

RED FLAG

MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM

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

Air France Strikers on the March



France:

YOUTH AND WORKERS BATTLE SOCIALIST SLAVE LABOR LAW

May 30—Workers and youth continue their fight against the French Socialist government's vicious new labor law (la loi El Khomri, named for the socialist minister of labor). This law is another fascist attack, this time on industrial workers, by the French socialist government which is also attacking refugees and immigrants from Africa and the Middle East. The French imperialists are attacking workers in Syria, Iraq and Africa. Only communism can meet the masses' needs!

Strikers blocked oil refineries, causing a third of the country's gas stations to run dry. Friends have told us they are forced to wait three hours in line at the gas station, if they can find one that still has gas.

Power station, railroad and airline workers joined the strike for a day. Tens of thousands of youth and workers marched in cities across France.

Le Havre, France's second-biggest oil port, has been shut down for a week. Oil depot workers have been joined by truckers and dockworkers who normally

load and unload container ships. Meanwhile, thirty-eight tankers have been stranded at the Fos-Lavera oil port, the nation's biggest.

The El Khomri law finishes the job of tearing up the labor code. It makes it easier for bosses to fire workers, to reduce wages, to increase the work week and to cut overtime rates. As long as both union and boss agree, almost anything goes. And with 10% unemployment, it's easy for a boss to threaten a plant closure to get the union's agreement.

Only Communism Can Meet Workers' Needs

In communism there will be no unemployment. No one will be fired. The working class will decide what hours of work are reasonable based on how long we need to work to provide for the needs of our class. For example, oil depot workers would discuss with other workers what is needed in every part of the communist liberated zone. They would mobilize enough hands to get the work done.

[See FRANCE, page 2](#)

OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNISM EVERYWHERE
PAGE 2

ALL CAPITALIST ELECTIONS ARE RIGGED
PAGE 3

MTA:

COMMUNISM WILL MEAN RESPECT, DIGNITY AND CREATIVITY FOR ALL

LOS ANGELES, USA--"A supervisor wrote me up for helping an elderly person cross the street," said an MTA operator. He added, "Recently, they had us go to classes to learn how to be courteous and helpful to elderly and disabled people but when we put into practice what they taught us, we get written up."

"Yes," said an MTA operator from another division. "The reason for MTA's contradictory behavior is that their main reason for those classes is to avoid lawsuits, to shift responsibility away from the company onto the operator. Liability is the key word."

"The main problem, however, is that MTA wants us to treat all passengers humanely, especially persons with disabilities, while they treat us inhumanely," added this operator.

Inhumanely! That is the key word! Capitalism is an inhumane system where the capitalists own the means of production and we own nothing but our labor power which we must sell to them for a wage in order to survive.

Thus, they are our masters, we

are their wage-slaves. Money is the chain that binds us to them. What is humane about this? Furthermore, they only hire us if we can produce profits for them. This condemns billions of our class to a life of deprivation, and tens of millions yearly, especially children, to actual death.

Can we change this? Can we break the capitalists' chains with a communist revolution? Can we build a society where we all treat each other with respect and dignity as creative human beings? Can a communist world without money be better for humanity and the environment? You be the judge.

This fiscal year, MTA bought hundreds of new buses. The ramp which allows persons with disabilities to drive their wheelchairs into the bus has a serious defect.

"The wheel chairs can flip over backwards, especially if there are grocery bags or other bags attached to the back," explained an operator.

How is MTA dealing with this problem? Were the buses sent back to the manufacturer to repair the de-

[See MTA, page 3](#)

SYRIA: INTER-IMPERIALIST RIVALRY SHARPENS
PAGE 4

THIS IS A 3-WEEK ISSUE
SEE PAGE 4

Conditions worldwide are more alike than different:

SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY TO MOBILIZE MASSIVELY FOR COMMUNISM

Two international phenomena are changing the face of world affairs. *Foreign Affairs* says they have left “Washington’s foreign policy elites ... disoriented.” We workers need not be. If we are clear, we can take advantage of the opportunities.

One is the increasing popularity of socialism. A *Newsweek* cover says “We Are All Socialists.” In the US, polls show that those younger than 35 overwhelmingly favor socialism over capitalism. Rallies for presidential candidate Sanders, a democratic socialist, regularly attract 25,000. This in a campaign that is supposedly already lost.

On the other hand, countries led by self-proclaimed socialists are in trouble. Masses are in the streets in Brazil, France and South Africa. Miners in South Africa and dockworkers in France have fought pitched battles against the armed might of the state.

On the face of it, these two trends seem contradictory. In essence, they are not. Both are reactions to the global crisis of overproduction that started in 2008.

Capitalism’s internal contradictions between the working class and the bosses are moving millions. Socialist-led countries are in fact capitalist countries mired in the global capitalist crisis.

Masses of workers can’t live like before. Millions are looking for radical alternatives. From South Africa to the US and elsewhere, our comrades find thousands open to the argument that only communism can satisfy all our class needs.



FRANCE from page 1

This aspect of communist production has historical precedents. During the Chinese Cultural Revolution, many steel factories rejected material incentives in favor of production for collective needs (see article, p. 16).

Communist production allows us to produce for need because we will not be caught up in capitalist competition and the profit-driven productivity rat race.

Need Communist Revolution, Not Reform

There is a lot at stake in this struggle – billions in reduced overtime rates alone. So the bosses and their socialist flunkies struck back hard. They sent riot police to break the blockades at the oil refineries and dipped into their sacred strategic petroleum reserves to reopen some gas stations. The workers are not finished. Another day of protest is scheduled for June 2.

