



# RED FLAG

**MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM**

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



## MOBILIZING THE SOUTH AFRICAN MASSES FOR COMMUNISM

### Can't Be Limited By \$15 Now Campaign:

## ABOLISH TYRANNY OF WAGES

SEATTLE, WA, March 18 — Hundreds marched last Saturday for a \$15/hour minimum wage. For days afterwards the local papers, union leaders and politicians debated how much exploitation was acceptable. The ICWP argues that the only acceptable course was to end the tyranny of wages.

Dozens took *Red Flag* at the march. This generated a number of discussions about the prospects for communist revolution. A Teamster union driver was particularly interested in the political struggle among Boeing workers featured on the front page.

Meanwhile, the mayor commissioned a 24-member advisory committee to propose a new minimum-wage ordinance. It will issue its recommendations by late April.

Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 775 head David Rolf and Seattle Hospitality Group CEO Howard Wright co-chair the mayor's committee. Wright owns hotels and the Seattle Space Needle. His plan includes tips

as part of the \$15 minimum. His self-serving hypocrisy is easily exposed.

Rolf's local endorsed the march and a representative spoke at the rally. He invoked Henry Ford, the original owner of Ford Motor Company, who he admitted was an enemy of the working class. "But he realized that he needed workers who could afford to buy his cars," argued the union rep.

The SEIU leaders' whole argument rests on the premise that a minimum wage increase is good for capitalism. What else can we expect from these class traitors? Trade union philosophy demands we accept the deadly illusion that capitalism can actually serve our interests.

The socialist city council member Sawant tried to differentiate herself by demanding \$15 now. That is until she compromised by agreeing to phase in the increase over three years for small businesses.

Her group plans to put a "cleaner" minimum wage initiative on the fall ballot if the city council

It was a scorching hot day in South Africa, with the temperature hovering over 104° F (40° C). Undeterred by the oppressive heat, a young comrade who had read *Red Flag* a few days ago took us to his friend's house.

We arrived at the friend's shack. There is no running water, electricity or toilets. The shack is made of discarded packing crates. Workers constantly compared this to the state-of-the-art soccer stadium built for the 2010 World Cup.

Inside this shack, which could be duplicated from Tijuana to Bangladesh, where daily life is unbearable, we started a serious discussion about how to end the capitalism that forces hundreds of millions of workers around the world into such horrific conditions.

"Reading *Red Flag* is a priority," said the young comrade. He said that it has opened his eyes. "Now I understand that it is capitalism and not just one bad boss."

More young comrades joined in a very lively discussion about how twenty years of rule by the African National Congress in South Africa have produced more misery for the working class.

Our comrade, who has decades of experience organizing, especially under brutal repression during apartheid, said that all the political parties serve the capitalist class. All the comrades cheered when the comrade said that reforms will only take us in circles. "We must smash capitalism with communism, which will fulfill the needs of the working class."

This led to the discussion on education. A young comrade said that it is very expensive to get a college education in South Africa. So we talked about how capitalist education trains us to be selfish. After a lively exchange of ideas, another comrade said, "Education is really crooked. We really learn to survive by working and helping each other. Capitalist education makes us greedy."

In a very moving testimony, the comrade who had organized the meeting in his friend's shack said that there are days when he is hungry and there is no food. His friend, who also has almost nothing, always finds a way to feed him when he is starving.

We used this example to illustrate how under communism we can

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**RUSSIA/UKRAINE:  
NATIONALISM IS  
DEADLY FOR  
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**MTA WORKERS  
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**CHINA'S RISE  
AND  
IMPERIALIST  
WAR  
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**FOR A  
COMMUNIST  
MAY DAY  
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**Russia, Crimea, Ukraine:****COMMUNISM WILL FREE WORKERS FROM  
BOSSSES' NATIONALIST TRAP**

Russia's recent annexation of Crimea exposes sharpening inter-imperialist rivalry, which can no longer be managed with diplomacy or even economic pressure. Imperialists can rely only on military force in their struggles to re-divide the world. (See last issue of *Red Flag*).

Don't expect this "new Cold War" between the US and Russia to stay cold. It's no accident that mainstream commentators are writing about the sequence of events that triggered World War I a century ago.

It's US imperialism, not Russia, that's increasingly isolated in this fight over strategic energy resources. The powerful Chinese and German imperialists both have strategic relations with their Russian counterparts.

Many around the world hate US imperialism so much that they are cheering Russia's corrupt capitalist butcher Putin. This is a deadly mistake for the working class. It's just not true that "the enemy of your enemy is your friend."

Ask the steelworkers, aluminum smelters, and truck assemblers of Sverdlovsk, Russia – once Putin's stronghold -- who turned against Putin and went on hunger strikes in 2012 over unpaid wages. "Maybe we're tired of how we're living," one said.

The only path to a better life is to mobilize the masses for communism. We must take this message to our workplaces, to our schools, and to the streets on May Day, the international holiday of the international working class.

**Nationalism, Imperialism, and Hypocrisy**

The US government supported Texas slave owners' declaration of independence from Mexico in 1836, annexing it in 1845. In 1893, US citizens in Hawaii overthrew Queen Lili'uokalani and reconstituted Hawaii as a republic – which the US annexed five years later.

Their squeals about Russia's annexation of Crimea – part of Russia for centuries – are pure hypocrisy. However, Russian rulers are no better. They protested the secession of Kosovo from Serbia and waged a genocidal war against separatists in Chechnya, but supported the secession of South Ossetia from Georgia.

Capitalists' and imperialists' appeals to "a nation's right to self-determination" camouflage their scheming to control the markets, resources, and labor power of some strategic area.

The fight over Crimea and the Ukraine illustrate vividly the impossibility for the masses to move forward without decisively rejecting nationalism and mobilizing for communism.

**Nationalism, Imperialism, and Racism**

Rising Ukrainian nationalism traced its origins to a 17th-century Cossack uprising against Poland. The Cossacks massacred Poles and half the Jewish population. Ever since, virulent racism has been part of Ukrainian nationalism. Russian nationalism, meanwhile, bolstered the Tsarist empire, often called a "prison-house of nations."

