

# RED FLAG

**MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM**



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

CUZCO, PERU, August 2—Teachers from half the regions of Peru have been on indefinite strike since June 15.

Thousands are marching to the capital, Lima, to demand a salary increase and repeal of the Teacher Reform Law.

The tenacious men and women educational workers have blockaded roads, clashed with the police, seized public places, and even tried to take over an airport. They have the support of high school students, parents, and college students.

However, the teachers must join the struggle of the whole working class. Instead of fighting for reforms, they must mobilize the masses to eliminate wage slavery and fight for communism. It's the only way we can win a communist education for a classless society.



## BLACK BOEING WORKER REMEMBERS 1967 DETROIT REBELLION

*Detroit (USA) was the center of world auto production when it erupted on the night of July 23, 1967. This was the biggest of over 100 anti-racist rebellions that rocked U.S. cities that decade. Seven thousand National Guard and U.S. Army troops were mobilized to put it down. By the time the rebellion ended 5 days later, the racist rulers had killed 43, injured 1,187 and arrested 7,231. Almost 3,000 buildings were destroyed.*

*The connection between cop brutality, racism and industrial exploitation was brought home like never before. The potential and necessity of communist revolution is its most important legacy.*

I was a month shy of my 13th birthday when the Detroit rebellion broke out. We lived in the Jeffries projects, about a mile from one end of the rebellion marked by the Wayne County Jail. I woke up on July 24 to a tank parked out front of our house.

My uncle was not so lucky. He was arrested and thrown into one of

the infamous “cages” that lined Michigan Avenue as he returned from work at a White Castle hamburger stand. Forty prisoners to a cage! It could have been worse. Curfew was at 7:00 pm. If caught outside we were subject to being shot by the National Guard.

He was 18 years old. He was scheduled to go to Vietnam that fall. He just told me that he would have gone to Canada if he had the money.

The rebellion was justified. In addition to the cop brutality that sparked the revolt, 60% of the black neighborhood I lived in were unemployed. Most people I knew had been laid off from the auto factories.

But after days of mass violent rebellion, burnings, death and repression, the revolt failed. The only way we could have won is if we had built a movement to mobilize for communist revolution.

What if my uncle had gone into the army with the outlook of winning soldiers to turn the guns

See DETROIT page 2

## SOUTH AFRICA: MINE WORKERS NEED A COMMUNIST SOLUTION

July 21—For the past week I have been in Marikana to mobilize mine workers for communism. Mine workers are key and play a vital role for a communist revolution.

We distributed more than 200 *Red Flag* newspapers and *Mobilize the Masses for Communism* (MMC) pamphlets at two mine shafts: the Lonmin shaft and Impala shaft. When we talked to mine workers, especially in the Lonmin shaft, they showed a lot of anger towards the government and political parties.

A few mine workers said, “Don’t come here with your party. We are not interested. You have taken us for fools for far too long. When we were striking in 2012, you called us criminals who show nothing like workers’ behavior but criminal behavior.”

Apparently this was said by the South African Communist Party (SACP), calling miners “criminals” for striking for better wages. As a result, the SACP, together with the African National Congress government and the mine bosses, sent in their protectors, the Police to kill more than 40 mine workers and injure hundreds. But the miners’ struggle, their brave standing, showed us that when workers are organized they can stand the police brutality and fight the capitalists.

We explained to them that we are not SACP but the International Communist Workers’ Party (ICWP). We have nothing in common with traitors (the SACP). In actual fact, they are our enemy. They are the working class’s enemy. They are the ones we need to destroy, together with their capitalist bosses.

We explained that we are not only different from them, but ICWP is fighting directly for communism, not for failed socialism. They warmed to the idea once we explained it. They took the *Red Flag* and MMC. Two of them were really interested in the ICWP. They asked to meet again. We exchanged numbers and they wanted to join the party. This was a very

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## BLACK AEROSPACE WORKER REMEMBERS 1967 DETROIT REBELLION

around on capitalism? What if he recruited soldiers to an organization like the International Communist Workers' Party? A communist revolution will mean war against the bosses and their agents. We will need large sections of the army on the workers' side [see box].



And what if all the adults I knew who worked in Auto had built party clubs in the massive factories they worked in? We could have attacked the very concept of wage labor. That would have been something!

### Communism Will Destroy Bosses' Racism

I had good friends who were Puerto Rican. The Puerto Ricans worked in the Detroit salt mines that made millions for the owners. The canaries sent down into the shafts often died, but the miners were sent to extract the salt anyway. Some never returned.

The Polish, Hispanic and black kids got along despite the racist propaganda on TV. We were all poor. If one family was hungry, we all got together to help them out.

Immediately following the rebellion, Puerto Rican and black students attended Jefferson Junior High School. But as we prepared for high school, the school district sent the Hispanic students back across the de facto Fort Street border between the Puerto Rican and black neighborhoods. That made it harder to maintain the bond with one of my best friends. None of this segregation was by accident. The ruling class was afraid.

In communism, we will not be afraid of working-class unity. It will be a pillar of our society. Schools, work and neighborhoods will all be integrated.

Mental and manual labor will also merge. Workers will teach students about the theory behind car manufacture and mining resources. Many languages will be taught by all to all.

### Communism: To Each According to Need

Some small businesses put "Soul Brother" (black-owned business) in their windows to keep from being burned down. Mostly it didn't work. Once the fires started the whole block burned down.

Immediately, the big department stores and supermarkets jacked up prices. Some workers trucked in free food for the neighborhood. The trucks had signs that said, "Tell that GROCER GO TO HELL."

Right after the rebellion was squashed, the cops ransacked the Jeffries Projects. They confiscated any new items found, assuming you looted them. In communism, we won't have cops to protect private property. No cops to terrorize and brutalize the masses!

