down the door and ran to try to help their friends. But the police stopped them and began to attack them. They let the girls die.

They died fighting. The conditions in which they lived were unbearable and they decided to fight to change this. It is our responsibility to organize the youth to liberate themselves from the evils that sexist, racist capitalism forces them to endure. Young people are crucial in mobilizing for and building communist society where no girl or boy will be forced to live in this kind of hell. They will be part of a new education far from these oppressive walls where we will learn collectively in the processes of production.

The international working class has historically been attacked by the interests of the capitalists. The conditions of poverty, sexism, racism, violence and exploitation to which we are subjected provide a gloomy picture for the new generations. The youth who have been linked to gangs, drugs, or who are abandoned usually come

from families in which the parents have had to emigrate in search for their survival.

The victory of communism is the only thing that will insure that the material bases of these sexist and oppressive events never again exist. By building a society in which we collectively organize all aspects of life, each one of us will be part of a family. No human being will be forgotten or exposed to practices that endanger their life and that of others.

Like in El Mozote (where the Salvadoran army murdered 800 people in 1981), Ayotzinapa (where the Mexican army “disappeared” and killed 43 protesting students in 2014), and Tlatelolco (where the Mexican government massacred an estimated 300 protesting students in 1968), these 40 girls and teenagers will not be forgotten. It is our duty as communists to make those responsible pay and to forge a world where this will never happen again.



Protest, Guatemala City



Comrades in Los Angeles and San Diego, USA, bring communist politics to International Women's Day activities

#### LETTERS

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#### CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

##### Developing More Communist Leaders

The *Red Flag* article about developing more communist leaders sparked a helpful discussion in our party collective. An older member summed up the main point: Masses are in motion worldwide as fascism intensifies. Many are questioning the capitalist system. They are interested in what we have to say about communism. We need more comrades and friends to step up their efforts.

She described how her own commitment to communism was deepening as she “stretched” to take on more responsibility for the party.

Then a newer member agreed to take responsibility for a *Red Flag* distribution that she has “helped” with for about a year. She asked for the information she would need to do this.

Another very dedicated comrade is frustrated because her family responsibilities (on top of a full-time job) take up so much time. She would like to “step up” but doesn't know how. We are trying to find ways that she can help follow-up (using electronic media) with some of the con-

tacts we are making at rallies and with others who are already around the club.

A close friend who meets with the collective agreed to take on several responsibilities for this year's May Day dinner. She volunteered that she would make a point of reading *Red Flag* in both Spanish and English in order to become a more effective translator.

Then everyone got very involved in a discussion about a “strategy” meeting that two friends asked a comrade to set up. One had attended our New Year's Day discussion and really liked it. Both are frustrated because all the activity against the Trump regime's fascism seems to be scattered and ineffective.

How can we meet to discuss “strategy” when they are fighting for reforms (like saving the Affordable Care Act and stopping the Muslim ban) and we are mobilizing for communist revolution? Two comrades suggested that we start by talking about our “vision” for the world. We think there would be a lot of common ground there.

There was some disagreement about whether we should try to frame common short-term “goals” that we could share with our friends. But their goals are reforms. Ours aren't.

For example, our goal would not be to “save the ACA” but to convince a certain number of people that only communism can provide the health care everyone needs. We would work with them on their goals while making our goals clear and fighting for them.

Now, in 2017, we have a better idea of how we can set up the meeting our friends want without being opportunistic or reformist. We have a more long-term perspective on building ties that can sustain long-term political struggle with these friends who are very committed to the cause of the masses. Our immediate goal is to bring a bigger and more politically diverse group to the May Day dinner and the May Day march.

— A party collective in California



### Capitalism is the Material Basis of Racism

I find ICWP's general line extremely impressive, inspirational even. But I have some pretty serious reservations about how the party's line on racism is presented—and, perhaps, about some aspects of that line.

