



# RED FLAG

**MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM**

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



## **INDIA:**

### **FIFTY THOUSAND DESPERATE FARMERS MARCH AGAINST BANKS— NEED REVOLUTION TO END PRIVATE PROPERTY**

March 12—The western state of Maharashtra in India is considered the food basket because it produces food in abundance. The same state is also notoriously known as the suicide belt where thousands of poor farmers have committed suicide as they are unable to pay loans to banks.

A week ago, thousands of farmers from the suicide belt villages converged in an epic march of 160 kms to Mumbai. They braved the scorching heat of summer and walked six days to arrive in front of the state legislature. Their number swelled and the Mumbaikars welcomed them with open arms and wallets to contribute for food and water.

Among many reform demands of the farmers is the forgiveness of crushing loans and support for falling prices of food and vegetables (i.e., higher prices to the farmers for their crops)

The International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP) calls on the working class to seize this opportunity to organize for communist revolution. In communism there will be no banks, no money, no rent or loans. We will collectively produce for our needs and there will be no private property. In capitalism, abundance of goods brings misery and eventually wars, killing our working-class brothers

and sisters around the world. In communism, abundance will free us to advance to a communist way of living.

Communist ideas are not alien to the masses. For a week, thousands of workers marched together, cooked together, and sang together. Marching in unison, men and women, Dalits and non-dalits raised slogans that reverberated around the world. The spirit of unity and communist sharing is the exact opposite of the desperate suicide that takes the lives of many.

It is the urgent task of our party and our supporters to organize the masses to break from the various political parties that want to reform capitalism. Neither fake communist parties nor traditional parties want to abolish wage slavery.

If a march like this is led by ICWP, we will arm the masses and call upon the industrial working class and soldiers to not only support us but to organize insurrection against our class enemy for communist revolution. This will certainly inspire millions around the world to fight for communist revolution. As the old saying goes, a single spark can ignite a prairie fire. Recruiting masses to ICWP around the world is going to ignite many sparks that will engulf the bosses and end their rule.

### **ROBOTS COME TO THE GARMENT INDUSTRY— COMMUNISM WILL GIVE THEM SOCIAL USE**

“If you cannot absorb the youth in productive activities, they will do something. And that something will not be very pleasant socially...it is a time bomb,” said Zahid Hussain, a World Bank economist in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh is one of the countries where the capitalist class, with the help of the European imperialists, has used repression, nationalism, and exploitation to submerge the working class in profound poverty. The workers constantly protest with mass strikes and rebellions.

The garment industry represents 80% of its exports and is its main source of jobs, especially among young women, who often are the only source of income for their families. But, even with wages as low as \$68 a month, this industry has been invaded in the last few years by German, Spanish, and Japanese high tech machines (robots) that replace thousands of workers in the mass production of clothes.

For example, in the Mohammadi Fashion Sweaters factory in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, a few dozen workers control 173 machines that knit sweaters for H&M, Zara and other famous brands. This factory had employed 500 workers before the new machines were brought in.

In Bangladesh, from 2013 to 2016, the production of clothes for export increased by 19.5%, but the number of new workers who enter the industry annually

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**West Virginia Teachers' Wildcat Strike:****HISTORY OF MILITANT CLASS STRUGGLE INSPIRES US,  
BUT COMMUNISM IS OUR FUTURE****West Virginia Coal Miners, 1921****West Virginia School Workers, 2018**

USA, March 8—Thirty thousand public school teachers, bus drivers, cooks and other school workers across West Virginia ended a nine-day strike after they and other state workers received a 5% pay raise with no increase in health insurance costs.

But these workers need something different from a wage increase. They need to end capitalist wage slavery by mobilizing for communism.

Public-sector workers in West Virginia, including teachers, have no legal right to collective bargaining. They have no legal right to strike. But strike they did! They defied the laws and the officials of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) who told them to go back to work.

**In the past, West Virginia miners and other workers waged fierce strikes** against the deadly conditions in which they toiled for a pittance. They led pitched battles against the coal bosses and their government goons.

The railroad strike of 1877 spread from West Virginia across the US. It culminated in the Pittsburgh Rebellion, which some compared to the Paris Commune of 1871. The mine wars of 1912-22 included the Battle of Blair Mountain (1921), the largest armed insurrection in the US since the Civil War.

Communists helped build multiracial mineworker unions. But they didn't try to lead these armed class struggles to revolution for communist workers' power. We have much to learn from both their successes and their limitations and errors.

In the 1960s and 1970s, West Virginia was a hub of huge and frequent "wildcat" strikes that defied union officials' attempts to suppress class struggle. The recent school strikers were conscious of their debt to these militant industrial workers. They organized themselves through personal relationships and social media. They knew that workers' power lies, not in laws or unions, but in our ability to shut down the system.

**An even greater power lies in workers' ability to build a new system – communism – based not on capitalist profits but on workers' needs.**

Teachers stepped up, but industrial workers,

soldiers and sailors are still key to mobilizing for communist revolution. Energy is still one of the leading industries in West Virginia, along with chemicals, biotech, automotive, and a fast-growing aerospace sector.

Democratic Party politicians and liberal-capitalist news media worry that the decline of unions will open the door for "uprisings" like the teachers' strike. They want the Supreme Court to decide the Janus case in favor of unions like the AFT that will push voter-registration and, they hope, control the angry masses.

Some leftists will say that this strike shows that workers should "take back" their unions or build new unions. We disagree.

**The militant trade-unionism of the past inspires us, but it is not the way forward.** Miners fought for health and safety but they still die from black lung today. Industrial workers must mobilize masses for communism.

