

RED FLAG

MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM

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

WORKERS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND EVERYWHERE NEED COMMUNISM

Thirty-four wildcatting platinum miners at the Lonmin Mine in Marikana, South Africa were murdered by South Africa's mostly black cops in August, 2012. They were shot in the back, shot from helicopters, shot at point-blank range. If the end of apartheid is Mandela's legacy, so too is Marikana.

The National Union of Miners called on the strikers to return to work. The company threatened to fire them all. But miners and workers all over South Africa responded with a strike wave involving at its peak over 100,000 miners, industrial and transit workers and squatters' organizations.

This mass anger reflects the vast disparity between the rich (including a few new black capitalists) and the masses of workers. It highlights the betrayal of the hopes of those who fought against apartheid and envisioned a just society. The response of the African National Congress (ANC) government reflected the fears of the capitalists that the mass mobilization of workers will sweep away their system of racist exploitation.

Workers around the world are in motion. Workers on strike from Greece to Egypt, from India to China, and youth in the Occupy movement, responded to the devastation brought about by the world-wide capitalist crisis of overproduction. But the masses in motion need organization and a clear goal. The articles in this issue of *Red Flag* point in that direction: industrial workers from South Africa, Central America, and the US are joining the International Communist Workers' Party. We call on workers all over the world to join us in *Mobilizing the Masses for Communism*.

"Sure, We Would Like to Join!"

INTERVIEW WITH A NEW SOUTH AFRICAN COMRADE

Red Flag: Greetings comrade! We are very glad that you have been reading *Red Flag* and our Party's pamphlet on South Africa. You know that the International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP) is organizing internationally to overthrow capitalism and build a communist society. To do this we need hundreds of millions of workers to join us. Would you and your friends like to join ICWP?

Comrade XM: Revolutionary greetings to the leadership and all members of ICWP worldwide! Sure, we would like to join the party and participate in the movement to overthrow the system that has brought misery to the working class everywhere.

RF: This is exactly what the bosses fear—workers like you joining our party and spreading revolutionary ideas. Please tell us about the current situation in South Africa.

XM: With the death of Mandela, we have a circus here. All the capitalist and imperialist leaders have come here while the workers in South Africa are under siege. We are fighting against the sell-out ANC and their National Development Plan (NDP) which is to attack workers. That is how the capitalist bosses have configured the world for their own interests. They have created artificial borders to hide their

See COMRADE, page 2

MANDELA'S ANC FOUGHT APARTHEID, NOT RACIST CAPITALISM

Nelson Mandela fought throughout his life and won. The South African masses fought, were tortured, massacred, inspired the world but have yet to win.

The world's budding revolutionary communist movement must critically assess the role of the old communist movement in the fight against apartheid and racism in general. These are the tasks at hand as the imperialists bury their man in South Africa, Nelson "We must rid ourselves of the culture of entitlements" Mandela.

Mandela's fight was to liberate black capitalists from the restrictions of apartheid. This task would have been impossible without the heroism of the black working class.

The African National Congress (ANC) that Mandela led was not a revolutionary party. He himself made that clear in 1964 at the Rivonia trial, where he was sentenced to life imprisonment. "The ANC," Mandela insisted, "has never at any period in its history advocated a revolutionary change in the economic structure of the country, nor has it, to the best of my recollection, ever condemned capitalist society."

We Must Critically Analyze the Old International Communist Movement

No one in the ANC leadership ever challenged statements like that. It should not be surprising,



then, that a major ANC leader like Cyril Ramaphosa (who led the miners' union) now has an estimated fortune of half a billion dollars, or that Thomas Mbeki, the ANC leader who succeeded Mandela as President of South Africa, should challenge us to "just call me a Thatcherite" (a follower of racist, right wing British prime minister Maggie Thatcher).

It should be no surprise that, as one report put it, "Mandela and his family have raked in millions with his children and grandchildren active in some 200 companies." It should come as no surprise that, as early as 2001, George Soros could report to a meeting of elite capitalists at the Davos Forum, "South Africa is in the hands of international capital!"

We've seen this story repeat itself all over Africa, all over the world: a rebel leader emerges from years in jail or the jungle to become a billionaire despot.

Our party has lived, in El Salvador, through a guerrilla movement which has, like the ANC, become a new ruling party in the service of international capital.

It should come as no surprise, but it does!

It does because the old international communist movement never concluded that no fight against oppression and exploitation can succeed

See MANDELA'S ANC, page 3

**COMMUNIST
MOVEMENT
GROWS
ACROSS
BORDERS
PAGE 2**

**INDUSTRIAL
WORKERS:
BOEING
PAGE 3
LA & NY TRANSIT
PAGE 4**

**CENTRAL
AMERICA:
REVOLUTION
NOT ELECTIONS
PAGE 14**

**THIS IS A
3-WEEK
ISSUE**

Conference of International Communist Workers' Party

CELEBRATING GROWTH, WRESTLING WITH THE TASKS AHEAD

“The bosses don't value our work,” reported maquila workers at a recent International Communist Workers' Party conference. “Salaries are only \$6.50 for a 10-11 hour day.”

The capitalists can never give us the value of our work. Their business of exploitation means keeping as much as they can of the value we produce as their profits. Only communist revolution can return the value of our work to the world's workers.

These six women and men, the only ones able to get off work, spoke for the rest of the newly-recruited ICWP garment workers' club in El Salvador. They were among thirty comrades from four countries who debated the question of the day: *How do we build on the opportunities for mobilizing the masses for communism that confront us today, especially among industrial workers?*

Building One International Communist Workers' Party

Groups of industrial workers are starting to join our party. Besides the maquila club in El Salvador, another group has formed among metalworkers in South Africa (see p. 1). Our transit club in Los Angeles is growing (see p. 4).



Elsewhere ones and twos are joining. Individuals and groups are circulating our communist literature from Brazil to Bangladesh. Soon more will join from more places and areas of work. Plans must be made and money must be raised to advance this international work.

We celebrate each and every new member. However, we must learn to work in a new way, building a communist party of a new type, as we begin to recruit groups.

