

Developing and Testing a New Communist Theory

COMMUNIST THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE: PART IV

In our last column we discussed the failure of the theory that socialism leads to communism. We not only noted that socialism has never actually done that, but explained why: Socialism is a form of capitalism. Its wage system and its government and party hierarchies are capitalist institutions and they inevitably produce a new capitalist class, as happened in China and the USSR.

We also outlined ICWP's theory of how to fight for communism and organize communist society, mass mobilization for communism.

Mass mobilization for communism was put into practice in limited ways inside the old communist movement. In the late 1920s, Soviet workers in many industries organized "communes" to pool their wages. They were made to stop this after a few years, since it undermined socialism's wage system.

As the Chinese communists fought for power, they lived on a "supply system," where everyone got a similar allowance for food and clothes. This system was abolished under socialism, but looking back later Mao Zedong commented, "...the collective lived an egalitarian life. In work everyone was industrious and in warfare all were courageous. There was absolutely no reliance on material incentives, but rather a reliance on the drumbeat of revolutionary spirit." Further mass mobilizations for communism took place in China in the People's Commune movement of the 1950s and during the Cultural Revolution of the

1960s.

Mass mobilization for communism doesn't just mean having a mass communist party. It means putting the fight for communism in the hands of workers and their allies, and relying on their initiative and creativity to strengthen the fight. Concretely it means encouraging those who are short on experience as organizers or who don't yet know the ins and outs of communist theory to join ICWP if they agree that the working class needs communism. When millions do the best they can, we can win.

Mass mobilization for communism means making it possible for people who respect ICWP but aren't sure about communism to work with us to distribute *Red Flag* and make it their paper. Our commitment is not to offer the working class anything short of communism, like reformism or socialism. But we also struggle to create close relations—communist relations—with those who don't agree with us fully, and ask them to do more.

An article in the last *Red Flag* (Jan. 19) from an industrial workplace gives examples of this approach. One black worker took several *Red Flags* and gave the Spanish part to a latino worker. An asian worker heard that there had been a *Red Flag* article about a labor issue in the plant, and asked another worker for a copy. That worker got a copy and brought it in the next day. One worker who wanted to discuss communism asked why the get-together had to be done so

cautiously. Another worker figured out why we have to keep our *Red Flag* network secret from the bosses when someone asked who had written an article about their workplace.

These examples are modest but they show the idea of mass mobilization for communism, relying on workers' initiative to push the movement forward.

Some workers at the same plant have been asked to write articles or letters for *Red Flag*. This is another important example of mass mobilization for communism. It's your paper—let others know what your experiences have been or what you think about communism.

The positive experiences mentioned here are important in two ways. They help show that the mass mobilization for communism can work in practice, and they provide information about how to expand and correct ICWP's understanding about how to apply this approach.

This is a key point of the communist philosophy of knowledge. All knowledge comes from practice and the theories derived from practice guide further practical work. Practice shows the strengths and shortcomings of a theory and allows it to be improved. This is the dialectic of theory and practice, the philosophy which has proved itself in the practice of over 100 years of working class struggle for communism, and is still the way we learn how to win.