

# RED FLAG

## MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM

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

**RED ARMY TROOPS  
MARCH FOR  
COMMUNISM  
MOSCOW,  
OCTOBER 1917  
SEE PAGE 8**



## LONG LIVE COMMUNISM!

**NOT A MINIMUM  
WAGE:  
FIGHT TO END WAGE  
SLAVERY**

LOS ANGELES, USA—"The bosses do not respect our rights; they don't even pay us the minimum wage," shouted a garment worker from his moving car while he took a copy of *Red Flag* at the Koos factory. In another factory, a worker said, "In order not to pay the new minimum wage, the bosses divided the factory into three, with fewer than 25 workers in each one."

Currently in the US, there are a variety of minimum wages. For example, the current Federal minimum wage is \$9.25 an hour. California's is \$10.50 an hour. The minimum wage for the County of Los Angeles is \$12 an hour, but a company located here that has 25 or fewer workers only has to pay the minimum wage of \$10.50 per hour.

The bosses and their governments worldwide regulate the minimum wage. They use the lie that it is sufficient for a man or woman worker to live and have the strength to return to be exploited the next day, and at the same time to raise the next wave of wage slaves.

But we in the International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP) fight to change this way of life. In Los Angeles, some 600 men and women garment workers receive *Red Flag* consistently. They know that we are fighting for a world without money or exploitation. A world where wages will be things of the past. A world where we will no longer have to sell our labor power. The workers, through ICWP, will plan what to produce to meet the needs of the whole society.

Currently, under capitalism, the governments create minimum wages supposedly to protect the workers. But reality is completely the opposite: they protect the capitalists. They use

See [WAGE SLAVERY](#), page 3

Bolshevik Revolution Inspired Millions:

**MOBILIZING FOR  
COMMUNISM WILL  
INSPIRE MORE**

SEATTLE, USA, November 4—The Russian revolution was a big deal. We're still feeling the aftershocks.

Workers, soldiers and youth can not only grasp communism, they will fight for it with all their being. That's what we emphasized at our potluck commemorating the 100th year anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution.

The bosses realize this also. They've spent some 100 years and a boatload of money building cynicism about communism's potential.

They want us to believe that everyone is out for themselves. That humans are greedy. That teenagers are too self-centered. That now is not the time to mobilize for communism. Even potential revolutionaries sometimes buy into these ideas. Communist organizers always wrestle with this question. This was the focus of our discussion before, during and after the potluck.

The toastmaster raised a beer to celebrate the accomplishments of the Russian workers in 1917. In North America, two sparks from the revolution landed in Seattle, WA (USA) and Winnipeg, Canada. Both had general strikes: Seattle for 5

days, Winnipeg for 40 days.

Strikers took over the cities. They fed and cared for people. A Seattle strike veteran reported that the fact that masses carried out these duties without being paid raised questions in many people's minds about whether the wage system was necessary.

The bosses freaked out. This was a dangerous example. Using their state power (cops, military, vigilantes), they put an end to them.

The Soviet communists seized the opportunity to take power when the tsarist state collapsed under the weight of WWI. But how were the workers to run an area that had 1/6 of the world's population? They invented a program on the run.

They made mistakes, chief of which was maintaining a money-driven economy. "At first, the communist-inspired workers were able to beat back capitalism. But like the lead-poisoned water in Flint you can drink a small glass and you'll still be okay. Over time it will make you sick. Eventually it will kill you," said the toastmaster.

"But I believe people are greedy," said a friend. Later on, he changed his tune.

See [BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION](#), page 4

**U.S.-CHINA  
ON COLLISION  
COURSE  
PAGE 2**

**SOUTH AFRICA:  
CENTENNIAL OF  
RUSSIAN  
REVOLUTION  
PAGE 3**

**CATALONIA:  
NATIONALISM  
ONLY ENSLAVES  
WORKERS  
PAGE 6**

**MEXICO:  
TALKING TO  
SOLDIER ABOUT  
COMMUNISM  
PAGE 7**



## US-China Rivalry Sharpens

# WORKERS, SOLDIERS, SAILORS MUST TURN BOSSES' PROFIT WARS INTO COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

"A military is built to fight," declared China's President Xi in a recent major speech. The focus of Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) should be on "how to win." Days later, the Chinese air force simulated a bomb attack on Guam and Hawaii.

Meanwhile US President Trump foolishly told Japanese officials, "I never knew we had so many countries."

Xi's speech marks a dramatic change from the former slogan of a "peaceful rise." It's an insult to the original PLA, once led by real communists, which mobilized masses to seize power.

When the PLA was the Chinese Red Army, its strength came from its commitment to "serving the people." It practiced communism in its "supply system," where volunteer soldiers received basic necessities instead of wages. In the 1950s, many Red Army veterans led village struggles to advance toward communism.

The Chinese Red Army, led by the Communist Party, turned the imperialists' World War II into a revolution that smashed feudalism and the old capitalist class. But major errors in the Chinese Communist Party's line – nationalism and other concessions to capitalism – turned it into Xi's pack of imperialist exploiters.

Workers, soldiers and youth, in China and everywhere, must now prepare to turn the imperialists' World War III into a revolution for communism.

