

RED FLAG

MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM

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

SOUTH AFRICAN MINERS MUST ROUT RACIST IMPERIALISM

February 18 --Anglo American platinum mine guards wounded nine miners in Rustenburg, South Africa. Three are in critical condition.

Guards fired at thousands who were charging the offices of the National Union of Miners (NUM). Miners fought back with whatever crude weapons they could find sending four company guards to the hospital.

Last August, Rustenburg was the scene of massive wildcat strikes, during which the cops shot 34 dead. The bloodshed at the Marikana mine sparked months of tumult. Eventually over a hundred thousand miners, truckers and farmworkers walked out on strike.

On February 27, in a replay of the 1998 Ku Klux Klan attack on black worker James Byrd in the US, black South African cops tied an immigrant cab driver to the back of their police car, and dragged him to his death in full view of an angry crowd. Police in South Africa, encouraged by the 2008 statement of Deputy Police Minister Susan Shabangu to "kill the bastards" and "not worry about regulations," kill about 700 people every year.

But state violence hasn't stopped the determined masses. The heroism of the industrial workers calls on us to redouble our efforts to mobilize the masses for communism.

Imperialism is an inevitable development of capitalism

Power is for the taking, but unfortunately the working class will not soon be doing the taking. Illusions about nationalism and imperialism can sabotage even the most heroic mass actions.

Imperialism's bloody birth at the beginning of the 20th century is wrapped up with the super-exploitation of these miners. South Africa is still the world's largest source of platinum and many other indispensable raw materials.

Capital is the lifeblood of imperialism. The **See IMPERIALISM, page 2**



TRADE UNIONS: DEAD-END FOR WORKERS; FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM

SMART is the merger of the United Transportation Union (UTU= 55,000 members) with the Sheet Metal Workers International Association (SMWIA=150,000 members).

How SMART is trade unionism?

LA MTA drivers are now under the SMART umbrella. Trying to avoid the merger, UTU officials wasted a lot of money. To pay these expenses, members' monthly union dues were increased \$8 dollars.

Many workers, however, are skeptical about the new union. Others believe it will help them get rid of James William and his gang, (their current "leaders"), and educate them to negotiate a better contract in 2014.

To help drivers choose "better leaders," SMART local meetings teach the union's constitution and by-laws. At the Feb. 3rd meeting, pointing at James Williams and his gang, the SMART organizer said, "If they are not doing what they are supposed to do, vote them out."

They also have "contract negotiations" classes to help drivers understand the negotiating process. But, this is always kept "secret": secret from the workers! More importantly, union contracts justify and legalize our wage slavery. Our historical task is to destroy wage slavery altogether.

When the SMART organizer was asked what strike support drivers here can expect from the 150,000 sheet metal workers, the organizer answered, "Our members will not cross your picket lines at construction sites where MTA's train or bus operators work."

The drivers expected to hear that tens of thousands of those workers would be called out on strike to support them. But, SMART did not even publicize the recent NYC school bus drivers' strike much less raise a finger to help them!

Like all the union hacks, their excuse is: The union contracts prohibit workers from striking in support. Their strategy is reliance on the bosses'

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SOUTH AFRICA STRIKES CALL US TO MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM!

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SEQUESTER "ANTICS" ATTACK THE MASSES, CREATE POLITICAL CRISIS FOR RULERS

The "self-defeating antics of US Congress reflect declining status and global influence," writes historian Kenneth Weisbrode (YaleGlobal, 1/2/13). Pessimism "is spread by the realization that the country's position of global superpower may soon be lost," a realization that "is no longer controversial."

He's referring to the "sequester:" large automatic budget cuts to nearly every federal agency, mandated by a 2011 law passed by Democrats and Republicans, and signed by President Obama. That's \$85 billion in cuts through September, and potentially trillions over the next decade.

Medicare and Social Security aren't affected — for now. But schools with the poorest students are losing Title I funds, 70,000 kids will be kicked out of pre-school, and tens of thousands of college students will lose work-study jobs and grants. Unemployed workers will lose benefit extensions. An estimated 700,000 more will lose jobs, and perhaps 100,000 will become homeless.

This huge attack on the working class, like the "austerity" imposed on workers worldwide, stems from capitalism's global crisis. But "austerity by sequester" also reveals the sharpening contradictions within US capitalism-imperialism.

Significantly, the sequester even hits the military. Field operations are being scaled back. Civilian employees will be furloughed. Weapons contracts will shrink.

The Pentagon and the National Defense Industry Association lobbied hard against the sequester, and lost. "We are by no means giving up the fight," said Aerospace Industries Association President Marion C. Blakey. They—like Obama—prefer "targeted cuts" that mainly target the masses.

Sequester: Result of Capitalist Crisis

Capitalism's iron law is to maximize profits. The system's inner logic means that, increasingly, this can only be done with fundamentally unproductive investments in the financial sector. The

economy starts to resemble a casino, where the biggest banks and investment houses gamble for the wealth produced by workers' labor.

US financial giants gambled on complicated "products" (many based on predatory mortgages) with huge risks that few understood. This house of cards came crashing down in the "Great Recession of 2007-2009," the worst US economic crisis since the 1930s.

The Great Recession, coming on top of two long, expensive wars (Iraq and Afghanistan) and Bush-era tax cuts for the rich, hit the US budget hard. It meant less tax revenue and greater expenditures (like bank bailouts) and therefore growing deficits, financed partly by printing more money and largely by increasing public debt.

In December 2000, President Clinton announced that the US was "on course to eliminate its public debt within the next decade." By 2010, the debt was over \$13 trillion.

Economic Crisis Becomes Political Crisis: Rulers Can't Rule in Old Way

In 2011, the US was maxing out its credit limit. Congress had to increase the limit in order to avoid default with catastrophic effects rippling worldwide. The House Republicans, aiming for massive cuts and no tax hikes, held the debt-limit hostage. Obama paid the ransom, agreeing to "sequestered" spending cuts if a more reasonable deal couldn't be reached by 2013. Many assumed that the Republicans would "deal" to avoid military cuts.

Democratic Party victories in November 2012 led to a short-term deal that included some tax increases along with budget cuts. But many House Republicans want only to slash the federal government, the military included. They have so little commitment to US imperialism that even arch-conservative Karl Rove is now organizing against them.

Obama offers to cut Medicare and Social Security in exchange for tax increases. Congress

and the President have postponed their federal budget fight until September. But the Tea Party Republicans will probably agree (if anything) only to raising the debt limit.

Thus the capitalist economic crisis has now created a political crisis for the US rulers and their famous "two-party system." Similar crises are developing in England, Italy, and elsewhere. It's high time that US workers reject the lies of politicians and union officials that we can solve our problems by voting!

Capitalist crisis deepens; revolutionary opportunities grow

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities reports that "in the fourth quarter of 2012, the demand for goods and services (actual GDP) was about \$985 billion (5.9 percent) less than what the economy was capable of supplying (potential GDP). This large output gap, which is manifested in a high rate of unemployment and substantial idle productive capacity among businesses, is the legacy of the Great Recession."

The Congressional Budget Office predicts another five bad years (at least). The committed imperialists (Republican and Democratic) say it'll be even worse if deficits dominate policy and are handled only with budget cuts and no tax increases. They realize that remaining a global power (if not a super-power) depends on maintaining our political loyalty while they build up their military, super-exploit us, and prepare for nuclear world war.