There was a big Federal Department Store warehouse near where I lived. People broke in to get appliances and household goods. That won't happen in communism because warehouses would only be there to distribute what the working class needs.

In '67, that warehouse was owned by the department store. The necessities were meant for sale. Communism doesn't produce goods for sale, but for need. No need to take what is already yours and your neighbor's!

Today, fifty years on, Detroit is a wasteland for those black auto workers and others of the working class. How could they let a whole city's worth of lives be destroyed? I actually know the answer to that: capitalism. But it's infuriating.

To add insult to injury, the capitalist

## ANTI-RACIST REBELLIONS SPREAD TO US TROOPS

Several divisions of the US Army's 82nd Airborne Division were diverted to the Detroit rebellion from their scheduled deployment in Vietnam. Within 18 months, every major U.S. city broke out in anti-racist revolt. Thousands of U.S. soldiers rebelled themselves, refusing riot duty.

When I listened to my friend's recollection of the Detroit rebellion, it reminded me of when the Army brass began training us for riot duty in the fall of '71. The officer in charge began by warning us to beware of students and gangsters that "rioted."

I questioned him. I mentioned that, according to a recent issue of *Scientific American*, the Detroit rebels were either auto workers or laid-off auto workers.

Unbeknownst to me, the brass had prepared some right-wing troops to confront me. One of these right-wingers jumped up shouting, "Shut up!"

"Make him!" retorted one of my friends.

You could hear the metal folding chairs hit the floor as the room split. We were on the verge of a riot ourselves. The brass got scared. Along with the Military Police, they ordered us to return to our barracks.

The brass never called us out for riot duty because they couldn't trust us to do their dirty work. Eventually thousands of troops at my base revolted against racism in the army and the racist Vietnam war. A few joined the party we were building that fought for socialism (not communism). We could have done much more with a party like the ICWP that mobilizes directly for communism. We will.

—Another Boeing worker

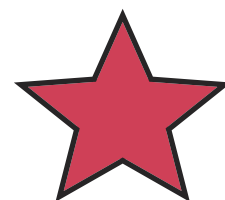
media is abuzz with the "Revitalization of Downtown Detroit." It's supposed to be the "in" place for knowledge workers and hipsters.

My brother was one of the "lucky" ones. After four decades of racist super-exploitation at Ford, he managed to save a little money. He wanted to buy a parcel of land in the downtown area some years ago when the prices were cheap.

Wayne County Assessor Carl Mathews told him to his face that he couldn't. Venture Capitalist Dan Gilbert, owner of the Cleveland Cavaliers basketball team and Quicken Loans, had reserved the area for himself. Now he's making billions building corporate headquarters and fancy condos and apartments. The workers that built "Motor City" are left to rot!

Communism will end real estate speculation. Nobody will own land. Housing will be collective. So will factories and any buildings necessary for the working class to collectively run society. No more mortgages. No banks. No Quicken Loans. No Cavaliers. And no corporations to have headquarters.

There is no excuse anymore—if there ever was—to stop at anything short of mobilizing for communism. Communist clubs in the key areas of industry and the army are more important than ever, and more possible. Herein lies the victory the Detroit rebels deserve.




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MASSES FOR  
COMMUNISM**

International Communist Workers' Party  
www.icwpredflag.org



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## **BOSSES SQUANDER LIVES, COMMUNISM CREATES LIVES WORTH LIVING**

### **SEATTLE, USA**

The same day we started writing the Detroit anti-racist rebellion article, a fellow worker collapsed while running his machine. Four workers gave him CPR to keep him alive. As I was leaving, an exhausted and tearful guy from his area gave me the bad news. He died in the hospital.

Although an immediate safety issue wasn't the cause, job stress must have been a factor. Further, his death didn't stop the bosses from making everyone in his area work overtime (more stress). Even more motivation to get this important communist Detroit article written and distributed!

This sparked angry discussions and meetings, organized and spontaneous. There were calls for political action and discussions about how only communism can end this destruction of human life (more next issue).

Many talked about a particularly galling issue some years ago. The bosses in our building decided to get rid of all disabled workers to increase "productivity." One guy, who rode in my van, had a bad arm. He worked like hell at his job. We used to kid him about how he had better slow down.

In order to fire him, the bosses transferred him to a job where he had to raise his bad arm above his head. He couldn't.

We all went to bat for him. The author of the Detroit article had a particularly sharp fight with management, but, in the end, the bosses got rid of him.

"How can people be like this?" said another worker in my area.

"These are not people," I answered. "They're bosses."

Boeing's top boss just praised the head of commercial production for cutting costs and increasing productivity. Capitalist production is organized around making more profits. Those that are willing to sacrifice our lives to increase profits are the ones who "rise" in the management ranks.

Capitalist competition creates selfishness. On the other hand, communist production based on our collective needs will form the material basis for winning men and women to think of the world's workers first. We can start now, but by changing the basis of production we can assure that the process succeeds on a bigger, more permanent scale. I was surprised at how many agreed with me when I said this.

We often say that industrial workers are key to making a communist revolution. They are also central to developing the new men and women that will guarantee the success of communist society after we seize power.

—Another furious, but hopeful, Boeing worker

### **SEVILLE, SPAIN**

In Seville, the temperature went up to over 40 degrees C (104 degrees F). For construction workers, it is so hard to work in this heat that one of them died. He was paving a road with asphalt in Morón de la Frontera near Seville. This July 13 it was over 104 degrees F when his co-workers warned emergency services that he was in poor health. The 54-year-old worker died because of the ruthless conditions capitalism subjects workers to all over the world.

