

RED FLAG

MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM



THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST WORKERS' PARTY * WWW.ICWPREDFLAG.ORG



**JULY 22, 2018
MASSES PROTEST
US BOSSES' RACIST
IMMIGRATION
POLICIES:
MORE THAN 500
CHILDREN STILL
SEPARATED FROM
THEIR PARENTS!**

Auto Worker Reports:

HOW I EXPLAIN COMMUNISM TO CO-WORKERS

SOUTH AFRICA—As we know, workers are learning everywhere about exploitation and the difficulties that they come across in the workplace.

So as we workers are sitting, maybe during lunchtime, we talk mostly about the things that affect us badly, like exploitation and problems we are facing at work. They complain because they get too little money and have other problems. I see this as my opportunity to introduce ICWP.

When my co-workers are complaining, I say, “OK guys, yeah, these things are happening, but there is a solution, there is a way of making things better, which is ICWP.”

And then they ask me, “What is it about?”

“It’s a movement for Communism,” I say, “where everyone would be equal and things would be much better than in this society we live. There is a solution from this era, capitalism, and that is Communism.

I try to draw Communism for them. They get interested and find a little hope.

The following day I come with the *Red Flag* and I distribute it to them. We read maybe two articles together. “You see,” I explain, “things are happening everywhere, people are being mistreated by their employers. So even if you vote for any other party, it will never change. As long as this capitalist system exists, the poor will suffer. There’s only one way: Mobilize the masses for Communism.”

I give them *Red Flag* to take home. The next day I ask them, “What did you notice about the paper?”

They say, “I saw an interesting article about this and that.”

Then I ask them, “Who wants to join ICWP? Who wants to take part in preparing a better tomorrow, a better future for the next generation so that they won’t have to experience what we are experiencing now?”

Then they give me their telephone numbers. Since I’m new, I can’t explain everything about ICWP. I take the numbers of those who want to join.

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FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM HEATS UP IN AEROSPACE FACTORY

SEATTLE (USA)—In August, temperatures here soared over 90° Fahrenheit (32° C). The humidity made it feel like almost 125°F (50° C). Life-threatening accidents spiked at Boeing’s fabrication division.

The company called stand-down meetings throughout the factories. These consisted of 10-minute management presentations to every crew.

The talks were short on facts and big on declarations of the company’s safety commitment. But one manager let slip a statistic that was not supposed to be presented. When the temperature rises over 85°F, accidents are 2 to 3 times more likely.

At one stand-down, workers responded by demanding easy access to water. We know that as dehydration sets in, both alertness and co-ordination suffer. This year the bosses decided not to maintain the coolers with bottled water that usually dot the factory floor.

The bosses said it “wasn’t hot enough” on day shift. When second-shift workers stood up for their day-shift comrades, the bosses cut their water as well. When the big boss was confronted, one worker described his response as “let them eat cake.”

Communism would never let this go on. The party would organize workers to deliver water to every work station. We would collectively struggle with everyone to drink plenty. If we had to keep a factory open during a heat wave because of an emergency, we would get help from others who don’t usually work there. Nobody would be forced to overdo it.

The boss at this particular crew meeting made a concession. Workers could leave their work areas to get water in other parts of the factory anytime. We did, spreading the word to other crews as we traveled the plant.

What the boss didn’t say was, “Take it easy, don’t overdo it, take frequent rest stops, and drink all the time.” Capitalism won’t even give lip-service to such basic commitments.

At another meeting, a friend said, “You know how the company spells

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Social Democracy Serves Capitalism

WE MUST MOBILIZE DIRECTLY FOR A COMMUNIST WORLD

Capitalism's crises are deepening. Many are seeking alternatives. Ruling-class elements, fearing the alienated masses, are promoting "democratic socialism" (or Social Democracy).

Not for the first time! We must learn important lessons from our history. One is Social Democracy's betrayal of the international working class. Another is the failure of the Communist International's "United Front Against Fascism" strategy.

This two-part article argues that we must rely on the working class to fight for a communist society: "From each according to ability and commitment, to each according to need."

Europe, 1912: War in the Balkans was about to explode into world war. The division of the world among the imperialist powers made that inevitable. The Second International was a coalition of social-democratic parties from nations on five continents. How would it respond?

There had been Second International conventions at Stuttgart and Copenhagen in 1907 and 1910. They had agreed (after heated debate) that war was caused by capitalist competition. It was bolstered by "national prejudices systematically cultivated in the interests of the ruling classes."

Workers should do everything possible to prevent the outbreak of war. If this failed, they should try to end it quickly. They should use the crises created by war "to hasten the breakdown of the predominance of the capitalist class."

The International took a sharper position in the Basel Manifesto of 1912. "Capitalist imperialism" was causing the conflicts breaking out everywhere. War "cannot be justified on the slightest pretext of being in the least in the interests of the people."

Workers must "consider it a crime to shoot each other down in the interest and for the profit of capitalism." The ruling classes were afraid of

workers' revolution. And they should be.

World War I broke out in 1914. Most of these socialist parties treacherously abandoned proletarian internationalism. They rushed to "defend the fatherland." They lied that socialists "had not decided" the question of war.

World socialism split in two at the 1915 Zimmerwald Conference.

On one side: Socialists whose parliamentary parties voted for war credits "for the purpose of plunder, carving up the world, acquiring markets, and enslaving nations." (Lenin)

On the other side: Russian Bolsheviks and others — like Liebknecht and Luxemburg in Germany — who upheld the call for revolutionary civil war. This "Zimmerwald Left" would become, in 1919, the core of the Third (Communist) International. Just two years later they led masses to take power in Russia.

This split between social democrats and communists exactly paralleled the long-simmering split between opportunism (trade-union reformism) and revolutionary politics. In both cases, social-democracy exposed itself as the junior partner of capitalism.

Social-democrats were happy to put forward radical-sounding slogans that helped the rulers distract the masses from revolution. And when the rulers needed to mobilize the masses for world war, the social-democrats openly substituted patriotism for class struggle.