We can see the potential for communism in the teachers who not only organized themselves but also prepared bags of food for children who weren't getting school breakfasts and lunches during the strike.

The media and union spin this as "teachers caring about kids." It's a lot more than that. It's the kind of class solidarity learned through a century of class struggle. And this solidarity is the basis of communism.

**In communist society there will be no wages** (high or low) and no money economy at all. Society will be structured around everyone caring about each other. We'll organize production on a collective and voluntary basis to meet everyone's needs. No one will go hungry or have to worry about health care.

Where dangerous work is necessary, the workers themselves will make sure it's as safe as possible. No profits, no "bottom line" and no reason to cut corners.

**Communist education** will encourage curiosity, creativity

and learning for people of all ages. No longer will the majority be schooled to be passive wage-slaves while a few are taught to believe themselves naturally superior and destined for power and privilege. Workers themselves will plan and carry out this communist education. Everyone will both teach and learn.

**Communist education today means drawing revolutionary lessons from class struggles. It means figuring out collectively how we can win and build communist society.**

We're not surprised that the AFT did not go all-out to mobilize its members in solidarity with the striking West Virginia school workers. But we need to be self-critical for not mobilizing communist solidarity ourselves. That's especially true of our comrade teachers, students and parents who are building the International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP) in US schools.

Caught up in our daily routines, including important Party work, we didn't grasp the urgency and potential of this massive strike. We didn't think about it enough to make the connections. Members and collectives didn't take the initiative to open discussions or get friends to help write and distribute leaflets—or more.

Let's start to correct these errors by discussing this article with friends, relatives and co-workers. These strikes may spread. Oklahoma teachers are preparing for April 2. Kentucky may be next. We should be prepared, too.

**West Virginia miners' children**

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## COMMUNIST POLITICAL STRUGGLE WILL TRANSFORM AEROSPACE WORKFORCE

USA – On March 14, Trump touted his corporate tax cuts at the Boeing plant in St. Louis. Boeing CEO Muillenbergh said the cuts are “one of the best things that has happened in the last few months.” The company will get a windfall of billions.

Most will be used to continue a gigantic buy-back of Boeing stock, netting executives millions. Workers are not happy.

The company Public Relations department came up with a scheme to spin the news. They are holding a vote for “suggestions on how to invest \$100 million [from the cuts] toward workforce development.” Party members and friends couldn’t find a single worker who will admit to participating.

On the other hand, Party cadre and friends in the factory are discussing “workforce development” in communism.

The bosses want us to choose between four options. The first three concern technical skills for individual advancement. The last, management training, is straight-out capitalist brainwashing.

We started by contrasting this to the aim of communist development of the workforce. Our goal is to develop communist political leadership in the heart of the factory, not limited to technical skills.

“How do you do that?” asked a Boeing *Red Flag* distributor. “Around here, people are brainwashed to get ahead individually, not collectively.”

We agreed we will need lots of communist or-

ganizers. Many will be forged in the political struggle to create communist relations of production. But first we’ll need a revolution.

We must focus on developing those communist organizers now. These organizers, particularly in industry, need to know how communist factories will function to guarantee the success of communist society. The politics of communist workforce development is key to this understanding.

During the Chinese Cultural Revolution, there were many attempts to merge performance tasks with administrative tasks. No separate classes for management. No larger salaries! The slogan was for mass management.

In communism, there won’t be managers and technical staff standing apart from the immediate producers who make decisions about what to produce, the allocation of tasks, and the nature of production. Nobody will be assigned to only one sector. The party will mobilize workers to seize control of every aspect of production.

We will not, however, ignore technical skills. We will change the nature of technical innovation by placing it in hands of the workers.

This will require a new way to educate. Worker collectives in the most advanced factories during the Cultural Revolution decided who got specialized training based on the needs of the collective, not job advancement. Those who got such training were immediately integrated back into work units.

Scientific knowledge will be put in the hands of workers, enabling them to transform produc-

tion themselves. The goal is a new social organization of scientific and technological research.

The political struggle for workers to organize production to serve the international working class will create unity, helping to break down race, gender and national segregation. The interests of individuals and production units will bow to the interests of the world’s workers.

The appropriation of this communist ideology by the masses will help answer our Boeing friend’s qualms. The social norms of behavior will change.

In the end, the Cultural Revolution did not win this battle. They were fighting under a socialist system. Socialism maintains wages, inevitably leading to greater inequality.

We’ll immediately eliminate wages in communism, giving us a clear advantage. The working class will provide what we need and now must buy with wages. Even so, we’ll face significant political struggle to replace mere “production units” (i.e. companies) with interrelated political units that also produce material goods.

We are encouraging our base to test these ideas with their friends. Their experiences will help develop the organizers we need and should fill the pages of *Red Flag*.

We call for a communist May Day! “Communist Workforce Development in Communist Factories” will be one of our organizing slogans. That’s how we’ll answer Trump’s bluster and Muillenbergh’s votes.

### ROBOTS from page 1

dropped enormously, creating a massive army of unemployed youth who are angry at the capitalist system.

In 2013, the garment building Rana Plaza collapsed, killing over 1,100 women and men workers and creating massive discontent among the workers and the whole population. Since then, the bosses have invested more in using robots to increase production and supposedly reduce confrontation with workers.

“I think that the majority of the owners of sweater factories are happy with the mechanization because that will avoid labor disputes,” said Huq, of the capitalist group Mohammadi.