The capitalist system doesn't care if the workers don't have what they need; they are only interested in their profits, their production. The reformists and the unions have raised their voices to the sky over this event, but they will do absolutely nothing to prevent this from happening again. We workers are simply not important to them except to produce profits. Neither reformists nor any union can solve the problems that the capitalist system gives us.

To end these murders caused by capitalism, the only solution is to destroy capitalism and build a communist system. In communism, the workers will not be exposed to these circumstances because we won't work for money. Surplus value will not exist. Workers will enjoy the benefit of working in safe conditions because we will produce to meet the needs of our society.

Workers around the world do not need to be exposed to excessive hours of work, miserable wages, and this pure, hard exploitation that the bosses demand. We won't work for profits! The working class will build a world with a better quality of life and without the vices and capitalist ideas that make some feel more powerful than others.

The International Communist Workers' Party fights for Communism to become a reality. Help us to build a new world, sharing *Red Flag* with friends and discussing the issues that *Red Flag* publishes. Form part of this movement by building a mass Party and a new world: a communist world! Long live communism! Long live ICWP!

—Comrade in Spain

#### **My Experience in the Party**

I am a comrade in South Africa. I was in the land of bread and butter, toasted in the village of shacks and plants, in the environment of do's and don'ts.

As I joined ICWP I came to realize that that's not the way to live.

I've got eight months in the Party. While we were going house to house mobilizing, distributing *Red Flags*, I came across a question: "Is ICWP here to steal our country?"

My answer was that our country was already stolen from us by the capitalists! ICWP is here to help us get it back, because now we are only "free" to serve the capitalist system. We must ask ourselves why criminal activities are taking place and who are the real criminals.

We are only experiencing the rich getting richer and the poor getting all the way down. Let me not dwell on that. On the sixth of May we were having political classes. This became an eye opener for me: a group of people sharing the same idea. It's where I realize I have found a home. Through these trying years, I have reached my destination.

The struggle must continue! Long live ICWP! Viva!

—A New Comrade

Miners at Marikana, South Africa, on strike, August 2012

For more about this struggle, read our 2013 pamphlet,

*SOUTH AFRICA STRIKES CALL US TO  
MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM!*  
[icwpredflag.org/MMC/SAPamES.pdf](http://icwpredflag.org/MMC/SAPamES.pdf)

#### **SOUTH AFRICAN MINERS from page 1**

good development for the party and it means now the party is going to have a cell in Lonmin.

After the visit to these, we met with the mine worker who really wanted to join. We struggled with him, because his most important contradiction was that even though communism sounds like a good idea to him, he didn't think communist revolution and communist society is possible.

We studied some few pamphlets about the Russian revolution with him. He saw that really these major gains by the Russian workers in 1917 were indeed possible now. It just needs a determined working class with communist principles

and communist solution to destroy our class enemies and create a society where exploitation does not exist. No one group gets more than others.

After that he said, "Really communist society is indeed true freedom, freedom we have been fighting for." He said that some workers have given up but he is sure that when they hear more about the party and what it is all about they would join because they really need a solution to this capitalist brutality towards workers. "I will give workers the paper and explain it to them," he added, "because some don't know English and

at least I speak the language they understand."

This shows that workers need a communist solution to exploitation that they have subjected to for hundreds of years. This also means that for us party comrades here in South Africa, we need to go to mine workers more often. In that way the party will grow, because workers do not yet know about our ideas and they are what they have been waiting for.





## US CAPITALISTS CREATED RIGHT-WING CHRISTIANITY TO SUPPORT THEIR RULE, PART II

*Part I summarized some of the doctrines and political ideas of evangelical Christianity in the US.*

Right-wing Christianity did not just grow by itself. It was promoted in stages by the direct intervention of the US bosses.

During the economic crisis of the 1930s, many big capitalists resisted the Roosevelt “New Deal” social welfare programs like unemployment insurance and Social Security. Speaking to the US Chamber of Commerce in December 1940, the head of Armstrong Flooring Co. said that the “only antidote” to Roosevelt’s program was “American patriotism and religious faith.”

At the same meeting Congregationalist minister James Fifield told these industrialists that ministers could be recruited to attack social welfare legislation. He and the ministers he organized argued that the New Deal was encouraging people to violate God’s commandments by “coveting” the wealth of the rich and trying to steal it from them. Christianity was individualist and concerned with individual salvation, they said, not social welfare. Collectivism is “unchristian,” Fifield claimed, and capitalism closely matches Christian values.

Fifield headed the First Congregational Church in Los Angeles. The board of this wealthy congregation included some of the biggest capitalists in California, and was attended by right-wing movie industry figures like Cecil B. DeMille.

Using his church as a base, Fifield projected a national organization called Spiritual Mobilization, generously funded by the biggest US capitalists. This organization targeted ministers, including some Catholics and Jews, with the

message that the New Deal glorified the state and denied God. Distributing pamphlets, books, magazines, and organizing sermon contests with cash prizes, Spiritual Mobilization claimed 12,000 affiliated ministers by 1948. Ministers all over the US gave sermons praising capitalism and individualism, attacking social welfare laws and rejecting the Social Gospel as “Pagan.”

The 1950s saw a decisive turn in the US government’s use of religion. The words “In God we trust” were written on all US money and “under God” was inserted in the Pledge of Allegiance recited by school children. An annual Presidential Prayer Breakfast was started. Religion was mobilized on a massive scale to promote anti-communism and the Cold War against the Soviet Union and China.

This officially promoted religiosity was vague, and not necessarily Christian. It claimed that religion was the foundation of the US government, and that God commanded obedience to that government, combining nationalism with religion. The bosses’ intense anti-communist propaganda and the widespread fear of nuclear war led many toward religion.