There are two basic conceptions of where racism comes from that compete for the allegiance of anti-racists: a liberal conception and a communist one. Some of the time ICWP's formulation of the communist position on race seems exactly right but there are important problems with other formulations.

In several places, having put forward the communist line, the ICWP publications go on to explain the relationship between racism and competition between workers that doesn't clearly enough distinguish between the communist position and the liberal one.

Consider this from the pamphlet 'To end racism mobilize the masses for communism':

"Capitalism's racist terror enforces this super-exploitation. Its wage system forces us to compete with each other in a labor market in order to survive. Thus capitalism creates the material basis for its 'divide-and-conquer' politics."

Anyone who already understands the communist position will know that it's not being claimed that whites and blacks are being forced to compete as races against one another. It's not being claimed that benefits for one race will have to come at the expense of the other.

But the second sentence could just as well have been used by a liberal theorist to articulate the liberal position that whites benefit at least in the short run from their "privilege." The reader who's new to thinking about communism could easily fail to see what point is being made.

In lots of other places the "material basis of racism" is identified with competition for wages in ways that could easily be understood as articulating the liberal position. This identification is compatible with either a liberal or a communist conception of the source of racism. The real material basis of racism is the necessity for capitalists to invent races to undermine workers' solidarity.

Of course, we need to get rid of wages in order to get rid of capitalism and to finally eliminate racism. But it's not true that racist attitudes are always grounded in workers' concerns about competing for wages. Moreover, when ruling classes rely on racism to persuade workers to fight against other workers in inter-imperialist wars they do not typically rely on lies about competition for wages.

The material basis of racism and sexism is capitalism which requires racism and sexism to undermine the natural tendency of oppressed workers and their allies towards solidarity in class struggle.

There are lots of places where what ICWP says completely nails it. I think that ICWP's position on racism (and sexism) would be greatly improved if the contrast to the liberal position were explicitly formulated (in those terms) and if the complete communist position were consistently articulated.

—Long-time non-party Red

**The above letter is excerpted from a much longer and very thoughtful one. We deeply appreciate this effort and will print more in future issues. Meanwhile, we welcome readers' comments.**



### What Is the Material Basis for Continuing Anti-Jewish Racism?

Since January of 2017 there have been no less than 60 single or repeat instances of phone-called threats to Jewish community centers in the United States. There also was a February 10 vandalism of a Jewish cemetery. What is the material basis for the continuation of racism against the Jewish people? *Red Flag* opposes racism of all types, and fights for communism to end the basis for racism. Thank you.

— A Comrade

#### Red Flag responds:

The capitalists need racism to divide the working class—always.

Racism against Jews has a long history, dating back to feudalism. Christian European rulers used it to justify their "crusades" of conquest. They blamed Jews for epidemics and other problems faced by the impoverished masses. Their anti-Semitism distracted Christian masses from a brutally exploitative system.

Hitler justified his imperialist war for world domination with "Aryan purity." That justified the racist genocidal slaughter of Jews, communists, Roma people, and the disabled. He attacked Jews to divert the Christian masses' anger away from capitalism. Anti-Semitism helped to win workers to German nationalism and to sacrifice and fight for Germany in World War II.

Trump and his chief adviser Steve Bannon have unleashed a torrent of racism. Their targets are immigrants, including from India, black workers, Latino/as, Muslims, and Jews. Their rabid racism encourages the deadly racist atmosphere described in the letter above.

Bannon was the editor of *Breitbart*, an openly anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim online rag. Its "clash of civilizations" line exposes the material basis of anti-Jewish racism today. That's the rulers' need to divide and exploit the working class.

This is a time of sharpening crisis. US bosses need to win part of the working class to attack other workers and go to war for the interests of declining US imperialism.

They disagree on how to do this. Democrats push multi-cultural nationalism. The Trump forces tell Christians that they must fight for

"civilization" (really, for US imperialism) against Muslim people. Their latest "Christian crusade" again attacks Jews.

The good news is that millions who hate racism are energized and united. That includes black and immigrant workers, Muslims and Jews, and many white Christian US citizens.