Remember this as the reformist program of the new US social-democratic superstar Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez says: "We [the USA] can become stronger by ...saving our armed forces only for when they're truly needed."

The defeat of the German empire in 1919 opened the door to revolution. The German Naval Command ordered a desperate final battle with the British Navy. German sailors led revolts

in Wilhelmshaven and Kiel. Civil unrest spread and the emperor abdicated.

Leaders of the powerful Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) prevented the establishment of workers' power. They opposed the creation of councils (Soviets) of workers and soldiers like the ones that the Bolsheviks had created in Russia.

Instead, they continued their tradition of class collaboration and reformism. They created a parliamentary system that included German capitalists and their army.

The new Communist Party of Germany (KPD), inspired by the Bolshevik October Revolution, led a general strike and armed uprising in January 1919. Their newspaper was *Die Rote Fahne* ("The Red Flag").

Workers rose in Berlin, Hamburg, the Ruhr, Bavaria and many other parts of Germany. They were suppressed by anti-communist Freikorps (militia) thugs, in bloody street battles, on orders from the SPD leadership. Key KPD leaders were assassinated.

The KPD regrouped and grew as part of the Communist International. It became the largest communist party in Europe. In Germany, as elsewhere, the democratic socialists of the 2nd International fought bitterly against the communists of the 3rd International.

The second part of this article will discuss the deadly errors of the KPD and the Communist International. They retreated from revolution, opting instead for electoral and trade-union politics. They too sought coalitions with "lesser-evil" capitalist-imperialists in a "united front against fascism."

We have learned from their mistakes to mobilize masses for communism, now and always.

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But, I don't stop there. I invite them to come to a meeting. There, other comrades come who assist me in explaining more about ICWP and Communism. After that, they choose whether or not to join ICWP.

This is my way of mobilizing, of recruiting members to ICWP. In each and every conversation I have, I look at the person's pain, or what they are complaining about and use the opportunity to show that there is a better way of living, which is to live in a true communist society. I talk about ICWP and Communism anytime, anywhere. Hence people get interested every day.

I come across a lot of questions, like: When will communism take place? Who will be the president? How many people are needed? How do we vote?

I say that this is a movement. It might not happen today, or tomorrow, or the day after tomorrow. But what I am sure of is that if I die, I die knowing that I prepared a better tomorrow for the next generation because this is the movement.

I even use the example of how the African National Congress (ANC) started in 1912. No one

knew in 1912 that the ANC would win power by 1994, but they did. I use this example to try to explain to them that we don't need to vote. The only thing we need is to reveal the truth to the people, to alert them about the truth.

People think it's God who makes them suffer. But it's not like that. It is the system, the way it's built. It oppresses the people.

I try to answer those questions and if ever there's a question that I am a little confused about, I go and consult my comrades and then I come back with an answer.

It helps me a lot that I have a lot of enthusiasm for what I'm doing. Every time when I talk, I include it as part of the conversation so that the person doesn't feel threatened or shocked.

The most important part is to get feedback, go back to the people you gave the *Red Flag* to know and see what they think of it and what they learned from it. Don't just give them *Red Flag* and that's the end of it. Find out how they see *Red Flag*.

Because the main aim whenever you are giving *Red Flag* is the results. Maybe you give ten *Red Flags*. Maybe two of them will give you their telephone numbers. This is the main thing that is important. So we must focus on the results of giving the *Red Flag*, which is the quality, comrades.



JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST WORKERS' PARTY
WWW.ICWPREDFLAG.ORG — (310) 913-9704
E-MAIL: ICWP@ANONYMOUSSPEECH.COM
TWITTER @RedFlagBandera
BLOG: ICWPWEB.WORDPRESS.COM/
WRITE TO: P.M.B. 362
3006 S. VERMONT AVE., LOS ANGELES, CA 90007, USA

El Salvador: New Front in US-China Conflict

ORGANIZE FOR COMMUNISM IN THE FACTORIES

EL SALVADOR, August 29 – President Cerén of El Salvador officially announced the beginning of diplomatic relations with the People’s Republic of China. The Chinese also hailed this development. The country is becoming another disputed terrain of sharpening inter-imperialist rivalry.

This measure goes beyond an electoral strategy (as stated by the right). It is no turn to the left by the fmln’s leaders are trying to tell their militants. China is an imperialist power. The decision to open diplomatic and economic relations with them is capitalism’s logic, logic that the fmln never intended to abandon.

The struggle between the Chinese and US bosses is the principal contradiction in world capitalism. In the constant quest to monopolize markets and lower production costs, capitalists and their imperialist states seek the best geopolitical strategies to combat their rivals. The end result is war.

The next day, the US ambassador in El Salvador (Manes) called China’s expansion “alarming.”

“It is a strategic point and they are looking to grow here, not only economically, but also militarily,” he said.

His statements are both laughable and hypocritical. The US has been the empire that historically has dominated and massacred the Central American region.

But the Chinese interest is a reality. Chinese

capitalists have offered to sell weapons to the Salvadoran army. Although the Minister of Defense has declared publicly that this is not possible, a relationship with China’s armed forces already exists.

Chinese capital has an interest in El Salvador’s La Union port. It’s useful to unload their containers and change their plates for those of El Salvador to avoid paying Trump’s tariffs.

Special Economic Zones: Communist organizing is our only hope.

The most ambitious projects of the Salvadoran government and Chinese capital are the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ).

In July, the fmln economic cabinet proposed EEZ in 26 municipalities in the eastern part of the country. There, they intend to install a legal framework different from the rest of the country, eliminating many taxes and regulations. This is to encourage foreign capitalists to exploit the natural resources and the working class with complete freedom.

The fmln has presented this to its militants as a “development opportunity.” They justify the EEZ by saying that the capital would be mainly Chinese, not from the US. But this will only aid the capitalists!