### Billy Graham

The specifically Christian content of Cold War religion was supplied by Christian celebrities like evangelist Billy Graham. From the 1950s on, Graham held a series of “crusades” in the US and abroad, preaching to large crowds in sports stadiums. Although designed to recruit converts, the crusades were mainly attended by church members. Graham’s message was as much anti-communist as religious. He declared that communism is “against God, against Christ, against all reli-

gion .... motivated by the Devil himself.”

Like most evangelicals, Graham endorsed sexist ideas from the Bible: “As the church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands” (Eph. 5:24). He claimed that by nature women need strong husbands, and husbands have a psychological need to “express their authority.” Contradicting this, he sometimes said that he believed in the equality of the sexes.

Also, like most evangelicals, Graham supported the war in Vietnam. Other evangelicals asked Graham to say that opposing segregation and racial discrimination was a Christian duty, but he refused. Graham liked to appear with US presidents and often hung out with Nixon. In the spring of 1970, Nixon invaded Cambodia and US college campuses exploded in rebellion. Nixon could not find a college where he could speak without protestors, so Graham provided one by inviting him to speak at his crusade at the University of Tennessee. Nixon spoke there to a huge crowd with little opposition. After the Watergate scandal and Nixon’s resignation, Graham abandoned politics and his influence declined.

Graham was replaced by evangelists who used television on a large scale and pulled in a lot of money through direct mail. Some of these, like Jimmy Swaggert and Jim and Tammy Baker, were destroyed by financial or sex scandals. Baptist Minister Pat Robertson, who made an unsuccessful try for the Republican presidential nomination in 1988, heads a syndicated TV show that now supports Trump.

*Next issue: The “Moral Majority,” Liberal Christianity, and Religion under communism.*

## PUERTO RICO:

### WORKERS NEED COMMUNISM, NOT STATEHOOD OR INDEPENDENCE

Earlier this summer, I went on a study-abroad trip with my class and discovered the many inequalities and the social activism that is going on in Puerto Rico. We often forget that Puerto Rico is still a colony. Not only is there a class division but the people are at the mercy of the U.S. imperialist power.

**Puerto Rico has been a U.S. colony since 1898** after the U.S. took the island from Spain in the Spanish-American war. Over the last century, the U.S. has caused social, economic, and political distress upon the island.

The U.S. exploited the land when it became a huge sugar plantation, ruining their local agriculture. American corporations displaced male workers who couldn’t afford to feed their families, and factories encouraged the sterilization of female workers, so that they could continue working without taking maternity leave.

**In other words, Capitalism was a beast that fed off of the working class of Puerto Rico** by exploiting them for their cheap labor and hurting their quality of life.

Puerto Rico currently owes about \$73 billion in bonds. Most of the money is from capitalist interest to U.S. investors. They also owe \$50 billion in unfunded pension liabilities. To add to that, a significant amount of the debt comes from past governors who asked for loans from the banks without the people’s permission.

In 2016, the US Congress passed the Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Stability Act (PROMESA). It established a financial oversight board, called La Junta de Control Fiscal. This board is made up of seven people who have a direct link with wall street and can override any law, policy, and government action

in Puerto Rico.

The little democracy that Puerto Rico had as a colony is now shattered through this law. This means that health, social, and educational programs will be cut, workers’ wages and hours will be lowered, and the cost of living will rise. They are asking for money that residents don’t know if it is legitimate.

The island is currently divided politically between statehood and independence. Many Puerto Ricans believe that if they become a state, they would have equal rights, and their quality of life would be better. Other people, especially the youth, believe that independence from the US would be the answer to Puerto Rico’s economic troubles.

**However, the problem is the capitalist system,** not their current status, that has caused the poor to become poorer and the rich to become richer. Also, the debt was created by capitalist interests. The class struggle is obvious in Puerto Rico. A huge portion of the population currently lives in poverty and is unemployed. Independence would not solve the people’s sufferings and economic troubles.

National Liberation Movements after World War II turned colonies into capitalist countries. The bourgeois led the independence movements



**Strike at University of Puerto Rico, Spring 2017**

in Indonesia, Latin America, Africa, India and so forth. There is still class division in these countries, where the poor are working for the rich and the rich are profiting from people’s suffering.

So, poverty will not end if Puerto Rico becomes a state or independent country. Under capitalism, the working class would still be wage slaves who barely survive off their paid labor.

With a communist system, countries would not be in debt because there would be no currency. The people would not have to labor to pay a debt they did not cause. Most importantly, with communism, no one will be homeless or starving. We will all have access to the same social, health, and educational resources.

**It’s important to realize that the power is in the masses,** not the seven people who currently have control over Puerto Rico’s health, social, and educational programs. The masses are stronger and bigger than the elite!



## Capitalism Asphyxiates Eleven Immigrant Workers

### WE NEED A COMMUNIST WORLD WITHOUT BORDERS OR WAGE SLAVERY

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS, July 22—Pain and tragedy return to take hold among the families and friends of the eleven immigrant workers who died from asphyxiation inside a truck that transported them to the supposed “American Dream.” It is believed that about 100 people were in this truck.

The driver abandoned the truck with the immigrant workers inside, without air conditioning and without water, in front of a Walmart store. When the police came and opened the truck, the dehydrated, almost dying men and women wanted to get out and breathe, but the racist police didn’t let them leave. Instead they began to handcuff them and take them out one by one. Inside lay some already dead. Others died in the hospital.

Government agencies blamed the driver and the coyotes (the mafia in charge of collecting payments and transporting workers over the borders). But they don’t mention that these immigrants are fleeing from the violence and poverty caused by the capitalists

and their governments. That the real guilty parties for the deaths of these men and women workers are the bosses and their system of borders and profits.

Who decides on the racist anti-immigrant policies that put more rocks in the road for those who are seeking their survival? The bosses and their governments! A system like this doesn’t deserve to exist.