None of this is necessary — political antics, budgets, deficits, taxes, money itself, mass unemployment, unused productive capacity, world war — none of it! When the rulers can't rule in the old way, and the masses can't live in the old way — and when the masses, more angry than scared, start moving — we can see the possibility of communist revolution. We must build one International Communist Workers' Party into a force that can turn this into a reality.

IMPERIALISM from page 1

British ruling class, then the U.S. and now the Chinese have stolen vast amounts of capital through the racist exploitation of generations of South African miners. Their imperialist empires are built on the bones of our South African brothers and sisters.

Communism will destroy imperialism's lifeblood. We workers will produce only for the needs of our class. No bosses will hoard the fruits of our labor: no exploitation, no banks, no capital. No capital to export, no imperialism!

Imperialism is not a policy. It is the highest stage of capitalism where monopoly capitalists divide up the world. Finance capital dominates, expanding its tentacles to the boards of every major industry and government on earth.

The Way Forward

Last fall's strike wave may have forced the South African bosses to come up with a new figurehead to defend their exploitation. Cyril Ramaphosa, deputy president of the African National Congress (ANC) and past-president of the

NUM may be too exposed—after all, he watched last summer as the South African police murdered 34 miners in defense of his company's profits.

So last week, Mamphela Ramphela formed a new party to challenge the ANC. She's a revered veteran of the struggle against apartheid and companion of murdered anti-apartheid leader Steve Biko. Until last week, she was also chairwoman of another major mining company, Gold Fields. From 2000 to 2004, she was managing director of the World Bank. So much for voting your way free of imperialism!

Imperialism is the inevitable outgrowth of the capitalist system, funded by a century of unspeakable racist exploitation of

South African miners. To ask imperialism to self-destruct is like asking the sun to rise in the west. There is only one-way forward: to rout racist imperialism we must mobilize the masses for communism.



Striking miner compares South African President Zuma to Adolf Hitler



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COMMUNIST REUNION STRENGTHENS FIGHT FOR REVOLUTION, NOT REFORM

Three years ago the International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP) was formed from a split with the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) in order to mobilize the masses for communism and to reject PLP's reformist line.

"We needed a new party, one that differentiated between reform and revolution."

"I hope to continue learning about communism from you."

"We were wrong with the reformist party and we hope to help guarantee that here, if we move, it will be to the left."

These were some comments of men and women workers who joined ICWP during a recent meeting, who had until then stayed with PLP.

One came up to an ICWP comrade and whispered very emotionally in his ear, "See, I told you that this is the party (ICWP) the workers want."

The meeting was a reunion among comrades from several areas of the country, and the first contact with ICWP for some other workers. The new comrades welcomed visitors with sweet bread and a rich cup of steaming coffee that helped wake up those who had traveled a long way.

A local comrade explained how the process of the split with reformist ideas had occurred. He explained why it was necessary to join the communist effort worldwide and leave behind leaders who only hinder and stop the revolution. "This is our party and these are our ideas," he emphasized in conclusion.



A comrade responded, "We are thankful for your confidence in ICWP and you are welcome again. The ideological struggle is not against people, but it is between the political line of communist revolution and the line of reform."

After clarifying that all of those present were now members of ICWP, the agenda was established. A young leader focused the report on the international crisis and how the party's collectives are debating the inevitable World War III. He discussed how we can and must organize youth, and also the not-so-young, especially in the factories and the military, which are cornerstones for carrying communist revolution forward.

A comrade said, "We understand that Russia and China are other imperialists like the USA and that they have also kept the working class subjugated there."

"The whole analysis about the international context seems very important, but it's also important to talk about what we are going to do as the ICWP to recruit more workers," emphasized a comrade who recently joined.

The political line is discussed, not imposed.

A comrade very honestly discussed his disillusion with the old reformist party and its leadership. He asked, "What will guarantee for me that the same thing won't happen

here?"

Another said, "I am already old and I don't like that they impose political lines. I wrote and wrote for the old newspaper. I even drew up a manifesto for May Day and they never published anything. Also, you say that you tolerate criticisms. The previous leadership never wanted to heed our criticisms."

These statements deepened the discussion and made clear the importance of criticism and self-criticism. Some explained that the party isn't only those who lead it: each member is and must be a guardian of communist ideology inside ICWP. At the same time, it was emphasized that discipline was fundamental for the growth of any revolutionary movement. A young comrade pointed out, "The political line is not imposed, but instead discussed. That is our revolutionary practice."

We also discussed the role of *Red Flag* in spreading communist ideas. "I would like the paper to have more information about El Salvador," said a newer comrade.

Several comrades answered: "That's easy." "In this country political events take place everyday and we all build *Red Flag*. Therefore, what's needed is for us to write more about what happens to us as workers." The newer comrade pledged to write for the newspaper.

Amidst smiles, music, stories, and a rich lunch of chicken stew with rice brought by a comrade who has fought a thousand battles, and who promised to be present in the next activity, the meeting ended. But not before everyone pledged to win more readers for *Red Flag*, recruit more youth for the factories and the army, and develop plans for the 2013 May Day March in San Salvador.

MTA MECHANIC SUPPORTS RED FLAG

As the party grows, so do its expenses, but we should have confidence in the workers, who will know how to respond according to their conditions and possibilities.

Since this is a party of the workers, soldiers, students, teachers, farmworkers, etc., we're the ones who should help economically so the Party grows and *Red Flag* expands to every continent.

I want to share with *Red Flag* readers two heroic and inspiring stories.

One is about an MTA mechanic who was out of work for five months due to surgery on his knees. When he returned to work, I had not the least intention of asking him for his back sustainers. Nevertheless, when he saw me, he said, "I know I'm overdue on my sustainers, because those bastards from Disability still haven't sent me my checks, but on Thursday I'll give you for three months and in a few weeks I'll give you the rest and I'll be up to date."

The other story is about a neighbor. She has been an organizer for women's rights, but now she's unemployed. I wasn't thinking of asking her for a donation, either, but she saw me when I was in front of my house, and she said, "Here, take \$25 for *Red Flag*."

These two cases have made me realize that there are very loyal workers who are strong in their conviction to fight for a better world. Hopefully this will inspire others to make an effort and contribute their grain of sand to help in the construction of this great building which will be communism.

SMART from page 1

Democratic politicians. Shortly after the merger, they stated, "Combined as SMART, we create a large and powerful voice... in advancing legislative objectives in Congress and state legislatures."

NYC school bus drivers' strike shows: this strategy is deadly for workers

Using the excuse that all the Democratic mayoral candidates had "promised" to renegotiate the bus contracts in 2014 – the ATU officials ordered striking NYC school bus drivers and escorts back to work.

On returning to work, hundreds of strikers were fired, and the bus companies are now demanding a 20% wage cut and reduced benefits from their remaining workers.

Come next June, the new bus companies will be replacing some 3,000 strikers with lower paid workers. The next round of contract bids will replace the rest of the higher paid workers like bus drivers who after 8 years seniority earn \$29/hour.

Workers struggle for their lives – union officials "struggle" for union dues

Given the above, the union's survival is in limbo. To show they can control the workers, ATU officials threw these strikers under the bus hoping the liberal bosses will allow them to continue collecting dues from whatever workers the bus companies hire.