Many find it inconceivable that a leftist party would propose a law so openly capitalist. But it’s not that the fmln and its leadership are “traitors” or “sellouts.” Their policies are consequences of the economic and philosophical pragmatism that

has permeated the left worldwide. China’s Xi Jinping leads this ideological trend.

The electoral left, a remnant of the old communist movement, justifies these measures as “strengthening the productive forces” and creating “abun-

dance” to advance socialism.

It is precisely this line of stages that has kept humanity from moving towards communism. Maintaining the social relations of capitalist production, the market economy and money— socialism is state capitalism.

A new way of producing and living here and now!

The communist work ICWP has developed in the maquilas is now even more important. Building ICWP among workers and students will win masses to fight for communist revolution.

Recently we discussed this situation. The men and women worker comrades know that they must play a fundamental role in raising awareness among the super-exploited masses that will work in the EEZ. Their experience will help us mobilize more workers for Communism and develop the leadership that each one can give.

The social and environmental crisis confronting the vast majority of humanity makes urgent a revolutionary change in the way of producing and consuming everywhere. An economic and cultural revolution will be possible with the organization of a massive and international party, ICWP.

The working class today is larger than ever. In communism, we can use technology and industry to organize production to meet the most fundamental needs of the masses, not for the market. Workers will run production to meet our needs in the safest, healthiest way possible.

It is possible and urgent to break with the logic of capital in order to save the earth and the species that inhabit it. The capitalism we face requires a struggle like never before:

An international ICWP, international strikes, international sharing of knowledge and experiences, raising communist awareness among the masses to build collectives and including them in the fundamental discussions of the party and the new society.

It’s a fight against the clock. There’s no time to lose.



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safety? S-C-H-E-D-U-L-E!” Get more parts out so the company can make more profits. Communism will never put our lives at risk for profit. In communism there won’t be any profits – or any money.

One accident was mentioned. A worker fell from an 8-foot ladder. We didn’t get the whole story.

But another worker filled in the details. His coworker had complained to a supervisor ten minutes earlier. The ladder was uncertified. The injured young worker shouldn’t have been on it with no training. When the boss refused to do anything, the coworker went to the safety monitor. Same story!

Communism will put our safety in the hands of workers, not a boss or some made-for-show safety monitor.

Lasting Effects of Communist Debates

As we fanned out in search of water, the debates about communism spread also.

Many recalled the death of farmworker Silva Ibarra last August. Quite a few drew parallels.

The farm bosses forced Silva to continue working even as he got sicker during similar weather. His fellow workers wildcatted. *Red Flag* (Volume 8 # 10) described our communist

response. Friends in the plant helped build support.

Not coincidentally, the question of communist healthcare came up, as it had last summer. Once again, we talked about barefoot doctors in China after their revolution. This time we concentrated on what they did in the factories during the Cultural Revolution.

Barefoot doctors received formal medical training part of the year. The rest of the time they worked on the line with everyone else. They focused on mobilizing workers to guarantee preventive medicine. No made-for-show safety monitors and vacuous safety stand-down meetings.

Close party friends agreed this was the best system. But they worried they couldn’t win others to this position. One guy lamented, “I can’t understand why workers would vote against their own best interests.” He was referring to “Medicare for All.”

He knew communist healthcare was the solution, not Medicare for All. “But, we aren’t there yet,” was his final argument. We’d be a lot closer if he joined the party.



Farmworkers strike in Sumas, Washington, August 2017 More pictures on the blog: icwpweb.wordpress.com

Soon smoke from nearby forest fires swept in. It ruined the air but lowered the temperature. The actions slowed down as they often do.

The many discussions about communism and the potential to win others, sparked by this struggle, will contribute to lasting change: growing communist consciousness and commitment among Boeing workers.

“Land Expropriation Without Compensation”

COMMUNIST REVOLUTION WILL EXPROPRIATE ALL CAPITALISTS AND END EXPLOITATION

OUTH AFRICA – “Expropriation of land without compensation” dominates the political spectrum in South Africa, with general elections less than a year away. More than 100 years ago blacks in South Africa were forcefully removed from their land—without compensation. This is the land that the political parties now want to expropriate.

Almost all the political parties are singing the same song because it is what the mass seems to dance to. But they differ on how to go about expropriating the land. The front runners are the ruling party (African National Congress) and the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) led by the popular Julius Malema.

The EFF wants the constitution to be amended to allow the expropriation of land without compensation. The Ruling party originally agreed on amending the constitution. But in May they held a ‘land summit’ in which they came back with a remix of the song they sang before. They came back saying that the constitution had to be used without amendment for “expropriation without compensation.”

Section 25 subsection 2 of the constitution states that “Property may be expropriated only in terms of general application (a) for a public interest; and (b) subject to compensation, the amount of which time and manner of payment of which have either been agreed to by those affected or decided or approved by a court.” So, what made the ANC come up with a desperate move that is not consistent with the constitution?

The masses now realize that to amend a constitution is a long process. The elections will

come and pass before the constitution is amended. The ruling ANC knows the masses will have the hope that expropriation without compensation will happen soon since they are telling people the law is already there. With that they hope to win the masses for the general elections.

How will the land be distributed? Who will be the actual owners? Who will actually benefit?

The politicians say that the land must be distributed equally among the citizens of South Africa. They say that the masses will be the owners of the land and the state will be the custodian of the land. It must not be sold to foreign nationals.

If the title deeds of my property are kept by the state and the state dictates terms on which I must sell my property, that is not ownership. It means I am just a lessee, not the owner.

The current system (Capitalism) benefits the bosses, not the masses. The lessee will require capital to run the land. The state says that they will give out ‘soft loans’ to the people running the land. But even a ‘soft’ loan is paid back with interest. So those who give out loans will have a market which is fully dependent on them.

They say that there will be land for residential use, for agricultural use and commercial use. A business is not a business if it does not produce profit.

Profit is not derived selling products on the market. It is made from the factory by lowering costs of production. That is done by paying those who produce the goods less than the value they produce. What is done in the market is extraction of the profit.