We need a world without borders, a communist system, where the resources of the whole world will support everyone.

That’s why we take *Red Flag* to factories and other places, to organize and to create this communist world, where the human being as an individual person is placed above any monetary transaction. A world without money, or exploitation; that will be our future.

For those eleven lives that were lost and for so many others worldwide in search of this economic dream of being a wage slave, let’s destroy this system of wage slavery by joining ICWP and fighting for communism.



**LOS ANGELES, US, July 26—Hundreds of people gathered on the corner where a street vendor was attacked by a racist. These workers, pushing food carts through the neighborhood, are constantly harassed by the police. Now gutter racists feel supported by the racist anti-immigrant politics of the US ruling class. More than 150 people gladly took our newspaper *Red Flag*, including one person who donated \$5 dollars and two more who gave us their names so we could stay in contact with them.**



LETTERS

LETTERS

LETTERS

CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

#### Give the People What They Want! Part 2

It is easy to forget that the peoples of the world existed in their own intellectually driven communities prior to Western invasion. Many of their philosophies and systems of life are preserved (if only) in the memories of the victims. It is crass to assume that those communities may not want to revert back to their original states following a revolution or societal collapse – regardless of the promises of communism. After all, most societies already lived within some variation of the communist model before they were overrun by foreign ideals.

Insistence that science and rationality are the solutions for humanity is a wild presumption. Science is simply one way of uncovering truth about humans, the world, and the universe at large. Further, scientific research reveals that human rationality is inconsistent and unreliable at best. Similarly, spiritual sterility is NOT a shared reality for all humans. Yet refusal by nonparticipants to acknowledge spirituality’s meaning and value in the lives of the awakened makes communism’s proposition unfulfilling and empty – like a beautifully gilded cathedral with no soul. What do these apparently conflicting positions in the human experience mean?

Like the woman in the park who was dismissive of my personal reality and outlook in life, communist philosophy cannot succeed by denigrating or dismissing the intellectual capacities and philosophies of the world’s peoples. Let communist thinkers adjust the manifesto to reflect changing times and multiple realities. Those who thrive in stability can certainly appreciate the solidity of an ideal communist society (in contrast to a fluid anarchic state). But without evidence to the contrary, the people of the world can also reasonably suppose that the difference between capitalism and communism is little more than the frying pan and the fire.

Yes! We must strive toward working to live, not living to work. But if we embrace the concept of actually living, then to live without inhibition is our ultimate goal. If in the end, this freedom leads to our destruction because of the anti-social whims of a few, then the human story will be that of an unsustainable species. But if society succeeds in growing cohesively, only then can we truly celebrate human freedom.

—A reader

#### The Masses Need and Aspire to Communism

Pre-class communism lasted tens of thousands of years. Many aspects of that society have survived in the ideas, practices and memories of what happened prior to the “Western [actually European capitalist] invasion.” This includes indigenous people in the Americas as well as those elsewhere in the world who still have these ideas, practices and memories.

We the oppressed masses, the majority of humanity, are capable of again living collectively without money or exploitation. We can produce everything collectively and distribute it based on need. We have never stopped aspiring to do so.

Communist science - dialectical materialism – recognizes that everything is constantly changing. It defines the laws of motion of these changes. Aspects of dialectical materialism were developed over centuries all over the world, from China to Greece and beyond. It is based on the experience and understanding of the masses and is still developing. This is not Western ideology—it is universal.

Historical materialism is dialectical materialism applied to history. It describes the class struggle between the masses and their oppressors worldwide. This struggle caused society to transition from pre-class communism to slavery, feudalism and now capitalism – including socialism, a form of state capitalism.

Scientific communism analyzes this experience. It concludes that this struggle must inevitably lead to a communist revolution and the building of a scientific communist society worldwide. This is the only society that can fulfill the masses’ aspirations to return to the time when humanity was free of exploitation—but now at a higher level.

Communists do not want to throw out the culture and experiences of the masses. We strive to preserve those customs which help advance society and discard those which are harmful vestiges of ideologies that the exploiting classes imposed on us all throughout history. For example, Chinese communists kept acupuncture which came from traditional medicine. But they abolished the viciously sexist custom of binding women’s feet.

On the question of spirituality, as our comrades in South Africa wrote, “It would not be wise not to welcome people who are spiritual when we are building a mass organization because most people are religious or some way spiritual.

“A communist organization must accommodate everyone that agrees or that is against poverty (especially when it is imposed on them by others), crime, and all other horrors of capitalism. And not just for him/herself but for everyone in society, especially the victims of such horrors. In that way we can be able to build a cohesive sustainable society, a communist society.”

—A comrade



The book *From #Black Lives Matter to Black Liberation* by Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor is capturing the imagination of many US anti-racist activists. As the letters below note it attempts an anti-capitalist class analysis of racism but fails to draw the critical conclusion. That is, we can only end racism by mobilizing for communist revolution and communist society.

But the letters disagree sharply on another question. Should our party encourage friends and *Red Flag* readers to read and discuss this book (“explosive”) or discourage them from reading it (“dangerous”)? What about other books, movies, and media that have a political line opposed to ours?

Please read and discuss the two letters and send in comments. Also, what do you think of the ways that the letters deal with reform movements like the Chicago teachers’ strike? Can they “make a dent” in the racist system? – **Red Flag Editorial Collective**

### Discussing this book could be explosive

*From #Black Lives Matter to Black Liberation* is excellent in many ways. It examines anti-Black racism (the New Jim Crow) from a class—and anti-capitalist—perspective. But she fails to see the strengths of today’s movement and the possibility of building a mass party that fights for communism.

This review comes from a multi-racial study group of Party and non-Party forces. We suggest that other areas organize similar study groups. The results could be explosive.