We must write for *Red Flag* to steel ourselves for the struggle to advance communist consciousness in every fight. *Red Flag* must become a communist newspaper of a new type, its pages full of political debates that will sharpen the Party's line.

Understanding the World We Live In

The conference started with a report and conversation on the international situation.

The bosses are attempting to survive their system's continuing crisis of overproduction. We outlined our enemy's survival plan: war and escalating attacks on our living conditions. Equally, we examined the response of masses in motion against these attacks. Perhaps our biggest weakness has been underestimating the effect of the masses around the world on our own particular situations.

New and old comrades vowed to read and write for *Red Flag*, keeping in mind how the international situation affects our coworkers and how our local struggles can affect the party's concentrations all over the world.

An inspiring report relayed from soldier comrades started a lively debate about the military work our Party needs.

Teaching and Learning Communism

A discussion on communist education opened with a PowerPoint presentation by a student comrade in Mexico about the history of education in class societies. Her example showed how we all can be both teachers and learners. Our line of *Mobiliz-*

ing the Masses for Communism means that we must all teach communist ideas to others at the same time we're learning them ourselves.

For our forthcoming pamphlet on education, a student will work with ex-guerrillas on a piece about how (and what) they taught and learned during the struggle in El Salvador. The maquila collective will write about ending the division between mental and manual labor in the production of garments.

Mexican comrades gave a vivid presentation that showed why capitalism is the cause of world hunger, and how communism will organize to produce enough nutritious food for everyone.

On the last day, the conference broke into groups to prepare *Red Flag* articles that seize on particular debates resulting from our local class struggles.

A youth group wrestled with turning the backpage cultural section into a more international effort. Another discussed contaminated water and sexist abuse in the maquilas as starting points for articles that promote communist solutions. In the third group, a teacher helped another comrade write a letter, learning that this is an important contribution she can continue to make.

Our Tasks for 2014 and Beyond

We must write and circulate *Red Flag* articles that relate the local to the global, workers' immediate grievances to the need for communism. This is no walk in the park. The bosses are deadly serious about stopping us. They have no illusions about the potential of these communist ideas. We must have no illusions either, and be even more serious about advancing.

We must find more ways to increase the circulation of *Red Flag*. For example, we're talking with twenty workers from another maquila factory. Using internal and outside forces, can we distribute the paper massively in this area?

We must consolidate new members and groups of workers and students through practice. Not just any practice, but practice mobilizing our fellow workers in struggle for communism.

COMRADE from page 1

dictatorship.

We are fighting against e-tolling on our national highway (new electronic tolls). We are fighting against labor brokers. We are fighting against the abominable youth wage subsidy (child labor), now disguised as an “employment incentive tax” which the bosses and the ANC want. This is how they divide the working class.

RF: You grew up under apartheid. Tell us about your experience.

XM: It was a brutal system, growing up under separate amenities as blacks in general and Africans in particular. We were forcibly removed from towns and cities and dumped into Bantustans or homelands and black townships with no infrastructural facilities. Poor schools with inferior gutter education system. Poor hospitals, clinics, roads. And police and dogs and barbed wires to confine and discipline us.

RF: What do you think is the biggest obstacle to the international communist movement?

XM: I think it is nationalism. We need no national boundaries. Democracy only hides the interest of the bosses. The ANC has indeed given new life to imperialists and capitalists all over the world by adopting the NDP which favors severe attacks on the workers and gives free rein to the bosses to plunder and profit.

RF: What do you think of the unions?

XM: The unions are by their nature reformists and they have a very limited role. It is important to transform their trade-union consciousness and militancy to revolutionary working-class consciousness by patiently struggling for working-class interests to address this limitation of the unions.

RF: Please tell our readers about your work conditions.

XM: We work under very dangerous and poor working conditions. We are always exposed to extreme weather conditions. We work day and night shifts and over weekends all year long. We are the worst-paid. We are constantly facing dismissals from brutal em-

ployers. I am currently on unfair suspension pending the outcome of a disciplinary hearing.

It is a pleasure to meet you, RF comrade. The establishment of contact and solidarity of workers from all over the world is very important. We have the same struggle no matter where we are.

(The second part of the interview will include our South African comrade's thoughts about mobilizing the masses for communism and building a communist society without money.)

READ OUR PAMPHLET:
**SOUTH AFRICA STRIKES
CALL US TO MOBILIZE
THE MASSES FOR
COMMUNISM!**

AVAILABLE ONLINE AT
icwpredflag.org/MMC/SapamE.html
OR WRITE US AT THE
ADDRESS BELOW



**JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST
WORKERS' PARTY (ICWP)**
WWW.ICWPREDFLAG.ORG — (310) 487-7674
E-MAIL: ICWP@ANONYMOUSSPEECH.COM
WRITE TO: P.M.B. 362
3175 S. HOOVER ST., LOS ANGELES, CA
90007, USA

Beat Boeing's Voting Beat-Down:

COMMUNISM WILL SUCCEED WITH MASS MOBILIZATION, NOT VOTING

SEATTLE, WA, December 13— “They’re going to make us vote and vote and vote!” complained a Boeing machinist. The Democratic Governor, the bosses’ media, the company and the International Association of Machinists national headquarters are ganging up on us. They are using voting as a club to beat us into submission.

“They figure we’ll get worn out, say ‘whatever’ and move on,” agreed a new hire.

Or we can beat the bosses by expanding the fight for communism.

The local union mis-leaders are afraid to bring this latest contract extension to a vote. District president Wroblewski is even afraid to come to union meetings. Workers are still fighting mad from the last time he brought this idea up for a vote.

This latest offer is essentially the same as the one rejected 2-to-1 a month ago, except for a few tiny changes. The company and their allies — from the national government to the national union — demand we sacrifice a generation of our fellow workers for production of the new 777X jet.

“I thought this was the kind of stuff the NLRB (National Labor Relations Board) said the company couldn’t do. You know: vote for this or you’re out,” said another. The NLRB is the federal government agency in charge of overseeing U.S. labor law.

“...And what part of capitalism don’t you understand?” joked those gathered around, having no confidence the bosses’ laws would ever protect workers.