### One Belt, One Road: Chinese Imperialist Response to Global Capitalist Crisis

Xi vowed to make the Chinese army the world's best to reinforce the Chinese imperialists' Belt and Road Initiative, "One Belt, One Road" (OBOR). This is a \$3 trillion infrastructure development plan for highways, railways, ports and power plants.

OBOR seeks to secure Persian Gulf oil for China over land routes. In wartime, this would bypass maritime choke points controlled by the US Navy. It will also secure China's trade by land with Asia, the Middle East and Europe, while slashing transportation time and cost. Broad high-

ways will serve a "dual purpose" as aircraft runways and army transport.

The Chinese imperialists need OBOR to compete successfully against their imperialist rivals. For 20 years, massive investments fueled rapid growth in Chinese capitalism's productive capacity.

But there's a global capitalist crisis of over-production. Chinese industry hasn't sold enough goods to recoup these investments. The excess industrial capacity has idled thousands of factories, creating massive rural unemployment.

Chinese corporate debt is currently about \$18 trillion, or 170% of the total value of goods and services produced (GDP). To avoid widespread corporate bankruptcy, declining profits and a potential financial collapse, the Chinese imperialists need cheaper natural resources and new markets. That's why OBOR is crucial for them.

Xi, in a nod to "peaceful rise," said that China's dream required "a peaceful international environment and a stable international order." He's the one who's dreaming – or lying! Chinese imperialism could only replace US imperialism as the dominant world power amidst the radioactive rubble of World War III.

Inter-imperialist rivalry is the main contradiction in the world today. US, Chinese and other bosses are on a collision course. They are willing to sacrifice hundreds of millions of us to defend their system of wage slavery. Only mass mobilization for communist revolution can destroy this deadly system.

### Declining US Imperialism: From Proxy Wars to World War

US imperialism is desperately and unsuccessfully trying to impede OBOR with proxy wars unfolding in the Korean peninsula, Myanmar, Afghanistan, Iran, Kurdistan, Syria, Turkey and elsewhere. But the US rulers are increasingly isolated in Africa, Latin America and Europe, as well as Asia. Trump is in Asia seeking military alliances with Japan, Australia and India – though without a coherent strategy.



Today's Chinese imperialist rulers hide behind the revolutionary communist legacy of these Red Army soldiers.

US imperialism has declined steadily but dramatically since the Vietnam War. Two major oil wars in Iraq have strengthened the Chinese, Russian and Iranian capitalists. Even the Saudi rulers, once a solid US ally, are now deeply divided amidst Chinese and Russian pressures to abandon the US dollar.

During capitalist crises, imperialists and other capitalists become more violent and ruthless. But their crisis is our opportunity. Capitalism has created billions of enemies searching for a better world. That world is communism.

### Communism Will End Capitalism's Endless Horrors

Masses internationally want a world where we produce for each others' needs. A world without borders or nations, where everyone is welcome everywhere. Where we build new housing, smashing the segregated townships and slums and horrific favelas that imprison workers today.

A world without the wage system that forms the material basis of racism and sexism. A world where workers' power eliminates the racist police, courts and jails and the bosses who use them to terrorize us.

To win this world we need the International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP) to mobilize for communist revolution. "I am a proud new member of ICWP," said a youth in South Africa. She added, "I am here in ICWP because of you and because the bosses offered no solution. I am here to dedicate my life to the party."

We must concentrate on recruitment at industrial concentrations and in the military. Most soldiers are youth with bleak futures. Many are open to communist ideas despite heavy nationalist propaganda. Comrades in South Africa recently distributed 200 copies of *Red Flag* to soldiers, making contacts with several. (See letter from Mexico, page 7).

*Red Flag* readers and comrades must join and build Party collectives to encourage each other to struggle for communist ideas and practice. That will strengthen our resolution and confidence. We must spend more time with those who are around us: visits, social events, study groups and involving friends in communist mass work.

The times demand it. The potential is everywhere. Let's think big! **Build an International Red Army!**



The proposed One Belt One Road combines the Silk Road Economic Belt with the 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road



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## South Africa:

# PREPARING FOR THE CENTENNIAL OF THE BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION

We are preparing for the anniversary of the Russian Revolution. So far our preparation has been going tremendously well. We've invited miners and others—twenty to thirty people so far, with the potential to invite many more. We still have to go into colleges and other places where we can reach more young people.

The main reason we are taking this route is to try to inspire young people so that we can draw strength from the young people of 1917 and the following years. Even though people like Lenin have contributed to the revolution of 1917, nevertheless it was the tireless work of young people who were on the ground on a daily basis distributing socialist material then who made the difference.

So if young people, especially us in ICWP, can actually do what those young people at that time were able to do, we will be able to prevail, because of the superiority of our line to the one that the Soviets were mobilizing for then.

This week we will be going to colleges so that we can make this day as big as possible. The important message we have to tell young people is that just because something is strong, or is bigger, doesn't necessarily mean that they can win. We can look at the capitalists today and their mighty militaries, mighty police, that can simply disappear if we can convince those mighty armies to join the masses of workers.

This example of 1917 is an important one that we need to take to the masses so that they can see that for the Russian Revolution to win, they needed to win soldiers and sailors to the workers' side.