Capitalism is in profound crisis globally and must attack workers at home and abroad. The French bosses are in such a fix that it may be that nothing short of a rebellion (like May 1968)

Here and there, we have brought this argument to industrial worksites, but not nearly enough. We have to seize the opportunity wherever we have political work.

Our South African ICWP comrades are having tremendous success at this. They are at the forefront of acting on our guiding principle: Mobilize the Masses for Communism.

Younger comrades have quickly come forward with urgency and commitment. They are giving leadership to growing numbers of workers and youth eager to mobilize for communism.

Our comrades are seizing the opportunity to mobilize directly for communism presented by the racist conditions that South African workers face, the masses’ past experiences of fighting apartheid, and their betrayal by the African National Congress.

The masses’ positive response shows that workers can be inspired by the possibility of a communist society organized to produce collectively, solely to meet the needs of the masses without money, bosses or exploitation. They can visualize that only communism will abolish social classes, racism, sexism, borders and imperialist wars.

Comrades and friends worldwide can learn from this great example of how to build ICWP into a mass party. It should inspire us to increase our commitment to a lifelong struggle for communism.

This development, however, has sparked some controversy. Where the growth of the Party is slower or more modest, some ask, “What is the difference between South Africa and us?”

A US West Coast Party leadership meeting discussed this question. We concluded that we face conditions and opportunities that are more similar than different. The similarities are primary although the differences shouldn’t be ignored. (See the letters on page 7 reflecting these discussions.)

Objectively speaking, the masses worldwide

can win even small concessions, and then only temporarily. A more likely scenario is that once the workers are worn out with incremental (reform) struggles, the socialist union leaders (supposedly more leftwing) will call it all off.

In the past, socialists and communists would throw themselves into the mass reform struggle and forget about communism. Their theory was that if communists were seen as hard and successful fighters for reforms, the masses would say, “Hmm maybe I should listen to the reds.”

This theory never worked in practice. Instead the masses said, “Hmm those reds say communism is the answer but in practice they put their energy into the militant struggle for reforms.”

We urge ICWP supporters in France to take *Red Flag* and communist leaflets to the marches and picket lines. And for those who are not already mem-

are being attacked by capitalism’s deepening crisis and its sharpening inter-imperialist rivalry and expanding wars.

There is greater potential to grow everywhere, if we boldly present the fight for communism as the only solution for the masses. Workers in South Africa, India, El Salvador, the US and everywhere are class brothers and sisters with the same need: to mobilize for communism.

Political Commitment Comes From Deeper Understanding

The comrades in South Africa have organized discussions about dialectical materialism, the science of revolutionary change. Dialectical and historical materialism explain why the triumph of the working class and the destruction of capitalism-imperialism are inevitable – but not automatic. They depend on what we do.

We must sharpen the struggle between capitalist ideas and practice and communist ideas and practice, to strengthen the communist side in ourselves and our friends. The internal contradictions in the working class and the Party determine the outcome of the struggle, not the bosses’ attacks and lies.

Comrades and readers in every area can organize regular discussions about dialectical materialism. We can figure out collectively the main things holding us back and struggle to overcome them, whether nationalism, racism, sexism, reformist illusions or religion.

We must collectively envision how communist society will work, developing and expanding communist relations. We must encourage more comrades and friends to take responsibility for ICWP, including helping to produce, write for, criticize and distribute *Red Flag* and support it financially.

Our ancestors lived in pre-class communism. Today we must bring to the angry masses the solution to the bosses’ crisis, growing fascism, and war preparations: scientific communism. We have no time to lose. We have a world to win.

bers, to join the ICWP. We should help organize rebellions and political strikes against racist capitalism-imperialism and for communism. Unlike the French Communist Party in 1968, our goal is the revolutionary seizure of power.

When communist-led workers have state power we will put an end to money, the wage system, and the labor laws that the bosses use (with the Socialists’ help) to keep us in wage slavery.

France 1968 The Struggle Continues



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All Capitalist Elections are Rigged

COMMUNIST REVOLUTION, NOT ELECTIONS, WILL FREE US

LOS ANGELES, USA—Over 1000 youth and workers here enthusiastically welcomed *Red Flag* and our communist leaflets at three recent rallies for Sanders..

We explained that communism, not socialism, will free the masses. Revolution, not voting, will end the capitalist system that is the cause of racism, sexism, exploitation, unemployment and imperialist war. Many people thanked us and wanted to talk.

We said that socialism is state capitalism, and that the only way to get rid of all capitalism is with communism. We can live the way our ancestors lived in Africa and the Americas, sharing everything without money, producing for need, but consciously building comradely communist relations and using science and technology.

“Wow, Communism! Cool!” said several young people.

“I would like to get your paper regularly,” said a student.

“How can I join you?” asked another.

Some asked questions. “How can we get what we need without money?” We explained that it’s workers’ labor power that produces everything, not money. In a system with no bosses or money, workers will be free to produce and distribute everything we need.

Others argued that Sanders would bring peace. But Sanders promises to defend the US with force. He voted to fund the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. He doesn’t want to get rid of capitalism, the source of imperialist war. He aims to calm and divert the masses’ anger against capitalism into voting and trying to reform it.