On the eve of World War I, the territory of

present-day Ukraine was divided between the Russian and Austro-Hungarian imperialists, who saw it as key in the coming fight over the Balkans.

French, Belgian, and British imperialists had already invested heavily in mines and factories there. During the war, Austro-German imperialists moved in, trying in vain to crush workers' and peasants' organizations.

**20th Century Communists Confused over  
"National Question"**

The Ukrainian masses joined with Russian workers, soldiers and sailors to build workers' power out of the rubble of World War I. They were decisive in the Red Army's victory, between 1917 and 1920, over the imperialist invaders and their anti-communist "White Army".

"We are internationalists," Lenin wrote to the Ukrainian masses in 1920. "We stand for the close union and the complete amalgamation of the workers and peasants of all nations in a single world Soviet republic."

But the Bolshevik line was deeply contradictory: "The right of nations to self-determination; the unity of the workers of all nations." And they did not build communism, but socialism whose economic core was capitalism. Inevitably nationalism defeated proletarian internationalism.

By the 1930s, Soviet workers were urged to "defend the motherland." Sergei Eisenstein's patriotic film "Alexander Nevsky" celebrated a 13th-century victory of a Russian Prince of Kiev (in today's Ukraine) over German invaders.

Ukraine was so thoroughly integrated into the Soviet Union that, in 1954, Khrushchev turned control over Russian Crimea to Ukrainian authorities.

**Communism Will Create One Human  
Family**

The capitalists see nationalism as natural and necessary for their system. Doug Bandow recently wrote for *Forbes* magazine ("The Capitalist Tool") that "in principle, there is nothing wrong with wanting to live with others who share family, religious, historical, and cultural ties. But ... once ethnic division begins, the process usually leaves newly dissatisfied ethnic minorities. ... There is no obvious end, with ever smaller groups successively attempting to secede from each new territory."

**Who's Russian? Who's  
Ukrainian? Who Cares?**

People have lived in the area now called Ukraine for almost 7000 years, since the Neolithic era. For long periods, many distinct cultures coexisted. Archaeological evidence shows both nomadic and sedentary cultures, hunting, gathering, fishing, agriculture, and the domestication of the horse. Some settlements had thousands of inhabitants and left no signs of social class divisions.

According to legend, Kiev was founded in the 5th century. The "Ukrainian" and "Russian" languages evolved from the "Old East Slavic" spoken in the 9th century state of Kievan Rus'. Then, most people still lived in family- and clan-based villages and worked the land as communes. Their society did not have the class institutions typical of Western European feudalism, whose Christian crusaders (along with Mongol invasions from the east) destroyed Kievan Rus' around the 12th century.

The idea of being "Russian" or "Ukrainian" or "Polish" took hold much later, in the 1830s and 1840s. The very idea of "nationalities" (cultural groups tied to particular territories) is firmly rooted in capitalism.

There are national bosses but just one international working class. Nationalism or patriotism of any sort divides and weakens our class. It sets us up to be used as cannon-fodder in the bosses' imperialist wars.

We must wage a relentless political struggle to make it obvious to the masses that only by destroying capitalism everywhere can we put an end to deadly nationalism and imperialist war. Communism will eliminate private property, wage slavery and the money system. This will create the material basis to wipe out borders, nations, and nationalism.

The seeds of communism are growing today in the International Communist Workers' Party as groups of workers join us from San Salvador to South Africa.

*Against the bourgeois "right of nations to self-determination," we proclaim the need of workers everywhere to mobilize for communism across and against capitalism's borders.*



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## COMMUNIST SOLIDARITY CRUCIAL TO MTA WORKERS' STRIKE AGAINST CAPITALISM

LOS ANGELES, March 25 — “Management is using two tactics – intimidation and their treacherous union ‘leaders’ – to prevent us from striking,” said a MTA bus operator.

Their contract expires in June. MTA and US bosses fear a strike that would impact tremendously the country's second largest city. Economically, it would cost them more than \$80 million a day, while stranding over 1.6 million bus and railroad passengers.

However, even more terrifying for the bosses is the political impact the strike could have nationally and internationally. It could pit the capitalist state against these workers, while showcasing the power of the industrial working class and its crucial role in modern capitalism.

It could give these workers ideas about revolution and running society, since hundreds of them have been reading *Red Flag* about organizing a political strike against capitalism and for communism.

Recently a worker told us, “In my Division, management was commenting that many MTA employees were or are in the military or national guard, and that they were afraid they would all go AWOL.” This really terrifies US bosses, therefore their desperate efforts to stop or break a strike.

### MTA's Bad Cops:

#### Supervisors and the Sheriff

At Division 7, Supervisor Barbara Maycott and a senior supervisor showed up at the “Rap Session” with an LA County Sheriff deputy. Their intimidating message was loud and clear:

“Companies’ laws and regulations must be obeyed. We’ll find ways to terminate any operator breaking them”.

### MTA's Good Cops:

#### Their Treacherous Union Officials

For their dirty insidious work, they have their unconditional servants: James Williams and Victor Baffoni and gang of the UTU (the drivers’ union). First they tried to demoralize drivers from striking by lying about strike benefits. This attempt failed: their lie was exposed.

Now James Lindsay and gang, who head the ATU (the mechanics’ and service attendants’ union) are getting ready to settle their contract before the operators’ expires. They hope that the mechanics will not support an operators’ strike because their contract has a no-strike clause.

Changing the expiration date of the mechanics’ contract from that of the operators’, plus the no-strike clause, place legal obstacles to workers supporting each others’ strikes.

### Workers need local, national and international solidarity

Solidarity is a communist principle that’s been practiced by the oppressed masses throughout history: collectively facing their oppressors. Failing to do so, they have been easily vanquished.

Unfortunately, this solidarity has mostly been for reforms or to fight for socialism, like in Russia and China. Workers need communist solidarity: solidarity not for higher wages, a better union contract, or state capitalism (socialism); but to destroy capitalism’s wage slavery and build a communist world.