Why Now?

“Has anything like this ever happened before?” asked a recent hire at another of our shop-floor group discussions. “Things change by the hour. The international is openly working against us. Who knows what the local leadership is doing.”

“No,” a veteran machinist answered quickly.

The worldwide capitalist crisis of overproduction reveals the naked truth about capitalism. It also shows how inadequate trade unionism is in the face of the resulting capitalist onslaught.

At the beginning of the week, Boeing bragged it got a big Canadian order for 737MAX planes worth \$6.5 billion at list prices. They only charged the airline \$3.2 billion to beat out Airbus or any of the other manufacturers that were coming on line. That’s more than a 50 percent discount. The company plans on cutting our wages and benefits at least that much.

“It was inevitable we got to this state as long as production was organized for sale and profit,” said the veteran. “We need communist produc-

tion for the needs of our class if we are ever to get out of this mess.

“That means revolution that changes the fundamental basis of society.”

“I’m ready to tell the company this,” responded the new hire, giving the finger. “Let’s just go out on strike now!”

A political strike against the system that forces us to vote on our own destruction would certainly help change the dynamic.

Mobilizing the Masses for Communism Trumps Voting

Mandela was buried this same week. We discussed his legacy in the midst of our own struggle.

Mandela and his African National Congress came to power promising “one man, one vote.” Capitalism still reigned and the conditions of black workers got worse and worse. Rebellion took hold last fall and hasn’t stopped.

A Boeing worker who had been in the anti-racist, anti-apartheid movement most of his life commented that he doesn’t vote for any politicians any more. He’s shed the illusion that the bosses will let us vote them out of power.

He took the lesson of this contract battle farther than merely the battle between the company and us. The only way forward is to mobilize the working class for communism: building the International Communist Workers’ Party (ICWP).

Ones and twos are joining our party, and in some places groups. Advancing these groups through practice in class struggle will expose the bosses’ weapons (like unending votes). Writing articles about the communist lessons of those struggles will help distribution of *Red Flag* and give new comrades confidence to win others.

Many have voted “no” to the company’s attempts at extortion, but this won’t stop the bosses’ attacks. Boeing workers need to join with these groups of workers, becoming ICWP members.

Communism will succeed by the active effort of mobilized masses, not ceaseless votes.



DIFFERENT TACTICS, SAME PRO-CAPITALIST STRATEGY

The central office of the International Association of Mechanics puts the success of its “National Security Re-industrial Plan” above all else. Like unions everywhere, they beg the bosses to keep unions as the best way to pacify irate workers. They are pushing the latest contract extension to prove they can deliver.

The local leadership doesn’t want to bring the company’s proposal to a vote for fear of our reaction.

But don’t be fooled! The international and the local leadership are really two sides of the same capitalist coin. The subject line of District President Wroblewski’s email after the latest contract extension negotiations fell apart read: “We were willing to give Boeing labor peace.” They offered the company a no-strike regime for 16 years.

The local leadership is in a particularly weak position. They tried to play the democracy card to justify their betrayal last month. “We’re just allowing the rank-and-file to decide through a vote,” they whined as the workers in the plants revolted.

Now they are trying to justify not bringing this latest offer to a vote by pointing out the job security loopholes and the devastation the cut-backs will bring. These are the very things they tried to hide in the prior 2011 extension as well as the November vote. Actually it was workers on the shop floor who brought these attacks to light.

When push comes to shove, there isn’t a dime’s worth of difference between the local and national union leaders. They all serve their capitalist masters.

MANDELA’S ANC from page 1

without destroying capitalism-imperialism, without the development and leadership of a revolutionary communist party like today’s International Communist Workers’ Party.

As hindsight clearly shows us, the fight against apartheid really meant two different things to the two different social forces in black South Africa.

To the working masses fighting apartheid meant things like running water, electricity, accessible transit, the end of pass books with their forced migration of male labor (working men being forced to live in barracks hundreds of miles away from their families). In short, it was a fight against bitter and extreme exploitation.

To the elite, wanna-be black capitalists, it meant the abolition of restrictions on where to

invest, where to develop real estate and so on.

Rather than a fight against the racist hell of imperialism and capitalism, their fight against apartheid turned out to be a legal fight for the few to own (or part-own) mills, mines, factories, and banks.

What Is To Be Done?

This has left the working masses in South Africa still fighting the racist hell of imperialism and capitalism (see interview). Crucially, however, they are still fighting, as the industrial and mining strikes and township rebellions show us. And because they are still fighting (now against a state organized by black capitalists) they are teaching the world that no fight against racism can succeed unless it is an unrelenting fight against capitalism and for communism.

It is vital that we all understand that racism is

a product of capitalism. We can achieve nothing by fighting aspects of it in isolation from the fight to destroy capitalism itself and replace it with a communist, share-and-share-alike society.

In the US, for example, we cannot fight against racist mass incarceration or the rampant racist police brutality and fascist immigration laws without fighting for communism.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, we cannot fight racism against black and indigenous workers without fighting for communism.

In South Africa, we cannot fight racist super-exploitation without fighting for communism.

This is the task at hand. Let the imperialists bury their Mandela. We’ll bury racism and capitalism-imperialism by building the International Communist Workers’ Party worldwide!

BREAKING BARRIERS, BUILDING THE PARTY AMONG TRANSIT WORKERS

When G was asked if he wanted to join ICWP, his answer was an emphatic and certain “Yes. It’s what we should all do, because separate we are weak while united we are strong. We have to fight and support *Red Flag* so that it continues to be our newspaper. Really, thank you, because due to *Red Flag* we are organizing the workers of different ‘races’. Here is \$25 as my first contribution.”

Continuing the process of spreading communist ideas massively and consolidating a base in the working class, breaking down the barriers that the bosses want to impose between black, latin, asian and white workers, we had decided before the meeting of MTA workers to invite them to join the Party.

Two other workers gave \$25 each and two more promised to give \$20 each next week.

These achievements are the result of a revolutionary collective that put its confidence in the working class to be won directly to communist ideas. Through *Red Flag*, the working class masses understand that communist ideas represent their interests and that ICWP is their organization, their general staff.