This proves that expropriation of land without compensation does not benefit the masses but the bosses together with their servants, which the politicians are.

In a communist society, land, factories and all means of production will be controlled by the masses. They will collectively decide on what to do with them and how to run it for their benefit.

In this classless society the masses will not produce exchange value because money will not exist. The masses will not produce for profit but for their needs. That means there will be no exploitation. There will be no unemployment which results in poverty and crime. To fight for this classless society is for us to mobilize the masses and recruit them to join International Communist Workers’ Party (ICWP).

Why would the President of the United States tweet an outrageous lie about “large scale killing of farmers” (white) in South Africa? Is he that ignorant? Is he demented? Was he trying to distract attention from the legal troubles of his cronies Manafort and Cohen?

Who knows? Who cares?

What we do know is that Trump was echoing a major theme of international white supremacy: that white people are “endangered.” He was retailing the pro-Apartheid propaganda of the South African far-right fringe. As he did after Charlottesville, he was egging on a fascist movement – in the US as well as South Africa and elsewhere – that advocates and organizes race war.

What we do know is that rotten decaying capitalist imperialism is a breeding ground for these racist maggots.

We know that capitalism throughout its sordid history has relied on racism to divide the working class and reap super-profits through racist super-exploitation.

We know that capitalist imperialism has always relied on racism to mobilize some workers to suppress and kill members of their global working-class family for the sake of the bosses’ bloody profit empire.

And we know that communism can unite workers of every color and description into the revolutionary force that can smash this racist system.

Workers mobilized for communism can build a world without racism, without race, without nations or borders. A world of cooperation and sharing. The communist world we need.

COMMUNISM WILL ABOLISH PRIVATE PROPERTY

Land “ownership” was unknown in southern Africa until the 17th century. The people who lived there were hunters or herders. They recognized communal rights to control access to resources (such as water holes) but the land was not something to be “owned” like tools or animals.

Then the Dutch imperialists arrived. They fought to privatize the land – and had the guns to do it. Indigenous African people (the Khoikhoi) fought back. But they were unable to maintain access to grazing lands for their herds. Increasingly they were pushed further inland, massacred or forced into servitude. This was the First War of Dispossession.

Anti-colonialist wars and rebellions continued into the 19th century. By then, Dutch and British imperialists were fighting for domination. They agreed, however, on the capitalist model of private land ownership. Slaves and Khoikhoi labourers continued to rise up against their owners and bosses. Imperialists and their local puppets granted land to some indigenous people in strategic areas, hoping to use them as a buffer zone.

In the 6th - 8th Wars of Dispossession (1834-35, 1846-47, 1856-57) the AmaXhosa, AmaNdebele and AmaZulu people were defeated. They lost their means of production and subsistence. Their land was expropriated (without compensation). They, too, were expelled or forced into servitude.

The Natives Land Act (1913) officially limited black South African ownership to about 7% of the farmland. The rest – including the most fertile areas – was reserved for the whites, who were under 20% of the population. This law prohibited the sale of territory in white areas to Blacks and vice versa. It remained in effect until 1994. Even today, whites (now 8% of the population) own 72% of the farmland.

Unlike socialists, we communists don’t fight for a system of “state ownership.” In socialism, workers still have to sell their labor power to the “state capitalists” for wages. Communism will abolish property, public as well as private. In communism, land and other resources will be used and shared – but not “owned.”

People lived like that – in southern Africa and worldwide – for tens of thousands of years. Some communities, like the Khoi-San, lived like that into the 20th century.

The communism of the future will be different mainly because the masses will be politically conscious. They will study and use science to shape our collective future.

Masses will be committed to preventing the re-emergence of class society. We will continue to mobilize for communism to strengthen our global family and build the world we need.



WE ARE THE MANY, THEY ARE THE FEW

Democracy is the political form of commodity production. Once land-owning, aristocratic and peasant societies disintegrated, the emerging dominant classes needed a new ideology, or set of ideas, to bind society together. With the peasants freed from obligatory custom and servitude, the church's appeal and traditions waned in influence. Democracy appeared to be an advance.

However, whether it is liberal or authoritarian, democracy is nothing but the management of the capitalist mode of production. It creates an overarching idea that dismisses or pushes off to the margins any idea of exploitation. Its key concept that the "citizen" or the "people" are all equal is nothing but a fiction.

It's an important fiction that buries the reality of class warfare. It claims a political equality between, say, a Jeff Bezos, the billionaire owner of Amazon, and the thousands of minimum wage workers who create his wealth working for him, together with the millions who are desperate for wage work and so create a downward pressure on wage levels.

Look at that scenario and ask yourself how useful is the concept "We the people..." The revolution we are building starts, instead, by arguing "We the exploited."

Democracy is linked to commodity production in the way it explains our relationship to the larger society: One buyer: One seller. One person: one vote. One fare: One passenger.

We vote like we pay the bills - alone, isolated and weak or one person up against powerful impersonal forces such as the money market and the national government.

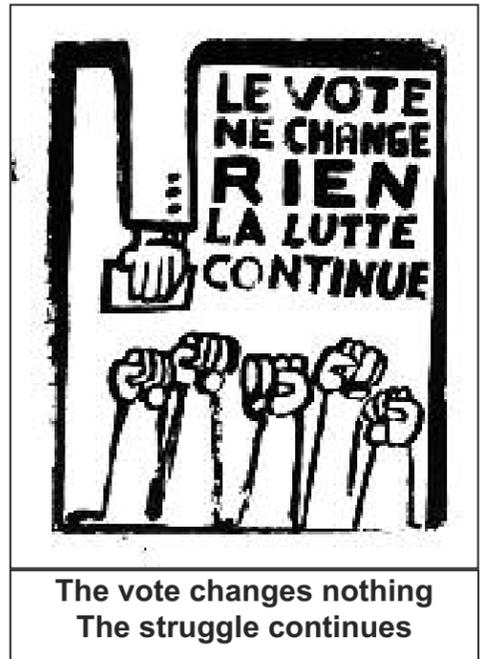
When we draw the curtain to cast our ballot we reject—or draw the curtain on—solidarity, the masses, the collective power of the working class. For a tiny ruling elite to rule over the masses of proletarians they must keep us divided, intimidated, and unaware of our own strength as a united class. Racism, sexism, patriotism and xenophobia are important weapons in the bosses' arsenal. So is the ballot box.