Taylor highlights the leadership role of the black industrial workers in the strike wave of the 1970’s, attacks the theory of “white skin privilege,” and cites the class divisions within the Black community.

She says that the ascension of Blacks to political office, culminating in the election of President Obama, has masked—and justified—the persistent inequality that African Americans suffer. For example, in 2015, 25-year-old Black Baltimore resident Freddie Gray died from a devastating spinal injury after being arrested and brutalized by Baltimore Police. Unlike the 2014 murder of Mike Brown by a white cop in white-ruled Ferguson, Missouri, this happened in a Black-run city. Three of the six cops charged in Gray’s murder, the judge in their trial, the police commissioner, the school superintendent, everyone on the Housing Commission, the majority of the City Council and the Mayor are all Black. Yet Freddie Gray got no justice

From Marikana to Baltimore the failure of progressive nationalism to liberate an oppressed people has been spilled out in a line of coffins of those murdered by the state.

Taylor highlights the work of Blacks who fought for socialism, the leadership of Soviet leader Lenin, the work of the US Communist Party (CP) as well as the African Blood Brotherhood and other organizations closely affiliated with the CP. She cites the often-buried history of the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement, the Black Panther Party, the Third World Women’s Alliance and other Black organizations which embraced socialism in the wake of the post-World War II anti-colonial movements.

She calls for the development of a Black left that will organize and mobilize along class line. She praises the 2012 Chicago teachers’ strike to demonstrate the choices facing Black workers. The Chicago School CEO was a Black woman who united with Mayor Rahm Emanuel to close more than fifty schools in Black and Latino/a neighborhoods. An organized Black left would fight for a class struggle position and unite with the striking teachers and not support the Black school district CEO—but Taylor limits that to a call for militant reformism, rather than calling for a communist revolution, to root out the origins of racism.

She sees racism as the main obstacle to building a revolutionary movement in the USA. But racism doesn’t change the fact that life for white Americans in getting worse as income inequality increases. She says that the majority of the poor, of those without health insurance, and of homeless people are white. She acknowledges that whites on average do better than Blacks, “but that does not say much about who benefits from the inequality of our society”—the capitalist class! Taylor states that this is the basis for class unity to defeat racism and, we would add, capitalism.

ICWP must build a new Communist movement, present a real analysis of the capitalist system to the working class, and recruit and encourage workers and the oppressed people to build a movement for a communist future.

—Comrades in the Bay Area

### We can’t recommend this dangerous book

The new book *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation (BBL)* does a good job exposing some futile strategies for ending racist police terror (e.g. voting in Black mayors and police chiefs). But it has a fatal weakness. It doesn’t tell us what we should do.

What we really need is a communist revolution that will sweep away the cops, courts and prisons. A revolution that will abolish money, private property and the wage system. A revolution that will end super-exploitation, and exploitation in general. A revolution that will lay the basis for ending racism altogether. But you won’t find anything like this in *BBL*.

On the positive side, Taylor emphasizes the role of the Black industrial working class, for example in the Detroit rebellion. Her class analysis of

racism attracts the very workers and students that can lead a mass mobilization for communist revolution. We owe it to these future leaders to present a communist vision and plan.

The book does not offer a Marxist strategy for ending police terror and racism. You can read the last chapter of *BBL* up, down, and sideways and not find more than a few vague hints about what socialism would do about racism.

Fortunately, we have another source. In January 2017 Taylor wrote an article about the Women’s March for *Socialist Worker* (a socialist, not communist, newspaper). Again, nothing about how socialism will deal with racism. But she does clearly lay out a strategy. That strategy is to “build a movement”.

And what will be the goal of this movement? To “stand up” to the current assault.

What a dead end. Racism and police terror have gone on long enough. We need a mass communist party (ICWP) that will end them for good. Not a vague “united front” (with whom?) that will only “stand up” to the latest assault.

The problem with the movement strategy is that movements don’t automatically produce communists. And they don’t even make lasting dents in racism. In fact, short of outright rebellions, movements have very little effect. Even the best movements can’t, in the long run, defeat the bosses’ state power.

The Civil Rights movement smashed Jim Crow, but the US is objectively more segregated than ever. The Detroit rebellion won auto jobs for some Black workers, but now Detroit is a poisoned

wasteland. The anti-apartheid movement smashed apartheid, but South Africa is still a viciously racist society.

This is why we can’t recommend Taylor’s book. It’s dangerous because it could help convince yet another generation of activists that a movement alone can defeat racism. We’re not against movements. Fights against racism are essential and can even make a small dent. We participate in movements and are ready and willing to lead them.

However, even a movement led by communists cannot end racism and police terror (although a communist led movement will make a bigger dent). Their real value is they allow us to move some people from trying to fix capitalism to trying to overthrow it.

For this we need a communist party that explains why merely fighting militantly is not enough. The ICWP does this in our leaflets, in *Red Flag* and in our daily interaction with family, friends and coworkers. The *BBL* book doesn’t even try.

—Comrades in Seattle Area





## Socialism Is State Capitalism

We think that the article in the last *Red Flag* about North Korea was helpful in showing that North Korea is not a communist country and that communism will eliminate money and wage slavery.

But it should have defined North Korea as a socialist state, although it did call it a state capitalist country. Socialism is a form of state capitalism.

The article differentiated between two kinds of capitalist countries. In one, individual capitalists and corporations control most of the resources (as

in the US). In the other, the state owns everything and state bureaucrats make all the decisions, exploit the working class and live like kings. Some capitalist countries have aspects of both.

But the article then made a statement that is unintentionally confusing: “Capitalists ...never speak about the advantages of the state’s ability to direct resources to identified needs.” This seems to imply that state capitalism is better or even that socialism is something different from state capitalism.