Union officials' undying support for capitalism and political control of workers earns them their lavish lifestyle. Michael Cordiello, president of Local 1181, makes \$245,000 a year. Larry Hanley, the international president, makes \$285,000 a year. Yet, some dues-paying members in Long

Island work only 6-hour days at \$15 an hour with no benefits.

Democratic Party + US union movement = kiss of death for workers

That is why liberal rulers like Robert Reich, the former Clinton labor secretary, called on Jan. 31st for the massive unionization of the 36 million US workers who toil for wages below the poverty line for a family of four.

He knows these conditions will eventually breed anger and rebellions, fertile grounds for revolution. Fearing this, he warns, "If they [the wealthy] were rational they'd even support labor unions."

The union hacks preach anti-communism and prevent workers from striking or rebelling by trapping them in the bosses' electoral farce, Democratic Party, and trade union ideology that capitalism can be reformed to meet our needs.

That is impossible. Only communism can ever meet our international working class' needs. "New" unions or "better" union leaders will never solve our problems, especially in these times of economic crisis, rising fascism and looming world war.

Workers' ideology is communism. Read, distribute, write for, and contribute economically to *Red Flag* to help spread these ideas massively, especially among industrial workers and soldiers. Join ICWP and organize study-action groups to recruit more workers-soldiers-students to the fight for communism. Only this will end capitalism's horrors and enable us to build the communist world we need!

Lunchtime in the galley:

“RACISM IS A CLASS ISSUE!”

A fellow shipmate and I sat down for lunch and were talking about another sailor who was stirring up a lot of racism. I mentioned that we have to fight against racism. Then my big Italian-American friend asked, “Why should white people care about racism?”

My friend is not explicitly racist, so he thinks, on that account, he’s doing his part to end racism. This understanding misses the institutionalized racism that is part of capitalism, and, worse yet, pits white and black members of the working class against each other.

I told him, “You have more in common with working class black people than you do with some big boss who uses racism and sexism to squeeze out every damn penny from workers to enrich himself. You come from a working-class neighborhood, your parents struggle to pay the bills, you have a view of the sewer plant. You’re part of the working class, not the bosses’ class.

“Why do you think racism in the U.S. is still around today, even though we’re well into the 21st Century? We have smart phones, nuclear submarines, aircraft carriers, heart transplants, but our society is still full of racism. The U.S. abolished chattel slavery a long time ago, they’ve had a civil rights movement, and yet we still have racist ideology today.

“We’ve been studying together, and we know that good scientists and philosophers need materialist explanations. Then we have to find the material basis for why racist ideology still exists in today’s society.

“The truth is that racism isn’t about whites against blacks, or blacks against whites; it’s about the interracial working class against the bosses’ capitalist class. Today the bosses use this old racism to keep the working class divided and to weaken our massive collective

power, if we organized.

“Racism allows the bosses to get away with paying black and latino workers less money, cornering them into run-down and drug-ridden neighborhoods, providing them inhumane working conditions and projecting a sense of insecurity throughout the whole working class. The bosses super-exploit this part of the working class. White workers are supposed to take this as a warning, that if they don’t submit to the bosses’ commands, they can easily be replaced by unemployed or by super-exploited workers, who are disproportionately black and latino workers, who deserve better.

“Racism is a tool the bosses use to screw the entire working class. So, white workers, and all workers, have to back up any worker who gets screwed by racism; it’s between the bosses and the workers. Racism is a class issue.”

My Italian-American shipmate said, “I’ve never thought about it like that. And I’ve never thought about being part of the working class. That’s deep. So how do you solve racism then?”

“We eliminate racism by eliminating the system that loves using racism and sexism to maximally exploit workers, just so the bosses can stay competitive in their rat race. To end racism, we have to end capitalism,” I said.

“Yeah, I see how it works. But what do you do instead?”

“We produce things according to what our communities need and we work together to produce that stuff. But we don’t waste our time making things no one needs because some boss thinks he can make a little extra profit from it.”

My friend agreed about the class analysis of race, but now new concerns flooded into his head.

“But if people aren’t forced to work, then no one is really going to work.”

“Well, work doesn’t have to be horrible like it is in capitalism. People like to work, but they don’t like to be tortured. But that’s a whole other conversation. Besides, how much work do you expect us to get done in one lunch?”

—Red Sailor



Mass shipyard layoffs hit San Diego workers

IN A COMMUNIST SOCIETY, THERE WILL BE NO LAYOFFS

Workers at NASSCO and BAE shipyards were notified last week that hundreds will be laid off within weeks (375 at NASSCO) and the total may rise to 2000. Layoffs are a fact of life under capitalism, since capitalists only pay workers when they can make a profit off their labor. These particular layoffs, however, come directly from the bosses’ political bickering in Washington, D. C.

Because there is still no federal budget five months into the fiscal year and the “sequester” law is now in effect, the US Navy is delaying and may cancel some planned ship construction and repair. Some of this might have happened anyway, since the US government is running huge deficits caused by imperialist wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the capitalist economic crisis.

The immediate cause of these layoffs, however, is a bitter fight among US capitalists about what and how to cut back. (See Sequester, p. 2) Deadlock over this issue has paralyzed Washington and led to across-the-board budget cuts that may last quite a while. In the meantime, many government workers and employees of companies that sell to the government are put on the street and don’t know how long they will be there.

No matter which side wins the argument, workers will suffer. Even workers in war industries won’t benefit when our sons and daughters are sent to war so that US corporations, rather than Chinese bosses, can exploit workers. And even if the legally mandated cuts to the Department of Defense take place, the US will still spend more money on war than the rest of the world put together.

Capitalism can’t exist without layoffs, but they will never happen when society is organized to benefit the working class. Under communism, where everyone will be a worker, people will always be able to count on having their needs met, whether or not their current project ends.

Unlike the USSR, Cuba and China, which have layoffs and all the other features of capitalism, communist society will be run by workers and take workers’ welfare as its main aim. With no need to compete with or dominate other parts of the world, the ships that workers produce will contribute to worldwide cooperative production, not rule by capitalist superpowers.

Join the International Communist Workers’ Party and fight for communism, the society that runs by the mass mobilization of the working class.

“I Don’t Why You Think...” by Nicolás Guillén

I don’t know why you think
soldier, that I hate you
if we are the same thing
me, you.

You are poor, I am too;
I am lowly, you are too;
where did you get,
soldier, that I hate you?

It pains me that at times you
forget who I am
heck, if I am you
the same as you.

But that’s no reason
for me to dislike you;
if we are the same
me, you,
I don’t know why you think,
Soldier, that I hate you.

We will see already, you and I
together in the same street
shoulder to shoulder, you and I
without hatred, neither me, nor you
but you and I knowing
where we are going to, you and I.

I don’t know why you think,
Soldier, that I hate you!

FEMALE SOLDIERS ON THE FRONT LINES

Why are U.S. imperialists suddenly magnifying the debate over women's combat roles? When bosses scream "equality" for soldiers, they are planning war and fascism. This debate is an example of the liberal façade that imperialists paint to make workers believe they care for us. But sending us to die, kill and fight their wars for imperialist profits and interests is not caring for us.