The capitalist system cannot be reformed, since it is a society that feeds on the blood of our sons and daughters in the army as well as millions of workers, who, after spending their lives making profits for the bosses, end their lives without a home and without medical insurance. We are certain that these new members will motivate other mechanics, service attendants, and drivers to join the Party. As the new comrade said, united we can achieve feats never before imagined.

Transit Workers Can End Capitalism’s Insecurity and Deprivation

COMMUNISM, NOT TRADE-UNIONISM, IS THE ANSWER

“If someone told me 10 years ago I’d be going someplace for charity, I’d say ‘no!’” Nicole Bouchotte, told the *New York Times* (11/23).

Ms. Bouchotte, 61, has been a school bus matron for Atlantic Bus Escorts Inc. for nearly 20 years. School bus matrons in New York care for 150,000 children bused daily to school. Working full time, they earn \$28,000/year.

The company, however, has cut her hours and pay by more than 1/3, reducing her biweekly check to \$410. Now she can’t pay her rent. Swallowing her pride, she sought out Catholic Charities, which provided \$442 to help with the rent.

In mid-November, Ms. Bouchotte received even more devastating news: the company is filing for bankruptcy. Her whole department will be let go at the end of the year.

The *New York Times* story ends by saying that although Ms. Bouchotte remains “unsure of her next move, her caseworker from Catholic Charities has been helping her explore career options.”

This article is currently posted at the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) website with no comment whatsoever.

There is nothing about inhumane capitalism, a racist system that destroys workers’ lives for the profits of a handful of capitalists.

There is nothing about these union hacks’ complicity in helping the bus companies super-exploit these mostly black, latin and immigrant workers and then dump them on the streets like trash when no longer needed.

And of course, there is nothing about workers’ urgent need to destroy this murderous system with communist revolution and build communism: a society based on producing for workers’ needs, not for capitalists’ profits.



These hacks’ greatest treachery is preaching that capitalism is the best system ever, that it is eternal and that we must confine our struggles within its laws and electoral charade.

A tale of treachery

Ms. Bouchotte, among 8,800 drivers, mechanics and matrons in ATU Local 1181, went on strike early in 2013. They tried to stop Mayor Bloomberg from removing Employee Protection Provisions (EPP) from New York City’s contract bids for school bus companies. These provisions required them to hire workers respecting their previous seniority, salaries and benefits.

Their efforts failed. After a month-long strike, the Local and International Presidents ordered them back to work. They told the workers to wait till January 2014 when Democrat Bill de Blasio might become Mayor.

De Blasio will be Mayor, and his promises will be worth nothing. Meanwhile, the city has signed new contracts without the job-security provisions for 1,100 routes. Some 1800 union workers have lost their jobs. Many more will be jobless, or working without seniority for less wages and benefits, when contracts for another 5,000 routes expire next year.

Capitalism: Workers are “Damned if we do, damned if we don’t.”

“Without this labor contract, we have no choice left but to proceed with the sale of all of the company’s assets and contracts,” said an Atlantic Bus spokesperson. The workers recently rejected its offer for a 2014 contract that would lower their wages and benefits.

The company claims 2,000 workers would lose their jobs because it can’t compete with non-union companies which can pay workers much less since the city removed the EPP from their bids.

This is capitalism’s “freedom of choice” for

Thanks to Our Readers at MTA

The comrades who distribute *Red Flag* to Los Angeles transit workers at Division 3 want to thank the workers who brought us plates of delicious food from their Thanksgiving lunch celebration. We appreciated the refreshments and, even more, the solidarity.

We also want to thank the bus operator there who, on another occasion, walked between a comrade and a transit cop who was harassing her and made a point of asking for a copy of *Red Flag*. In case that reader did not see the expression on the cop’s face, we can tell him that the cop was clearly taken aback.

And we thank over 100 workers at Division 3 who take every issue of the paper, especially those who find a moment to stop, ask questions, and chat, and those who take extra papers for co-workers or their public. We would welcome the opportunity to talk with you at greater length in a more relaxed setting.

We extend this invitation to all *Red Flag* readers: If you choose a time and place convenient to you (and perhaps one or more others) and give us a call at (310) 487-7674 we will arrange for a couple of us to meet you there.

And if the workers at LA Transit Division 3 let us know in advance of their next lunch celebration, we will be happy to bring some food to contribute.

Happy Holidays to all!

—Three LA Comrades

the working class. We either accept cuts in compensation, as Ms. Bouchotte and others were forced to do, or be fired.

But, even this is not enough for the bosses. Companies like Atlantic can simply declare bankruptcy, or like Boeing, reopen contracts, to impose even more drastic conditions on workers with the blessings of the bosses’ courts, media and politicians.

**Trade unionism is no answer –
Communism is!**

We will be at the mercy of the capitalists’ voracious appetite for maximum profits until we destroy capitalism with communist revolution. A militant reform struggle guarantees nothing. Working-class liberation requires getting off the treadmill of reformism.

It requires organizing political strikes against capitalism that inspire and mobilize workers everywhere with communist political slogans like “Abolish wage slavery” and “Production for need, not profit.”

It requires breaking the bosses’ laws and, eventually, armed struggle.

It requires joining the International Communist Workers’ Party.

For transit workers in Los Angeles MTA to prepare for a possible strike in 2014, it is important to learn the lessons of the struggle described here and choose the revolutionary alternative.

**SUPPORT AND WRITE
FOR RED FLAG!**

COMMUNISM VALUES THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ALL WORKERS

“I don’t think communism will work,” said a garment worker at Atomic Denim to a *Red Flag* distributor.

“Why not?” asked the *Red Flag* comrade.

“Because all leaders sell out. They end up living well and exploiting the people,” answered the worker.

“Honesty is not the determining factor. Honesty is important, but more important is the political line of the leaders and of the movement. There are many leaders who never sold out and yet their struggle didn’t lead to the liberation of the working class.

“For example, Emiliano Zapata, a Mexican revolutionary, never sold out. That’s why they killed him. But the slogan of his revolution was only ‘Land to the tiller.’ Land reform was carried out and today the Mexican farmworkers have no land. The land is again in the hands of the big Mexican capitalists,” said the comrade.