It is easy to underestimate the power of the ballot box. Look at May 68 - a mass spontaneous worker student movement that paralyzed the might

of French capital only to collapse at the ballot box. The slogan *Le vote ne change rien* (The vote changes nothing) was meant to tell the masses that they needed revolution, not voting for reforms. But the truth is that diverting the movement into electoral politics defeated the biggest uprising in a fully industrialized country in contemporary times. The ballot box was the final bullet in the defeat of the uprising.

So the vote is not neutral—it actively sabotages the revolutionary movement of the masses. In El Salvador, after the 1992 Peace Treaty, the guerrillas, instead of fighting for power, became an electoral party. So, too, in South Africa. The ANC dissolved its revolutionary arm, the Spear of the Nation, in 1994 when it stood for election. It now is the party, as is the FMLN in El Salvador, which administers capitalism.

Our aim is to build the revolutionary movement that starts with the slogan "We the exploited," that builds the solidarity and trust that can't be built behind the curtains of a ballot box. This movement starts with fighting back against every capitalist attack with the understanding that we must put an end to this system. It starts with one person giving a fellow worker or student, a family member, or another passenger on the bus a communist leaflet or the latest edition of this newspaper. That's the daily work of building the fight for a better world, which over time will create the conditions for the working class to seize power and build the communist world we need.



The vote changes nothing
The struggle continues

LETTERS

LETTERS

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CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

Communism will do away with money and buying and selling of any kind of work

In a church-affiliated book group, discussion Vitale's *An End to Policing*, the topic at the last meeting was the criminalization of sex work. The author advocates decriminalizing sex work. He cites the examples of the Netherlands and rural Nevada where prostitution is legal and regulated by the state. He concludes that this is a useful reform. Police should not be in the business of arresting prostitutes and making criminals out of people who are merely trying to earn a living.

Vitale quotes women who say that they can make a lot more money in this way than working at McDonalds, that this is not an activity that hurts anyone else, and that they should be allowed to earn a living however they choose.

The woman leading the discussion agree. She emphasized that the deeply racist and anti-working-class nature of the entire criminal injustice system means that criminalizing sex work is another way of victimizing women of color.

Another woman condemned the sexism of men who avail themselves of prostitutes and the hypocrisy of a state that arrests the prostitutes but not the johns.

A man was offended by the buying and selling of what should be a deeply meaningful expression of a sacred personal relationship.

I mentioned Alexandra Kollantai's *Love of Worker Bees*, particularly the short story "Sisters." The author discusses the resurgence of prostitution during the New Economic Policy in the 1920s in the Soviet Union. This retreat from the revolutionary policies of the Bolsheviks during the war communism of the Civil War produced conditions where women lost their jobs. If they didn't have a husband to support them, they were reduced to begging or prostitu-

tion.

More profoundly, however, this cries out for the elimination of money and the buying and selling of any kind of labor. Although I have never been a sex worker, I have been desperate enough to sell my blood for \$5 a pint, and I have sold my labor power in many jobs. Capitalism means that to survive, proletarians who have nothing but their labor power or their bodies to sell must sell whatever they can. Most of us sell our labor power. Some of us sell our blood or, even more intimately, the sex act. But it is all alienating.

We are fighting for a world where no labor is alienated—where we work and produce together for the good of all, and share the fruits of our labor to satisfy human need. This communist world will free us to build and nurture deeply satisfying human relationships, including, but not limited to, intimate and noncoercive sexual relationships.

—West Coast (US) Comrade

Party collectives can help with personal relationships

I recently spoke with a friend about the relationships we have as couples. She is divorced, with a daughter. There was infidelity in her relationship. The process hurt her emotionally and she started going to a therapist. In the discussion we commented that men are usually less harshly judged for infidelity than women.

She commented that one of her friends has a wide circle of friends, all of whom have been unfaithful. Therefore, she should not worry. However, she acknowledged that this is a difficult process. She commented that I should go to the therapist because she knows something about my relationships. I looked at her, surprised. She said that in first-world countries people go to the therapist and it is normal.

At that moment I thought that with the salary

I have, either I feed myself or go to the therapist. I answered that maybe, instead of going to a therapist, we should be able to listen to each other and make dialectical analyses about what happens in our relationships as a couple. I said that we are writing a pamphlet about sexism and something that we agree with her about is that if people no longer want to continue a relationship for different reasons, they do not have to continue with their partner.

But maybe this isn't so simple. We must be objective in giving opinions. On our road to a society where people can develop skills to strengthen personal relationships, communists don't have to divide our life into our political and our personal life. We are both; we are communists. In communism, starting now, collectives will function like therapists who will be educated with communist principles.

With a young comrade who re-joined the party, we analyzed that therapists are sometimes biased by capitalist education (religion, political affinity, morality, etc.) and their analyses in any case are not so politically useful. There is still much to analyze about personal relationships, but when we share them with our collectives, we can make more progress.

Join ICWP

—Comrade in Mexico



Editorial note: The letters on this page, along with the page 1 article from Seattle, are part of an ongoing discussion about communist class struggle and how to organize it. We invite readers -- and especially collectives -- to read and talk about them and contribute more letters and articles. We especially welcome contributions based on on-the-job communist work.

Imagine this scenario:

A bus passenger in a wheelchair is frustrated. Once again, the ramp he needs doesn't work. He feels abandoned. Worse, as it takes time to try and cycle the equipment, he's in the unwanted position of causing delays in other peoples' busy schedules. He'll be late to work, too.