Currently, there are about 214,000 females serving in the active duty U.S. Armed Forces, and over 200,000 in the National Guard and reserves. There are 1.5 million men and women in the U.S. Armed Forces, but US imperialism will need far more than this to fight a long war with imperialist rivals like China.

The decision to officially allow women in combat is one of many steps U.S. imperialists are taking to widen the pool for a draft and to try to make future wars including world war more politically acceptable. They also want to use this to increase today's all-volunteer army.

Bosses Push Sexism in the Military

While there are more women in the military, the sexist culture of capitalism is an integral part of today's bosses' army, starting in boot camp, where the brass push sexist and racist cadences. A recent survey found 90% of women in the US military have been sexually harassed, or worse, including assaulted and raped. Most are young enlisted women whose attackers are mainly older, higher ranking men. These sexist practices and ideology hurt soldiers and keep us from fighting together to end capitalism with communist revolution.

A recent Marine Corps survey on women serving in combat roles encouraged men to spew the imperialists' sexism. Many marines said they were primarily concerned about being accused of sexual harassment and that women would be treated with favoritism.

This echoes the view of "the most decorated U.S. military man," General Patrick Henry Brady. According to Brady, "Women pose an insane burden on readiness." Most outrageous is his comment that "they [women] aren't designed to kill." The question is not who is "designed" to kill, but rather whom to target. If you asked a female soldier in the military whom she would kill, she might point to General Brady.

Many working women and men around the world are fed up with sexism, racism, poverty and war.

They will one day be ready to end these evils at their source by destroying the capitalist system with communist revolution.

Many do not fall for capitalism's sexism.

When female soldiers began to be gunners in a platoon in Iraq, there wasn't an outcry among soldiers in our company. Perhaps any negative views were silenced because, deep inside, soldiers knew that men and women in the military have one thing in common: we all come from the working class. We depended on each other and saw each other with respect. Married couples in the unit helped set the respectful tone.

Communist soldiers have taken leadership in the fight against sexism and racism, showing that disrespectful attitudes to women soldiers should not be tolerated, and only help the brass divide us and weaken our fight against capitalism. Men and women need to fight shoulder to shoulder against the bosses, without women fearing sexual harassment, assault or rape.

The illusion is pushed that women can rise in the ranks, even occupy ranks like generals, with monetary and career incentives. Collin Powell, the first black Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, did nothing for soldiers or sailors, and neither will a woman boss! This advancement is in the interest of the imperialists. We'll advance collectively building our Red Army.

Women and Men Soldiers: Fight for Communism

Female soldiers have long fought wars on the frontline, especially when communist soldiers fight for the interest of workers around the world. Historically, women have played crucial roles in revolutionary wars. The most famous sniper in World War II was Lyudmila Pavlichenko, a Russian woman.

From China and Vietnam to El Salvador, revolutionary women alongside men have bravely fought and died for a better world. As U.S. imperialists prepare for wider wars, and even world war, both women and men should prepare to join the military to organize for our class.

Communists' mission is to struggle with men and women in the military to unite with industrial workers and the masses internationally to use their arms to serve the working class. Our interests are opposite from the imperialists'. We fight to destroy sexist, racist capitalism and replace it with communism, where all will contribute to building a world without imperialists, where women and men fight and work collectively to meet our class' needs.



March 8:

International Working Women's Day COMMUNISM WILL END THE MATERIAL BASIS OF SEXISM

EL SALVADOR — Some of the most significant recent growth of our party here has been among women factory workers, who are leading important struggles for the working class and organizing for communism.

These workers schedule ICWP meetings at a time when everybody can come. The majority of them are the ones who maintain the home and

are responsible for the care of the family. The fact that this responsibility falls primarily on their shoulders—the assignment of these tasks because they are women—is another obstacle that they overcome to give leadership to the working class. But we are overcoming all these discriminatory behaviors little by little. Our organization is fighting to build a just and equal society where men and women carry out tasks according to our ability and not according to our gender.

In a meeting, a man insisted, "In this country, there's no sexism and no racism." This comment, undoubtedly, shows us the need to talk about these capitalist weapons, and how this problem keeps many women from organizing political struggles.

Is sexism natural? Or is it a product of the division of society into social classes?

In pre-class society, although men and women often had different

tasks, this did not create divisions of status. With the development of class society, and exploitation, one of the ways that the ruling class has used to divide the working masses is sexism. This is true today. Because it keeps men and women divided, it's an attack on all working people, although it is women who end up most disadvantaged.

ICWP works hard to organize more women and to develop women leaders who will organize with a communist line. Doing this requires a conscious struggle against sexism, in discrimination on the job, in our homes and social relationships, and in ourselves. Because of sexism, we have all learned behaviors depending on whether we were born male or female. These behaviors have been strengthened by capitalism, but all men and women workers organized in ICWP should unlearn this,

Communism will put an end to class exploitation. There will be no more bosses to divide us. Building communism will require cooperation, and the full development of all our gifts. People in a communist society will be shaped and prepared to carry out tasks according to their ability. Men and women will carry out the same activities.

Historically women have made significant contributions, especially to the fight for communism, but they have often been made invisible. On May 8, International Women's Day, thousands march around the world, denouncing femicide, hunger and women's unemployment. We call on them, and on the masses of women and men, to join us to fight for communism. By putting an end to capitalism and the sexism of class society, we can bring real liberation for both men and women.



Up until now women have usually not played a big role in combat in imperialist armies, but they have been an important force in anti-imperialist struggles. Women fighters were key to the resistance to the US invasion of Vietnam in the 1960s and 1970s. There were all-woman anti-aircraft, construction and transportation units. An anti-aircraft regiment that protected the network of underground military hospitals in the Marble Mountains near Da Nang consisted entirely of women and took heavy casualties. Mortar teams that attacked the US bombers at the US airbase at Da Nang were also led by women.

LETTERS

LETTERS

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CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

Seattle School Workers Slam Tests, Discuss Communist Education

Recently, faculty at several schools here in Seattle voted to refuse to give the standardized MAP test ("Measures of Student Progress") to their students. Nationwide, teachers have been complaining for years that these tests take away valuable instruction time, and are useless for evaluating student progress. We all grew up taking the Iowa tests every few years, so what's different about the current achievement tests?

This MAP test is given to thousands of students in many states. It originated in Oregon and Washington, and became popular because it was one of the very first computerized adaptive assessments. As the child is taking the test the computer is scoring it at the same time. If the child starts picking the wrong answers it is programmed to give easier questions. If the child is getting every answer correct, it starts making the questions harder.

So, if a "good" student who consistently works hard, pays attention in class, and completes his or her assignments, should become tired or distracted and miss a few answers on

the MAP, they get a low score. You can see how these tests are not a good measure of achievement.

Plus, the teacher is screwed, because in many districts, standardized test scores are being used to evaluate teacher performance. Scripted lessons, standardized tests, and computer-generated instruction take power away from the teacher and put it into the hands of the bosses. They can then spread their lies and propaganda to promote war and fascism.

When I talk to my friends and fellow workers at school, they are often shocked when I say that if we had real communism there would not be school buildings or classrooms that isolate students from the masses. Education will not be merely a lot of facts and figures that you memorize to pass the next test. It will be hands-on, integrated into the working class.