When both MTA contracts expired on the same date, supporting each other’s strike had no “legal” obstacles. Now, these union scum and their masters are hoping MTA workers obey their contracts’ rules and don’t support each other any more.

These treacherous union hacks are doing the rulers an enormous service. If MTA workers fall for this ploy, our wage-slave masters won’t have to order their politicians to impose “cooling off” periods (like Gov. Brown did in the Oakland BART strike); or have their judges impose injunctions. Furthermore, they don’t have to pass laws making strikes illegal.

All that exposes the true character of their state as a dictatorial instrument to control and oppress workers—something capitalists try very hard to hide. They want us believing that their state is a neutral and fair arbiter and that we are all “equal before the law.”

### Break the Capitalists’ Laws to Break Their Chains of Wage Slavery

To break the chains that bind us to our slave masters we must break their laws. Just like our ancestors from Spartacus, to the Haitians, to the US slave rebellions in their fights against chattel slavery, we must take our enemies head on. We can’t be bound by trade unionism, reformism, or the bosses’ politicians.

Ending capitalism’s wage slavery will require a communist revolution world wide. Communist solidarity will be critical. Forward with a political strike against capitalism and for communism to help build this solidarity!

## MASSES REBEL AGAINST RACIST POLICE MURDER IN BRAZIL



RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL, March 18 — Neighbors of Claudia da Silva protest her murder by the Military Police. This 38-year-old hospital worker and mother of four was caught in the cross-fire between drug gangs and the police in their racist and increasingly murderous “pacification” programs in preparation for the World Cup. The police threw her in the trunk of their car, and drove away, but she fell out, and her body was dragged behind the police car. Although warned by pedestrians, the police continued for 250 meters (273 yards), her body beating against the pavement. The news of this latest racist murder in the slums of Rio was greeted by protests and rebellions, including mass blocking of traffic and the burning of at least one bus. The angry Brazilian masses need ICWP more than ever.

## COMRADES IN SOUTH AFRICA from page 1

organize society to produce what the working class needs. The wage system, based on profit, can never meet our needs.

There was thunderous applause when a comrade said we must get rid of nationalism. “We must never bow to the South African flag! We only have one flag: that is the flag of ICWP for communism!”

The meeting ended with a very disciplined plan. The comrades agreed to meet every month. Everybody was energized and said that they would bring more friends and relatives to the meeting. These comrades have a very close and supportive relationship with thousands of workers in their township. The comrades also decided to write articles and letters to *Red Flag*. We also emphasized the need to bring women comrades to the meetings.

Earlier in the week, we participated in a rally organized around reform demands by the Na-

tional Union of Miners of South Africa, an independent union. (See photos below and on page 1.) A comrade was wearing the ICWP t-shirt. A young woman bus driver liked the t-shirt which said “Fight for Communism” and she wanted to meet us.

She traveled a long distance to meet us. She took us to her neighborhood where thousands of workers live in desperate conditions. Soon we were greeted and surrounded by women who cursed the African National Congress, the governing party of South Africa, and wanted to talk about our ideas.

We can give a huge number of such examples of organizing in South Africa. The bosses con-

sider super-exploited workers here as merely objects of profit, but these workers are making conscious, resolute plans to end capitalist tyranny. These experiences show that we have the potential to make ICWP a mass communist party, not only in South Africa, but around the world.



## \$15/hr Advocate Elected to Seattle City Council

### **CAN WE MAKE A KINDER, GENTLER CAPITALISM? NO WAY!**

The \$15-an-hour movement calls itself a strike against poverty. We call it an adjustment to slavery--wage slavery. The movement claims it will fight racism and sexism too. We say it won't. As long as capitalism exists, so too will racism, sexism and poverty. Capitalism needs all three.

Socialists and liberals disagree. They argue that a more humane capitalism can be built. We point out even the heroic socialist revolutions of the last century (the ones in the Soviet Union and China) failed. And, we argue, they failed because they didn't abolish the wage system.

Wages dominate our lives so much that it's surprising how confused we are about them. Some think that union negotiations determine them; others that minimum wage legislation does it by setting a standard benchmark. While both play a role, wages are far more than dollars and cents (or whatever currency a given country uses).

#### **Wages Subjugate Us**

Wages keep us under the thumb of the capitalists just as in feudal times serfdom kept the peasants under the thumb of the dukes and kings. The first bitter reality of this system is that we all have to go cap-in-hand to the boss to get a job and earn a wage. Without a wage, or the pensions we store up as delayed wages, we couldn't survive.

The second bitter reality is that no wage will be earned unless it protects or expands the profits of capitalists. The wage system is a system the capitalist runs. It makes wealth for them. That wealth translates into power. Wages, whether minimum or maximum, empower them and subjugate us.

Whereas we see ourselves as strong, caring individuals, capitalists don't. They see us as units of production, as things! They calculate our worth as if we were a machine - how much does it cost to produce, maintain and replace when worn out. In human terms "replace" means bringing up a family, the next generation of wage workers. So it's no accident that no matter what country you live in, a "good wage" will hover somewhere around what is needed to house, feed, educate and raise a healthy family of four. Of course few of us work for the "good" wage. Most of us work for "a nearly-good wage" or a "not-so-good wage."

Behind the "good" wage are several degrees of poverty, which capitalism always claims it will eliminate. In 1964, US President Johnson declared "a War on Poverty." Then, since "the War" failed, subsequent Presidents introduced welfare reforms to "break the cycle of poverty!" Later, since the "cycle wasn't broken," Elizabeth Warren could note that in 2004, "more children

would live through their parents bankruptcy than their parents' divorce." And now the talk is to attack poverty by raising the minimum wage.

#### **Capitalism Needs Poverty**

The reality is that capitalism needs poverty. The fear of it disciplines our class, making us go cap-in-hand to the boss when we know we should be going fist-in-air.

Today capitalists want to raise the minimum wage, not to eliminate poverty, but to cut the cost of government. If fast-food industries like McDonalds paid higher wages, their workers would no longer qualify for food stamps and other supplements. "This would save something in the order of tens of billions of dollars," claims multi-millionaire Ron Unz, editor of *The American Conservative*.