Muslims raised money to restore a vandalized Jewish cemetery. A Jewish congregation gave the key to its synagogue to the imam of a mosque that was torched.

We can and must win these millions to see that only communist revolution can put an end to capital-

ism's racism, fascism, nationalism and imperialist war.

We are one working class worldwide. We have the same enemy: racist capitalism. Most important, we can share a bright future by mobilizing massively for a communist world that can make racism, bigotry and borders into relics of the past.

#### Make It Happen!

"I have been reading this paper for years," said a Los Angeles bus operator. "And nothing is happening."

"Some things are happening," I replied. I told him about the growth of our Party in South Africa, India and elsewhere. I mentioned the wave of mass protests in the US in recent months.

But I could see that's not what he meant. He meant that he couldn't see anything happening at his workplace or among other bus operators. So I said, "People like you are the ones who are going to make things happen. Can you set up a meeting with a few friends? I can come, or another comrade, and we can talk about what to do."

"Let me think about it for a while," he responded. I think he was a little surprised by the idea.

If you, too, are wondering when "things will happen," you should think about it too. We're ready when you are.

—Los Angeles comrade



**PASADENA, CA (US), Feb. 28 -- Hundreds marched in solidarity, demanding that city officials refuse to help federal officials enforce Trump's immigration policies. Nearly a hundred marchers took copies of *Red Flag*.**



## IN MEMORY OF COMRADE CHECHO

EL SALVADOR—“He was a front line fighter,” is how a comrade began his story about the life of “Checho.” A comrade reflected on this and said, “And he continued being one until the last day of his life, because he continued fighting in ICWP.” This comrade had died the week before.

“He marched with us on several May Days. Remember the meal that we had in the house together with the industrial comrade from Los Angeles who visited us?” he continued remembering. “Checho was there and at many other Party meetings.”

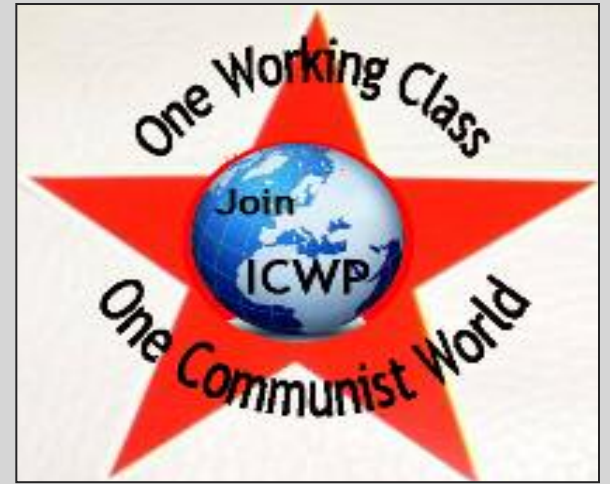
From a very young age, the comrade was a guerrilla fighter who fought to destroy the capitalist system and create a communist system in favor of the world’s working class. After the guerrilla stage was over and when the armed conflict in El Salvador ended, Checho, like many

fighters from the FMLN, felt unprotected and alone, facing the new way of life, far away from the solidarity and collective social relations with his former comrades-in-arms.

It makes you enormously angry to see how our fighters, after having given their whole youth for the sake of a process that they believed was correct, and as a result of all the accumulated and never-treated diseases, end their life far from a hospital or conditions worthy of a fighter for the working class.

One of the farmworker comrades of the Party three years ago took the *Red Flag* newspaper to him and told him that it was necessary to keep fighting for a communist system. He received the paper and in the midst of all the darkness of a rotten system he saw the light of a new struggle for his working class.

For comrades like Checho, we vow to win.



The struggle for communist revolution will continue to be our guide, and we will not retreat in mobilizing the international working class.

We express our solidarity to the community with whom he shared his ideals for a better world for our class.

Comrade Checho, until victory!