We can view the capitalist states like the US and China as powerful states, but they are vulnerable; they can easily fall just as the Czar did in Russia. And there's the example of Paris, France, where the workers also prevailed for a short time.

This is the message we need to emphasize to people: that things change. Nothing stays the same, even though sometimes change is not visible. It doesn't necessarily mean that change is not happening. We are setting in motion plans for the masses of workers mobilized for communism to destroy capitalism.



**"I refuse to throw my mother under the bus!" said a young person who is fighting to legalize all undocumented immigrants. The bosses, however, are promoting a "Clean Dream Act," which will only legalize the status of young people who came to the US as children, as long as they go to college or join the Army. ICWP fights for communism—an end to all borders. Join us!**

### Fight Sexism—Recruit Women Comrades

As we are preparing this commemoration, we have been talking about the need to recruit more female comrades in our collective.

In our last collective meeting, a comrade remarked that we are like a gentlemen's club. There's not a single active female member. We do have women comrades here in South Africa, but not in our collective. It's a situation that needs to be remedied because women bring an important and different perspective. We can't say that we're against sexism, that we are fighting sexism, and yet we are all men. So that needs to be reflected—we need women who can take leadership roles in mobilizing the masses for Communism.

That's why we are emphasizing this struggle so that by the conference there can be at least 10 women. Since we are expecting about 30 people, at a minimum 10 can be women. Comrades have already made plans to carry out this goal. There are ten of us in our collective; we tasked each one of us to bring one woman—a friend, a relative, a neighbor.

The comrades have made a meaningful self criticism about some of the things we are not doing right; we can come up with solutions to

tackle this problem.

As we approach the Russian Revolution event, as we visit colleges and industrial areas, we should approach more women so that we can intensify our efforts to recruit them into our movement.

### The Party Unites the Working Class for Communism

We wish the comrades elsewhere who are having events to celebrate the Russian Revolution that you have successful events and that the events help more masses be able to join our movement. You do not stand alone in this. We are with you in our thoughts and struggle, even though we are far from you. The work you do has a direct positive influence on us here in South Africa. It is an inspiration for us to want to do more in order for the party to grow.

We are having this event to show the masses what they can achieve when we are united. We can't be united without a mass party. That's why it is important for ICWP to serve as a glue for the working class. We've seen many examples that the bosses are trying to divide us, through using their many tools, like sexism and racism. But if we have a party with the right political line, we can achieve our goals.

## WAGE SLAVERY from page 1

it to convince many workers that the minimum wage is determined by "neutral" institutions, and therefore it is fair and must be accepted and appreciated. Capitalism exploits the workers to produce profits for the bosses, not so that the workers can live decently.

One worker said, "In Los Angeles, to survive from month to month, a family of four needs at least 5 minimum wages. A minimum wage of \$10.50 an hour is only enough for a two bedroom apartment with a minimum rent of \$1,200 a month; and what about the rest of our necessities?"

The cost of living in Los Angeles is so high that many youth who make the minimum wage have to live with their parents. Workers have to live in groups of family and friends to survive. The majority don't have enough to pay for medical insurance, much less to say that they have a secure future.

In communist society, the masses organized

with the leadership of ICWP will provide what the workers need. There will be no need for wages or money. Each person will participate according to their physical capacity, skill and commitment, and each will receive according to their needs.

With the men and women garment workers, for example, we will plan the production of clothes, whether for summer or winter. How many people are there in the liberated area or place? How much is needed? Where will the materials come from? How many workers can produce this in how much time? This will apply to other basic needs like food, housing, medical care, transportation, entertainment, and others.

We will take into account that the human body is not designed to work for 50 years, for 40 hours or more a week behind a machine or crouching in the fields. Therefore it will be planned so that we all develop different kinds of

work and have a life full of entertainment and activities. Work will make us calm, not stressed out.

These garment workers and millions more worldwide must fight for this world without the chains of wages. An important step is to join ICWP and participate in study groups and the distribution of our newspaper *Red Flag*. Join now.



**Garment workers taking Red Flag**



## EL SALVADOR: MASSES NEED ICWP COLLECTIVES, NOT ANOTHER BOURGEOIS FAKE HERO

El Salvador is one of the poorest countries in Latin America, with a high degree of poverty, crime and super exploitation. But it has a very militant urban and rural working class and student population.

Eight years ago these masses had the illusion that the fmln (ex-guerrilla group) in power would change things and a better future would shine for the working class.

Now, after eight years of fmln governments, nothing relevant has changed in the capitalist system. But the discontent of the masses has changed. Today our task is not only to expose the electoral politicians, but to mobilize more and more people to fight for communism.

A group of capitalists want to direct the discontent of the masses at capitalism and its electoral parties ARENA and fmln into looking for a new “independent” leader.

Nayib Bukele, bourgeois mayor of San Salvador, is the political figure who gets the most media attention and is the most popular in current Salvadoran electoral politics.

His expulsion from the fmln and his launching as an “independent” candidate for the presidential election of 2019 has generated a momentary stir throughout the country, since Bukele was one of the winning cards of the fmln for these elections. Two years ago everyone claimed that Nayib would be the fmln candidate for President. Little by little his possibilities were diminishing but he was never ruled out. Bukele has criticized the fmln (without a materialist analysis of the process of the left in the country and from a bourgeois perspective). He attracts thousands of people outside and inside the country.