They are dreaming. They do not know the revolutionary nightmare that awaits them. The millions of women and men garment workers in Bangladesh are in constant struggle against the conditions created by the bosses. A link is being created with them through a group of comrades and readers of *Red Flag*, who are bringing the alternative of communist revolution through our newspaper and through discussions about communism.

They will be the spearhead for a communist world and against capitalist happiness. They will organize and mobilize the masses for communism, developing militant and massive class struggle, and leading the masses to the seizure of

communist power. These comrades will guarantee that Zahid Hussain’s prediction about the youth (above) becomes a reality.

In Los Angeles, USA during the 1980’s there were about 150,000 garment workers. Now there are about 60,000. Mechanization created its effect: local unemployment. At that time, the bosses also sought production in places like Mexico, Central America and Asia, where they pay even less. Many of the women and men garment workers in Los Angeles, like workers in the maquilas in El Salvador, are reading and distributing *Red Flag*, with the goal of building a communist society based on meeting the needs of all the workers.

Capitalism in any industry seeks to maximize profits, whether in “rich” or “poor” countries. The competition between bosses makes the system more rabid and criminal in its attacks on the working class. This is part of the crisis of overproduction, which leads to wars.

**Robots will be our allies in communism.** Mechanization will be used to improve the lives of our new free workers, not to send them to the



Los Angeles, USA  
2013

street. The essence will be that no one will live on the sweat of other workers. We will all work collectively for the well being of the workers themselves.

We believe that during the development of the revolution and of the establishment of communism worldwide, the production of clothes to cover and protect humanity will be different. We invite readers to discuss and write about this topic.



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## Lesson from Elections in El Salvador:

### **BUILD ICWP AS THE ALTERNATIVE FOR THE WORKING CLASS**

EL SALVADOR, March 11—"In the factory there are comments that the fmln simply reaped what they had sown," said a comrade from the maquila, a statement that sums up exactly what happened in the latest elections in El Salvador.

The elections for mayors and deputies the first weekend of March were a disaster for the fmln and its electoral strategy. The legislative assembly will be made up mostly of deputies from the right-wing parties. They won't need to take the fmln into account to pass the laws that they want in the next three years.

The defeat of the electoral bourgeois "left" is not due to massive support for the right, but rather it is a vote of punishment and abstention. ARENA, the winning right-wing party, actually a fascist party with a long history of anti-worker violence, did not increase its vote count. In these elections they actually got fewer votes than the last time. The masses who had supported the fmln in the past decided to stay home this time or turn in a blank ballot.

The fmln leadership blamed the media and criticized public workers in the different ministries of the government. But their electoral defeat did not come about due to tactical errors or organizational problems.

The electoral parties of the supposed left, like the fmln, are being discarded internationally. Their inability to humanely manage such an inhuman system as capitalism has made traditional tools of struggle obsolete. However, this creates the need to build something new.

This something new is the International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP). Our strategy is to mobilize the masses for communism. That is why

we base our organization among the working class in El Salvador and around the world. Although the fmln has a history of decades of struggle by the masses in this country, it never fought for communism, and it underestimated the need to mobilize the working class masses. By becoming an electoral party, it discarded the most important lesson of the Paris Commune: the need to smash the bourgeois state.

Disenchantment with the electoral "left" is a valuable opportunity to mobilize the masses for communist revolution. As a consequence of the election results, many students, factory workers, farmworkers and public workers have intensified their desire to fight for a new world. In the university, students are holding broad meetings to discuss what should be the line of a new left. In the factories, workers increasingly see organization as necessary, knowing that a decade of right-wing governments is ahead. Public workers are getting ready to fight against the cuts that the IMF

and World Bank have demanded from the Salvadoran state.

"We have to organize our own. We have to learn from the mistakes of the fmln so that we never find ourselves in the situation that they are in now," commented a maquila worker. The organization of more ICWP clubs and strengthening those that exist is our main task. We must convert ICWP into the masses' alternative to build a decent life for all.

For ICWP to be the alternative for the working class it must continue its process of formalizing the Party's structures in El Salvador. We must continue the process of collective teaching and learning of communist ideas, the mass distribution of our propaganda and develop a new communications strategy that adapts to the new forms of communication internationally.

**Below: El Salvador, May Day, 2016  
Mobilize the Masses for Communism**



### **CAPITALISM CAUSES WATER CRISES AND HUGE INEQUALITY**

SOUTH AFRICA, MARCH 12—The Western Cape is currently experiencing a drought and as a result Cape Town will run out of water at any moment. What is important is to understand the cause of this crisis. The media may claim that it is due to the changing weather conditions. Some put the blame on the masses saying they do not save water. The question is: who consumes water and what is it used for?

In South Africa we use water in so many ways. The masses use it to drink, cook and for other basic needs. It is not only the masses who use water. The bosses need water to make profit. They use it in the mining industry, agriculture, etc. And in all these industries, it is public knowledge that they use millions of gallons of water which is way more than the masses use. After they use water and after exploiting the masses, the masses do not benefit at all as they produce for exchange value and not use value.

They blame the masses for wasting water but the masses consume a small fraction compared to what the bosses consume. An average worker consumes about 30 liters of water a day, but the bosses say that we must save water. But they are the ones who should be saving water. Instead they use gallons to brew beer we do not need. They also use it for commercial farming, for their lush lawns and gardens, and they have swimming pools that have running water for 24 hours a day. In a recent study, it emerged that Cape Town residents used 70% of water – homes lead at 55%, with informal settlement residents' (black families in townships) usage trickling in at a mere 4.7% .