Take the driver, for example. Her whole self-image is as a person who is always ready to lend a helping hand. Yet, despite herself, she's irritated not just at the ramp that's not working, that has caused many drivers to get injured, but at the wheelchair passenger himself who, just by showing up, caused all this.

And the other passenger on the bus has similar feelings. A mechanical mal-function has brought three strangers together and, at the same time, pushed them away from each other. The other passenger, a communist, goes back to reading *Red Flag*

A letter argues that "Fighting for Wheelchair ramps that work" is a reformist demand. It goes on to argue that we must refuse to make any kind of material or political demands on the capitalist rulers. He liked that formula when we came out with it, but now he thinks it steers us away from seeing the possibilities of struggle.

Not fighting to make the wheelchair ramps work leaves the workers disrupted, alienated and subjected to the needs of capital. We've got to deal with capitalism, he thinks to himself, because it deals with us ...every day. He begins to work out a leaflet ...

"As long as we work for wages, we'll create capital (enormous amounts of money) for the capitalist elite. We create it: they own or control it! And they do with it what they want. They throw \$6 trillion at wars in the Middle East (since 2001) but claim they're broke when it comes to maintaining wheelchair ramps.

"One way or another capital (through wages, corporations or their cops) tries to control our lives, but it can't. It can't control our will to build a world that revolves around the needs of people.

"Among many other things, we need wheelchair ramps that work! Drivers and passengers -- with and without disabilities - need to come together. We need a world where our disabled brothers and sisters are just as mobile as the rest of us.

"Above all, we need a world where all our comrades, whether or not they're in wheelchairs, can attend the local club meetings our party (ICWP) needs. We have to mobilize the masses to build the revolution for a communist share-and-share-alike world we all need."

"Yes," he says to himself, "I'll take this idea to my next club meeting."

—Bus rider

An air conditioning scenario

Lately there's been discussion about how or whether ICWP engages in the day-to-day class struggles with the bosses. The issue came up as a result of the story about wheelchair lifts on the MTA buses. But to avoid irrelevant details I'd like to offer a hypothetical (made up) scenario.

Imagine you work in a sweatshop and you're literally sweating. There's a heatwave and it's 90°F in the plant. There's air conditioning installed but the boss won't turn it on because he doesn't want to spend the money.

We're all at our wits end and some coworkers with health problems are in real trouble. People are talking about doing something. Some of them know you're in ICWP and they come to you looking for leadership. Are you really going to limit yourself to giving out *Red Flag* and telling them that under communism, there will be air conditioning? Of course not.

Now let's look at another extreme. Your union rep is a big fan of the Democratic party and tells everyone that the long-term solution is new health and safety laws that his candidate wants to put on the books. Will you join him in campaigning for his candidate and these laws? Of course not, trying to reform the system is futile.

I'd suggest the following rule of thumb. We can -- if we choose to -- fight for demands that are of clear and immediate benefit to workers. Like turning on the air conditioning or refusing to operate special trains for racist groups. I would rather call these "concessions", not "reforms". In fact, it's strange to consider switching on the air conditioning a "reform" of the capitalist system.

However, in fighting for these concessions we must not forget to distribute *Red Flags*. And to point out that under communism, there will be air conditioning.

—Northern Comrade

Mobilizing the Masses for Communism should be a continuous process.

Presently, it means not only taking communist ideas to the masses but simultaneously organizing communist class struggle directly for communist revolution.

The old communist movement's experience and ours, however, have been to organize reformist class struggles, using these to mobilize the masses for socialism or communism.

How do we break this cycle? What is communist class struggle? It might be useful to first answer another question. What is the aim of communist class struggle anyway? I would say it is to build the Party and a base for communist ideas among the masses, now, tomorrow and always. Without the Party we can't organize a communist revolution.

Our comrades in South Africa are very good

at mobilizing for communism. They are getting better at recruiting, like in the mines and in the auto industry. Now, to organize big things, like political strikes against capitalism and for communism, among miners and autoworkers, they need a third ingredient: communist class struggle.

Our class's first reaction against capitalist attacks is to fight for reforms. We can't change this overnight. If, for example, there was an accident in the mines or auto plants and some workers got injured or died, workers might strike calling for safer working conditions.

We would participate in the struggle, criticizing it as reformist -- a deadly trap for communists and workers alike. We would call for more advanced political actions like a political strike against capitalism and for communism to inspire workers everywhere to fight directly for communism.

Say we can't win the workers to do this because only a handful agrees with us. What do we do next? Do nothing because we already spread our communist ideas massively through our paper and leaflets? No! We organize communist class struggle.

Our club calls a meeting of its members and base. We agree that the smallness of our Party and its communist base among these workers prevent us from influencing events the way we need to.

We would then center the discussion on how to improve this. We would invite our friends there to join the Party. Some may join. Others may not but we get them all, members and friends, to promise to distribute more papers and invite other workers to the next meeting. We would make careful plans to follow up these decisions and to guarantee plenty of communist socializing with as many workers as possible.

Then we would write an article for *Red Flag* detailing what we did and calling on Party members to do likewise when possible. These apparently small steps would build the Party, build a network to distribute *Red Flag* under all conditions, and spread communist ideas massively. They are the building blocks for actions like political strikes for communism and eventually armed insurrection. They would make it possible for the masses not only to grip communist ideas but to turn them into a material force capable of transforming the world.

—a Comrade in Los Angeles, CA



NEW! ICWPBLOG! ICWPWEB.WORDPRESS.COM THE ICWP BLOG IS UP AND RUNNING!

The blog articles and opinion pieces on current events, letters from readers, longer pieces that are not (yet) in *Red Flag*. New posts several times a week so it's always up to date. It's not a substitute for *Red Flag*, but a supplement.

Read it, and contribute as well. You don't have to be an ICWP member to write for the blog. Your opinions are welcome, even your criticisms. As long as they are respectful, relevant and truthful, the blog is for you. .