We must face and question these “New Ideas” that do not help in any way the organization of the working class, nor represent a true revolutionary process.

Bukele seeks to create an organization “without leaders and vertical” in which everyone can be part if “they want the best for the country,”

that is, what he believes is the best. Since these two fmln administrations have shown us that to win elections and occupy positions in the bourgeois state is no victory for the working class, the masses must not trust a bourgeois adventurer this time around.

When the fmln presented Mauricio Funes as its presidential candidate in 2007, as communists we called on the working class not to fall for the false hopes of capitalist electoral change. Eight years after the fmln took over the presidency (the third year of its second administration) all those hopes have been diluted.

In this context the Party collectives need to discuss the main reasons for the disenchantment of the masses with the fmln and the inclination by the masses towards the Bukele project, starting from a communist analysis that for years we have collectively built as members of ICWP. The simple fact that the masses are detached from the electoral parties is not an opportunity if we do not study the causes of this distancing.

The working class has experienced revolutionary processes of change throughout the world. These have taught us great lessons to build the organization of the working class that will achieve the elimination of the material base of capitalism, and build a communist society. Theoretical material has been produced to learn about and understand these processes more deeply.



May Day, San Salvador, 2014  
Let's Destroy Capitalism & Build Communism—ICWP

As ICWP we put forward our plan, our project, and our political line to mobilize the masses for communism through *Red Flag*. This is our tool that allows us to relate with the masses and listen to their questions, criticisms, and discontent with the left processes of the past (some of which we ourselves have also committed) and to strengthen the line with their experience and try to add more members each time to our clubs.

Making our ideas and our Party massive is our task at all times. Only the mass organization of the working class for revolution will create new social relations and the structure upon which the new communist society will be built. We need to strengthen our clubs, our study groups and our newspaper. We can no longer continue to expect anything from a project like the fmln or a bourgeois with a messiah complex. We need our organization, our party, our new society.

### BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION from page 1

“Maybe people are a blank slate. To him I am god,” he said pointing to his son asleep in his arms. “I tell him something and he’ll believe it. At least for a while.” Everyone laughed, especially those who had or have teenage children.

Under communism greedy people will have to quit cold turkey, because they won’t have anything to practice their greed on. How can you greedily amass private property when there is no private property? How can you covet a huge salary and stock options when there are no wages and no stocks? Life’s necessities will be collectively provided without exchanging money.

#### From the Potluck to the Classroom

A high school student said her class had read the viciously anti-communist novel *Animal Farm*.

“Do you use *Animal Farm* in your history classes?” we asked a H.S. history teacher in attendance. “Not me!” he answered.

He discusses the Bolshevik revolution with his freshman history class. “How do they react?” He shrugged his shoulders.

The discussion asked how to make the revolution more interesting to these 14-year-olds. The Bolsheviks had published

a book that ran through the alphabet. Each letter was accompanied by a colorful poster that depicted some aspect of the revolution. Each page had a poem, some of which were quite good.

The teacher took seven posters to show to his class. A Boeing worker will take them to some *Red Flag* distributors at another high school.

Then we discussed the Gorky colony. Street kids built their own school and dormitories even as the communist-led masses waged war to consolidate the revolution. The comrade in charge of organizing the colony spelled out how this experiment in communist education worked, combining work and book learning. He wrote a three-volume set on his experiences.

The teacher took them to prepare a class lesson. A far cry from the cynical shrug of the shoulder!

Commemorating the Bolshevik revolution does not end with a potluck. We’ll help realize the full potential of communist revolution by regularly bringing communist history to our worksites and schools.



Title: The ABCs of Communism  
1917 October 25-November 7 1921  
Banner: “All Power to the Soviets”

#### The poem:

The world situation  
was a bloody mess  
Blood was nothing to the bourgeois  
They took us all for fools

Many soldiers were killed  
The people endured it without murmuring  
A blow was struck

The dawn broke  
A hostile government was replaced by the Soviets



## FREEDOM IS MOBILIZING THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM

Across the planet the masses—workers, students, soldiers, farm workers—are struggling for freedom from capitalist oppression. The masses want freedom from poverty, debt, police violence, racism, sexism, caste discrimination, pollution, unemployment and all the other miseries that capitalism forces on us.

Capitalism claims to provide freedom for everyone, although they really mean freedom for capitalists to exploit the working class. Freedom is a class question. That means that the more freedom there is for capitalists, the less the freedom of the masses.

### Materialist Freedom

Freedom doesn't just mean not having obstacles or limitations. In their book *The German Ideology*, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels explained the materialist conception of freedom. They wrote that freedom is power "over the circumstances and conditions in which an individual lives."

This idea is based on the materialist principle that people are products of their circumstances. Our class, families, neighborhoods, our jobs, schools, the climate, the government, etc., make us what we are. The circumstances impose limitations on us but also make us able to do many things. Under capitalism the capitalists control the factories, transportation, government, the schools, the military and the media, so they have far more power over our circumstances than we do. Many of the world's workers don't even have the power to feed themselves adequately, and we all depend on the wages we get from being exploited by capitalists.