In Los Angeles County (USA), during a previous drought, the 11 million residents of Los Angeles County were urged to preserve water. Later

an article in the *Los Angeles Times* revealed that only 5% of the water was consumed by the residents, while the remaining 95% was used by industry. .

As ICWP we also see the need for the eradication of borders as a must. South Africa is rich in mineral resources but it doesn't have enough dams and as a result, when it comes to water it is supplied by Lesotho. This means that without borders there would be no shortage of water. These borders are a result of capitalism.

It is often said that the next world war will be fought over water. The conflict between Ethiopia and Egypt is a testimony to this fact. These two countries and many others, including Sudan and South Sudan, depend on the Nile River for water. This is also the centre of their dispute. Ethiopia, as one of the upstream countries wants to build a dam drawing water from the Nile. This means the downstream countries will get less water. Hence Egypt views this as a threat to their survival because the Nile is their only source of water.

Without borders, this would never happen. Scarce

resources sharpen capitalism's huge inequality. Therefore we need to fight for a communist society to eradicate borders, profit, private property and privilege, because those are the main causes of this water crisis.



**Capetown: Iaga Township**



**Capetown: Rondebosch Golf Club**



## Hollywood Gives the Masses *Black Panther*

### WE NEED MULTIRACIAL MOBILIZATION FOR COMMUNISM

The movie *Black Panther* has made millions since its release and is sure to make more. What has brought the masses to see this movie in such high numbers? And whose interests does it finally serve?

*Black Panther* has resonated with the masses through its unique storytelling, with a majority black cast and strong and militant women. It explores current issues. But although we enjoyed it, *Red Flag* is forced to conclude that it has a dangerously pro-capitalist message.

*Black Panther* is a comic-book adaptation about a superhero from the fictional African country of Wakanda, which for centuries has been technologically advanced and abundant in resources. It is a utopia of sorts but has remained hidden from the rest of the world and uninvolved in the fate of the African diaspora.

When T'challa (Chadwick Boseman) has to become the new king, he is met with the challenge of what kind of king he will be—by both those who serve under him and his enemies. The first person to question the Wakanda tradition of not getting involved is T'challa's love interest Nakia (Lupita Nyong'o) who asserts how Wakanda can help other people with their abundance in vibranium (their main resource which powers the country). "I am not the king of the world. I am the king of Wakanda," he

says in protest of doing such a thing.

In a recent *Afropunk* interview, Boseman explained that he had more in common with the villain than the hero. T'challa is "the enemy I've always known. It's power. It's having privilege," he went on to say, speaking about the Wakanda character's monarchial rule and choice to say no.

This question is brought up again with the movie's main villain and stand out-character, Erick Killmonger (Michael B. Jordan) and his "militant" ideals. Killmonger spent his life in Oakland (USA) harboring anger towards Wakanda and their turning their backs on Africans who were dispersed through the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

Killmonger challenges T'challa for the throne and takes over the country just to seize power in hopes to arm all African descendants of the trans-Atlantic slave trade to overthrow their governments and rule. He is eventually stopped by T'challa's alter ego Black Panther.

While Killmonger's methods were misguided, the vast majority of people who saw the movie sided with him because, for the most part, he is right to feel such anger. T'challa was born into royalty and the people of Wakanda are seen living in harmony and without a care in the world, but that's how you know this is some-

thing ripped from a comic book. In real life, the monarchs and bosses reap all the benefits and rewards while the workers get the scraps.

While Killmonger seems to be the most left-leaning in the film, it's important to know his politics are nationalistic, which is dangerous to the masses.

Nationalism is a product of capitalism and is an error in thinking because it teaches you to only view those who look like you as allies. Killmonger only wanted to free African descendants in other countries, who have experienced racial injustices and all other types of exploitation, but what of other workers who are being exploited as well?

ICWP is fighting to mobilize the masses in South Africa and around the world to liberate all from exploitation by monarchs and bosses. We know that only communism is the answer where all workers are in charge and not the few. We will all work to ensure we all have what we need, and workers will be acknowledged every day for their contributions.

We cannot expect a fictional character in a fictional country with fictional resources to save us. We have to mobilize and save ourselves. Capitalist media will never make movies like that.

## From the Chinese Revolution to the Present and Future

### COMMUNISM AND THE STRUGGLE TO END SEXISM

Mobilizing masses for communism creates the material basis to end sexism. We can't say that too often!

In capitalism, working women too often have to put up with sexual harassment, abuse and worse. Like all wage slaves, they need that paycheck to survive. And would anywhere else be better?

In communism, there won't be wages or money or markets. There won't be bosses to profit from dividing the working class and super-exploiting black, immigrant, or female labor. Everyone will receive the necessities of life, so we won't be slaves to a job. If you don't like something happening where you work, join the communist collective of workers there who are giving leadership!

But will ending the wage system automatically end sexism? No. Even after communist revolution, ending sexism will take a conscious, committed long-term political struggle against the ideas and habits inherited from class society.

That struggle starts now.

#### The Chinese Revolution: Fighting Sexism by Mobilizing Masses

William Hinton's book *Fanshen* is a very helpful first-hand report on the communist-led struggle for land reform in Long Bow, China in 1948. In a chapter called "Abuses of Power" he wrote about a group of Party members who had become militia-men based on their heroism in the revolutionary struggle. But now they bullied men into coming to seemingly endless meetings. They helped themselves to fruit and other things they took, without authorization, from better-off villagers. And they engaged in "rascal behavior" including rape.