Teachers will come from many backgrounds and experiences. There will not be an elitist system with degrees and titles. Students will help each other learn instead of competing to

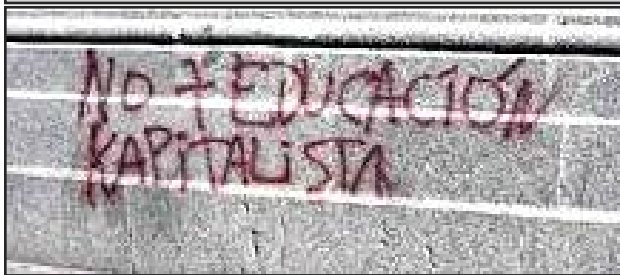
get good grades. The division between manual and mental labor will be eliminated.

There will be no tests or grades. All work will be evaluated by the collective. When problems arise, people will discuss them using the laws of dialectical materialism. Though this is very different than what we are used to, when we put forth these ideas our friends usually like the ideas and ask more questions.

However, even though we agree on what is wrong with the current system, and even when friends have liked our communist ideas, people still believe in reformist struggles like the one against the MAP and other standardized tests. This struggle makes it sound like if tests were fair, then all would be fine.

Certainly we want to get involved in this struggle, 'cause there are a lot of good people supporting it and we want to tell them about our ideas. But we must be bold, and when they chant "Scrap the MAP!" we should hand them a **Red Flag** and say "Scrap the CRAP-italist system!"

--Seattle school worker



Why Not Make Everything Free?

The hardest thing to talk about in school is politics. There are always different points of view and you're either a Democrat or Republican, but the hardest thing for me had been to talk about communism in school.

One day in my science class we were working on a worksheet, it had to do with the population of animals. And then my teacher brought up that our worldwide population is too much. He also said that the Earth can only hold 2 billion humans and today we have 7 billion: "We are 5 billion people over! We should just wipe out those 5 billion people." Astonished, we did not speak. He smiled and said, "They have been debating over that concept for over 40 years now."

One of my peers yelled, "Why don't we make everything free? It would be so much easier." Another peer shouted out, "That's communism! That's horrible!"

As I heard this I turned around in my seat and said, "Why is communism bad?"

He responded, "Everything will be disorganized no one will work and make food." My teacher added, "If everything was free why would I teach you guys when I could be with my family hanging out all day?"

These are common questions that are asked about communism. People have a hard time envisioning a world without money and without others making decisions for us.

Then my teacher said they can fulfill the

American dream. I purposely laughed out loud and asked, "What is the American dream?"

He replied, "It is where people can achieve their goals."

I said, "The homeless people were trying to reach their goals until their homes were taken from them because they had no money."

Just then another peer said, "No one will want to work for free. Nothing is going to get done." I replied, "Do you get paid to clean your room? No. You do it because you need to." Just then class ended.

I'm sure there will be more discussions to come and I look forward to telling you all about it and perhaps recruiting the peer that shared her obvious solution to the world's problems. Why not make everything free?

—High School Student

Communism: Not Just for Workers

I am remembering and at the same time reflecting about a question that a friend asked in a club meeting of the International Communist Workers' Party. He asked, "Without being a worker, can I join the struggle to achieve communism?" This same day that I am writing this, I started thinking about this question.

The struggle to achieve communism has to include all those of us who are victims of this capitalist system that is so inhumane. If in truth we call ourselves humans we have to make a collective struggle, not an individual one. As a species we have gotten to this point because in the past we have put communism into practice.

This capitalist system is responsible for isolating us and making us think that we couldn't unite to make a true struggle to achieve communism. But to save this human species and to save this planet, which is the only one we have,



Feb. 9 — Hundreds march against capitalism in Marburg, Germany. Other signs read: "No Border, No Nation - Free Education!" and "I'm NOT human capital."

we must walk with firm steps to communism. This struggle has to be made with workers, soldiers, and other sectors, but not with the ruling class. The struggle is against them, and they are our enemies.

The capitalists are the murderers of our brothers and sisters. If for some motive that hopefully doesn't happen, if a capitalist joins this struggle, then it's not for communism, it's for reforms, and humanity doesn't want crumbs.

The struggle for a new dawn will intensify if we increase the networks of **Red Flag**.

Let's unite, everyone, to achieve communism and eliminate capitalism!

Comrade in El Salvador



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Anarchism and Communism: Similarities and Differences

I recently attended a panel where anarchism and communism were being discussed. As both panelists described their vision of what a different system would be like, how decisions would be made, and what can be done to get to that different system. It was interesting to listen to similarities and differences. One key difference, which was pointed out by another participant, was that it sounded like the anarchist was talking about working within the system (capitalism) while the communist was talking about getting rid of capitalism altogether. Although the anarchist corrected the participant by saying that anarchists are anti-capitalist and do want to dismantle capitalism it was left unclear as to whether their new world would keep some of the same social retaliations.

For example, communists say that under communism there will be no more money and no more trading/exchanging because everyone will produce for the benefit of all. Stores would become warehouses for all production so all can get whatever they need whenever they need it. Leadership will be in place to help make sure production is distributed everywhere around the world fairly—everyone experiencing shortages and abundance collectively. Anarchists seem to have a smaller view of production and distribution because they are opposed to state structures. They talk about creating “sustainable communities.” I’ve also heard the idea that trading between communities would be acceptable social relations. Trading is significantly different than distribution of goods.

Trading is the birth of money. It was easier for those trading to use money as a method of exchange. We no longer consider our process of buying items as trading, but essentially this is what we are doing. Anarchism often sounds very radical, but it seems like they don’t go far enough with creating a change that will negate capitalism.

--Los Angeles comrade

Communism and Religion

Religion is one of many things that set man apart from other animals in the world. It has inspired majestic, sprawling cathedrals and the benefactor of Michelangelo and other works of Renaissance art.

However, religion has also been used as a justification for the crusades and numerous other wars, homophobia and extortion.

Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, have been used to justify events like the Inquisition and 9/11. How is it that these three religions worship the same deity, yet they are used to persecute others relentlessly?

Crusaders have persecuted Jews and Muslims. Israel has committed genocide against Muslim occupants of the Gaza Strip. Proponents of Christianity and Judaism have battled against proponents of Islam for centuries.

Catholics and Protestants constantly harass each other. Sunnis and Shiites kill each other relentlessly in the Middle East. During the Holocaust, some rich Jews allowed other Jews to be rounded up and delivered into the hands of the Nazis.

Institutionalized Religion

What is the purpose of institutionalized religion? What is the logic in placing the “right” to analyze God in the hands of a selected minority? It was to keep the masses of laborers in submission. This is one reason why the masses did not successfully rebel and overthrow their rulers.

Some laborers were petrified of the punishment they would receive in the afterlife for revolting against their rulers because they “were given the right to govern by god/s.”

We are still told “turn the other cheek” when slapped by the bosses.



In the 19th century, American slavery was justified by the perverted assertion that the bible justified the slaves’ servitude.

The task of interpreting God was done by an upper class of priests, who used their authority to scheme and manipulate, caring only for personal gain. But often times, the King, Emperor, Ruler, etc, intimidated the priests into preaching complete obedience to their rule.

The Native Americans in their pre-class form of communism believed in a God who lived in everything. They did not have someone “superior” to interpret God. There were shamans but they did not live separated and above everybody else. This eliminated any risk of a power hungry clergy.