The capitalists use their power to try to convince us with a massive campaign of deception not to fight them and their system. They promote racism, claim that better times are coming, or that it's all the fault of immigrants, or more wealth for the rich will mean more jobs, and the rest of their lies. But we communists fight against these lies, showing that the masses can and will defeat their system with a communist revolution.

### Freedom Requires Collective Action

People can get power over their circumstances by acting collectively. Many people working together can have the creativity and strength for tremendous accomplishments, but the survival of capitalism depends on limiting and controlling the collective power of the masses. Capitalists defeat mass movements that oppose the bosses' crimes by lying about them, imposing pro-capitalist leaders on them or smashing them by armed force.

Although capitalists have much more power than workers, their power is not unlimited. They constantly fight about how much of the labor that they steal from workers will go to the capitalists of each company, country or industry. These conflicts prevent capitalist unity and limit the power they have over their own circumstances. The economic crises and imperialist wars that necessarily result from the fights among capitalists themselves make the system uncontrollable. So even capitalists aren't completely free under capitalism.

### Communism is Real Collectivity

Marx and Engels pointed out that under communism, "the community of revolutionary proletarians ... takes their conditions of existence and those of all members of society under their control." Without capitalists, without a repressive government, without money or wages, collective humanity can decide how we use our labor, natural resources and technology to meet everyone's needs, direct our own future and provide lots of choices for individuals.



Rally of students at Jawaharlal Nehru University in India in 2016. They began with chants of "Red Salute" and "Long live revolution." Students sang a song for Azadi (Arabic for "freedom"), demanding freedom from hunger, from money bags, from Hindu fascists, and from caste oppression. Toward the end they sang, "we will make the history and all your books filled with lies will be burnt to the ashes."

This kind of freedom wasn't (and isn't) possible under socialism, with its wages, inequalities, and life-long trades and professions that limit the kinds of work a person can do. Only the united action of the masses gives us the greatest power over the conditions and circumstances that make us what we are and provides the resources for individual development. Thus "personal freedom becomes possible only within the [communist] community," Marx and Engels wrote, because "only within the community has each individual the means of cultivating his or her gifts in all directions."

### Mass Mobilization for Communism

Achieving communism will take a long, hard fight that can only be won by the revolutionary mass mobilization of the working class. But mass mobilization isn't just the way to get to the goal of communism. Mass mobilization for communism gives workers the greatest possible power over our conditions and circumstances, and is thus a taste of working-class freedom itself. We won't have freedom from exploitation, however, until we get rid of capitalism and build communism. Join us in the fight for workers' freedom.

### LETTERS

#### Racist Police Murder is a Class Question

We think using the graphic comparing the percent of blacks versus whites killed by the



### LETTERS

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cops was a mistake. It appeared on page 2 of the previous issue. Used in isolation, it undercuts our argument that because racism is a product of capitalism it can only be defeated by communist revolution. Graphics used in this way bolster nationalist or white skin-privilege arguments. They undercut attempts to build revolutionary class consciousness.

About a 1000 people were killed by cops in the USA in 2015. Around 500 were white, 300 black and 180 Hispanic (figures vary a little depending on the organization gathering the info). You never see that bar graph! Imagine it side by side with one that compares the percent of blacks versus whites killed. Then we would have a powerful visual showing how capitalism uses racism. The intense oppression of one sector of our class is used to oppress and discipline the whole working class.

### CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

The liberal organizations gather all sorts of statistics differentiating the victims of cop killings: their ethnicity, sex, age, whether they were armed or not and so on. Look in vain for one showing their commonality. Look in vain for a bar graph showing how many victims earned less than \$100,000 a year. That would be a powerful statement about the class nature of the murderous police state!

Using graphics is very important. They help us understand things. We could even have used this graphic if we had given it a little thought and changed the commentary that accompanied it. Perhaps it could have read: "Cops kill blacks at a more intense rate than they kill whites, but in actual numbers they kill more whites than blacks: racism is the cutting edge of class oppression."

—Bay Area Comrades

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## Spain: Crisis in Catalonia reflects bosses' fear of angry masses

### WORKERS NEED COMMUNISM, NOT NATIONALISM

SPAIN, November 8—The Parliament of Catalonia under president Puigdemont declared the Unilateral Independence of Catalonia. The electoral parties like JxSI (Together for Yes) and the CUP (Candidacy for Popular Unity) were the protagonists of this decision. Catalan bosses dreamed of economic and political control of this region, especially with the enormous profits that come from the work at the port, airport, industries, and labor.

Mariano Rajoy, President of Spain, representing another group of bosses, responded with fury and violence against this independence. He activated article 155, which deals with the central government's control over the autonomous regions in Spain. This allows the State, at any moment of "disobedience to the law and the constitution" to take over.

Arrest warrants were issued for Puigdemont and four of his deputies. They turned themselves in to the Belgian police and were released. Now they are awaiting the decision of the Belgian courts regarding the Spanish government's extradition order. Ten more of the ex-deputies are now imprisoned in Spain.

This has generated new discussions in the social networks. "I'm up to my nose in disgust when I see how my friends and relatives are arguing about the bosses' politics and how people have become so rude and so attached to a flag, whatever it is," said a Catalan worker, a *Red Flag* reader who now lives in Slovakia.