US Bombs Are Killing Our Children

COMMUNIST REVOLUTION: A LIFE-AND-DEATH STRUGGLE

August 9: Forty Yemeni boys and eleven adults on a school bus were killed by a laser-guided Lockheed Martin bomb. Two weeks later, twenty-six more Yemeni children and four adult civilians killed by US bombs in Saudi air-strikes.

Maybe you've heard recently about the humanitarian disaster in Yemen on mainstream (capitalist) US media. It's been going on for three years. You probably didn't hear when the Israeli government, also using US bombs, massacred over 500 children in Gaza four years ago.

Why now? Why are the US media and some politicians pushing back against US-supported Saudi war crimes enabled by multi-billion\$\$ US arms deals in both the Obama and the Trump administrations?

Part of the answer is an August 28 UN report accusing both sides in the Yemeni civil war – but especially the Saudi-led coalition – of war crimes.

Another part is that US imperialism benefits more from instability in Yemen than it would

from a decisive Saudi victory. Its Chinese competitors are strengthening ties with the Saudi rulers. They're the ones that stand to gain the most from a stabilized Yemen.

As we wrote last December, a major faction within US imperialism seems ready to leave Saudi Arabia (and Yemen) to the Chinese. They'd rather fight them elsewhere. See icwpredflag.org/wp/wordpress/volume-8-number-16/imperialist-war-capitalist-crisis-in-yemen/

Meanwhile, Yemeni children and adults die. They die from bombs. They die from starvation. They die from cholera and other preventable diseases. In short, they die from capitalism. And it's not just in Yemen.



The answer, as we said then, isn't another "peace" movement. It's to join and build the International Communist Workers' Party.

Why NOT now? Contribute in whatever way you can to hasten the end of this capitalist hell on earth. Do your part to mobilize for a communist future for all our children everywhere!

LETTERS

We Can Lead Ourselves!

This is the writing of a worker who very recently joined ICWP

A secret government refers to a group of Elites (Capitalists) who have as their only agenda a quest for world power. They are in a collective shadow that runs behind official governments. Their main agenda is aimed at mass control. These humans think nothing of betraying the masses, seeing them as lesser and expendable.

They compete with other capitalists all over the world to take what they desire from the masses. They are dangerous people with many resources, but they are a minority.

If we don't acknowledge them and posture ourselves in relation to them, we will become subjects of mind control and lose the little "freedom" we presently have. We will suffer and the earth will fall under our watch.

Hence they don't want the masses to be in-

LETTERS

LETTERS

formed and to realize what we are really capable of doing. So they prefer to keep the masses distracted with what is "more important" and manipulate us on a mass level.

The mainstream programs tell us that everywhere we are helpless and victimized by forces beyond our control. They say that the world is a harsh, cruel place of limited resources for which we must compete, sacrifice ourselves, serve others, work hard, make more, buy more, need more, compete and push.

They keep us distracted, and will create all sorts of political, economic, and environmental strategies aimed at controversy so that the masses do not have time to notice that information on many things is being withheld and misrepresented.

We don't need these leaders! We can lead ourselves! There's no safety in ignorance—only ignorance. Safety comes from awareness and making collective decisions/Choices.

CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

Fight for a Communist World Without Borders

The revolutionary working class, intellectuals and other social elements are the only classes and strata of society world-wide that have as its mission the development of international, intercultural, interethnic, and cross gender solidarity in the struggle to build communism. Why? Because the goal of communism can only be based on the organic solidarity between human beings.

The international outpouring of support for the immigrant youth that have been kidnapped and taken hostage in acts of child abuse and terrorism by the United States government is a significant and courageous act of the revolutionary working class, intellectuals and other social elements. The righteous anger of broad sections of society internationally has created the basis for solidarity. As well, openings exist in social space now to discuss the radical solution of working class revolution as the first step to concretely end the horror of abuse of people migrating to another land that exists in the United States, some European nations, etc.

We must absolutely support the rights of immigrant parents to be freed from the captivity of ICE detention centers. We must demand the immediate reunification of the families and their being granted permanent residency (Green Cards) in the United States. This is justice and is the only way forward.

The International Communist Worker' Party is building an international organization of workers, students, immigrants, soldiers, prisoners, and youth to lead the fight against imperialism, based on the working class. ICWP needs you to step up and help to build a international movement to end all class and social oppression. This is the only way forward for justice for immigrant families.

—Internationalist Comrade



This secret government works "behind the scenes" while a "puppet government" maintains the illusion of "freedom" of the masses by running campaigns of disinformation and propaganda where the masses are led to believe that these policies are in the best interest of the masses.

Long live Communism! We have a world to WIN!

—Comrade in South Africa

PRISON STRIKE from page 8

Other organizations are calling for prison abolition. According to the *Nation Magazine*, they "call for a vision of a society where housing, education, and health care are met, allowing people to live safe and fulfilled lives without the need for prisons." They propose a moratorium on prison construction, restorative justice, and an

end to policing.

Prison abolition attracts many people who share our ideals of a just society, but who fail to understand that this will require a revolution. Capitalism is based on profit, squeezed from the labor of our class. It requires the racist and sexist division of the working class, It requires a police force to keep power and control in the hands of the few while condemning millions of our class

around the world to poverty, homelessness, inadequate health care and extreme alienation.

On the other hand, capitalism also brings us together on the job, in our schools, and in our communities, in prisons and barracks, where we can organize to overthrow them. We must take advantage of this potential, and mobilize the masses in prison and out for revolution and to build a communist society.

Movie Review

“SORRY TO BOTHER YOU” IS A RULING-CLASS TROJAN HORSE

Alert: “Sorry to Bother You,” hailed as a “devastating take-down of capitalism” and “a deranged anti-capitalist romp” is in fact a ruling-class Trojan Horse. We must continue our fight for Communism.