Some Sanders supporters said that the super-delegate system must be changed so that elections are not rigged. They are rigged by design. The US constitution was written by capitalists to administer emerging US capitalism. They set up the Electoral College to determine who the US President will be because the founders were afraid to let the masses decide by popular vote which capitalist politician would rule. They feared the masses would opt for radical alternatives.

Then in the 1980’s, the Democratic Party adopted the super-delegate system to give party leaders more say to better control who would be the nominee.

It is not fair. But the main thing that is not fair is that the capitalists own and control all the means of production (factories, mines) and the state (the police, army). The whole working class has to work for them. Our labor makes them rich. This can’t be reformed. It demands communist revolution.

No capitalist politician can end this racist exploitation, or the inevitable imperialist wars over control of the world. The masses, united for communism, can end these evils with revolution for communism, where we will collectively produce only to meet the masses’ needs.

Those looking for an alternative to capitalism won’t find it in Sanders or any electoral politicians anywhere in the world. But they will find it with *Red Flag* and ICWP. We invite those who like *Red Flag* to help distribute it, join study groups and join ICWP to mobilize the masses for the communist world we need.



Voting Changes Nothing
The Struggle Continues
A poster from France 1968

COMMUNISM MEANS SERVING THE PEOPLE

I talked to a group of four college students in Santa Monica where people were waiting to get into a Bernie Sanders rally. One described himself as an entrepreneur, one as a singer. Two others were just standing and listening. We were trying to figure out how Bernie Sanders was going to help millennials like us.

I started the conversation with communism, with the newspaper *Red Flag* which they took. They started to ask questions of me, like how communism is different with socialism.

The entrepreneur said that communism helped the lazy people out but capitalism/socialism will help people be more self-reliant. I disagreed. I said that communism helped people to be more resourceful because we would be relying on ourselves as a community more than ever before.

He said, “Explain to me why you say that communism will help people to be more self-reliant.”

I gave an example of a small family household. You want the house to be clean so you rely on your mom or dad or yourself to clean the house. It becomes second nature. If you are hungry you get food. If something needs to be fixed you fix it yourself or find people who have the necessary skills to fix it.

I told him, “The reason you are an entrepreneur is not mainly for the money but because you want to serve your ideas to help the people.”

He was like, “Really! I agree with you.”

“Exactly,” I said, “because I am feeling the same way. In capitalism we are taken advantage of and our ideas are used for someone else to make money. Instead I want us to be able to use them to help the people as a whole. That is the communist way: To help the people as a common goal instead of making a profit.”

He said, “Okay, I will read up and I will see how the paper can change my ideas a little bit more.”

By then we were at the front of the line. We exchanged contact information and they went in.

This encouraged me to take a whole bag of papers back to my neighborhood to help the people to open their eyes.

--Young worker in Los Angeles USA

MTA from page 1 fact? No! It is cheaper and more expedient to make the operators responsible for ensuring that the wheelchairs make it safely into the bus.

That means the operator must stop the bus safely, get out and follow the wheelchair passenger onto the bus, walking behind the wheelchair until it is secured. This puts even more pressure on drivers: cutting into their layover, losing a chance to eat something, go to the rest room or relax.

How would communism deal with this problem? Such buses would not exist. Our buses would be designed and constructed with the participation of persons with disabilities and other workers. The engineers, designers and builders would also be the operators, mechanics and service attendants.

With no rush to produce for a market – where capitalists must cut corners to beat the competition – buses and everything produced for human consumption or use would be thoroughly tested to guarantee its safety. If by accident something defective is overlooked, it would immediately be

withdrawn.

This can only be accomplished in a society which produces for human need, and is committed to eradicate racism, sexism, individualism, and all other poisonous “isms” pushed by capitalism.

Capitalism sees employed wage slaves as beasts of burden. Even worse, it sees people with disabilities and people without homes as a nuisance and a burden.

Communism’s guiding principle is “From each according to their commitment and ability, to each according to need.” Thus communism can embrace these class brothers and sisters as truly human beings.

They can contribute to society as creative human beings. Their contributions, like everyone else’s, no matter how little or how much, will be welcomed and appreciated. They and everyone will be treated with dignity and respect. They and everyone else

will have at their disposal all the resources to collectively develop their humanity and creativity to the maximum.

No one will be the servant of others. No one will be the boss of others. With no privileges for anyone, we will all collectively produce and share the fruits of our labor.

Money will no longer rule our lives. It will be consumed in the flames of the communist revolution that will destroy capitalism. ICWP with our paper *Red Flag*, is organizing this revolution. Join us!



An invitation from the *Red Flag* Editorial Collective:

HELP MOBILIZE FOR COMMUNISM

With this issue the International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP) launches a campaign to engage many more of our members and friends in the production of this paper.

The struggle to advance the political line of ICWP in theory and practice is the lifeblood of the Party's work. We know that the only alternative to today's worldwide horrors of capitalism is to mobilize masses for communism.

We know that communism will transform the social relations of production. We will work gladly to produce the goods and services everyone needs, without money or wages. We will enjoy both the collective labor and its fruits, without bosses or markets. We will continue the fight to unite the working masses worldwide with intentional struggles against the racism, sexism and nationalism left over from the capitalist era.

We have learned much from the masses who have already tried to put communist ideas into practice. Especially we urge all comrades to study the Cultural Revolution in China (see page 8). Examples like these can inspire confidence in us, in our friends and in the masses today.

But there is so much that we do not yet know about communism! We can only learn that by building ICWP into a mass communist party where all members and friends contribute to the development of our political line.