"Without being very knowledgeable about the history, it sounds to me that the peons are fighting to create a new kingdom with nobility titles, subjects, and lackeys. Well, I can only say that without being a clairvoyant, the problems of the workers will be the same with different bosses," said a Chilean worker who also reads *Red Flag*.

"We don't think that this struggle serves any-

thing positive because the way in which the process has developed in the context of the Spanish State and the European Union will not bring long term positive consequences," we responded.

Where three years ago Spanish youth were in the streets protesting the dead-end that capitalism provides them, the rulers on both sides have been able to divert this anger and frustration into nationalist lines. The bosses have been able to mobilize tens of thousands of people—

including this same generation of young people—behind a nationalist project, building nationalist illusions that somehow capitalism can be better with new bosses and nations.

It terrifies the bosses to imagine that all these young people could be mobilized for communism. In ICWP we say to these new generations that capitalism is terrified of the potential and capacity of the youth have always been the vanguard of a revolution. That's why we're taking communist ideas everywhere, so that these young people dedicate their talents to building communism.

Our goal, as the International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP), is to unify the working class to fight for a communist system without nations or borders. We are only one class worldwide and we must reject nationalism pushed by the bosses which divides the Spanish and Catalan workers.

The capitalists, whether Puigdemont or Rajoy, will never take care of the needs of the workers. Their nature is to super-exploit the workers and



Barcelona, 2014

to create great wealth for themselves. Today, the only thing that has been achieved in this struggle is more racism and more political repression. This is precisely what we talk about in *Red Flag*, the tools that capitalists use to divide the working class, to get workers to confront each other and to continue making profits by using nationalism, racism, sexism, borders and wage slavery.

We must join ICWP and call on everyone to spread communist ideas and mobilize ourselves for communism, fighting directly to defeat capitalism. Only by building a mass party where the collectives work to meet our needs and improve our quality of life. ICWP continues to fight to defeat capitalism and we need the help of all workers worldwide. Only in this way can we build a new world, A COMMUNIST WORLD. A world where workers will be welcome everywhere to produce collectively only to meet the needs of our one international working class. JOIN US!

#### LETTERS

#### LETTERS

#### LETTERS

#### CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

#### Puerto Rican Workers Share, Rebuild

Oct. 22—Twenty miles from the city of San Juan, the people of Naranjito have been without clean drinking water and without electricity for over two weeks. They can wait in long lines at a water tank, or use water from a PVC pipe that neighbors connected to a mountain spring. Food prices are double what they were before Hurricane Maria devastated the area.

Yet, the strength and collective spirit of the people is demonstrated in the way they are coming to the aid of friends and neighbors. Those who are able to buy food and cook it, share with those who cannot. Elderly folks with health issues are given what medicines their neighbors and families are able to provide. In the worst of times, they show the very best of humanity.

In our work of creating a model for community based on communist values, we are often asked, "What kind of society will we live in?" And we hear fear expressed, based on repressive socialist regimes that use the name "communist" wrongly. "Those governments kill people!" and, "You would throw us in jail!"

The real truth is in front of our faces DAILY; namely that our so-called free society, democratic government both allows many to die and jails thousands with little to no legal representation.

Looking at the people on the island of Puerto Rico, we must ask ourselves how we would respond to such a disaster, how we could best live alongside our fellow survivors. Yes, how we

would want to be remembered by those closest to us in both suffering and in surviving. How we could build a different kind of world, a communist world, out of the devastation.

Join those who want a world where we will care for one another! We have a world to gain!  
—Los Angeles (USA) comrade

#### NFL Protests: Fight Racism at the Point of Production

While our club was discussing the last editorial, we developed an insight into why the Colin Kaepernick led protests (football players taking the knee during the playing of the National Anthem) were sending such shockwaves through the racist ruling class. We decided it was because they took place on the job! Had Kaepernick just led or spoken at demonstration it would have annoyed the racist rulers but would

not have threatened them so much. But the idea that political protests were being organized at the point of production, at the site where they make their profits, that is a type of protest that scares them.

On the other hand, we thought it was a fact we should take note of. With that in mind we looked again at the conclusion of the editorial and now found it was too general in its declaration of "confidence that the working class, armed with communist ideas, can overthrow this murderous system." We thought it would be stronger to call on all readers and members to organize meetings, discussions, increase our *Red Flag* distributions on our jobs and so on - at the point of production. In other words, to call for specific party building to accompany our general confidence.

—Bay Area (USA) Club

Read our Pamphlet:  
**To End Racism,  
Mobilize the Masses for  
Communism**

available at:  
[icwpredflag.org/wp/wordpress/pamphlets-and-article-series/to-end-racism-mobilize-the-masses-for-communism/](http://icwpredflag.org/wp/wordpress/pamphlets-and-article-series/to-end-racism-mobilize-the-masses-for-communism/)





## TALKING TO A SOLDIER ABOUT COMMUNISM

“What will you do with people who do not agree with you? Who will give the masses the weapons and teach them how to use them? Where will the money come from?” They would need a lot of money for it. These were the questions that a soldier friend had in our first talk after a few months of getting to know each other on social networks.

This soldier friend had already read the ICWP military pamphlet and some notes from *Red Flag* newspaper. After a brief presentation of what the Party is and the past experience with some other soldiers who listen with interest but later cut communication, I answered his questions.