This hit movie takes place in present day Oakland, USA. The movie centers on a young African American, Cassius Green, who is so impoverished that he lives with his girlfriend Detroit in the garage of his equally desperate uncle. Cassius drives a car so wretched that he operates the windshield wipers by tugging strings threaded through the windows and buys gas 40 cents at a time.

Cassius gets a job at an Oakland telemarketing company, Regal View. After several customers hang up on him, Cassius gets some advice from an older African-American co-worker, Langston, who advises him to use his white voice which will make him “sound, breezy, carefree like you don’t really need the money. It’s what white people think they’re supposed to sound like”.

Cassius rides his “white” voice to the top floor where “Power Callers” work. Cassius finds himself torn between social mobility and union organizing by a coworker and his girlfriend, Detroit. When the Regal View telemarketers strike for better pay and working conditions, Cassius scabs, breaks their picket line, and soon loses his friends, Detroit, and his dignity.

WARNING: SPOILER ALERT

Cassius’ success as a Power Caller gets him invited to join Regal View’s biggest client, Worry Free, where workers are housed, fed, and entertained in a factory-like setting.

The Worry Free CEO invites Cassius to an exclusive party in a mansion, where he discovers that Worry Free is engaging in a perverse fusion of horses and humans, equisapiens, who are genetically modified to be bigger and stronger workers.

In the final scene Cassius, now an equisapien, smashes the door of the Worry Free CEO. Workers fighting the corporation?

Equisapiens serve as an allegory with multiple meanings. Warped faces of exploited workers, represent dehumanization at the hands of a corporate giant like Worry Free and the evils of unchecked capitalism.

This film’s writer-director is Boots Riley, leader of the hip-hop group The Coup. The film has been widely distributed in the US and featured in a four-page article, “How Boots Riley Infiltrated Hollywood” in the May 27, 2018 *New York Times (NYT) Magazine*. The article states that Riley has been a self-described Communist since his teens when he joined the Progressive Labor Party.

What are the convictions of this self-described Communist? In the *NYT* article, Riley says that

he aims “to help build a mass movement that can use withholding of labor as a strategy for social change.”

What is that social change? The *NYT* article lists his involvement in some political/social movements: Palestinian rights, Occupy, and Oakland renters’ protests against evictions. Riley says nothing in the article about getting rid of capitalism, the source of the injustices and miseries depicted in his film. The activism and film of this self-described Communist actually support reforming capitalism and thereby maintaining it. No fight for Communism here.

One reviewer has described “Sorry to Bother You:” as “Boots Riley’s Trojan Horseplay.” A Trojan Horse is something that seems to be good but hides something bad. This movie is a Trojan Horse because it depicts the poverty, dehumanization, and degeneracy of capitalism but does not cite the cause of these miseries, capitalism.

“Sorry to Bother You” is a satire. Satire uses humor to expose the shortcomings and abuses of corporations, government, and society. It is often used to effect political or social change. This film graphically exposes the failures and abuses of capitalism but doesn’t present the only clear change/solution to ending them: mobilizing the masses for communism.

US: Nationwide Prison Strike

COMMUNISM WILL GET RID OF COPS AND PRISONS

AUGUST 28—Prisoners across the US are on strike against the racist and inhuman conditions they face in the largest penal system in the world. Millions of men, women and children in the US are locked up—overwhelmingly black, latin/as and/or poor. At any given time, at least 80,000 people are subjected to the torture of solitary confinement.

The spark that precipitated the strike was a prison riot on April 15 which, according to one prisoners’ group, was caused by “the greed wrought by mass incarceration, and a lack of respect for human life that is embedded in our nation’s penal ideology.” It has spread nationwide, beginning on Aug. 21, the anniversary of a 1971 prison rebellion in San Quentin, California, and will end on Sept. 9, the anniversary of the 1971 Attica uprising in upstate New York.

Although prison authorities are trying to suppress the news of the strike, there are reports of prisoners in Florida refusing to work and detainees at the ICE prison in Tacoma, Washington, refusing to eat. Five Florida prisons are now on lockdown, and there is additional strike activity in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and California.

In tUS jails and prisons, inmates are sharply and overtly divided by race, ethnicity and presumed or real gang affiliation. Strike organizers have gone out of their way to build unity across all these divisions.

The prison system is the most racist and inhuman manifestation of the lack of respect that capitalism holds for all working people.

Prisons reflect capitalism’s need to violently impose the rule of the tiny capitalist class on the vast majority—the working class. While the capitalists—the real criminals—walk free, jails and



Attica Prison uprising, 1971

prisons lock up nonviolent drug addicts, homeless people, those who suffer from mental illness, immigrants detained for crossing the bosses’ borders, and those who the system has failed.

The 700% increase in the prison population since the 1970s reflects the decline of the US as an imperialist power. The 1960s and 70s saw the mass rebellion of black soldiers and workers in Vietnam and US cities, rising up against the systematic racism of every social institution, including the police. The late 70s saw the closing down of steel, auto, and tire factories where black men had begun to get steady jobs. This combination of increased militancy and mass unemployment terrified the ruling class as it showed the revolutionary potential of black workers.

What followed in the 1980s was an influx of crack cocaine, a surge in aggressive policing, and the doubling of the prison population within a decade. The chaos the US rulers had created in Central America and Mexico forced millions of

workers to come to the US for work. This allowed the rulers to incarcerate hundreds of thousands of black workers, while consigning immigrant workers to the lowest-paid jobs in agriculture, garment factories and service industries. Currently, latinx prisoners are the fastest growing sector of the incarcerated population.

Communist society will solve social problems collectively and humanely

Prison strike organizers condemn the racist and inhuman nature of the prison system and calls for reforms. They demand that prison labor, which includes prison jobs, firefighting, and contracting for big business, be paid at a minimum wage, instead of the pennies per hour it pays now.

We call for revolution, not reform, for a communist society where we’ll do away with exploitation and money, and work collectively to solve social problems rather than locking people up.

See PRISON STRIKE, page 7