“It’s true,” said the worker. “The rich always end up winning.”

“Yes, because the Mexican revolution and many other revolutions did not put an end to capitalism and the capitalists. Communism, however, will put an end to both.”

“But, then what happened in Russia, China and Cuba?”

“They didn’t put an end to capitalism there either. The communists fought for socialism, which is State capitalism. Socialism maintained money,



wage differences. Not long after the Soviet revolution, the industrial worker was paid more than the farmworker, the professionals more than the workers and the communist leaders more than everyone. In the long run, the communists became capitalists.

“That’s why communist revolution will eliminate money. Money corrupts anyone. Without money nobody can be rich and no one can be corrupted. We will all contribute to society according to our commitment and abilities, and we will receive according to our needs.”

No One Will Be Better Than Anyone Else

“I don’t agree with that. I don’t think that it is fair that someone who studied should receive the same or less than someone who did not want to study,” commented the garment worker. “I think

that the professionals also won’t like it.”

“In capitalism, the bosses tell us that the farmworkers and industrial workers are not worth anything because we have not studied. However, the opposite is true. We are indispensable for society and many professionals are not. If tomorrow all the farmworkers disappeared, all of humanity would suffer greatly because who would produce the food? Millions would die of hunger.

“What use are the engineer’s and architect’s plans if the construction worker is not there to lay the foundations?”

“Who builds the houses, roads, bridges, and buildings? The construction workers. However, who gets all the credit? The engineers and architects.

“Who is more useful: a garment worker or a famous fashion designer? Their designs are useless if there are no garment workers to sew them. In the winter, in cold climates, you freeze if you don’t have a good coat. Who makes the coats? Garment workers like you.

“In communism, no one will be better than anyone. We will treat each other with all the respect, dignity, and appreciation that we deserve.”

“Yes, you are right about much that you say, but...”

The garment worker was thinking hard about it, but he could not continue the conversation because it was time to go in to work.

Trans-Pacific Partnerships and Inter-Imperialist Conflict:

YOUR ENEMY’S ENEMY ISN’T ALWAYS YOUR FRIEND

The last issue of *Red Flag* described the “Trans-Pacific Partnership” (TPP) that US imperialists hope to build to counter growing Chinese imperialist domination of Asia-Pacific trade. The TPP negotiations reflect the current global capitalist crisis of overproduction, which can ultimately be resolved only by world war.

US rulers have failed to meet their 2013 deadline for a Trans-Pacific Partnership. A document leaked from recent talks in Salt Lake City suggests why: the US refuses to compromise on key matters, like intellectual-property provisions that would give US companies long-term monopolies on medications.

The US also insists on “Investor-State Dispute Settlement” which would give US corporations broad rights to sue other governments whose laws or policies might endanger their profits. For example, tobacco companies threaten to sue over anti-smoking laws. (*Huffington Post*, 12/08/2013



Given this reality, leading US imperialist pundits are backpedalling. Paul Krugman blogged for the *New York Times* (12/12/13) that “I haven’t seen anything to justify the hype, positive or negative.”

“Domestic obstacles may loom larger.”

—Phil Levy, *Foreign Policy* (10/16/13)

US capitalists in some sectors (automotive, insurance, agriculture) oppose TPP because they may be hurt by lower tariffs and subsidies. Sixty senators have demanded that TPP address “currency manipulation.”

Some “insider” critics want the process improved so that TPP will succeed at least in its core goal, US imperialist dominance in the Asia-Pacific region. Others want to torpedo the treaty.

The Obama administration hopes to “Fast-Track” ratification (if an agreement is reached), avoiding public controversies. But this angers members of Congress, who object that “Fast-

Track” gives their powers to the Executive Branch.

Ruling-class forces mobilize activists to strengthen their own hands.

The Democratic Party offshoot MoveOn is petitioning Congress “to vote no on fast track legislation for the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).” MoveOn builds dangerous nationalism by falsely claiming that “America must reserve the right to determine our own consumer, health, safety, labor, privacy and environmental regulations,” as if smaller countries were the main threat.

Some complain that TPP is “being secretly negotiated by 600 multinational corporations and industry trade groups.” But these capitalists

negotiate through the US State Department. The US government is the organization of the capitalist class as a whole.

Yes, multi-national corporations are trying to squeeze the most out of TPP, and they are our enemies. They strive to undermine food safety, environmental protection, internet freedom, and labor laws. They are driving up drug prices and deregulating banking and finance.

But the cause is capitalist crisis, not the TPP. And other, more far-sighted imperialists who try to limit them are not our friends.

We’d better understand that capitalism’s global crisis will increasingly disrupt and drive down the most basic conditions of our lives. We must find our friends among the masses, everywhere in the world, for whom communism is the only solution.

Communism: Production for Use, Not for Exchange

We know no borders. Our members and friends in at least ten countries are organized as one International Communist Workers’ Party. Whenever and wherever we take power, we’ll start building communist society. Borders, nations, and trade agreements will immediately disappear. We will share freely all that we produce with all those in need.

But the whole world won’t become communist overnight. Will we negotiate trade agreements with capitalist governments in the meantime? No!

Those governments will try to “strangle the baby in its cradle” as imperialists tried to do with the infant Soviet Union in 1918-20. But when that failed, Soviet leaders in the 1920s sought out trade relations with Britain and other imperialists.

They thought foreign trade would give them “legitimacy” and finance industrial growth. That made sense because Soviet socialism was a fundamentally a capitalist system that couldn’t possibly have evolved peacefully into communism.

When the US blocked trade with Cuba in 1960, Castro and other leaders thought they had no choice but to become “socialist” and tie Cuba to Russian imperialism instead.

We have learned from the heroic victories and tragic errors of 20th-century communists that our job, now and always, is mobilizing the masses for communism.

That will mean struggling to produce basic necessities like food and shelter locally, in our liberated zones, as we fight off the attacks of capitalist armies. As we grow and consolidate the communist zones, we will share (not “trade”) with comrades further away, and eventually worldwide.