After the revolution people will be free to worship whoever they choose, as long as they do not put themselves in a position above others. This is one way we can secure our communist future.

--High School Comrade

Responding to Mobilize the Masses for Communism

A person speaks and another listens. They repeat the same words to others and whether they agree or not with the message they respond. Humans are naturally programmed to respond to stimuli whether it is physically, or mentally. Education can serve as a stimulus and inspire people to respond.

Before reading the ICWP Manifesto *Mobilize the Masses for Communism*, I thought I had a good understanding of what communism was from World History class, but didn’t necessarily like the way the history books portrayed it. So I read books on my own time to educate myself further. These books while giving a clearer meaning of communism, still held capitalist deas.

Communism has been defined as the government having control of the money and dis-

tributing it out to the citizens. They have said that from this stem all types of problems such as the government becoming corrupt and too powerful, controlling all aspects of life through means of media and propaganda.

The ICWP’s manifesto stated otherwise saying that money will be completely eliminated. Why would money be a need in a society where everything is done by and for the people? This disturbed me because I have been born and raised in one of the most capitalistic countries in the world. One of the valid arguments for not believing in communism isn’t valid at all. With that now being gone, I figured there was only one thing holding back communism, which would be the future generations.

Many have been taught that to in order to make it in this world you must make large amounts of money and support capitalistic ideas which stand in the way of communism. The ICWP must be ready for an armed revolution, as I’m sure the party is well aware of and at the same time is preparing for it.

People who have been raised with capitalistic ideas may feel threatened by this upcoming revolution and feel the need to respond. This response will lead to war which will turn not only Americans against Americans but brother against brother as well, and will ultimately end in bloodshed and it would be sad if the ICWP didn’t win because it would have all been for nothing. ICWP will have to be ready to deal with this possibility. Get ready ICWP, to deal with the response to stimuli.

--Los Angeles High School Student

Red Flag responds: *Doing away with money will eliminate the material basis for inequality and privilege. An armed revolution is necessary because the capitalists will never relinquish their position of privilege and power peacefully. The masses of the world, men and women, will be mobilized to be active and thinking individuals who will be involved in all of the decisions and the creation of a new society that will guarantee the working and the sharing of everything that the world has to offer humanity. Red Flag invites you to join or form a study group around Red Flag, to help distribute it and to join ICWP. That’s how we prepare to win a communist world.*



JAPAN'S ECONOMIC DECLINE IS PUTTING IT ON THE PATH TO WAR

"We simply cannot tolerate any challenge now and in the future. No nation should make any miscalculation about the firmness of our resolve. No one should ever doubt the robustness of the Japan-U.S. alliance." - Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Feb. 22.

This was Abe's defiant message to China, after meeting President Obama. He was addressing the Japanese-Chinese dispute over the Senkaku-Diaoyu islands, the excuse being used by the US and Japan to forge an alliance trying to contain China's rise.

Since China's rise is uncontrollable, the US wants Japan to prepare long-term for war against China. But Japan is a declining imperialist power with serious economic problems. To get Japan to rearm, the US is urging it to fix its ailing economy by ferociously attacking Japanese workers.

The nature of capitalism-imperialism propels it to war and fascism. Mobilizing the masses for communism is the only logical alternative. Understanding the economic and political reasons behind the imperialists' carnage will help us reject their racism, sexism, nationalism, patriotism and anti-communism and keep us firm on the road to revolution.

Economic decline leads to war

Since the ending of its "economic miracle" in 1991, Japan has been buffeted by recession after recession. Its economy, once the world's second largest, was surpassed by China's in 2010.

Now, it struggles with a \$13.6 trillion debt, the world's second-largest after the US. To make things worse, Japanese bosses' wealth derives greatly from their trade surpluses, and last year they suffered a \$78 billion trade deficit, the second one in a row.

This will make it more difficult for Japan to service its debt, which already devours 25% of the government budget, while confronting Japanese bosses' with an unstoppable and irreversible decline.

One short-term plan: attack the working class to become more competitive

For this, Japanese bosses must drastically reduce the wages and living conditions of the Japanese masses. Voicing the extreme sacrifices this will demand, Finance Minister Taro Aso remarked early this year that the "old should hurry up and die" to ease the economic burden on Japan!

Less dramatic but just as deadly is Prime Minister Abe's plan to cut for the next three years the barely subsistence-level welfare benefits, which will affect more than 90% of families on welfare. Other cuts in social security payments will adversely affect the population at large, including lowering the minimum wage.

Second short term plan: help Japanese bosses financially

Besides pumping \$116 billion to stimulate the economy, with one third of that to stimulate private investment, the Abe government is providing generous tax incentives for large corporations.

But, most importantly, to get the economy growing again, Abe claims, "Beating deflation and curbing the yen's appreciation is crucially important." His plan is to get the Japan Central Bank to print money indefinitely until inflation is at 2%. This will decrease the yen's value and further attack workers by reducing their wages.

The nature of imperialism condemns Japan's plan to failure

Since mid-November, the yen has declined

9%. Abe's plan will further devalue it to make Japanese products more competitive in the world's markets, while enabling Japanese rulers to pay back their debt in cheaper yen.

But, Japan imports almost all of its energy which a weaker yen will make more expensive. This in turn will reduce the profits of the industrial manufacturing sectors the fiscal stimulus aims to revive. Abe's solution: restart old nuclear reactors and build new ones because, after coal, nuclear energy is the cheapest.

Japan's plans to be more competitive will only intensify the competition among the world's capitalists-imperialists fighting for greater market share: They either succeed or go under!

Some Japanese bosses who refuse to go under will choose war

"Japan is not, and will never be, a tier-two country. That is the core message I am here to make," reiterated Abe on Feb. 22. The imperialist pecking order never changes peacefully. Japan is back as a declining imperialist power fighting for survival.

The social sacrifices this will demand will make the Japanese masses restless and rebellious. Revolutionary conditions will mature and revolutionary communism could once again be on the agenda of the masses.

Japanese workers must organize a massive ICWP and mobilize the masses for communism: the only way to guarantee that Japanese imperialists, some of the world's most racist, fascist and genocidal, will be buried forever together with all their kind worldwide. Imperialism makes world war inevitable. But, just as inevitable is communism's triumph—if the working class is mobilized to fight for it!

LETTERS

LETTERS

LETTERS

CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

March 5 – As anti-government protests escalate in the Egyptian industrial and university city of Mansoura, some soldiers in the Morsi government's Central Security Forces went on strike today and protested in front of CSF headquarters, joined by some police. They are refusing to be involved in the government's brutal repression of protesters and are seeking unity between soldiers and citizens.

Port Said has been paralyzed by strikes (including teachers, bank workers and many others) and demonstrations. "This was civil disobedience that is turning into a revolt," said a young worker. Hundreds torched a police station there on Saturday, while mass protests rocked Mansoura, Ismailia, Suez, Mahalla and other Nile Delta cities. According to Japan Times, young revolutionaries are calling for wider strikes.

Liberal groups call for "civil disobedience to topple the regime" but the masses need communist revolution to topple capitalism.



Mass Rebellion in Egypt's Nile Delta

I liked what you wrote about the protests in Port Said. You got it exactly right. There is much more going on that is not being reported accurately by Al Jazeera or anyone else.