I told him that in it's time and collectively it will be decided what to do with the people who don't agree with the political line. There will be a lot of ideological struggle to oppose anti-communist ideas, but there will be people who don't agree with the line. Maybe they will be put in some place; I didn't want to call them “jails,” or maybe they will be killed if their ideas are completely counter revolutionary. However, even then, that would have to be discussed first.

He said that in the pamphlet it said that if a person didn't agree with the political line of the Party, they would be killed, something that he wasn't willing to do. I told him that he should review the document to confirm that it really said that.

I also told him that we would not have to buy weapons, and we don't need anyone to finance us. What we need are millions of soldiers, soldiers like him, who have to take up arms against the boss, that is, to build a red army. I told him that's why I was with him now, showing him the ideas.

I explained that we will never make an alliance with any capitalist power because they are bosses. I talked about the difference between reform and revolution. I said that we want a revolution, since reforms improve capitalism.

It was getting late and he had to go back to work. He took *Red Flag* newspaper and I told him about the note that talked about the soldiers. He said he would read it. It was agreed that he would write something, but his writing didn't come on time for this edition.

Sometimes these small discussions seem

not to mean much, but they mean a lot; it is to have confidence that we have to find and develop political consciousness among the soldiers and the workers, whether in the barracks or in our workplaces, so that one day we will achieve the liberation of our working class around the world. Join this struggle.

—A young Comrade in Mexico

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



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

**Questions about Reform Struggles**

It appears from articles in *Red Flag* that ICWP does in some sense support struggles against racist violence even when there's no immediate prospect of turning those struggles into revolution against capitalism.

Similarly, the party has praised the efforts of the Standing Rock “Water Protectors” to stop a pipeline that would threaten the local water supply. *Red Flag* correctly describes the choice of location for the pipeline as racist and the protestors as ‘courageous.’ It drew attention favorably to military veterans who came to protect the demonstrators from agents of the state (!). This was really important given the importance of soldiers and sailors in the working-class revolution.

These struggles are reform struggles. How does ICWP understand its relationship to them?

ICWP seems to have focused almost exclusively on defensive struggles – responses to quite particular outrages of capitalism. Is that the line? What about, for example, the old practice in the US during the Vietnam war of trying to abolish officer training (ROTC) on campus? If this were not put forward as a way to ‘purify’ universities but as an attack on US imperialism, would it undermine the case for communist revolution more than supporting the Water Protectors?

There's a perhaps even more important question. Suppose for example that demonstrations were being planned in my city in support of the Water Protectors and I was going to a meeting. Suppose that I had been tentatively convinced of the Marxist conception of racism but that I wasn't sure whether in practice one could convince people who were not the direct victims of racism to exhibit class solidarity with its more direct victims.

Should my ICWP friends urge me to work to incorporate that marxist anti-racist position into the literature or speeches for the demonstration even if I was not willing to advocate for communist revolution?

If so, then ICWP might decide which reform struggles to engage with by asking: (1) Will par-

ticipation provide an opportunity to effectively put forward the party's line to new people and learn more about how to put it in practice? (2) Will participation help newer friends of ICWP to test out its ideas by taking leadership in putting into practice those aspects of the party's line with which they tentatively agree? Will it help them grow as leaders?

Perhaps this is not ICWP's conception of reform struggles. If not, then it would be useful for the party to articulate an alternative.

I'm open to persuasion. But it's hard for me to see how you could build a mass communist party along a revolution-not-reform platform without inviting newcomers to share in taking initiative in struggles and testing out some of the party's positions even when they are not yet convinced of the need for communist revolution. How can ICWP help to create such opportunities for its new friends without the party itself being involved in the creation and maintenance of reform organizations?

—Anti-racist reader



**LOS ANGELES, Dec. 10, 2016—Marchers in support of the Water Protectors take hundreds of Red Flags**

**A Comrade Responds to Questions about Reform Struggles**

These are good questions that deserve clear answers.

Yes, you're right, ICWP does take part in what could be called “reform” struggles against

racism. The important point is how and why we do this.

We fight racism \*as communists\* and in order to strengthen the fight for communism. Anything else is in the long run futile, because capitalism will eventually roll back any reform we are able to win.

This is not the way communists in the old movement fought racism. From 1935 through the rest of the twentieth century they fought racism second hand, through non communist ‘front’ organizations. They folded up their red flags, identified themselves as militant (even “marxist”) antiracists, and recruited militant antiracists to join them in fighting for reforms.

The old civil rights movement was a good example – the US Communist Party played an important behind-the-scenes role. And they won big victories against Jim Crow.

So what's the matter with that? The matter is that there was very little effort to convince the antiracist militants that only communism can end racism or even that communism is a good idea. Now, fifty years later, the US is de facto even more segregated than before, cops murder Black people with complete impunity, and Nazis waving swastikas march openly in the streets.

Another example is the anti apartheid movement in South Africa. Going back to the nineteenth century, communists (including followers of Marx) submerged themselves in the abolitionist movement and left advocating for communism on the back burner.

In all these cases communists ignored the advice of their own manifesto; which says that “in the movement of the present, [communists] also represent and take care of the future of that movement.” The future being communism.