We can't and don't rely on a few "theoretical experts." We don't separate the "mental labor" of figuring out our line from the "manual labor" of organizing and mobilizing. Uniting "mental" and "manual" labor is a key communist principle.

Producing *Red Flag* is communist work. It is done by volunteers who also hold jobs, attend

school, are communist organizers, have family responsibilities or all of these. Nobody went to journalism school. We all learn "on the job." Nobody is paid. We contribute in different ways, as we are willing and able. We are all proud of the paper and want it to improve.

But more workers, students and other comrades must help plan, write, edit, illustrate, translate, work on layout, proofread, post online and evaluate each issue of *Red Flag*.

More of us must donate and help raise the money needed to print *Red Flag* on at least three continents. Like it or not – and we don't! – we still live under capitalism.

One goal of this campaign is to double the size of the local collective that produces the paper. Especially we must train younger comrades, and those newer to the party, to do all aspects of the work locally and internationally.

Another goal is to build *Red Flag* collectives in many areas around the world. These groups could meet once an issue to evaluate the previous paper and make suggestions for the next. They could also help write, edit and translate more articles into more languages.

Accomplishing these goals will take some time. But they will help us make a qualitative leap forward in organizing a truly international mass party.

To make this all possible we need to take a step backward and publish *Red Flag* every three weeks instead of biweekly, for now.

We will publish more articles on our website ICWPRedFlag.org in advance of the print edition. Some

articles may appear as "web only."

Comrades should take initiative in creating leaflets to respond quickly to local or global issues as they arise. These too can be published on the website for others to read and download to use.

That should also allow us to expand the circulation of the paper. We will all have an extra week for visiting friends who can take bundles of papers to distribute and for doing mass distributions in more locations where this is possible.

There will be more time for Party collectives to do political work and evaluate it. We need many more articles and letters that advance our understanding of communism and what it means to do communist political work. We need examples of "best practices" – but also of not-so-successful efforts – so we can all learn from them.

We look forward to returning to a biweekly schedule as soon as possible, but with a greater level of participation in producing and distributing the paper. Right now, please let us know how you can help.

Forward with *Red Flag*! Forward!



War in Syria: Inter-imperialist Rivalry Sharpens

COMMUNIST SOLDIERS AND WORKERS CAN END IT

The war in Syria has created the worst refugee crisis in recent history. Millions of people have had to flee for their lives. Two thousand refugees have died in the Mediterranean this year, many of them from Syria—more than seven hundred in the past week alone.

They are fleeing from a civil war, which, after four and a half years, has killed hundreds of thousands and destroyed the lives of millions more. Most of them are Syrian working-class families. It seems there is no end to it anytime soon. The war started as a protest against President Bashar al-Assad's regime over the arrest and torture of teenagers who wrote revolutionary slogans on school walls. It escalated to full-blown civil war in a matter of months, releasing the anger of the Syrian people that had been building up over decades of oppression by the regime.

The US imperialists encouraged this rebellion because they wanted to topple pro-Russian Assad, not because they care about the Syrian people.

Similar situations happened in Libya, Egypt and other parts of the world. Workers are realizing that to end not just dictatorships but the entire capitalist system they must make a revolution. It is necessary that this revolution have the correct ideology. That is, the understanding of communist ideas. We must mobilize the masses, capable of destroying capitalism and all its evil, to create a communist society. Communism, by doing away with money and the whole profit system, will destroy the imperialist incentive for war.

While most casualties of the war have been the result of Assad's military and other pro-government militias, countries like the US and Russia have also killed thousands more with their murderous bombing campaigns. Many others have died at the hands of various armed groups as well, like the Islamic State.

With various factions fighting over territory, ethnicity and ideology, Syria has turned into a deadly mess that only communism can resolve. Right now, imperialists like the US and Russia are taking this opportunity to influence and manipulate these kinds of wars for their own interests.

It is clear that this war to liberate Syria from the Assad dictatorship has turned into a proxy war between the US and Russia. This is part of the sharpening inter-imperialist rivalry between the US and Russia which will inevitably lead to World War III. With Russia becoming more powerful militarily and ambitious to become the next world power, it must support a dictator like Bashar al-Assad. Russia provides

weapons and military support to the regime to protect its interests.

For example, it keeps a naval base in Tartus, a city on the Mediterranean coast of Syria, strategically important to expand its control in the area. Russia's alliance with Assad makes their maintenance of that base possible, and increases Russia's ability to threaten US attempts to control the region.

Imperialist countries that have economic, geographical and military interests are as guilty as the Assad regime and ISIS for all the casualties of the war.

In these wars, soldiers play a very important role in determining the outcome of the war. Soldiers are the main instruments the capitalists and imperialists in any country use to attain their objectives. The bosses' main mistake is to underestimate the ability of soldiers to think and realize that they are fighting their class brothers and sisters. Soldiers armed with communist ideas can join them and turn the guns around to end imperialist wars everywhere.

The wars between imperialists for control and profits are inevitable as capitalist crises sharpen. But the working class, along with soldiers, together have the power to change this. We must learn that the bosses' greed for power is endless. Whatever imperialist power controls the world, the working class will always lose. We don't need a system where one class represses, kills and exploits another class for profit. We need a classless society where everything is based on meeting the workers' need, not profit. Let's fight for a communist society.