There is a new video on Facebook of the man arrested and severely beaten in the city of Mansoura, Dakahlia province.

The videographer had to stop filming after shooting started in his direction. This happened during the clashes on Friday evening, March 1, when hundreds of people poured into the streets calling for the downfall of the Morsi regime.

Another video includes names and ages of children have been arrested in the Mansoura events, including two who are 12 and 13 years old.

Skirmishing continued between police and demonstrators in the Suez Canal Street area, and police fired tear gas profusely to

disperse the demonstrators.

Witnesses confirmed that the police fired cartridges at demonstrators, after demonstrators threw bombs back at the police.

A field doctor at the hospital in Mansoura confirmed that the injuries pro-

testers received included head wounds and dozens of cases of suffocation and spasms resulting from tear gas. Others, women and men, are reported injured by police cartridges.

Anti-capitalist anarchist groups calling themselves "Black Bloc" and "Hooligans" converged on Mansoura to protect peaceful demonstrators and urge their participation in activities called for by revolutionaries and activists in Cairo and Alexandria. They call for escalation of the struggle by closing bridges and main roads, as well as marches.

In a joint statement on Facebook they announced, "We will go to Mansoura not for civil disobedience but to protect people's blood and avenge the bodies that were dragged on the ground. You will see among us youth who will go to death, like you rush for life; for us martyrdom is sacred."

An opposition party in Dakahlia issued a press statement reminding people that after the fall of the regime, Morsi had allowed his security forces to pay themselves from the headquarters of political parties and to attack citizens. The statement added that the Morsi government had lost legitimacy since it insulted the dignity of the country and citizens.

With the ruling Muslim Brotherhood organizing Parliamentary elections starting in April, leftist and liberal parties are "calling on the masses of our great people to boycott the elections and to continue the peaceful struggle for overthrow the regime."

—Red Flag reader from Egypt

SOUTH AFRICA STRIKES CALL US TO MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM!

They shot them in the back. They shot them from helicopters. They shot them at point-blank range. Did the police massacre of 34 wildcatting platinum miners at the Lonmin Mine in Marikana, South Africa, end the wildcat? No.

Did the arrest of 270 (and torture of some) end it? No. Did charging those 270 with murder (one or two cops had been killed earlier) scare them? No. Did the call of the official National Union of Miners (NUM) to return to work have any effect? No. Did the company's threat to fire every striker? Certainly not!

Did the state-organized brutality at Marikana intimidate the rest of the working class in South Africa? Hell no! It emboldened them.

Clearly what is happening in South Africa is no ordinary strike wave. The widespread nature of the struggle, 100,000 miners at its peak, involving township dwellers, miners, industrial workers and farmworkers, speaks to the size of the discontent. The brutal state suppression speaks to the fears of the capitalists. Forged by a hundred years of racist oppression in the bowels of the earth, these subterranean heroes of Marikana speak to the surfacing of a new mass ideology among the workers.

While they don't yet see themselves as "the gravediggers of capitalism," neither do they see themselves as helpless victims of its economic crisis.

"THE MASSES HAVE WOKEN UP"

"The masses have woken up, "a worker at Boeing in Seattle, USA., enthused on hearing about the struggles. "Workers around the world," he went on, "are tired of bosses coming away with fortunes, while they come away with broken bones."

Workers in South Africa

(both citizens and immigrants) are demonstrating to themselves and the rest of us that the working masses are in fact the engines or makers of history and not its victims.

The masses have woken up. Greek workers have staged nineteen General Strikes within the last two years. Strike waves, involving the deaths of both bosses and workers, have swept India's auto industry. Millions of workers, legal and "illegal," have battled the new capitalist exploiters in China. Even the Occupy movement was a reflection of this stirring.

The masses have woken up in response to the devastation brought about by the world-wide crisis that broke out first in the United States as a housing bubble and has since engulfed all capitalism as a crisis of overproduction.

MARIKANA--A NEW MANIFESTO

But it is in South Africa that the workers have taken this wake-up call to new heights. Because of its history, the modern South African state is the product of one of the world's fiercest, most intense battles against racism. Its major governing institutions – the African National Congress, (ANC), the National Union of Miners (NUM), and the Congress of South African Trade Unions)



(COSATU)– earned their leadership credentials in the battle against apartheid. They leveraged those credentials into the political leadership of the post-apartheid state.

The overriding principle of its ideology was simple: remove racists from leadership and a capitalist state can develop both prosperity and equality. Social Justice Capitalism was possible! Because of the heroic struggle that brought it into being, the ideology of this post-apartheid government of South Africa resonated around the world. It dressed dog-eat-dog, exploitative, capitalism in anti-racist clothing.

It is the complete bankruptcy of this ideology that the wildcatting miners (together with the working masses of South Africa) have exposed.

The miners at Marikana have not written a new manifesto, but they have produced an all-important first draft. It says progressive capitalism is a lie. It says workers are the mak-

ers of history. The masses have woken up. The question is, have we, the revolutionaries?

COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

From Athens to Shanghai to Marikana, the world's workers have made a clear statement about what is unacceptable about capitalist production but these struggles have not spontaneously developed an alternative form of production. That is the task of the ICWP, and it is an urgent task.

How do we support these life and death battles? Of course we should advertise them, but after that, what? Expressing solidarity is like applauding from the sidelines. We must join the struggles by advancing them! The South African workers have ripped the anti-racist, progressive image of capitalism to shreds. In so doing, they have handed us the opportunity to present its alternative - share-and-share-alike communism.

The new graves at Marikana make the argument for communist revolution even more relevant.

If the century-long struggle in South Africa has taught us anything it is that our battle is not to reform capitalism once again. It is to replace it with

communist revolution. Communism will abolish private ownership, money, profits & exploitation. It will rip away the need for racism, as well as sexism and nationalism that pit worker against worker. It will create a society where we cooperate to produce for need.

On the one hand, the masses have woken up. On the other, the crisis in capitalist production that has gripped the world shows no sign of being resolved yet. As a result there will be many more Marikanas... in all corners of the globe. Opportunities to organize for communist revolution will come thick and fast.

It's our job to seize them. Then the international working class will be not just the "grave diggers" of capitalism, but the builders of a brand new communist world in its place!

WHO WON THE FIGHT AGAINST APARTHEID?

By the end of World War II, revolution was in the air. In China, Vietnam and Malaysia there were communist insurrections, calling for socialism as a democratic, state-run, capitalism.

In South Africa that unrest led to the alliance of the African National Congress (the ANC) and the South African Communist Party. Instead of socialism, it called for "One Man, One Vote." In a country of 25 million black Africans and only 5 million whites, the white rulers and their imperialist partners saw this as a death sentence.

They instituted "apartheid." It separated whites, black Africans, "mixed-race" and Asians. Black Africans were crowded into "homelands," just 12% of the land. To get jobs in the factories in the white areas, black Africans had to apply for "passbooks."

"One Man, One Vote" vs. Apartheid

Mounting anger against apartheid was met with state violence which came to a head in 1960 when cops killed sixty-nine unarmed protesters at Sharpeville. The state then banned all opposition movements and arrested thousands. Yet this iron fist couldn't kill the resistance.