### LETTERS

### LETTERS

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### CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

#### Communist Dialectics and T-shirts

Greetings Comrades,

We are going back to the study of dialectics. One of the areas needs help with this, so another collective will help; the two collectives will study dialectics together. This study of dialectics enhances our political line and helps us know how to analyze things that are happening. That way, people will be motivated to come because we can give them a picture of what is happening and what the solution is. This will be very helpful going forward.

As we have indicated, we have run out of our ICWP T-shirts at the time that workers need them the most. So, since we must mobilize the masses, it makes sense that we use the T-shirts as well. We must ensure that the T-shirts become available as *Red Flag* is. Before we were thinking that they are not as important as *Red Flag*, but seeing how the workers respond to the T-shirts, we want to emphasize that we need them.

— Comrades in South Africa

#### Powering Up for Communism

Since I have joined the ICWP, I am always engaging myself with the dialectics of our revolution and wherever I go I always make sure that I have *Red Flags* in my car.

Whenever I am mobilizing the masses for our revolution, I always draw a broader picture of our revolution and the differences between the ICWP and the political parties which are run by the capitalist system. Even if I noticed that some of the masses don’t pay attention to what I am saying to them, I normally exchange numbers with them in order for me to call and visit them whenever time permits, in order for me to get to know them one by one.

The best tool that I normally use is to share the dialectics with them and watch the DVDs that I have. If they don’t have an electrical power or a DVD player, I plug my DVD player into my car so they can view the DVD’s about our revolution.

When I am mobilizing the masses, I always tell them about the silent war that exists globally.

The obstacles which I am currently facing right now are the two issues of fuel and the catering for my collective. How do I overcome such obstacles? I normally cook from my house and borrow cash from friends in order to get fuel for the mobilization. I simply repay such money back on a monthly basis.

Aluta comrades.

— A Comrade in South Africa

#### Red Flag comments:

*This letter and the other letter and article from South Africa show the advances of ICWP. We ask Red Flag readers to donate what money they can so to help the comrades mobilize more workers for communism. Thank you.*

#### U.S. High School Students Respond to Letter from South African Comrades

Thank you for the “Fascism and Trump” letter in the last *Red Flag*. It’s inspiring to all of us knowing what you comrades are doing in South Africa. The letter helped us see the true sides of the story clearly. We agree that Donald Trump wants to keep capitalism in charge. Trump doesn’t care about the wellbeing of the working classes. He only wants to control and push us back. That’s where we communists come in and say “enough is enough!” We have to change this capitalist economy which won’t be able to maintain itself; it is not stable.

Trump plans to use the authorities to keep American businesses in America, but that isn’t going to solve anything. Capitalism only survives by making profits. It needs to expand to other areas in search of cheaper labor, to exploit the working classes even more. The poor become poorer, and the rich become richer.

We agreed that we have to take communist action against Trump and all the fascists that have taken control or are trying to around the world. Communist actions like increasing *Red Flag* circulation and networks, building more study-action Party clubs, building more communist relationships and bringing communist ideas and the need to join the ICWP to the rebelling masses

We discussed that fascism is a sign of weakness. It means capitalism cannot rule in the old way with their democracy. Fascism’s aim is to divide, weaken and control the working class. It promotes patriotism and war to save capitalism. All around the globe masses of working people are rising, rejecting and pushing back all of this fascism. Our history has shown that the communists defeated the fascist hordes and we will do it again.

Capitalism has taught everyone that to achieve justice we must defend and fight for our rights. Workers will never achieve justice under capitalism or get their human needs satisfied. We believe the only way for us is to go

forward: abolish capitalism, no profits, no money. If we keep mobilizing for communism with our comrades in Latin America, South Africa, India, and other places that ICWP finds itself, we will sooner rather than later achieve communism.

— Young Los Angeles Comrades

#### Communists and friends don’t wait to tear down the walls of racism, xenophobia

We often talk to our friends and co-workers about how only under communism will we finally be able to put an end to racism. But there are many ways to fight racism in the present, leading up to the day when the working class tears down all the borders between the bosses “nations”.