At times we will share scarcity. Later we will share abundance. Always we’ll share communist social relations that will liberate our full human potential.

WE'LL LIBERATE OURSELVES THROUGH COMMUNIST REVOLUTION, NOT ELECTIONS

EL SALVADOR: ALL ELECTORAL PARTIES SERVE CAPITALISM

The February Presidential elections are getting closer, and media campaigns are the daily bread. This is the time that electoral political parties like ARENA and the FMLN make their best-sounding empty promises that hold no future for the masses. They claim that "change in the system" means fighting for shares of power inside the capitalist system. They try to make people believe that making a revolution means setting up stands to sell products at a populist event, rather than uniting revolutionary theory and practice in the struggle against the system.

Now it is clear that for the leadership of the FMLN to be "Left" means being a revolutionary of the free market instead of fighting to sharpen class antagonisms as we do in the International Communist Workers' Party, ICWP. The FMLN promotes private enterprises with "social purpose" like ALBA Oil. These are the people who want to privatize the class struggle; they want to manage our hunger for a humane world. The only way to achieve this ideal world for the working class is organizing in a communist party, the ICWP.

The recent presidential election in Honduras resulted in victory for the national party, with obvious signs of fraud against the LIBRE Party (Party of Liberty and Re-

foundation) which is also a capitalist party. But the greater problem of fraud is that elections are a tool of the capitalist system, their way of pacifying the masses, of making us believe that we are participating in a democracy, that we are listened to.

No, comrades and friends, this is not the case. One positive piece of news from these elections is that each time fewer people from our class participate in choosing the henchmen and administrators of the capitalist system.

There are no pacifist revolutionaries.

The FMLN talks about peace and nonviolence as if it could be the road to a communist world. We have the example close at hand of Allende of Chile who, in search of a "pacifist revolution," ushered in the dictatorship of Pinochet, by chilling the masses' high spirits and their drive for an armed revolution. All the tools and institutions of the capitalist states function to protect the capitalist system.

In the light of these developments, organizing for communism through the ICWP and *Red Flag* newspaper is the only road for the proletariat, the only solution to the reality that we are surviving. Those who make revolutions are not the electoral political parties, but the workers, the masses, you and me.

HONDURAS: ELECTION CIRCUS STRENGTHENS CAPITALISM-IMPERIALISM

The electoral circus in Honduras has ended as usual in a bourgeois state. Many millions of dollars were spent in this poor and underdeveloped country. The slogans were the same: promises to solve all of society's problems. But the only thing that moves the politicians is seeing how they can take advantage of this farce to help their personal interests, and those of the national and foreign oligarchy, which funds their electoral campaigns.

This process has concluded with sorrow, not glory, for the immense majority, especially the working class, which returns to the calamitous reality of more people unemployed, health centers and public hospitals without medicine, many schools without desks or enough teachers, and the highest rate of violent deaths in the world (86 for every 100,000 inhabitants annually). Corruption is growing while 40% of the population lives on less than a dollar a day.

Electoral farce: bosses' weapon to stop revolutionary struggle

The current crisis that plagues worldwide capitalism-imperialism has plunged Honduras into an unprecedented political, economic, social and security crisis. Neither elections nor "21st Century socialism" will improve the life of the working class. These are only a mockery and farce invented by capitalism to divert or stop the true revolutionary struggles that will prepare the working class to fight to free itself from the exploiters' yoke once and for all.

Xiomara Castro ran as the candidate of the recently founded Party of Liberty and Re-Foundation (LIBRE). She is the wife of the ex-President, who was overthrown in a military coup planned and supported by the national bourgeoisie and the US empire. Despite massive support from many organized

groups of city workers, farmworkers, and pseudo-revolutionaries, she lost the election. As expected, the forces of the ultra-right were not going to allow their power to be taken away easily.

The LIBRE Party, in its eagerness to come to power and implement "21st century socialism" through a "re-founding" of the bourgeois state, promised reforms that clearly were in no way quantitative, much less qualitative, changes to transform society. Instead, their plan is an accommodation to a new class of exploiters. All government structures exist to serve the national and international bourgeoisie.

The reality of Venezuela shows that this socialism has already failed. Not even the most basic needs of the masses, like food and security, have been met. The ultra-right in Honduras cynically used this fact to help defeat Xiomara Castro.

Proletarian revolution: the only way to end savage capitalism

There is no doubt that it is not through bourgeois democratic processes that the working class will liberate ourselves forever from the calamities created by capitalism. Only a proletarian revolution led by a communist party will guarantee the taking of real power and control for the benefit of the masses.

While bourgeois democracy is enthroned in power to safeguard the interests of the capitalist system, proletarian revolution advocates for the decisive struggle against capitalism, bringing the masses of the population into the direct struggle for communism, that is, without passing through socialism. We have learned from the errors committed in the processes of struggle, in the Soviet Union, China and other countries, that we must fight directly for communism.



LETTERS

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CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

Capitalism Does Not Exist to Meet Workers' Needs

Comrades often write in *Red Flag* that capitalism does not meet workers' needs. More precisely, capitalism cannot be reformed to meet the needs of the working class, because no reform can eliminate the fundamental contradiction of capitalism: capitalists make money off workers' sweat. Just as slavery did not exist to meet the needs of the slaves, but of the slave masters, capitalism exists to exploit, oppress and accumulate capital on the surplus labor of the working class, not to meet our needs.

If some workers in imperialist countries feel that their needs are being met, this is a tempo-

rary situation based on the imperialists' ability to deprive the oppressed masses all over the world, especially in Africa, Asia and Latin America, of the basic necessities of life. Fifty percent of the working class in the world is malnourished, and one-third of the population barely survives on \$2 per day.

The capitalists buy labor power in order to create surplus value, which is unpaid labor to accumulate capital to expand their factories and compete with other rival capitalists. The more they extract surplus value, the more competitive they will be. That is why they lower wages, speed up workers and cut benefits.

Finally when they are desperate they lay off workers and bring in machines to produce

more cheaply. But there is a fly in the ointment. They create their own disaster and crisis of overproduction and the rate of profit declines. That is why they are drowned in the current crisis, and less and less able to meet the basic needs of even the workers in the imperialist countries.