Read our pamphlet:

Soldiers, Sailors, Marines: Crucial to a Communist Workers' Revolution

[/icwpredflag.org/MIL/mpe.html](http://icwpredflag.org/MIL/mpe.html)

REPORT FROM SOUTH AFRICA CONFERENCE MAY 14 AND 15TH

I arrived in Port Elizabeth one day before the weekend of the ICWP dialectics conference, organized by the South African comrades. In the early hours of Saturday morning, before the sun rose, we drove to the township. This was my first time visiting a township. We passed two funeral homes upon arrival, and I saw garbage littering every corner and street throughout thousands of one-story houses that lined miles and miles of one-lane streets, with broken concrete and pooled water. We arrived at a comrade's home, and she came out dressed in the ICWP red shirt and a big smile. Another comrade neighbor went door to door to wake people to get ready for the buses. This spirit of hard work and dedication for change set the tone for my first glimpse of South Africa, the people, and what we can do as a party in this international work.

I was dropped off later in the daylight morning to wait for one of two buses organized by comrades to take people to the conference. I spoke to two women who had gone to the May Day March, and were also going to the conference. I was learning about their families and the struggle to find work, support their children, and to have enough money to eat. On the bus, as people gathered, they were in high spirits, singing and laughing. Upon arrival to the rented hall, men and women spilled out of the buses and gathered around me to take pictures, to dance and chant, and energize us for the meeting. A group of 6 to 7 comrades organized in the kitchen by cooking and plating fried chicken, salads, beans and rice for the group.

The conference was organized around several aspects of dialectical materialism—the science of change. We learned about “internal and external,” “likeness and difference,” “conflict and unity,” “quantity into quality,” and “negation of negation.” Examples were given of how these principles can be applied to objects, ourselves, and our work, and how this helps us understand how to analyze prob-



lems and fight for communism. Several comrades came up to the podium to talk about why they want to know about communism. They said that the current ANC party and other political parties have not been able to solve the problems they face on a daily basis and are sell-outs. There was a serious tone in people's stories as they came to the realization that capitalism, not bad politics, is the root of suffering. They expressed hope in developing an understanding of communist collective work; building the ICWP as a way to change the world to solve the needs of the working class. The group broke into three discussion sections in the afternoon to apply the principles of the conference to what we can do now, and what do we face as obstacles and how does the ICWP work.

Over the course of the next week, the leadership of the South African workers in ICWP met to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the conference, and how to build the movement in the next six months. The comrades who had been working and planning for the conference, particularly the younger members, discussed how to develop more leaders, and how this is necessary—“quantity into quality”—to distribute the *Red Flag* newspaper, and make a communist school to develop leadership in South Africa.

We all agreed there are personal problems that hold back development of leadership, but that there are strengths in many members of the leadership that can overcome these problems. The enthusiasm and confidence among the young comrades, and the plans made, led me to believe that we will see a growth in numbers and commitment as the work carries on in the ICWP collective in South Africa.

FORWARD WITH THE STRUGGLE!

While in the African National Congress (ANC) I was won to believe in socialism. I believed we were all equal. Working within the capitalist system (in the ANC) I used to offer people food parcels. But remember, dear reader, that I was only doing so seasonally when the capitalist system needed something from the working class, like at election time.

When Nelson Mandela was released from prison, everyone thought that everyone would be freed from being slaves.

Hell broke loose because before the elections the ANC promised the people heaven and earth but after the elections none of these promises were met. Instead, the ANC sidelined people, while Party officials were enjoying the fruits of this revolution instead of the working class enjoying them. That's when I decided to leave the party as I didn't want to be labeled as one of the bunch of liars.

Then I never joined any political party at all until November 2015 when I was introduced to the ICWP. But to be honest, I was reluctant to listen to the comrades because I had had enough of the capitalist system. I had told myself that there are lots of new political parties which will contribute to the same capitalist system. I didn't want to victimize the working class again.

Whilst talking to ICWP, my consciousness said to me, “Let me give them the benefit of the doubt.” I listened cautiously to the comrades. After the short introduction, I was offered some *Red Flags*.

On arrival back to my residence I started going through the *Red Flags* and dialectical material. The dialectics has made more sense to me. I even browsed the Party's website and all that made me more interested in the Party. I was still skeptical about joining the revolution because I didn't want to be a card holder just like other parties that talked about revolution but are from the capitalist system.

The following day I talked with the comrades. I asked about the joining fee to the party. I was informed that my dedication to the revolution is my joining fee. The comrades told me that there would be a conference hosted by the Party. During the conference I learned a lot about communism and the Party. In those two days I learned a lot and the dialectics was explained further. From that conference I have remarried the ICWP because it is the only revolution that will abolish the capitalist system and eradicate the bosses' system.

Long live ICWP! Away with capitalism! A luta continua. Aluta ICWP aluta. Forward with the struggle ICWP!

COMMUNIST MAY DAY IN EL SALVADOR

EL SALVADOR—In the May Day March, groups of ICWP members participated from several areas of the country in an ICWP contingent. Carrying a large banner with the main call of our party “Mobilize the Masses for Communism,” also dressed in red shirts identifying our Party, made the communist contingent in the march very colorful.

The International Communist Workers' Party marched to commemorate the historic struggles of the working class and with a call to organize directly for Communism. For the third consecutive year we mobilized farmworkers, students, teachers, and men and women workers of the textile maquilas. The workers arrived in a disciplined manner at the site of the march, punctually and with great enthusiasm to participate in this great demonstration of the working class, showing that communism is being built in the working class.