Of course, most \$15/hr. activists could care a damn about that. They want to eliminate the rotten conditions capitalist exploitation produces and reproduces again and again. They are right, but it is a long march that doesn't go through City Councils and pleas for legislation.

It's a march that rallies under the revolutionary slogans of "Abolish the Wage System" and "Fight for Communism." It's a march of a thousand miles that begins with the distribution of one *Red Flag!* It's a march the ICWP has already started. Join us on May Day!

## TYRANNY OF WAGES

### from page 1

action falls short.

None of these forces questions the need for wages because none envisions anything but capitalism.

Even those advocating socialism concede that society must include wage slavery. Once again, what else could we expect? Socialism is really just another form of capitalism.

Mobilizing the masses directly for communism takes a different tack. Exploitation must be eliminated. Work must be organized to fulfill our needs instead of camouflaging the bosses' thievery of the products of our labor for their profit.

#### **Boeing Workers Discuss Minimum Wage**

Boeing friends had many questions when comrades returned to work Monday morning after the march.

This issue is particularly relevant now. The bosses have lowered starting wages for industrial workers to \$15/hour--and sometimes lower!

"I think people should get at least \$15/hour," said a *Red Flag* reader, "but I wonder how some of these businesses can survive."

The socialists and liberals argue that Wall Street caused this crisis, the 1% can afford to pay a \$15 minimum wage and that the big bosses use small businesses to camouflage their own greed. They avoid the heart of the matter like the plague.

"Now you're getting to the heart of the matter," answered our comrade. "How come we can't get jobs unless the bosses are able to exploit us?"

A lot of work needs to be done, but the bosses won't let us do it unless they can profit off our labor. Wages tie us to this system. We need a new communist system organized to do useful work for our collective good.

Our comrades in South Africa are facing the same ideological struggle. This shows that our comrades everywhere have to wage this struggle,



### **What If the Union Called an Election and Nobody Showed Up?**

The first thing Boeing workers noticed about the election of a new International Association of Machinists district president was the abysmal turnout. "The president was elected by his friends and family," was how one machinist put it.

He won office with 4.8% of the 45,000 eligible votes. The three candidates running received a little over 6%.

"Friends and family" was not too far from the truth. The vast majority of the 2,000+ votes the newly elected president got were from the over 1,000 appointed shop stewards and hundreds of paid union functionaries.

One hundred thirty-two Boeing workers took the last issue of *Red Flag* with a front-page article explaining the bankruptcy of trade union politics. Many more showed this article to their "friends and family." This led to scores of debates about the alternative: mobilizing the masses for communism and building the ICWP

which can affect workers worldwide.

#### **Let's Mobilize This May Day To Abolish Wage Slavery**

This debate will come to a head on May Day. We invite everyone to our pre-May Day dinner April 12<sup>th</sup> where we will organize revolutionary activity for May 1.

The socialists and liberals will build May Day contingents based on how much exploitation is acceptable.

Now the Democratic Party has picked the issue

up to save their butts in the next election. The bosses can no longer let sleeping dogs lie. They have to throw out a few illusionary reforms.

Nonetheless, this movement for a \$15 minimum did not come out of the blue. It is part and parcel of workers' action around the world triggered by the capitalism's crisis.

Masses in motion provide a great opportunity to struggle for a communist vision. Central to that vision is the struggle to abolish the tyranny of wages.

## ORGANIZING FOR A COMMUNIST MAY DAY

EL SALVADOR — A beautiful Sunday morning of communist discussion at the beach was very gratifying for a group of men and women factory workers and their families.

The agenda contained three points. It began with an analysis of the editorial in *Red Flag*. A young woman leader was responsible for beginning the discussion about the situation in the Ukraine and how this affects, or does not affect, the working class in El Salvador.

The second point was a discussion of the elections carried out in February and March of this year and the role of each comrade in them. The discussion ended by planning the internationalist activity of celebrating May Day this year.

A comrade who had not been participating very actively was designated to lead the discussion about inter-imperialist rivalry based on the editorial in *Red Flag* and her return was very encouraging. Everyone commented about how the fights between the imperialists affect workers everywhere and that these fights never have the goal of helping the working class but instead are about how to exploit us.

Most workers participated in the Presidential election, but one of them said, “It is a process that little by little we are getting out of. Before we didn’t know much about communism; now we do.” All those present gave their opinions, and

an analysis was given about how elections are a fight among old bosses and new bosses, and that the working class gets nothing in these bosses’ fights.

A worker comrade who participated for the first time was very energetic in her participation and made the commitment to carry out the struggle for communism, organized in the International Communist Workers’ Party. “I agree with the comrade who said that she believes in criticism and self criticism as the way to carry forward the struggle for communism,” stated the new comrade.

Two young workers also took the enormous step of joining ICWP. It was their second time participating in a meeting and they said they are ready to continue in the revolutionary struggle and that they feel very proud to be part of this process of organization. One of these is a young woman who brought her child with her; the other comrade brought his wife and children with him.

“I don’t think that we will march on May Day with the union. We want to march where we are most useful to the party,” one of the workers’ leaders said forcefully. They asked how we thought our participation would have the biggest impact as the only communist party in

the march. There were many ideas, including how the youth could distribute our communist literature.

Finishing with these topics, a comrade asked, “And what will the comrades think who live far from here?” This started a lively discussion about what it means to have an international party.

Referring ironically to the last electoral struggle when it was said that in this country people would not be able to eat chicken, because supposedly in Venezuela there aren’t any chickens for sale, a comrade brought chicken and others brought rice, pork rinds, sodas and bread to end the gathering with the group of members of ICWP and their families, eating sumptuously and smiling, overlooking the waves of the mighty Pacific Ocean.



### Politics and Math Education – Part 2

## CAPITALIST TRAINING AND TESTING VS COMMUNIST LEARNING AND PRACTICE

Previously we explained how capitalist math education trains us for the capitalist workplace and reinforces the idea that a few bosses should take charge of our lives.

But everything changes. The deep crisis of global capitalism today, with its increasing push toward world war, means more rapid change. That includes math education.