We're determined to reject the old united front strategy and make the fight for communism an integral part of the fight against racism. A purely militant and even ‘marxist’ fight against racism is, in the long run, futile.

In our view, the absolutely vital takeaway from fighting racism is that \*only communism can end racism\*

—A comrade



**Centennial of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution:****COMMUNIST WORKERS' POWER WILL MOBILIZE MASSES TO BUILD COMMUNIST SOCIETY**

Sunrise over Petrograd on October 25, 1917 marked the dawn of a new era. The working class, led by its Communist Party, had driven out the capitalist Provisional Government.

Red-led workers, soldiers and sailors – along with “Left Socialist Revolutionaries” (SRs) and their rural base, began to build a new society. They had proved to themselves, to the world, and to the future that the days of wage-slavery were numbered.

But on October 25 the revolution had only begun. Soon “moderate” socialists would abandon the Congress of Soviets, the new organ of workers’ power. The capitalists would regroup and attack. The bitter political debates of the past year would turn into armed struggle. Groups supposed to be revolutionary (Mensheviks, SRs, Anarchists) would conspire to overthrow the Bolsheviks. They would support anti-communist rebellions organized by capitalists and other open reactionaries.

There was heavy fighting in Moscow before the Bolsheviks prevailed. The civil war began immediately. General Kaledin organized a rebellion of the Don Cossacks that the Soviet government defeated in January, 1918. By then, anti-Bolshevik forces were rallying in support of the bourgeois-led Constituent Assembly, which the Bolsheviks had disbanded.

In the spring, nationalist Czechoslovak Legions (with a base among railway workers) took power in Siberia, the Urals and the Volga region. By July, even the Left SRs and anarchists openly opposed the new government.

Then over 100,000 imperialist troops, from over a dozen capitalist countries, invaded Soviet Russia.

Bolshevik hopes for prompt and successful uprisings of European workers and soldiers were dashed.

Even more seriously, peasants rebelled against the Bolshevik grain requisition policies that started in 1918. Worst of all, SRs helped turn protests of Kronstadt sailors into open rebellion in March, 1921. This anti-communist revolt gained support from naval officers and even “White” counter-revolutionaries. They too used grain requisitioning as an excuse to attack Bolshevik workers’ power.

The Bolshevik government was able to suppress the Kronstadt rebellion because it had a mass base among sailors and workers in the port cities. Many ships refused to support the rebellion. Some sided with the Bolsheviks. On other ships, sailors fought their officers.

However, the New Economic Policy of 1921

was in part a response to the Kronstadt rebellion. Lenin described this as “progression to state capitalism.” For workers, however, it was a retreat.

**Bolsheviks Win the War but Lose the Peace**

The civil war – abetted by imperialist invasions – would rage for over three years. The Communist-

led masses would win that war. They would inspire masses around the world – including us!

But they would lose the peace. They defeated themselves by implementing the historic communist line of building socialism as a “stage” in the development of communism. The Soviet masses themselves proved that line wrong in practice. We must learn the lessons of their heroic struggle and their tragic failure.

Socialism itself turned out to be capitalist in essence, not a path to communism. It rebuilt a money-based economy with a wage system that turned its communist leaders into capitalist oppressors.

The Bolsheviks didn’t build a mass base among rural workers, even when Bolshevik soldiers returned to their peasant villages. And they hadn’t tried to win the masses in the city or country to communism: “from each according to ability (or commitment), to each according to need.”

When the urban masses desperately needed bread, farmers refused to sell enough grain. So the Bolshevik government had to requisition it – by force. Their failure to mobilize masses for communism – eliminating money and markets – prevented them from overcoming divisions between rural and urban workers.

The Bolsheviks understood the importance of the super-oppression of masses belonging to minority groups. But they wrongly interpreted this as a “national question.” They didn’t grasp the need to destroy this racism at its roots by mobilizing masses for communism. Their mistaken line on nationalism prevented them from building international working-class unity.



**Petrograd Soviet of Workers & Soldiers during the Revolution**

State capitalism undermined early Bolshevik efforts to end sexism, class society’s special oppression of women among the masses. Wage slavery plus economic crisis forced many into subordination to men.

Concessions to nationalism, concessions to private enterprise, to bourgeois democracy – all prevented the realization of communism.

**Mobilize Masses to Build a Communist Future**

October 25 (old-style) is November 7th on today’s calendar. We celebrate that day because it showed so clearly that people like us – industrial workers, soldiers and all oppressed masses – can take power and shape our own destiny.

We have learned from the Bolshevik Revolution, most of all, that to build communism in the future we must mobilize masses directly for communism now and always.

We cannot compromise this policy by forming coalitions with other “left” groups around demands for democracy or reforms. We expect to exercise communist workers’ power by building a mass International Communist Workers’ Party.

Let’s draw everyone we can into discussions of how to make this work. How will the Party mobilize masses directly for communism where we have power? How do we expect decisions to be made?

Who will give leadership? Who will be in the Party?

The short answer is: YOU and many millions like you.

We will find the long answer together.

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

**South Africa**

**Speeches and lunch**

**November 17, 2017, 12 noon**

**Los Angeles (US)**

**Mini-Conference and Dinner**

**November 18, 2017, 2:30-7:30 pm**

**El Salvador: November TBA**

**Mexico: December TBA**