The participation of the youth collective encouraged all those present since they achieved the goal of distributing our newspaper *Red Flag* and

the communist leaflet to those who participated in the march and to the people whose jobs were in buildings on the route of the march. Some did not wait to get home to read it; they read it as soon as they got it.

The experience is always encouraging since the workers ask for *Red Flag*.

“You haven't given one to me,” said a worker.”

“Here are some for everyone,” I responded.

The participation of women ICWP leaders was significant, organizing this activity with authority, and thereby giving an example to more women to join ICWP to end the system that subjects millions of women every day to exploitation all over the world.

Other comrades also did a great job distributing the leaflet and *Red Flag* in the intersections

where people waited in their vehicles for the march to pass by. It was also well received there.

After having marched through the main streets of San Salvador, the contingent of factory workers went to another place and shared some delicious pupusas, forming closer ties with several workers who participated for the first time in the march. During this activity, they expressed their interest in organizing in ICWP.

This has been a day of struggle. As the ICWP leaflet said: let's fight directly for communism, not for reforms.



LETTERS

LETTERS

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CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

Dear Friends, Comrades

I am joining myself to your party because I believe very strongly that the working people, all over the world deserve to be respected.

Over the past forty years, as an adult, I have seen how the system takes all the life and energy from my elders and spits them out, to die shortly after retirement. In a system that only cares for profit and overproduction, this happens over and over again, with no concern for the quality of life of the people who create wealth.

The state of our natural world, the protection of its resources and its living beings, is also a cause that is important to me. I want my children to grow up in a world that values them, values me, and only produces what is actually needed.

The current state of affairs, with the corrupt system that caters to businesses and crooked politicians and their cronies, has opened my eyes. There can be and will not be a “fair election.” The people need to represent themselves, form a united front and create the system where each person is taken into account!

The police state is not far away, we can see that in the militarization of the local police forces. These crooked cops are murdering people in the streets and are getting away with it. This cannot be allowed to continue, and I cannot stand by passively. I will use my time and energy to help the cause of the party, as well as I can, for as long as I can!

Viva La Causa, Viva la Gente!

--New member in Los Angeles, USA



**Workers' and Soldiers' Soviet
March 1917**

We stand on the shoulders of giants

The article on socialism and communism in the last *Red Flag*, starting with the general strike in France, mistakenly lumped together socialists like Francois Hollande in France and Bernie Sanders in the US with the Bolsheviks in the Soviet Union.

We think that's a big mistake. We owe it to our predecessors and to our comrades now and in the future to draw the lessons of history as accurately as possible.

Hollande, Sanders, and their ilk are the discredited remnants of the Second International. These parties were deeply reformist—totally wrong about the capitalist state. They included most notably the German Social Democratic Party of Kautsky and Bernstein, who became trade union bureaucrats and parliamentarians. They believed in elections and backed the German ruling class in World War I. They were—and are—deeply anticommunist and rejected workers' revolution. Bernie Sanders is in that tradition, and when he talks about a “political

revolution” he is using the term revolution as a marketing slogan, like a “revolutionary new toothpaste.”

The Bolsheviks, the communist revolutionaries of the Third International, broke decisively with these class traitors. They defended proletarian internationalism and smashing the bourgeois state. They were communists, and a communist society, without money and social classes was their goal. They knew that it would take revolution to get there.

They agreed with Marx—mistakenly as it turned out—that socialism was a stepping-stone to a communist society. They also had a confused and contradictory position on revolutionary nationalism—another mistake. But to say that they became socialists, and in the end, failed, like all socialists before and after, is misleading at best.

We in ICWP have learned from their mistakes. Socialism is actually state capitalism. It keeps wages, money, and the labor market. The competition for survival inherent in the labor market means that it can never lead to communism, but eventually erases all the gains made by revolution and returns to open capitalism. “Revolutionary nationalism” ends up providing cover for a new ruling elite. The working class must fight directly for communism—without wages, money, bosses or borders.

The heroic struggles and fatal errors of the Communist Parties of the Third International taught us these lessons. We stand on the shoulders of giants.

--Red students of history

A Personal Story from India

I feel very close to the mass line of ICWP.

I come from deep rural India from an upper caste Hindu family (caste is quite similar to race). I have witnessed the oppression of caste, class, and gender since childhood with a lack of consciousness. As a kid I used to take pride in my upper caste and had a blind nationalism.

I used to identify with Brahminical fascist groups. Later, during my studies, I came in touch with some communist activists and revolutionary literature. I read a lot in

the last few years to unlearn what I had learned unconsciously.

For a while I was very confused. I was able to see oppression but couldn't figure out how to fight it. The most confusing things were culture, family and religion. Sometimes more reading creates more confusion, especially when you are not able to correlate the ideas with material conditions. It takes time.

After I met comrades of ICWP, I started reading the basics of dialectical materialism. It becomes very clear when you develop a scientific understanding of society. I can correlate my academic understanding of physical science to understand changes and workers' movements in society.

In this class struggle we are more similar to each other than different. Gender, race and nationality have been used by the ruling class to divide our force of production which is the backbone of capitalism. It is our urgent task to expose this to the masses.

We need to understand our power. It is we

who run the world. Capitalism wants us to feel helpless and insecure.

We need to expose that the working class has power if we are organized with communist ideas. We must unite against the divisive forces like gender, race and nationalism. Let's fight capitalism rather than fighting each other. We must fight opportunistic and reformist tendencies among us.

Let's join the correct line and read, write and contribute to *Red Flag* and join ICWP.