The rulers see that their schools aren’t training us and our kids to meet THEIR changed needs. So they are experimenting with reforms, none of them intended to meet the needs of OUR class.

#### P-TECH: Direct Corporate Control

“Countries like Germany focus on graduating their high school students with the equivalent of a technical degree from one of our community colleges, so that they’re ready for a job,” said President Obama in his State of the Union speech. “At schools like P-TECH in Brooklyn, a collaboration between New York Public Schools, the City University of New York and IBM, students will graduate with a high school diploma and an associate degree in computers or engineering.”

In these P-TECH schools, the corporate “partner” designs the curriculum to guarantee that graduates are ready for a job in its company. “We need to give every American student opportunities like this,” Obama declared.

Sure — opportunities to be trained as wage-slaves!

In communist society, education will be even more closely linked with work, but not under conditions of capitalist exploitation. Young people will work alongside more experienced adults who are deciding the “what” and “why” and “how” of production, not just obeying orders.

Beyond the basics of numeracy and logical reasoning, which all children will grasp in age-appropriate ways, youth will learn math as they need it.

All will have the opportunity to learn, as well, the beautiful and powerful general structures and applications of mathematics. Classes and study

groups will be organized in workplaces and communities, as age-diverse groups decide to learn something new.

We will all give leadership in areas where we have knowledge and skills. But nobody will be a “teacher” full-time for their whole working life.

#### Common Core Curriculum and Imperialist Competition

This month, millions of US students are guinea-pigs in two new tests aligned with the “Common Core” curriculum. These tests will eventually be used to “assess” both teachers and students. The college-admissions SAT and ACT tests are also changing to orient with Common Core.

Common Core math standards claim to have students “practice applying mathematical ways of thinking to real world issues and challenges.” But who defines those issues? The capitalists!

“The standards are benchmarked to international standards to guarantee that our students are competitive in the emerging global marketplace.

“This will ensure that we maintain America’s competitive edge.” (www.corestandards.org)

“Businesses all across the country depend on a highly qualified workforce prepared for jobs in the 21st century,” echoed the US Chamber of Commerce, calling the Common Core standards “essential to helping the United States remain competitive.”

So education reform in the US and allied countries is really about imperialist competition for profits, and preparation for a worldwide shooting war when trade wars reach their limits.

Liberal Democrats and teachers’ unions once supported Common

Core, an Obama-endorsed initiative tied to his “Race to the Top.” Now they complain about “too many problems that need to be fixed.”

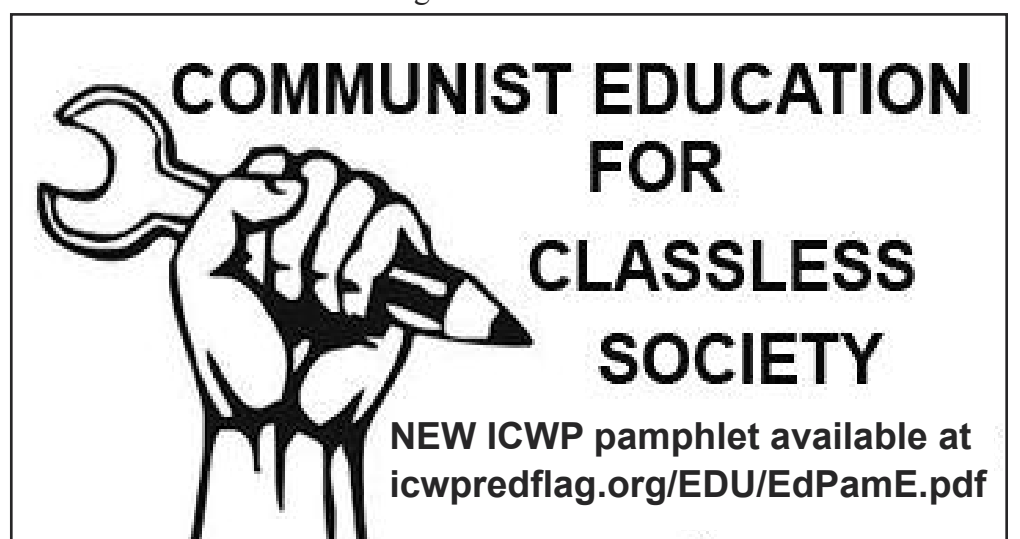
But the problems are built into the institution of capitalist schooling.

Children are processed in same-age batches, even though we develop unevenly. Top-down capitalist society makes “testing” the heart of schooling.

Teachers aren’t given the time or resources to assess individual children’s strengths and weaknesses, nor to figure out how best to meet their needs. Certainly, children and youth aren’t asked what they want to know or whether they’re satisfied with how well they know it.

The new tests supposedly assess “critical thinking,” but capitalist state agencies still decide what kids should know and how to prove they know it. For example, high-schoolers might have to write a memo for a Congressman. They’ll never be asked to calculate the rate of exploitation of a garment or aerospace worker!

Communism understands that social practice is the test of knowledge as well as truth. The standard is what meets the needs of our class, and of each individual. We must all learn to evaluate our work and learning, and that of our comrades, using honest and frank criticism and self-criticism. We do this today in the process of mobilizing the masses for communism.



## China: Rising Imperialist Power

### TRADE WARS LEAD TO SHOOTING WARS

“The world of the past three decades has gone.” So wrote a columnist in the *Financial Times*, a major trans-Atlantic business daily, in 2008 after the outbreak of the world crisis. It’s a point of view that couldn’t have escaped the 20 million workers made jobless in the Guangdong region of China the following year.

It’s a point of view that still rings true. “Soon nothing will be as it once was in Bagamayo,” says an activist in Tanzania, “because the new rulers of the world, the Chinese, are coming.” According to the German magazine *Der Spiegel*, Bagamayo, “a sleepy coastal town in Tanzania,” is the site of new multi-ship container terminal built by the Chinese construction company Group Six International.

It doesn’t matter on what continent you live. The conclusions are the same. Change, whether calamitous or revolutionary, is on the immediate agenda.