One friend of ours from Somalia is an activist and filmmaker. She is doing a project where she invites Muslims and non-Muslims to sit down to dinner together. Some of us were invited recently, and we all made new friends.

After a delicious meal, she had us all sit in a circle and asked some prepared questions. These questions were common “icebreakers”, and the goal was to draw out something about each person that would reveal their inner self.

There were a lot of interesting answers, but not very political. So, several comrades purposely injected bits and pieces of a communist vision in our responses. Many were nodding their heads and smiling. Eventually we identified ourselves as communists, and one person asked if we would have borders. When we said NO, he responded “I’m for that!”

Afterwards, as people were getting ready to leave, phone numbers and emails were exchanged. On the way to our car, a friend of a friend told me, “I want to know all about communism!”

The rest of the ride home was a discussion of communist ideas. Was socialism a cousin of communism? No! Will communism do away with nations? Yes!

There are a lot of people out there trying to figure it all out. And some of them are willing to create a social gathering where we can openly talk about communism. We should go to a lot of these, especially as May Day draws near. Self-critically we did not invite people to march with us on May 1st. Next time we will be sure to bring invitations to our May Day communist contingent.

— Seattle (USA) comrades

**“General your tank is a powerful vehicle....it has only one defect: it needs a driver”****UNCOVERING THE REVOLUTIONARY HISTORIES OF WORLD WAR II**

Capitalists fear war. And well they should. Never mind that their system knows no end to pillage and destruction. Never mind that it has temporarily solved its major contradictions through two world wars. Capitalists fear war because it drafts young workers, trains these conscripts as soldiers and puts guns in their hands.

Many know that World War I ended when workers and conscripted soldiers took power in Russia and built a socialist Soviet Union. Likewise, as a result of World War II, Chinese workers and peasants were able to seize power, throw out all the imperialist exploiters and start to build a socialist society.

What is less clearly understood is that these revolutions were not isolated incidents, but rather the most organized expressions of a revolutionary internationalism that swept the whole world. We have written before about the Indian Naval Mutiny at the end of World War II. Led by Sikh, Moslem, and Hindu sailors, it marked the beginning of the end of the British Empire. Among other demands, it called for Indian troops to be withdrawn from Indonesia!

What were Indian troops doing in Indonesia? It turns out they were part of the British Army that invaded Indonesia to disarm the Japanese. That was the mandate handed the British. However, that wasn't their dirty scheme. They planned to disarm the Japanese and hand Indonesia back to the Dutch.

It was a plan that unleashed the fury of the largely unorganized Indonesian youth and workers. Even before the British arrived, working out of local ethnic or religious groups, they had taken over offices, mines, plantations, railways and radio stations from the Japanese. The British troops arrived on September 29, 1945. The first soldier was killed on October 11.

**Turn the Guns Around!**

As the resistance grew the British realized they

needed the help of the Japanese troops to put down the rebellion. Instead of disarming them, they recruited them. But some 200 defected to the Indonesian side. In this, the Japanese soldiers were following the lead of some 600 Indian troops.

Refusing to take part in what became a bloody massacre in city of Surabaya, a British paratrooper unit staged a sit-down and had to be sent home. Another group of British soldiers put out a resistance newspaper in Jakarta. Some Australian troops handed their weapons over to the largely unarmed Indonesian rebels.

Australian dockworkers and seamen refused to carry troops or munitions to the war zone in a political strike that affected some 500 ships. Indian dockworkers were brought in to break the strike but they, too, promptly joined it. Collections to support the strikers were held on board British warships in Sydney Harbor with a delegation elected to hand the money over to their Indian brothers, turning 200 years of colonial occupation upside down.

In Holland, widespread anger at their government's plan to re-colonize Indonesia spread among the Dutch soldiers. They organized a massive demonstration in Amsterdam followed by a two-day general strike.