The leaders of North Korea set up a socialist state using the Soviet Union as a model, as they did in China, Vietnam and Cuba.

Socialism (state capitalism) is not an improvement over countries in which capitalists and their corporations control the state. In both, workers’ labor power is exploited to enrich capitalists or the state bureaucrats who form a new capitalist class. In both, the capitalists need a repressive state to control the masses. The article should have made this clearer.

—Red Flag Editorial Collective

### LETTERS

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### CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

#### Everyone Must Become a Communist Leader

We were talking with the comrades about the issue of leadership: what it means to be a leader in a mass party, in ICWP. Comrades have come up with different examples of communist leadership but we all agree on one thing: that anyone can be a leader and everyone must be a leader.

We have demonstrated this, not only talked about it, that everyone can be a leader. I saw an attitude in the meeting yesterday. It was reflected in a letter that I read from an issue of *Red Flag* from December, 2014. It said, “Interestingly, our party is becoming younger. We have in our midst a large number of young lions. They are all still at school but they have demonstrated maturity in grasping our line.”

This was written three years ago. Now these comrades that the letter talked about have become leaders of the Party. One is mobilizing miners in Marikana (see page 1), another is in another industrial area distributing *Red Flag* there, another is mobilizing in another area.

This development was not automatic. It was a struggle; we have been struggling with each other to understand and articulate the communist line of ICWP. This has yielded fruits and challenges. The party is growing. This now presents us with new challenges and opportunities.

So, I think it’s an interesting prospect and outlook for the future of the party. When you look, you see there is going to be continuity because of the young leaders. I think ICWP has a really bright future here in South Africa.

—Enthusiastic Comrade

#### Mobilize for Communism Today

I liked the thrust of the article from Seattle calling to “break the never-ending cycle of racist cop murders,” as it reported on the angry demonstrations protesting the murder of Charleena Lyles. A thirty-year-old black woman, Charleena had been shot dead by cops in front of three of her four children.

The story was very powerful and argued correctly that we need to mobilize for communism. Unfortunately, the article then went on, “In communism, the party will regularly organize mass meetings at workplaces....”

It jumps the key step of how to mobilize for communism today. Instead it said, at some unspecified time in the future some communists will organize...and so on. It’s a sharp contrast to the urgent anger of the speakers: “Fix the system. We are dying. We are burying our children.”

Unfortunately, the comrades played down their key role. They organized discussion in at least one major industrial plant. Industrial workers create all the surplus value that keeps capitalism running. Winning the majority of them to the need for communist revolution will spell the

end of capitalism.

“Fix the system”. with communist revolution; Because “We are dying” we’ll organize political strikes against racist murders; “We are burying our children” so “Let’s bury capitalism!” With the skill and energy the comrades in Seattle have, all the points about communism could be aired in the workplace discussions about actions. And I think they would make the point more powerfully.

Visions of the future (knowing where we want to go) are vital and it is actions like these that give those visions life and force.

—Comrade in California (US)

**Read our military pamphlet  
SOLDIERS, SAILORS,  
MARINES:  
CRUCIAL TO A COMMUNIST  
WORKERS’ REVOLUTION**

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

#### Party Work in the Military

As a participant in a recent meeting of Party members and supporters on work in the military, I was very impressed with the organization and the content.

This was the first I had heard of the policy of teacher work being “pre-military” work.

I also had never participated in a discussion in a left group where work in the armed forces was discussed from many positions – theoretical, political, and historical.

It was uplifting to see young leaders so thoroughly discussing military work through the lens of the Party’s analysis. It also was insightful to hear the comments of various participants who had been part of the military provide historical background to both their work in the US military but also the work in the military of communist movements internationally. One of the most clear lessons of the meeting was that the possibility of victory in the communist revolution is lessened if the Party lacks military cadre.

—Red Teacher

#### Marines Gladly Take Red Flag

On Friday night, we talked about work in the military. On Saturday, we drove to Oceanside to talk to Marines. Some of the young comrades were nervous. I have been in the Navy. But I too was dreading rejection because the military has so much anti-communist propaganda.

We had seven comrades to canvas the small town and have conversations about communism with enlisted men and women. We passed out 50 *Red Flag* papers and

close to 20 ICWP Military Pamphlets.

My group of three had five conversations. I’ll talk about one of them. We offered a paper to an Asian Marine in his 20s who said he didn’t like that people don’t think for themselves. He knew a world war was coming. He understood that working-class soldiers would be sent to fight, bleed and die for the elite class of society. He knew that was wrong.

We talked about how communist society will not have classes. We won’t fight for the benefit of the upper, elite, rich class that only has interest in us as wage slaves in their factories, farms and cities, producing goods that they take from us only to sell them back to us.

He agreed that soldiers were integral to the success of communist revolution because they are the ones who would be sent to kill us in an insurrection. However, they are also our brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, mothers and fathers, and our children. When we unite our working class, we will wipe clean the capitalist’s class society and built a communist world free of racism, poverty, money and oppression. Humans will no longer fight each other, but we’ll have advancement of us and every living thing on the planet.

We smiled and thanked each other for the great and inspiring conversation. Our new friend walked away with his *Red Flag* newspaper and Military Pamphlet in hand. We walked on happy to be surprised and inspired again and again throughout the day.