#### Capitalism=Wage Labor System

We call it a capitalist crisis. We could just as



easily call it a wage-labor crisis. Capital (a huge concentration of money in the hands of a few) and wages (small bundles of money distributed to billions) are inseparable. Without wage workers, money means nothing; it can’t become “capital” in the hands of the few. “An increase in capital,” Marx pointed out, “is an increase in the working class.” A reformist world view among the working class, therefore, is vital for capitalism to be able to function. In this light, the expansion of *Red Flag*, which argues for a communist share-and-share-alike world view, becomes urgent.

The labor force in China, totaling 798 million, is over five times the size of the US labor force. Its very size is both a source of great strength and terrifying weakness for the Chinese capitalists. For example, it allowed the government to launch a gigantic stimulus program to try to counter the effects of the world-wide economic crisis and re-employ those workers who were laid off when the crisis first broke.

The program will develop seven “Strategic Emerging Industries:” biotechnology, new energy, high-end manufacturing equipment, energy conservation, clean energy and the next-generation internet technology. Among other things, the program translates into building a nanotechnology research center, 50 engineering centers, and 88 labs focusing on new technologies, as well as laying 621,000 miles of fiber optic cable and adding 35 million new broadband ports.

#### Stimulus Plan Is Economic Warfare

Add these plans to the already completed improvements in shipping ports,

highways and high speed rail, and a new picture emerges. China’s working class, which already produces the most of any country in the world (having just edged out the US) will become even more productive.

Whether they intend to or not, these plans are a direct attack on US imperialism. The US bosses’ strategy is to maintain or expand “America’s global primacy.” These plans promote “Chinese global primacy.”

Chinese penetration has already sparked French military actions in Africa, where Chinese investments (and influence) already match those of France, as well as the formation of a new US Army command for Africa. To many, especially in Africa, the Chinese are “the new rulers of the world.” The old rulers, the US imperialists, are being successfully challenged. But they won’t go down without fighting to the last drop of *our* blood.

And it is not the “war hawks” in China or the US who will be the prime movers. It is the essential nature of capital itself that is the prime mover. It is the necessity of capital to expand and expand again, as if there is no limit, that creates the crisis. At some point, however, it is war that decides which imperial group will dominate and which will be subordinate to the other. In this light a domestic policy like China’s “Strategic Emerging Industries” program is as warlike as its deep-water Navy project.

The international working class, only by joining and massively building ICWP, can become the main protagonist of the revolutionary communist social change we need. Then we shall rule the earth, putting an end forever to all the old and aspiring capitalist-imperialist rulers of the world.

*(The next article will look at how China’s massive working class terrifies China’s capitalists.)*

#### LETTERS

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#### CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

### Inter-Imperialist Rivalry Between US and China Behind Fight Between Self-Defense Groups & Knights Templar

#### ONLY COMMUNISM WILL END THESE EVILS

MICHOACÁN, MEXICO — In their preparations for a third World War, US and Chinese bosses are in a race against time. To increase their war arsenals, they need to control the world’s human and natural resources. Events in Michoacán, Mexico are part of this inter-imperialist rivalry.

Michoacán is Mexico’s largest iron ore producing state. Because of its climate, soil, water, and low paid labor, it is also a main producer of fresh foods. Most of this production is owned by US bosses. For example, the owners of the Driscoll company not only super-exploit migrant Mexican workers in Watsonville, California, but also women and children on their farms in Michoacán. They produce over 250,000 tons of berries a year, valued at 4.5 billion pesos. Cattle ranching is also important, occupying 14% of state territory.

Michoacán’s strategic Pacific port of Lázaro Cardenas is a natural gateway for trade with China. Although only opened to container ships a decade ago, its deep bay can accommodate the world’s largest cargo ships – making it Mexico’s most international port, competing with the ports in Long Beach, California, and Panama.

Michoacán’s drug war, initiated by former President Calderon and continued by Peña Nieto, is really an inter-imperialist fight between the US, Canadian and some local bosses, against the Chinese and other local bosses, for the control of all this state’s wealth.

In the first 10 months of 2013, the Knights Templar drug cartel, which took over a large part of

Michoacán’s economy, sold 5 million tons of steel to the Chinese bosses. Unified Development Mine of Mexico, one of several Chinese-owned mining companies, has acquired since 2009 exploration leases in 30 areas.

Its competitor, Canadian-owned North Mining, extracts 15 thousand tons of iron ore a week there. Felipe Calderón gave North Mining 94,000 acres of land for the exploitation of minerals. Today the mining companies have gotten concessions to 25% of the Mexican territory.

One of the reasons for the Mexican army taking control of the Lázaro Cardenas port since last November is to prevent exports of steel to China. Most of the imports of Chinese goods to Mexico (including chemicals for synthetic drugs) come through this port.

The Knights Templar had helped local mining companies appropriate unclaimed mining areas. They themselves also took possession of many mines. They totally controlled the transport of iron ore, and charged security fees to all mining companies in the area, as well as to farmers, ranchers, businesses and services.

US, Canadian, and local bosses were losing control of the resources, so the Self Defense groups were built, initially with big and local small bosses’ workers. Then other workers joined, with the false hope of changing their terrible living conditions. They have helped to free mines, farms, town squares and now give security to the original bosses.

The deaths in this war continue to be suffered by the working class: over 100,000. Faced with extreme poverty and unemployment, the youth, men and women look for employment in any group, Knights Templar or Self Defense. These groups, however, do the dirty work of the bosses in deadly competition. Initially, the Knights Templar served the US-Mexican bosses’ interests. Eventually they became their real competitors. The same thing can happen with the Self Defense groups, which is why the government is undermining them. Supporting either side is a mortal trap for the working class.

Farmworkers, mining and other workers, soldiers, teachers and the unemployed worldwide need to mobilize massively for communism. They must join ICWP to destroy capitalism and all its bosses with communist revolution. In communism, without bosses, money or borders, we will decide collectively how, where and by whom to produce our food, homes, and clothing. We will have education in which we are all workers and students for life. There will be no separation between mental and manual work. We will protect the environment; and the health and integrity of every person will be most important.