Why didn't the militia leader or the Party collective stop them? They tried – half-heartedly. The key male Party leaders also felt entitled to some privileges, including sexual "favors." They hit on many women, single and married. Their power was political, not economic. For example, when a former landlord's daughter rejected him,

Yu-hsing arrested her on charges of spreading false rumors.

Hinton relates how these cadre eventually had to stand before mass meetings where they criticized themselves and heard the criticisms of the masses. These criticisms were not always valid, but some felt pressured to accept them anyway. Others – including the clique of abusers—resisted. Hearing these stories, we can understand better the importance of both mobilizing the masses and practicing criticism and self-criticism today. We can't build communism without them.

Hinton reported on his return to Long Bow in 1971 in another book, *Shenfan*. This is even more interesting. One thing we learn, for example, is that the "criticism and struggle" process didn't always work.

For example, during land reform, the militia-man Man-hsi had raped many women. Most were either from landlord or rich-peasant families who had been dispossessed. Others were daughters of hated collaborators. He was criticized sharply for this and promised to change his ways. But four years later he raped the daughter of a neighbor. Only then was he expelled from the party, although he remained a leader in production.

Hinton found that the communist-led movement for land reform and socialism, including the Cultural Revolution, had struck a blow against sexism. For example, young men told him that "in the old days there was no way of making a living. People like us could not afford a wife. Therefore they did questionable things. Now we would be ashamed to do anything disgraceful." Women said, "Now that divorce is possible there is no need to die."

We don't agree with Hinton's 1971 analysis of



Women engaging in ideological struggle during the Cultural Revolution in China

the Cultural Revolution (which he later revised). But there is much to learn from his stories about Chinese communists' pioneering efforts to address crime and anti-social behavior with the "mass line." And he did recognize that the socialist line "to each according to work" was intensifying economic inequality, not ending it.

#### Sharp, Principled, Open Political Struggle: Now and Always

Sexism was clearly an ongoing problem in the Chinese Communist Party in spite of its line that "women hold up half the sky." Is there sexism in the International Communist Workers' Party today in spite of our best efforts to understand and fight it? Yes. Can we defeat it? Yes.

That conscious, committed long-term political struggle against the ideas and habits inherited from class society starts now. We can't walk away from it. We won't be able to walk away from communist society when we inevitably encounter reactionary or even corrupt behavior. We and our friends have to see, in the practice of our party now, that open and honest criticism and self-criticism will make it possible to defeat sexism in the process of mobilizing masses for communism.



## FIGHTING THE FLU OR FIGHTING FOR COMMUNISM, THE INTERNAL IS PRIMARY

### How Do People Get the Flu?

Right now there is an epidemic of influenza in the U.S. The government reports about 4000 positive flu tests per week, and many go untested. Scientists have known since the 1930s that you can only get the flu by being exposed to a virus. Many people are exposed, but do not get sick. Thus the external influence—contact with the virus—is not the main thing that determines who gets sick. An exposed person's general health and the state of their immune system—including whether they have had a flu shot—determine whether they become sick at all, and how sick they get. People can't get the flu without contact with the virus, but what is inside them is the primary cause of being well or sick.

Catching the flu is one example of a general principle of communist dialectics. Its core idea is in the slogan "Internal contradictions are primary." "Internal" means what goes on inside some system or process. The system could be an atom, a person, world capitalism, the solar system, and so on. "Internal contradictions" means the conflicts inside a system that steer it in certain directions.

Workers and bosses, and rival imperialist bosses are at war inside capitalism. These internal contradictions direct events in certain directions. U.S., Russian, Chinese and European capitalists maneuver to control the most labor and resources across the planet, and prepare for wars to keep what they have and get more.

According to old-style materialism—before Marxism—the external causes are the main things that make systems change. Communist materialism shows the opposite is true. The effect that ex-

ternal forces have is modified or canceled by internal contradictions. External factors are sometimes essential—like a virus—but the effect they have depends on what is inside.

Sometimes people object to this conclusion this way: Suppose a small, weak army fights a battle with a big, strong one. Won't the strong external force always defeat the weak one? Size and firepower certainly do count in a war, but you have to ask, why did the weak side fight the battle at all? About his experience of guerilla war, Mao Zedong wrote "If we could win, we fought; if not, we ran." Getting into a hopeless fight is a serious internal weakness of the leadership of a guerilla movement.

Organizing for communism is a lot like a guerilla war. Capitalism, our enemy, is a strong force external to our movement, but capitalism's internal contradictions give it critical weaknesses, too. Capitalism creates misery for the masses and luxury for a few. It generates racism and sexism, organizes terrible wars and can't avoid deep economic crises. Like guerillas, we organize where people are best able to see that communism is the only answer for them. But it often happens that our own internal contradictions hold us back and prevent our movement from growing.

### What Holds Us Back?

Different internal conflicts hold back our work in different places. Comrades in San Diego recently started up two new *Red Flag* distributions, at a second shipyard and at a college campus. The immediate result was that the number of Red Flags they got out more than doubled. This could have been done several years ago, however. So why

wasn't it?

The answer is that the comrades didn't understand or face up to several things. One is that many workers, students and sailors in their area are ready to hear that capitalism must be replaced, and are willing to consider communism. The comrades learned this from the positive response to *Red Flag* at mass marches during the last year.