—Comrade ex-sailor



**SOUTH GATE, US, July 23—About half the marchers in a rally for a single-payer health care system took *Red Flag*, including the young woman with the sign. As the attack on health care sharpened over the past two weeks, workers have taken to the streets in marches and rallies across the US. ICWP members and friends have brought communist ideas to these rallies. Only communism—based on need, not profit—can take care of workers’ health.**



## Centennial of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution: The Kornilov Affair

**ONLY COMMUNISM CAN DEFEAT FASCISM**

The last article described the “July Days” of the Russian Revolution. In the countryside, peasants (rural workers) were defying the government and distributing land. Urban workers went on strike – sometimes around political demands. Masses of soldiers and sailors were deserting. Many were influenced by communists (Bolsheviks) in the barracks. They marched on Petrograd, the capital, demanding the overthrow of the Provisional Government. Even the communist leaders weren’t ready for this uprising. The government squashed the rebellion with mass terror and anti-communist propaganda.

Immediately after the July Days, even some factory workers turned on their Bolshevik comrades. They believed the lie that Bolshevik leaders were agents of German imperialism.

The provisional government, led by Kerensky, seized the moment to launch a military offensive in the war against Germany. It was a disaster that cost the lives of 200,000 workers and peasants in uniform.

German imperialism’s counter-offensive took the city of Riga and threatened Petrograd. Discontent, desertion and rebellion soared among troops at the front, as well as those in the urban garrisons. Landlords, generals, and capitalists in the Provisional Government panicked. The socialist Kerensky put a famously right-wing Gen-

eral, Kornilov, in charge to restore harsh discipline in the rebellious military. Kornilov, thinking he had Kerensky’s support, began a march on the capital.

Now the socialists and liberal democrats panicked. They were caught between the radical right (today we would call it fascism) and the communist masses. Neither of the “dual-power” organs (the Petrograd Soviet and the Provisional Government) had forces that could stop Kornilov’s military coup against their fragile democracy.

Many top Bolshevik leaders were again in jail or in exile. But the Bolsheviks, and only the Bolsheviks, had a mass base among workers and soldiers. Many comrades were leaders on the factory floor and in the barracks.

**The factory workers of Petrograd, organized mainly on the shop floor, led the resistance to Kornilov.** Railway workers controlled or tore up the tracks that Kornilov’s troop trains planned to use. Metal workers went out to meet those troops and win them to the workers’ side. Printers refused to publish newspapers supporting Kornilov. Inside the city, male and female workers filled the streets, ready to resist.

But there was no fight. Kornilov’s troops deserted. His commander-in-chief Krymov surrendered and then killed himself. Kornilov was arrested. His successor resigned, stating that “we have no army.”

Petrograd workers saw more clearly that they alone, armed and organized, could defend the revolution. Their respect grew for the Bolsheviks, the only political party not entangled in the Provisional Government.

The Bolshevik program

of an armed uprising for workers’ power was increasingly their goal. The Red Guard units they had formed remained active.

After the Kornilov Affair, the Bolshevik Party won a majority in the Petrograd and Moscow Soviets. Now Party leaders faced a crucial choice. Should they stick to the electoral path, hoping for a peaceful transition to Soviet power after the second Congress of Soviets in late October? Or should they organize for armed insurrection and prepare to rule?

We’ll write more in another article about the storm of debate that erupted in the Bolshevik Party and its press when Lenin (in hiding) called for armed insurrection. Now we’ll make a different point.

**The Bolsheviks, Lenin included, were still not popularizing the idea of communism itself.** Workers were increasingly ready to fight for power. But power to do what? For peace. For land. For bread. For better working conditions and more of a say in their workplaces. In short, for the reforms that were impossible to get from the capitalist-led Provisional Government.

And their victory consolidated a mistaken strategy that would cripple the world communist movement for a century. That strategy said that fighting for reforms was a necessary stage in the fight for revolution. That communists should therefore agitate, organize and fight for reforms.

The problem with the Bolshevik strategy only became clear after they took power. As Lenin would admit, classes – and therefore class struggle – inevitably remained. Why? Because their “dictatorship of the proletariat” (later socialism) kept core elements of capitalism, including money, wages, and therefore exploitation. Their socialism, won by revolution, was a reformed version of capitalism. It would inevitably evolve in accordance with the laws of capitalism.

**Revolution for reform did not and could not create the communist society actually needed by workers then and now.** We have learned this great lesson from the Bolshevik Revolution: our program now and always must be to mobilize the masses directly for communism.



**Armed workers defending the October Revolution**

### What does it mean to take power?

Today our group discussed the Bolshevik Revolution and its upcoming 100th anniversary. We talked a little about what actually happened, including the key role of soldiers and sailors. We talked about the mass base built and mobilized by rank-and-file Bolshevik leaders.

We realized that there is a lot more we need to know. That includes a “who’s who” of important parties and individuals, a chronology, and a map. We’ll work on putting some of this information together.

We would like more discussion about what it means to “take power.” Someone asked what they did about money after the revolution. Another wanted to know more about what workers’ power meant in the workplace. And we agreed that it’s important to make the connections between the communist-led revolution a century ago and the work of the International Communist Workers’ Party today.

We talked about looking through first-hand accounts of the revolution and using excerpts to create a dramatic reading for the anniversary event in Los Angeles. Everyone took a different book home to read so that we can continue the discussion at our next meeting.

“This was a very enlightening day,” concluded a friend.

—Los Angeles comrades

### LEARN FROM THE THE BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION IN RUSSIA!

This Fall marks the 100th anniversary of the 1917 communist-led revolution in Russia (October 25 Old Style/November 7 New Style). This was a monumental event in the history of our class and our movement. We have so much to learn from its successes, its shortcomings, and its fatal errors.

We call on all collectives of the International Communist Workers’ Party, and all **Red Flag** readers, to organize study groups, dinners, public forums, rallies and other events to promote the broadest and deepest possible understanding of the Bolshevik Revolution.

Let’s inspire masses to join and strengthen our communist work among workers, youth, and especially among soldiers and sailors! Let’s use this history to grasp more firmly the meaning and power of our slogan “Mobilize the Masses for Communism!”