In the 1960s, new insurrectionary movements swept the world, along with economic crisis, as capitalism ended its long post-war boom. This upsurge reached South Africa in widespread spontaneous strikes by black industrial workers. For the first time, the racist state machinery was forced to make concessions to black Africans. The masses had tasted victory.

In 1976 high school students in Soweto, a black township, went on strike against repressive school reforms. They staged a massive peaceful demonstration but were met with a hail of bullets from the police. The struggle quickly spread

Continued over

INSIDE:

**MEXICO: NATIONALIZATION IS A DEAD END FOR WORKERS
HARD-FOUGHT LESSONS
LINK WORKERS IN EL
SALVADOR & SOUTH AFRICA**

RED FLAG Pamphlet

MARCH, 2013

From previous page:

WHO WON THE FIGHT AGAINST APARTHEID?

beyond Soweto to involve every township in South Africa. Between 1980 and 1985 there were continuous boycotts supported by millions of students.

“No More Heroes” vs. Apartheid

Students and parents organized stay-aways, rent strikes, boycotts and marches. The state answered with repression and murder. The youth turned their comrades’ funerals into demonstrations against fascism. The state then recruited the black middle classes into local township governments which tried to raise rents and utility rates and build a new police force.

The youth led the community to burn the local government buildings, to kill police and informers and throw mayors out of office. In 1985, hundreds of black officials resigned and fled to special centers for safety.

With the “stay-away,” students prevented their parents from commuting to the factories in the white areas of South Africa. These became general strikes involving the whole community, although they were only directed against racism and apartheid, not the capitalist state.

In 1984, stay-aways hit the country’s industrial heartland. The mass struggle reverberated in Wall Street and London. The South African state responded by sending over 7,000 troops to conduct house-to-house searches. The state—the protector of capitalism—was losing its grip, but the worker-student alliance was developing self-

confidence. It advanced a significant slogan, “No More Heroes”: the working class doesn’t need saviors: it needs collectivity.

“No Compromise” vs. Apartheid

Thousands of youth calling themselves the Young Comrades championed the slogan “Long live the spirit of no compromise.” They had set up their own “civic associations” in the townships and their own “people’s courts” to try petty criminals, enforce boycotts and condemn informers. They would accept no compromise with racism or the system of apartheid. Their achievements were inspirational; their limitations fatal. They fought apartheid (the effects of this misery); they needed to fight capitalism (the cause of it).

Attempting to stem the revolutionary tide, imperialists like Barclay’s Bank and Consolidated Goldfields mining company set up secret negotiations between ANC leaders and the South African government. The ANC agreed to drop demands for nationalization of the farms and mines, if the government would agree to end the legal structure of apartheid.

“Everything is Negotiable” = ANC

In 1990, ANC leader Nelson Mandela was released from prison. An international media campaign presented him as “the greatest hero of the twentieth century.” His job was to win the masses to replace the line of “no more compromises” with the ANC line that “everything is negotiable!” The ANC agreed to elections in 1994,



Soweto

and became the party that administers capitalism.

Barclay’s Bank, Consolidated Goldfields, and their US counterparts from the apartheid era are still the major capitalists in South Africa. Chinese imperialists are now in the mix; black billionaires are now necessary to preserve imperialism. The former head of the NUM and ANC vice-president, Cyril Ramaphosa, for example, is now on the Board of Directors of Lonmin Mining Company, the very company the miners of Marikana were on strike against. Like Ramaphosa, other “everything is negotiable” ex-leaders are making millions off of the grueling poverty-imposed work of black South Africans... but the masses are now moving.

As capitalist crisis and miners’ strikes threaten the profits of Anglo American Platinum, they have threatened to close mines and lay off thousands of workers in South Africa. “Independent” union leaders there have called for nationalizing the mines. “We cannot let these foreign investors do as they please with our mineral resources,” they cry. ICWP comrades in Mexico respond:

ONLY COMMUNISM WILL MAKE THEM “OUR MINES”

As workers in Mexico have learned, the nationalization of natural resources under capitalism only serves the interests of the national capitalists. In 1938 in Mexico, President Lázaro Cárdenas nationalized some US-owned industries, giving a bigger share of the profits to the Mexican bosses. Nationalization was supported by the communist movement, which wrongly believed that it would pave the road for the emancipation of the working class. The national capitalists took advantage of this fatal error to mobilize the masses to strengthen their dictatorship over the working class. There are no “progressive” capitalists! They are all exploiters.

When the Mexican oil industry was nationalized in 1938 as a way to crush a strike of oil workers, this was not revolutionary. The oil companies were compensated by public funds and donations from workers, benefitting the Mexican capitalist state and the functionaries who have administered PEMEX ever since.

The worst thing about nationalization--and nationalism itself--is that it created ideological confusion which is still an obstacle to the development of workers’ communist class consciousness. From Mexico to South Africa, our line of mobilizing the masses directly for communism must make explicit our opposition to the trap of nationalism.

When striking South African workers at Sishen mine recently seized the means of production (bulldozers), it showed the potential of the industrial working class. The only way to make it “our oil” or “our mine” is with a communist revolution. Then, with no capitalists and no profits, we’ll share all the resources for the well-being of the international working class. Then it will be “our world!”

HARD-FOUGHT LESSONS LINK WORKERS IN EL SALVADOR & SOUTH AFRICA

Like the workers in South Africa, the masses in El Salvador are in motion against the horrors of capitalism and its poverty and repression. But that’s not all they have in common.

Like the masses in South Africa, those who rule on behalf of the banks and international capital are those who were the “heroes” of the fight against the government in the 1970s and 1980s.

In South Africa it’s the ANC. In El Salvador, it’s the FMLN, the electoral legacy of the Faribundo Marti Front for National Liberation (FMLN) formed by four different guerrilla groups, together with the Communist Party of El Salvador (CPS), which led the armed struggle.

As in South Africa, these “heroic leaders” started talking about socialism, then changed it to national liberation, and after years of armed struggle ended up signing a Peace Accord and creating a Truth Commission to cover up the crimes of capitalism.

Today these “leaders” are in the govern-

ment, and are also part of the new bosses’ class. The entire current leadership of the FMLN and ex members of the CPS are part of Boards of Directors of huge corporations such as Alba Petroleum and Alba Transports, and include the Vice-President, the President of the Supreme Court of the Legislative Assembly and the Supreme Court and many other offices. The unions, like ANDES June 21, the teachers’ union, which once mobilized the masses in the struggles, now serve to quiet these struggles.

These capitalist leaders once led thousands of industrial and agricultural workers, teachers and students in great struggles for a supposedly “better” world.

But what happened? In South Africa as in El Salvador, are they simply traitors and sell-outs? Of course they’re traitors, but it wasn’t their love for a fistful of dollars that made them sell out. It was their political line of reforming capitalism. They believed that ordinary workers can’t run society--that we need instead experts and capitalists and investments from Wall Street, London, or Beijing.

We’re not doomed to endlessly repeat these errors. The same opportunity to mobilize the masses for communism that the Marikana miners have bought for us echoes in El Salvador and around the world. The hundreds of thousands of fallen comrades in El Salvador, like those in Marikana, cry out to us to reject these traitors, and more importantly their ideology of national liberation and of socialism, which has sabotaged the struggle of the international working class. Our struggle must be for communism.



El Salvador

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