We are at a critical juncture. Workers worldwide no longer want to live in the old way. That’s why we ask you to join this working class project, communism. Read, write, distribute, organize and support *Red Flag*. Join ICWP.

—Comrade in Mexico

**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.**

### Who Is a Communist?

The car stopped and an MTA bus operator leaned out to pose a question for a comrade distributing *Red Flag*.

"Is your platform still atheistic?" he asked.

"Yes," she answered. "But there's plenty of room in our party for people who are not atheists."

"Christians are not your enemy," he said.

"Jesus Christ was the first communist."

"*Red Flag* published a series of articles about mass Christian communist movements in the 12th through 16th centuries," said the comrade. "You can read them on our website."

The worker smiled broadly and reached out to shake her hand. They introduced themselves. Then he took the paper and drove away.

Actually, our International Communist Workers' Party does not have a "platform" the way most churches and political parties do. There's no catechism or list of beliefs that you have to swear to in order to become a member and participate fully.

Instead, we have an organizing principle: MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM.

Together we are learning in practice how to do this.

We are collectively developing a clearer and fuller idea of how to organize and run a communist society without money, where all contribute what they can and receive what they need.

We are learning and teaching the philosophy of dialectical materialism (which is atheistic). You can read about that in almost every issue of the paper.

We know that there will always be disagreements amongst comrades on questions of politics, strategy, tactics, and philosophy. Some are reflected in the paper. We have confidence that they can be worked out in the long term inside the party as together we mobilize the masses for communism.

We don't expect to fight and win a revolution or build a communist society with a small party, even one with an advanced line whose members have many ties with other workers. Instead, we aim to become a mass party that embraces and organizes struggle as well as unity within our growing ranks.

That's why we're serious when we keep asking readers to join the party. We are waiting with open arms to welcome you as comrades, differences and all. That's one crucial way we prepare now to run a communist society based on comradely relationships instead of on money.

—LA Comrade

See [icwpredflag.org/DepthE/HE1\\_4.pdf](http://icwpredflag.org/DepthE/HE1_4.pdf) parts V and VI-X.

### *Elysium*: Los Angeles, Immigration & Health Care

I thought the review of the movie *Elysium* was very interesting, especially the way the working

conditions in the robot factory in the movie reflect the real lives of sweatshop workers. In my experience in factories in California, the bosses only care about profits—workers' lives are expendable.

Other things in the movie were obvious to those of us who live in Los Angeles. LA today is fairly multiracial, but by 2157 when the movie is supposed to take place, everyone in Los Angeles is Latino or black; everyone, even Matt Damon, speaks Spanish, and the sign on County Hospital is in Spanish. There are no white workers, and all the rich people have gone to Elysium, which looks just like Beverly Hills.

The "citizens" of Elysium are the only ones with access to medical care, which parallels the current situation in the US with Obamacare, where undocumented immigrants are excluded from the health care system.

Our friends like *Elysium*, and other movies like *Hunger Games* and *Divergent*, because they show the exploitation and racism of capitalism, and people fighting back. Why do the bosses make movies like this? It's partly because if you want working-class young people to go to the movies, you have to show something that looks like real life. But by putting the action in a disastrous future, the present looks OK by comparison.

In addition, as the previous reviewer pointed out, movies like *Elysium* promote individual heroes as the solution to the racism and exploitation. *Elysium* also makes heroes out of the criminal gangs—the immigrant smugglers and computer nerds who are in it for the money like everyone else. The "hero" doesn't even think about relying on the workers in the factory, who are never seen organizing or protesting their murderous working conditions.

You won't see Hollywood making a movie that shows workers organizing the masses to fight for communism as a solution to racism and exploitation. "The revolution will not be televised!" That's up to us—to bring it live!

—Red Critic

### Harassment at Boeing

Boeing and the union ganged up on us in December and January. They eliminated defined pensions, cut pay and gutted benefits. They extended the contract until 2024. New hires bear the brunt of the attack.

Now management has embarked on a campaign of harassment and disciplinary actions. They are suspending workers for minor attendance infractions and scrapping parts. Suspensions are the first step to eventual firings.

Often the scrapped parts aren't even the fault of the machinists suspended, but the bosses don't care. The main point is to scare the rest of us, particularly the growing new-hire workforce.

Veteran workers remember this game. "Two



Hundreds of immigrant detainees in ICE prisons run by the for-profit GEO company in Tacoma, WA and Taylor, TX began a series of hunger strikes on March 7. Along with relatives and community supporters, they are demanding an end to deportations and protesting the brutal conditions there. Citizen and immigrant workers must unite everywhere to smash all borders by mobilizing for communism.

Auburn bosses ganged up on one guy in our learner program every 6 months or so," recalled a 30-year veteran. "They'd ride him for everything until he was fired."

They also remember the racist content of this harassment. Black workers were more often the victims of company harassment and firings.

Workers have complained to the union to no avail. Business representatives promise to look into it, but nothing ever comes of it. Their failure to fight racist harassment is part and parcel of the no-strike contract extension they pushed through.

The bosses have used this kind of scare tactic for as long as anybody can remember. It will always be part of the capitalist system.

Capitalism is a dog-eat-dog system. We do the company's bidding if we fall for the bosses' trap of trying to separate us according to who is a "good" worker and who isn't. We end up divided, while the bosses laugh all the way to the bank.

Communism would organize production for our collective needs, not the bosses' profits. Today, mistakes put your job in jeopardy. Under communism, each would contribute according to their ability and commitment and get according to their needs.

Everybody has strengths and weaknesses. We can build on each worker's strengths to overcome weaknesses. The unity built on our collective strength can overcome any obstacles.

Communism would not tolerate a backbiting culture. We'll all reach our potential. But we have to get rid of the bosses' culture first.

Join the ICWP for a future free of harassment and full of individual and collective potential.

—Machinist who's seen it before

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## THE ONLY PROLETARIAN OPTION: COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

EL SALVADOR—“Even though the FMLN has won the Presidential elections and we are a little bit pleased, what we workers need is a communist revolution, which will represent all of us,” said a sweatshop worker.

“As workers, we realize that there is a difference between reforms and revolution, and that we in ICWP must fight for communist revolution,” commented another.