The San Diego masses showed that they were ready to consider communism, but understanding that mobilizing for capitalism is urgent is a different issue. Many of us have expected only slow and gradual changes as capitalism gets worse, but dialectics teaches us differently. Internal contradictions often make changes take place "by leaps, and via catastrophes and revolutions in nature and society," as Lenin said

(See [icwpredflag.org/ldel.html](http://icwpredflag.org/ldel.html))

### Let's Grasp the Internal Contradictions of Capitalism

There are many signs of capitalist crises on the horizon. The turn toward more racist and pro-fascist politics is clear in many countries. The U.S., Russia, China and India are spending huge amounts on new weapons for war. It's been nine years since the last economic recession and a new one is overdue. Rising interest rates and government deficits will soon make many people's debts harder to cope with. Deaths from drug addiction, police murders and school massacres are in the news every day. Comrades and friends need to take to heart the fact that developing contradictions of capitalism are driving toward fascism, and use this knowledge to motivate our mobilizing the masses for communism.

### LETTERS

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#### Students Discuss Parkland Shooting ... and Capitalism

Our high school class did a unit on the Douglas High School tragedy in Parkland, Florida. We read the song "Shine," written by Douglas HS drama students and a poem that had been written by student Alex Schachter a few months before he was killed. Then we read student Sam Zief's testimony to Donald Trump: "How did we not stop this after Columbine? After Sandy Hook?"

The teacher asked the class to illustrate and explain a solution. Many drew things like roses, guns crossed out, or different people holding hands surrounding the planet.

Then we read the *Red Flag* article. The students were convinced of the inherent violent nature of capitalism. However, they were not convinced of the possibility nor the necessity of destroying it with a violent revolution.

Changing the context changes the nature of a thing. Communism will represent a different context for human beings. Therefore, our very nature will change. We will no longer be selfish, individualistic or violent to each other in any form.

"What is wage slavery?" asked a student.

Wage slavery is what the capitalist system imposes on the working class. Anybody that works and gets paid is a wage slave. Even though some receive a higher pay, they are still wage slaves.

Another student added, "What I understand is that when a person has certain needs and has to work for someone superior to him or her to be able to pay and receive those needs, that's wage slavery."

"When it ends," said another, "we will live with more equality and more organization."

The wage system is the underlying basis for all sorts of violence that we see today. We have to eliminate it by mobilizing the masses for communism. This is the message that we have to bring to the March 24 "March for Our Lives" actions that students are planning to demand gun control.

"But you're not gonna knock us down, we'll get back up again," goes the Douglas drama students' song "Shine." "You may have hurt us but I promise we are stronger and we're not gonna let you win, we're putting up a fight, you may have brought the dark but together we will shine a light."

—Los Angeles (USA) comrade

### CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS



Street Vendors  
Los Angeles (USA)

#### March of Street Vendors

On this past March 3rd, street vendors had a demonstration against the corrupt capitalist system that does not let them sell their food in the streets. There were about 200 to 250 demonstrators. 98% were women. The march took place in downtown Los Angeles. I was there distributing *Red Flag*.

I had the opportunity to talk with one of the organizers. She commented that for years they have been struggling to get the permit to sell food in the street. She denounced the way the corrupt system has granted certain permits to other street vendors who are friends or relatives of the councilman from the second district.

I told her that there would be no need for so many problems in a communist world. That they should join ICWP to mobilize the masses for a communist revolution—the only solution to eliminate the system of corruption, impunity, and repression that is this capitalist system.

—East LA (USA) comrade



## LEARNING HOW TO ORGANIZE COMMUNIST STRUGGLE

After AJ Weber was shot and killed by the Los Angeles Sheriffs we, a student ICWP collective of six, tried to organize a protest-march to the Sheriff's Station which is about five blocks from our school.

We met regularly and discussed in the collective how to go about it and how we can put forward the idea that this murder would have never happened if we had a communist world.

We decided to produce a big banner that read "We Want a Different World" and down the center "Justice for AJ". We also decided to have pictures of A.J. with his daughter, chant sheets, and signs that would read "Students United" and "We Need Communism Now". Everything was to be in English and Spanish. We also made a half page announcement and shared it on social media.

On the morning of the event we had everything ready in the trunk of a car. Two of us were the first ones to get to the designated area (at one of the corners of our school) where we would start the march-protest. Soon small groups of 3 to 7 showed up. They hung

around for a few minutes, did not see more people congregating and then decided to leave.

We were unsuccessful in making this protest-march happen. Some football players showed up but were threatened to be kicked off the team by security school guards.

Some of us feel that it was too early in the morning and people were not willing to get up. Others think that it was a combination of things like fear and the feeling that students believe that no matter what they do they won't be heard. Others might be so used to cops killing innocent people.

**We are learning that what happens externally is not what determines the outcomes of things but rather what happens internally.**

For example, we could have gotten there a little bit earlier, all at the same time. Also, we should have taken everything out of the car and as soon as people started getting there start distributing all the materials; banner, signs, chants sheets, etc. This did not happen.

It's a question of taking leadership.

Next time we should meet up off campus at a different meeting point, take all of these lessons into account and actually make it happen.

The group continues to meet and read and discuss *Red Flag*. We pass it out to our friends and family. We are currently making plans to invite as many as we can to come to our May Day dinner as well as the May Day march. All looks promising.

As we are learning in practice how to mobilize the masses for communism in the face of racist police killings and other things we are getting a better understanding of what is required.

We and the youth around the world will rise to the occasion, we will take over the leadership and built a police-, money-, racism-, sexism- and class-free communist world based on the collective spirit of all, where we all will look after each other and take care of each other.

—Los Angeles (USA) high school student comrades

### Driving a Bus is Dangerous to Your Health

"I'm really going to miss M," a bus operator said of a co-worker who recently died. "He always had a smile for you. He spoke to everyone. Really, he was a good person. There aren't many like him."