Carry on the struggle comrades. We have a world to win. Join the revolution. Join ICWP.

--New Comrade

Different Views about Religion and Communism

A comrade in our collective was supposed to be in a meeting but he wasn't there. So we asked him where he was. He told us that he was in church. That led to a big discussion about religion and communism.

Another comrade asked him which was primary, the church or the movement. He said the church is primary because he's been inside the church longer than he's been in the movement. So I don't know if this was a sense of misguided loyalty.

I explained that religion and communism, even though they have similarities, can never co-exist because religion, to speak the brutal truth, is a tool that is used by the capitalist class to divert the working class from revolution.

Another comrade continues:

We explained that if you look at religion you realize that they promise hope for a world where no one has been. They promise that they must continue to suffer because there is a world that is waiting for them where there is no suffering.

Most of the time those religious leaders are busy misguiding the working class, that it's okay for them to suffer because there is this spiritual being who will save them after death. While they are preaching these religious ideas, they continue to live comfortably. But then there is a contradiction. You are telling the people it's ok to suffer but while you are saying this, you're not suffering. They are living comfortably, continuing to oppress the working class.

A third comrade adds:

I liked the discussion. Also, we made examples about the articles we read based on dialectical materialism. We tried to explain to him how ICWP and religion differ. But I think that he understood clearly about the movement and religion.

Conclusion:

We wanted this letter to have different views because we were in a collective debate and it would be wise to get some insight about what other comrades think.

Keep up the good work.

--South African Comrades





LETTERS

LETTERS

LETTERS

CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

Need to Step Up the Work

We thank the Los Angeles MTA (transit) workers and others who responded to ICWP's call for economic help in the name of the comrades in South Africa. They needed this help to mobilize many men and women workers to the communist school on dialectical materialist philosophy. (See p. 5)

Our party is growing rapidly in other parts of the world. We asked why US workers are not responding the same way. We asked several MTA workers what they thought the difference was.

A mechanic said, "The working class in this country doesn't have the same history of struggle as in other countries. For example, May Day was born in Chicago with the struggle for the 8-hour day. However, most workers here do not know about it. The unions are completely domesticated. They are not fighting organizations, and they make us think that we are not the working class but the middle class."

Another said, "I think that it is because of our many illusions. Despite understanding the real possibility of World War III and of economic chaos, we still cling to the illusion that nothing will happen."

A third worker thinks that the bosses in other countries super-exploit all workers, while in the USA they create wage tiers to divide the workers and pit us against each other, or so that they don't see the struggle of other workers as their own.

Hundreds of MTA workers read *Red Flag*, distribute it locally and internationally and donate money for the communist cause. But not enough of these friends are willing to mobilize now.

ICWP has a lot of political work to carry out. We must intensify the understanding of dialecti-

cal materialist philosophy so that workers have a more scientific view of social development, their analyses are objective, and they understand better the need to break radically with nationalist, racist and individualistic ideas.

It is not enough to proclaim ourselves to be against racism. We don't do enough to end it. We don't promote integration effectively enough. Too often latinos hang out with latinos, blacks with blacks, etc. Sometimes MTA workers don't see how an attack on us is an attack on all workers.

We oppose nationalism but we don't always support struggles of workers elsewhere or of undocumented workers here. We shouldn't forget where we come from or ignore our own history.

We need to deepen our communist working-class understanding and practice by studying the history of our class, how economies function, and dialectical materialism.

We are sitting on a time bomb. Ignoring the alarms will only worsen things. Workers must organize now. It is urgent to get out of our "comfort zone." Let's take more responsibility for our historic role of burying the capitalist monster and building a new communist society.

--Red MTA worker

"We have to be as bold as the South African comrades"

"Our South African comrades are bold in mobilizing the masses for communism. We have to be just as bold in calling out the nationalist organizations who hold back the movement here."

This was the conclusion of a discussion of the editorial in *Red Flag* (v. 7 no 8) about the similarities and differences between the political work of our party in South Africa and else-

where. Our study group included a comrade from another part of Africa, a comrade with family in South Africa, a young African American comrade and a more experienced black veteran of the US movement against apartheid. With such a rich variety of experiences, it is not surprising that we had a fruitful and wide-ranging discussion.

We talked about the importance of fighting subjectivity—which in our case includes the danger of concluding that it must be a lot easier in South Africa, and that it's too hard to win people in the US to communism. We concluded that we have to look objectively at the obstacles we face and take advantage of the opportunities that present themselves.

Racist capitalism oppresses workers around the world. Although there are differences, there is the same basis for class hatred and the same desire for a better world. Nationalist fathers have betrayed the movement around the world. Capitalism around the world is in crisis. Workers will be less and less able to live in the old way. The same history, of communist parties that participated in class struggle but were defeated by their own reformism, is the legacy of the international communist movement around the world.

We in ICWP have learned from that struggle, often heroic and inspiring, but ultimately betrayed by an incorrect analysis, that we must fight directly for communism. Because we are all part of an international working class in capitalist countries around the world, we can learn from each other about how to fight and how to win.

Onward, comrades, onward!

--ICWP comrades in Los Angeles

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Join the ICWP 2016 Los Angeles Summer Project:

MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM

LOS ANGELES, CA USA—The International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP) invites all youth and all workers to be part of our efforts to mobilize the masses for communism this 2016 summer. We will be involved in studying and understanding communism and how it works.