On March 9, the second round of the Presidential election was held, electing the FMLN candidate, Salvador Sánchez Cerén.

“We call for a dialogue with the major companies of this country,” said Sánchez Cerén. What does this mean for the working class? The continuation of the capitalist system and its rotten system. Exploitation will continue destroying the lives of millions of workers.

“The school uniforms, shoes, school supplies and milk that they give to my children are a great help that we would never have received with the ARENA government,” said a worker.

The few crumbs that the FMLN government has given to the children of the working class are an insult. We, who create everything of value in society, deserve much more than this. We deserve EVERYTHING, with nothing for the capitalists. We must understand that the FMLN does not represent the working class. In fact, the leaders of this party are big businessmen.

It shouldn't surprise us that US imperialism, through its Secretary of State John Kerry, has congratulated Sánchez Cerén on his electoral victory, nor that the critics of this party, Salvadoran capitalists, who in past campaigns accused the FMLN of being a “socialist” or “communist” party, now defend them. This doesn't mean that these critics are pro-worker, but that the FMLN is becoming more and more pro-capitalist.

“Revolution or death, we will win!” This slogan in the FMLN party anthem no longer has any credibility when it comes from the leadership. The electoral discourse is very far from this slo-

gan, for which thousands of women and men workers organized and gave their lives many years ago.

Although this day thousands celebrated the electoral victory of this party, it will very soon continue with reforms that only serve to continue administrating the capitalist system.

Even an evangelical preacher said in a television interview, “Why fear the FMLN? They are not a party of the left. Now they are businessmen. They have tasted capitalism's benefits.”

And it's true. In spite of the fact that they keep selling themselves as a proletarian option, in reality, a party leader said openly on television, “We are not Marxists; we are not Leninists; we are not communists.”

Many members of the working class in this country and in others still keep a faint hope that reform groups like the FMLN, the followers of

Hugo Chávez, and the Sandinistas will help the working class move forward. It is a no-holds-barred struggle between capitalist reform and communist revolution.

We must seize this moment, going out more to the streets and the factories to expose reality, to take the mask off charity, and make it clear that it is not enough to pacify us with miserable solutions; we're done with bread and circuses.

Our struggle must be for a real communist revolution, where workers have state power to create a society without money or exploitation, and where EVERYTHING will be to satisfy the needs of the working class. Help us to raise the workers' flag, the red flag of ICWP.

It is time to look for and meet with more potential communists. We are and continue to be the open secret of humanity. Join us in this struggle to organize communist revolution through *Red Flag*.

### Mobilize the Masses for Communism on May Day

**From South Africa to El Salvador,  
from Spain to Brazil,  
from the U.S. to Mexico,  
from Honduras to Bangladesh**

**Fight for a world with collectivity,  
solidarity and sharing, without wage  
slavery, bosses, borders or money**

**March with ICWP on May First,  
International Workers' Day,  
for a Communist World!**

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

### FIGHTING FOR DIALECTICS AGAINST REVISIONISM

In the last dialectics column we described the sharp division in the working class movement between communists and revisionists that came into the open in the early 1900s, especially in Germany. The revisionists denied most of Marxism but rejected dialectics in particular. This was because they recognized that the growth of contradictions within capitalism would make revolution necessary, a conclusion they rejected. The revisionist rejection of materialism was equally important, since they wanted to substitute Kant's idealist, non-class morality for the revolutionary tasks that the laws of motion of capitalism set out for the working class.

Although their numbers were small, communists in many European countries fought the ideological battle for communist ideas against the revisionists and their support of imperialist war. The most determined struggle specifically for dialectics and materialism, however, came from Russian communists G. Plekhanov and V. I. Lenin. The next few columns will describe their efforts, which proved to be fundamental for the further development of communist philosophy.

Plekhanov was one of the founders of the communist movement in Russia. His role would eventually prove to be enormously contradictory, involving major contributions, but also errors and betrayals. From the beginning, Plekhanov sharply

attacked the idealism of the revisionists, fighting for space in German Socialist Party newspapers to do this. In books, articles and speeches he explained and defended dialectics and attacked efforts to distort it.

#### Plekhanov Against “Legal Marxism”

In his work “Criticism of our Critics”, Plekhanov exposed the bogus reasoning of Russian revisionist P. Struve. Struve had watered down Marxism to make it “legal,” that is, acceptable to the tsarist censorship. He had argued that the contradictions of capitalism could be “blunted” so they would not lead to revolution. Plekhanov combined philosophical analysis and economic data in his refutation of Struve's “blunting.” He showed that contradictions in the history of the communist movement had not only not been resolved by “blunting,” but by becoming more intense, which is the way contradictions are resolved in general. Plekhanov argued that the content of growing social production was constantly straining against the capitalist form that restricts it, a prime example, he said, of the “revolutionary significance of Marxist dialectics.”

#### Lenin Against the Narodniks

Lenin's first major work, which was directed against the Narodnik movement, devoted sections to materialism and to dialectics. The Narodniks opposed the tsarist system in Russia with

terrorist actions like assassinating the Tsar, although a large section of the Narodniks did not oppose capitalism. They saw the small peasants as the revolutionary class. Lenin directed his fire particularly against Narodnik N. K. Mikhailovsky, who rejected dialectics and tried to refute the materialist idea that class relations and class struggle determine the development of class society.

Lenin noted that Mikhailovsky was using a common strategy for attacking dialectics. He attacked Hegel's specific form of dialectics, trying to conclude that communist dialectics makes the same errors. In particular Mikhailovsky claimed that the “triad” pattern of “thesis—antithesis—synthesis” was the basis of dialectical development. Lenin pointed out that Engels had long ago written that “triad” patterns are not a necessary part of communist dialectics and nothing could be “proved” with them. Combatting Mikhailovsky's distortions, Lenin outlined core ideas of dialectics, which he called “the scientific method in sociology.” Lenin's emphasis on the importance of dialectics in this early work would be carried forward into his later writings, both those on communist theory and on practical political work.

*In our next column we will discuss some major errors of Plekhanov's dialectics.*