The only way out for them is fascism and war. The only way out for us is communist revolution to get rid of these parasites once and for all. The real need of the working class is to get rid of capitalism, and on its grave build a communist society free of exploitation and wage slavery, where production is for human need, not for private profit.

—Reader in Los Angeles

THIS IS THE PAPER OF THE WORKING CLASS. WE GET NO FUNDING FROM THE CAPITALISTS, THEIR FOUNDATIONS OR NGOs. PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY TO HELP PAY FOR THE COSTS OF PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION.

My first experience in an international meeting of ICWP

A few days ago, for the first time, I attended an international meeting of ICWP. I felt nervous because I didn't know how everything was there, or if I had to arrive there as a person who knows everything. First, the homage to a comrade who fought for the working class in the factories was deeply moving. I didn't have the good luck to know her, but from the way the comrades talked about her, she was a person who had the strength to fight for the working class. And now that she is no longer here, the way to remember her always is to follow her example of struggle.

The experience I lived in the meeting, with the comrades from different places, was very exciting and satisfying for me, because I realized how the capitalist system exploits all sectors of the working class. For example, when the comrades from the maquilas gave their report, they told how the capitalist bosses super-exploit them. It is depressing to hear in person, in the

voice of the workers, the way that they are exploited in the factories. I also felt powerless to do anything to help them, but I think that the best way to help them is to spread communist ideas, to fight to bury capitalism that exploits and kills the working class.

I think that reading the newspaper is not the same as listening to the reports in the voices of the comrades. Now that I heard the report of the comrades, I reflected and understood many things. I think that everywhere capitalism

exploits the workers of the world, making them work in horrible conditions, mistreating them and paying them poverty wages, while the capitalists keep the profits, products of the workers' labor. But this is the reality of the capitalist system. Capitalism doesn't function for the working class and we must destroy it; we need to build communism.

The changes that I am experiencing as a communist are more notable each time. Now, when I returned from the international meeting,

I commented to the comrades in Mexico that each time I understand more about how the capitalist system exploits the working class and I also understand that communism is the real solution for our class. I realize that I have contradictions that I must struggle to eliminate, accepting the criticisms of the comrades. With all this, I feel this need to continue sharing communist ideas with more people, so that every day there are more of us, and so that we destroy this monster that is absorbing us every day. Mobilize the masses for communism!

--Greetings from the collective in Mexico.



May Day 2013, Mexico City

Why the communist army will be important

The world's wealth is owned by about 3% of the total population. This wealth is created by 97% of the population, which is the working class.

The pillars that will sustain the communist revolution will be the industrial workers and the communist army.

In El Salvador, there were two armies during the armed conflict: the national army and a Guerrilla Army. During that time, the Guerrilla Army was created with the goal of uniting with the people to conquer power.

In 1989 it launched a final offensive, "To the Top." In this offensive it believed that the people would come along with the Guerrilla Army, but it didn't happen like that. The people left us, and that brought us to negotiate an end to the conflict without having achieved the conquest of power.

The Guerrilla Army was formed in practice and we achieved a preparation much better than the national army which counted on the support of the US for advice and weapons. Military training and organization are important for destroying capitalism, for which an armed and disciplined army are necessary.

The Communist Army should be integrated with the working class with a communist education. Commanders won't have privileges, just the capacity to lead when it's required to defend the interests of the working class.

—Comrades in El Salvador

El Salvador: Permanent Dispute between ARENA and the fmln?

In El Salvador, as in many other countries, voting has served for practically nothing. Twenty years after the war ended, votes serve to promote identities and fears, not to solve problems.

We live in a permanent dispute between the false left and a recalcitrant right in which neither acts nor allows others to act. This dispute paralyzes and ruins our class and must not be allowed to continue.

The basic rule of this dispute is, "The worse the government gets, the better for the opposition and the worse the opposition, the better for the government." This leaves no place for a rational, serious debate to solve problems. In the end no matter who governs, both ARENA and the fmln sabotage themselves; and the Salvadoran workers end up paying the consequences. Problems are not being solved through elections. Insecurity grows; gangs gain power, and unemployment multiplies.

Expatriate Salvadorans supply the most flourishing business for the "G20," as the eight richest families in the country are called. The money from expatriate remittances ends up in a few hands and is taken out of the country. The fight between ARENA and the fmln is the most effective tool to maintain control of the country. The polarization has given ARENA and the fmln full control of the national politics, but the main beneficiaries have been the G20 because this quarrel has allowed them to take full control of the economy and to appropriate remittance money. This money, instead of bringing improvements to the country, has been converted into commercial centers and luxury hotels in Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua and even Miami. Just one G20 family made an investment of \$250 million in the Dominican Republic and others became partners with the multi-millionaire Mitt Romney, ex-US Presidential candidate of the Republican Party.

ARENA-fmln, a relationship of love and convenience

ARENA and the fmln are the parties born for one to be the negation of the other. The problem is that now, in the peace, they have learned to live politically by being in permanent conflict and in a perverse relationship of love

and hate in which they win and the working class loses.

A Communist Force is Indispensable

Elections do not produce benefits to the people out of the kindness, good intentions, or ideologies of the politicians. The ARENA-fmln polarity favors ARENA and the G20 because the fmln continues to be the party with the anti-system rhetoric. ANEP-FUSADES-ARENA know that if the fmln is the only option, the electoral results are predictable and they could rule another twenty years. The oligarchs of the G20 want a democracy with an ornamental opposition; they want a left that is poor, barefoot and in the street. What is at play is not just one more government, but the opportunity to begin a restructuring of economic and political power. This is the first positive effect of the presence of a communist alternative.

Given that the ARENA-fmln bipartisanship has failed, a political system for the working class is indispensable. The comrades organized in ICWP are building a new vision of the liberation of the working class in the organization and struggle for a political system which generates a full life, whose priority will be the improvement in life for all. This is possible only by fighting for communist ideas.