Several days, later soldiers at the Harderwijk camp near Amsterdam bluntly refused orders to ship out to Indonesia and formed a committee representing 150 rank-and-file communist sol-



Read our pamphlet:

**Soldiers, Sailors, Marines: Crucial to a Communist Workers' Revolution**

available at [icwpredflag.org/MIL/mpe.pdf](http://icwpredflag.org/MIL/mpe.pdf)

diers to seek support from the Dutch working class.

The story of this explosion of working class revolutionary internationalism is still hidden from our history, whether in books or films. Along with others, like the Indian Naval Mutiny, it shows that World War II was more than a struggle between imperialist powers to divide or re-divide the world. It was primarily an opportunity for the international working class to use its revolutionary potential to change the world.

The politics of the international communist movement in those days—socialism and national liberation—ultimately led to its defeat. Nevertheless, the scale and revolutionary force of the internationalism that was unleashed still scares the capitalists.

Learning from the mistakes of previous communists, ICWP is building today an international Party fighting for communism, not socialism or national liberation. Let the imperialists start their wars. Our revolutionary history tells us that we can and will finish them!

**“SPY VS. SPY” VERSUS COMMUNIST WORKERS' POWER**

Did the Donald Trump crew conspire with Russian intelligence to steal the US presidential election, as the CIA and FBI claim? Or did US intelligence agencies hack the Democratic Party themselves in order to frame the Russians?

We don't know. We don't particularly care. We don't trust any of them. Both sides are imperialist powers that try to cover up the dictatorship of the rich with populist rhetoric.

As far as we can tell, the only true thing each side says is that the other side is fascist. The whole war of words reminds us of the US humor magazine MAD's wordless “Spy vs. Spy” cartoon from the Cold War era.

But like the Cold War, this situation is no joke. We're still talking about the world's two largest nuclear powers.

It's true, as the Russians and their supporters say, that Clinton seemed even more ready than Obama to risk war over Ukraine and Syria. In contrast, Trump and his crew (notably Secretary of State R“Exxon” Tillerson) have major business interests in Russia. For now, at least, they don't want that war.

Yemen is a different story. Trump is stepping up the US/Saudi air war on Houthi rebels that Obama started. Each air strike brings civilian casualties, including children. Each worsens the dire refugee crisis there. Pakistan may soon send ground troops.

Trump is also trying to take credit for a massive modernization of the US nuclear arsenal—also started by the Obama administration.

And for increasing the Navy's aircraft-carrier fleet to 12 ships from the present 10—though three are already in the pipeline.

And for getting “tough on China”—which was the point of the Obama-Clinton “pivot to Asia-Pacific.”

Some leading US imperialists fear that Trump is endangering their interests. He's hollowing out the State Department. His behavior is more erratic than diplomatic. His policies seem to be driven, more than usual, by considerations of personal gain.

What we know for sure is that the imperialists themselves are the real danger to the interests of the international working class. That includes the Russian, Chinese and European as well as the US imperialists. Their system makes war inevitable. Each war is far more devastating than the last.

We know this, but as communists we don't fear it. As the article on the Indonesian mutiny shows, the wars of the 20th century opened doors wide for communist revolution.

When the rulers mobilize soldiers and sailors for war, and masses of workers for war production, they risk creating an army of their own gravediggers. It's our job to mobilize that army for communism.

Such opportunities already exist. We must make the most of them. A comrade recently attended a community meeting where liberals were



organizing against Trump's fascist immigration policies. She found herself sitting at a table with two soldiers.

Would National Guard or Reserve units actually hunt down immigrants when many of them are themselves immigrants or from immigrant families? We need to inspire them with a vision of a communist world without borders.

This we know: The enemy of your enemy is often not your friend. Don't let your hatred of Trump push you into the arms of the FBI and CIA. Don't let your hatred of the FBI and CIA push you into the arms of Russia apologists like Julian Assange and Wikileaks.

Look for your real friends in the international working class and the International Communist Workers' Party.