The time has come to understand communism and mobilize the masses for communism. Capitalism is failing the masses worldwide. The masses have responded heroically with general strikes, massive mobilizations, confrontations with the cops including outright rebellions. They have begun to question the very existence of capitalism itself!

From India to South Africa, from El Salvador to Spain to the US workers and students have joined the ranks of the ICWP. This year, 2016 on May Day, International Workers' Day, the red flags of the ICWP flew in Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas. The ICWP as a whole is learning rich lessons from these new comrades on how they are learning and putting into practice

our guiding principle: Mobilizing the Masses for Communism.

Here in Los Angeles we will be studying and putting into practice dialectical and historical materialism, the science of how change takes place, the science of making communist revolution. We will be discussing and learning this science and communist ideas with youth, soldiers and workers. Also through studying the example of our

contingent that has significantly grown in South Africa, we will learn how they have managed to mobilize people so quickly in hopes to help us mobilize all over the world.

We will learn about *Red Flag*, our ICWP's international newspaper, of its role as a beacon of light for the masses of the world that have begun to rebel, how to write for it and how to put it together. We will be taking *Red Flag* to schools, factories, neighborhoods and military bases.

During the Summer Project we will be involved with a lot of political work. We will also organize movie nights, picnics and pool parties. At the end of the Project we will have a Communist International School. Join us!

For a world without borders, racism, money or exploitation. Forward comrades! For a world where we organize everything that the earth has to offer us collectively for the benefit of us all.

Join us at the kickoff picnic on July 9th, 2016. Call for details. (310) 487-7674



Bosses Slander Chinese Cultural Revolution

WORKERS MUST BUILD ON ITS LEGACY

If we were foolishly to believe the *New York Times*, the Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) was one of the great crimes of the 20th century. In truth it unleashed millions to create some of the most advanced communist practice ever, in almost every part of society. Their legacy includes a treasure-trove of communist experience.

Much of our party's line, outlined in *Mobilize the Masses for Communism*, is inspired by these masses. The ruling class (including today's Chinese bosses) wants to drown out their clarion call. Our party wants to amplify it!

Tens of millions took part in the Cultural Revolution. It started when Mao Zedong launched a mass struggle against open capitalist-roaders within the Communist Party leadership. In the course of this battle, huge forces emerged that broke through the limits of the original fight. They attacked the "bourgeois right" on every front.

Crimes against the Bourgeois Right

So let's list some of these "crimes."

Students rose up against "bourgeois education." They demanded communist education. Masses praised education through work and acted upon this conviction.

"Our school must not be run like the old bourgeois-dominated schools, which caused our sons and daughters to degenerate into good-for-nothings unfit for manual labor," insisted some tea-growing peasants.

Millions fought for communist health care. They admired the legacy of the "barefoot doctors" who came from farmworker brigades. Each year they were trained for six months in the cities. The other six months, they worked alongside their friends in the fields.

Inspired by the Cultural Revolution, the surgeon Joshua Horn described his first-hand observations of communist health care from 1954-1969. His book *Away With All Pests* is still read around the world. We recommend it.

Horn described the mass campaign against schistosomiasis. Mobilized millions dug up the snails that carried the disease. They ended the plague that had sickened and killed tens of millions.

Industrial workers experimented with a new type of production center. Anshan Steel workers created a set of principles known as the Anshan Constitution. Workers could not be fired. Their income was stable and set by national standards.

Workers participated in plant decisions; managers participated in productive labor. Workers had a complete right to criticize all management openly. The decision-makers became those who did the work. However, the Anshan Constitution stopped short of abolishing the wage system.

Tonghua Steel Factory workers spearheaded the attack on material incentives. They thought that getting extra pay was short-sighted individualism. Collective responsibility motivated them.

This set up one of the fiercest practical and ideological battles of the Cultural Revolution. Millions fought to bring back the Red Army's "supply system." The Red Army fought for decades and eventually defeated the Japanese imperialists and the Chinese capitalist Kuomintang army.

The supply system was based on the communist principle "from each according to commitment and ability, to each according to need." In the words of the Shanghai Commune, it "put politics in command." Communist collectivity motivated these soldiers. There was no rank or privilege.

"The Red Army abolished hired work," wrote Zhang Chunqiao, publisher of the Shanghai newspaper *Liberation*. "Communist relationships [like the supply system] established the model for the relationships inside the revolutionary base areas."

Many Army veterans led the fight to end the wage system during the Cultural Revolution. In their own words, wages put "money in command." Our

party continues their fight today as we mobilize the masses for communism and nothing less.

Such are the crimes against "bourgeois right" that the bosses hate and fear. We workers should not fear them. When the Chinese masses put communist ideas into practice, they taught us all important lessons about what communism is really about.

Mass Uprising for Communism

Mao considered some of the communist proposals to end the wage system, but quickly rejected them. Both he and his openly pro-capitalist opponents faced a mass uprising for communism.

This mass uprising forced both sides to divert attention from their own defense of "bourgeois right" by sacrificing minor players. This led to a lot of attacks on relatively innocent people. Fifty years later, the bosses focus on this aspect to discredit the whole Cultural Revolution.

But facts are stubborn. The Cultural Revolution was the first mass struggle against revisionism (capitalism wrapping itself in a red flag). It created material examples of actual communism.

The grass-roots communists were eventually defeated. They lost mainly because of their own weaknesses, not because of the vicious government attacks on them. They mistakenly trusted in Mao's leadership instead of forming a new party to fight directly for communism. But they left a rich legacy that can inspire masses to mobilize for communism now.



Red Guards, 1966