--A comrade in El Salvador

Red Flag responds: Thank you for your letter. But we disagree with you. Both ARENA and the fmln represent the interests of different sections of the capitalist class. They could never represent the interests of the working class. They are not the negation of each other. Their negation would be a mass revolutionary communist party, the ICWP, fighting to overthrow all the capitalists and build communism. Even if the ARENA and fmln were able to cooperate with each other, it would be to attack the working class even more and to perpetuate the existence of capitalism. As the letter correctly points out, only communist ideas and a communist revolution represent workers' interests.

“Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement.” Lenin, *What Is To Be Done*

MARX ON HOW CONTRADICTIONS ARE RESOLVED

In the last column, we saw that a contradiction is a struggle between two connected processes, tendencies, or situations. We looked at several contradictions of capitalism, and saw that contradictions can be resolved, that is, come to an end. In this column we summarize Marx's ideas on how this can happen.

Dialectical Contradictions in Thought and in Reality

The contradictions we have discussed so far are inside the capitalist system, but contradictions occur in other economic systems, in nature, and in thought. Marx wrote that contradictions in reality tend to produce contradictory thoughts and statements, but “contradictions lie in the thing, not the linguistic expression of the thing.” Both the contradictions in thought and language and the contradictions in social or natural reality, which are called “real contradictions,” can be resolved, but not necessarily in the same way.

Resolution of real contradictions is not immediate but takes time. Real contradictions cause “motion,” a process of change that lasts for a while. Examples of motion include objects changing location, circulation of goods or money, immigration, social movements and mobilization of the masses for communism. Motion includes changes in a particular direction as well as oscillations and repetitions in processes, like capitalist crises that happen over and over again.

Resolution of Real Contradictions

During the resolution of a real contradiction, the relationship between the contradictory sides has to change. Marx called this process that leads

to resolution “development.” Development involves at least four kinds of changes:

(1) *Development becomes simpler and more clearly defined.* For example, the transformation of landowners into capitalists is a “movement of reality” that “will simplify the opposition [between labor and capital], drive it to a peak and therefore accelerate its resolution.”

(2) *The development becomes more obvious.* For example in a crisis in the world market like the present one, “the “contradictions and oppositions of bourgeois production become striking.”

(3) *The development becomes sharper, more intense, or being “driven to a peak.”* For example, Marx wrote that England in 1848 was “the country in which the oppositions of modern bourgeois society, the class struggles between bourgeoisie and proletariat, are developed most fully and driven to the highest peak.”

(4) *The development causes motion of some kind.* Marx wrote that the process of exchange of commodities “includes relations that contradict and exclude one another. The development of the commodity does not cancel these contradictions, but creates a form within which they can move. This is in general the method through which real contradictions are solved.” He also said in *Capital*, Volume I, that the elliptical motion of a planet around the Sun is caused by contradictory factors.

The opposed sides of a real contradiction cannot be unified or reconciled. Development is the only way to resolve their contradiction. Resolution can only happen when the conflict between the two sides is “driven to a peak” and one side

defeats the other. Marx sharply attacked people who tried to resolve contradictions without development by “mediating” between the working class and the bosses, and trying to prevent the two sides from “fighting to a decision.”

There may be some contradictions that will not be resolved because they have little or no tendency to develop. This is certainly not true of the basic contradictions of capitalism, since, as the *Communist Manifesto* said, “the development of class opposition [between workers and capitalists] keeps step with the development of industry.”

Contradictions in Ideas and Theories

In many cases the process of resolution of contradictions between ideas is the same as with real contradictions. Marx was well known for his determined struggle to defeat wrong ideas and theories, especially in politics and economics. There are cases, however, where opposing points of view may both be partly right, and their contradiction can be resolved by finding the right connections between them. Marx says that this is possible in economic theory and gives an example from mathematics.

The Value of Dialectics

As his comments quoted above show, Marx put a very high value on dialectics. Because dialectics shows that everything changes and nothing lasts forever, Marx saw it as “inherently critical and revolutionary.” Surely, he was right. We need to conduct mass education for dialectics, and make it a tool for communist revolution.

Next: *Engels' contribution to dialectics*

COMMUNIST AND CAPITALIST CULTURE

To join study groups that will be discussing this topic contact us at
ICWP@AnonymousSpeech.com

CATCHING COMMUNIST ANALYSIS

A lot of people we know like “Catching Fire,” because it shows people fighting back against fascism and class society. Although it's entertaining, it's sure not a Communist movie. We're going to write about “Catching Fire” next month, but this time we decided to talk about “Hunger Games,” where it all started.

“I really liked it,” said Cathy. “Katniss is the kind of girl I would like to be. She's brave, strong, smart and she was ready to die for her little sister. She was against racism. Look at her friendship with Rue. That was really special.”

“It also mirrors our society today. It shows the

poverty of working people—especially white miners—and how outrageous and disgusting the rich people are. Like how Katniss was overwhelmed by a little loaf of bread, but in the capital there was way too much rich food,” said Amber. “And it shows a real fascist police state and how everybody hates it.”

“In the different districts, it shows the divisions between really poor workers and middle class people who are still oppressed, but don't know it,” said Johnny. “The people who are a little higher up are like their dogs, or happy slaves. Take Cato. He's like the German workers who joined the Nazi Party.”

“That's how they always stay on top, by divide and rule. It's patterned after the Roman Empire, where they used one group of subjects to put down another, and gladiators entertained and terrorized the masses,” said Carlos. “That's like what they do in working class neighborhoods, where black and brown youth fight each other in-

stead of the common enemy.”

“I agree that it mirrors class society,” said Amy. “But it creates a world where they tried to make a revolution, and lost. And seventy-five years later, and the working class still hasn't organized and rebelled. I think the message of the movie is that Communist revolution will always fail.”

“So instead of revolution, they have some silly ideas about how to fight back,” said Cathy. “Like when Gale says, ‘what if no one watched, then they wouldn't have a game.’ That's like my grandma who refuses to shop at Walmart and thinks that's going to change things.”

“But you can tell, from what happened in District Eleven when Rue died, that there's going to be a big rebellion. That's what's going to happen in “Catching Fire,”” said Amber.

We'll talk about that next time.