Another bus operator commented, "It seems like every couple of weeks they post the picture of another person who died. I wonder what it is. Maybe the exhaust we breathe all the time?"

Actually, stress is a bigger threat to drivers than the exhaust.

A study of San Francisco MUNI drivers published in 2000 concluded that "professional drivers are second to none as an occupational group at risk for hypertension and ischemic heart disease, and that these diseases occur at a relatively young age... It is unusual for a mass transit operator to retire at term in any city." City bus drivers in the Netherlands, for example, retire on average at the age of 48, usually due to disability.

(See <https://unhealthywork.org/la-bus-driver-study/a-day-in-the-life-of-a-bus-driver/>)

Studies of bus drivers in Great Britain have linked their shorter life expectancy to being sedentary: sitting for 8 hours or more a day, with few breaks and little exercise. A Chicago research team compared drivers to other sedentary workers (like lawyers and executives) with longer life expectancy. They concluded that the low pay and lack of respect contributed to earlier deaths.

Driving a bus doesn't have to be like this! We're sure that bus operators who read *Red Flag* have plenty of ideas about how to make the work less stressful. In communist society they'll have the power to put these ideas into practice. And nobody will have to drive a bus all day, every day. We'll all do many different kinds of work.

Not enough of us are like M, but his example shows the potential in all of us. We can't help being influenced by capitalism's dog-eat-dog individualism, and the wage system that is its material basis. But we can and should all struggle against it. Mobilizing for communism helps us to do that. Communist society's mate-



Above: Santiago, Chile

Right: Milan, Italy



## INTERNATIONAL WORKING WOMEN'S DAY

rial basis will be "from each according to ability/commitment, to each according to need." That will bring out the best in all of us: our collectivity and our love for the international working class.

—LA comrade

### India: Comrade Sends Support

I am sending you 5000 rupees (\$65). We always associate with *Red Flag*. Whether it is economic cooperation or any kind of cooperation, we are together. We are in a financial difficulty now, otherwise, I would send 10 thousand rupees. Please let me know how to send you the money.

—A comrade

### Lenin and Communism Forever

Hundreds of millions of people in India were shown BJP and their fascist goons toppling a statue of Lenin in the Eastern state of Tripura. In a recently held Tripura state elections BJP defeated the revisionist, fake communist government ruled by CPM for the past 25 years.

Many of our supporters and friends were disheartened and felt angry. However, it is not a surprise to us. The once-mighty Communist Party of India, just like the old international communist movement, abandoned the path of communist revolution. This fatal mistake turned the old communist parties into political

parties that serve capitalism.

However, no force on the earth can stop the titanic battle that is raging between capitalists and the international working class. Our class enemy knows that communism will end their system of profit and wage slavery. They will do everything in their power to spread anti-communism.

Lenin's statue was toppled but they cannot topple or bury the ideas of communism. It is our duty, the duty of our party, to continue the march that started with Lenin and millions of others. It is their struggle, their determination and their advances in our understanding of science of revolution makes our path clear. Our party has resolved not to make the mistake of fighting for socialism but to create communist society.

Every day in India we witness small and big demonstrations of workers fed up with wage slavery. They are crying for communism. It is our urgent task to reach out to them. We are at the threshold of history where profound changes are about to happen that will topple capitalism with communist revolution. We will not rest until the last vestiges of capitalism are smashed forever. Our class will rise from every corner of the earth, undeterred by defeats, only to regroup and vanquish capitalism.

—Comrades in India



**Working-Class History: The Paris Commune of 1871 (Part 1)****MASSES TURN BOSSES' DEADLY WAR INTO FIGHT FOR WORKING-CLASS STATE POWER**

The Paris Commune, one of the most influential events in human history, arose from the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71). It marked the arrival of the working class on the world stage as the most revolutionary class in history. It opened the era of working class world revolution, laying the basis for the Russian and Chinese Revolutions.

The Paris Commune was the first time in history that the workers took power and used it to organize and run society in their own interest. Most important, their legacy teaches us that we must fight for communism, and nothing less.

The lessons of the Paris Commune are fundamental to the strategy of the International Communist Workers' Party: mobilizing the masses to build a classless world – without money, wage slavery, racism, sexism, xenophobia and imperialist wars. A communist world where the masses plan, produce and distribute everything to meet their collective needs.

**War creates material basis for revolution**

In the Franco-Prussian war, the Prussian rulers fought to forge a unified German nation at the expense of some French territory. The French capitalists were fighting to stop this and to maintain their hegemony over continental Europe.

This brutal war raged for about a year, with tens of thousands of casualties on both sides. The French army was decisively defeated. The French Emperor Napoleon III was taken prisoner by the Germans, and the German army besieged Paris.

The masses in Paris were mobilized. They sensed the danger and opportunity of the situation. They rejoiced at the fall of the hated Emperor, who had made their lives even more miserable by reorganizing Paris for the rich. Masses had been expelled from their dwellings

so the rulers could build wide boulevards. They hoped these would prevent the masses from constructing barricades as they had done in the insurrection of 1848.

In 1792, the rising French capitalists had overthrown the French nobility and declared a Republic. Now in 1871 the French capitalists declared a new Republic. They hoped it would confuse the masses and win them to support their bosses in a patriotic fervor.

A small communist movement that arose during the French Revolution was quickly smashed. But 1871 was not 1792. The working-class movement had matured tremendously. *The Communist Manifesto* (1848) had shown the way forward. Marx's International Workingmen's Association had members in Paris. They rose to the occasion, advocating arming the masses. And the masses went further: they fought to build the Commune.

**Daring to Storm Heaven**

The Parisian National Guard consisted of soldiers and workers, including some communists. They mobilized armed masses to defend Paris against the Prussian siege — and against the French government.

The French bourgeois rulers were holed up in the Versailles palace, outside Paris. They sent troops to take the cannons of the National Guard, which were key for the defense of Paris. The masses of workers and National Guard soldiers loyal to them fought off a secret early-morning attack. They called on the government's soldiers to refuse to fight for the capitalists.

A woman confronted the soldiers: "Are you going to fire on us? On your brothers? On our husbands? On our children?" A noncommissioned officer left the ranks, faced his company

and called out: "Turn your guns around and put your rifle butts in the air!" The soldiers obeyed.

After a fierce battle, the masses forced the capitalists' troops and their entire state apparatus to leave Paris and retreat to Versailles. The masses had won the day!

**Workers and Soldiers Take and Organize State Power**

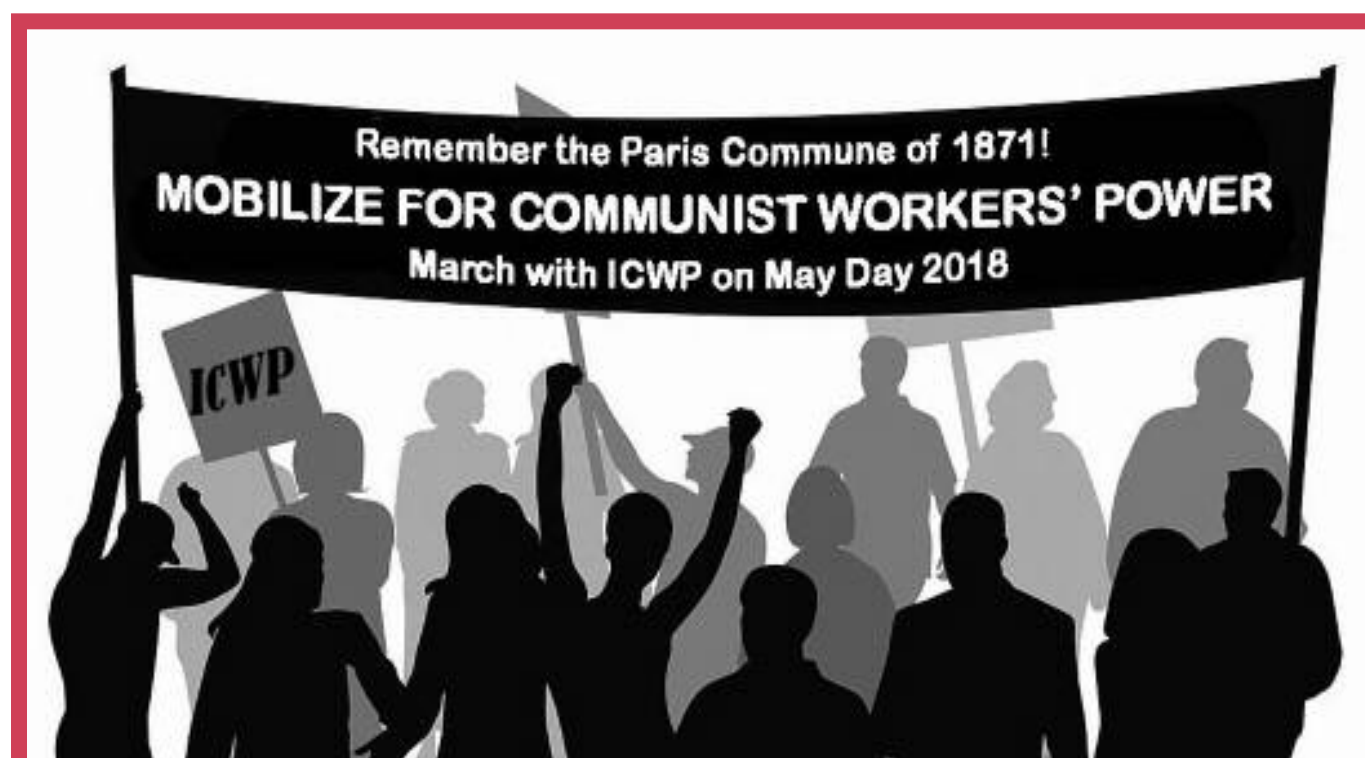
The Central Committee of the National Guard set up elections for the Commune. Each district elected representatives. Most were workers with little experience in politics but complete commitment to the Commune.

They organized the Commune Council and quickly mobilized the workers to re-establish all public services without bosses, administrators or supervisors. They collectively distributed food and coal to those who needed them at no cost.

"During the Commune's short reign not a single man woman child or old person was hungry, cold or homeless. It was amazing to see how...this government fought a horrible war for two months but chased famine from the hearths of the huge population which had no work for a year."

The masses helped make and carry out all the decisions through the Commune Council, section meetings and massive club meetings in the districts. Everyone was encouraged to participate. They changed all aspects of life—from production, to education to social relations to eliminating rent. The next article will describe more of their many achievements and also some shortcomings.

*Let's commemorate the Paris Commune this May Day by marching for communist workers' power!*



**JOIN WITH  
ICWP IN  
PLANNING FOR  
THE MAY DAY  
MARCHES**

**MAY DAY  
DINNERS:  
SEATTLE:  
APRIL 7, 7 pm  
LOS ANGELES:  
APRIL 21, 6 pm**