

# RED FLAG

## MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM

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

Striking transit workers in Sao Paulo, Brazil, fight cops to join protest of favela residents during World Cup



### MTA Mechanics Learn to Fight

## TAKE IT ALL THE WAY TO COMMUNISM

LOS ANGELES--“How were the classes?” one MTA mechanic inspector asked another who had just returned from a re-education course MTA was giving to all mechanic inspectors.

“Pretty good,” answered the mechanic, “but now they want us to do extra things.”

“Yes? Like what?”

“Like inspecting the gas tanks on every bus we inspect.”

“That will add at least an extra hour per bus. What do you think?”

“Well, I think is doable, but it will mean more pressure and more stress on us.”

“You’re right! We should refuse to do it, especially when we have to inspect two buses per day.”

MTA started these reeducation classes companywide because at this division a mechanic inspector was being harassed, and was suspended, for inspecting the buses properly as MTA’s official policy specifies.

In practice, however, MTA allowed the mechanics not to report minor defects because MTA’s priority is putting the buses on the streets. This endangers the safety of drivers and passengers.

ICWP through *Red Flag* launched a massive political campaign defending this mechanic for doing what was best for the drivers and the pub-

lic. It exposed MTA’s hypocrisy.

MTA decided to “change its evil ways” and sent the mechanic inspectors to reeducation. At the division of the suspended mechanic, they promised not to bother the mechanics during their working hours.

Now MTA is using its reeducation campaign to force mechanics to do more work. The message MTA is sending is that there is a price to be paid, if you fight for your interests and those of you co-workers and the public.

This should not surprise us. It is the logic of the class war we are locked in with the capitalists and their agents. Our interests and their interests are diametrically opposed. What’s good for them is bad for us, and vice-versa.

Regardless of the cost, we must fight this war to its logical conclusion: the destruction of capitalism and the building of communism. We are the many; they are the few. Our labor power drives everything – if we cease to work their economy will stand still. If our brothers and sisters in their armed forces refuse to defend them and join us, their reign of terror crumbles.

Fighting is the only guarantee of our victory. Fighting, we learn to fight better. The bosses will never stop attacking us. It is the nature of their system, which demands more and more profits that only our labor can produce.

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### CAPITALISTS CAN'T EVEN ORGANIZE A WORLD CUP WITHOUT MOBILIZING AN ARMY!

Brazilians are identified with football (soccer) more than any other people. They play it everywhere, from beaches to side-streets. They watch it with passion. Their drums, samba steps and capoeira moves have turned it into “the beautiful game.”

Why, then, does the Brazilian government have to mobilize 200,000 soldiers, cops, tanks, and attack helicopters in order to stage what they call a “Carnival of Football,” the World Cup? The last *Red Flag* looked at the oppression and exploitation in Brazil that sparked this massive, sustained uprising. Today, we want to look at how the struggle reflects developments in world capitalism and the opportunities for communist revolution.

Brazil hosted its first World Cup in 1950. It was then that it built the famous Maracanã Stadium. In those days important games would attract a crowd of 200,000 or more. The upper deck was standing-room-only, packed with working class supporters. The atmosphere was electric.

Today’s Maracanã, remodeled for this World Cup, holds 75,000. Its upper deck is all corporate suites. The masses have been expelled. Why? Why were they included in 1950 but excluded today?

The World Cup in 1950 was the first since the end of World War II. It was a period of growth. Capitalists, led by US imperialists, looked to rebuild after the massive destruction of war. They were confident in the future. And they were right. Markets expanded. Profits grew. Capitalism grew!

They needed the masses, but could they win them? In Europe the Soviet Red Army had defeated the Nazis. In Asia, the Chinese Red Army, after defeating the Japanese fascists, had just taken power in Beijing. The prestige of the old communist movement had never been higher. The capitalists unleashed massive violence against masses of rebellious workers at the same time that they used circuses like the 1950 world cup.

Today’s World Cup comes in the midst of the deepest crisis the world has faced since before World War II. Capitalists now confront falling rates of profit, massive overcapacity, and sharpening competition for resources. They are no longer confident in the future; they are anxious about it. And, although the old communist movement has collapsed (which the bosses are thankful for) they now fear the gigantic working class they have

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## Obama's Speech at West Point Criticized for: IGNORING US IMPERIALISTS' GEOPOLITICAL NEEDS FOR WAR

"Geopolitical rivalries have stormed back to center stage," wrote Walter Russell Mead in *Foreign Affairs*, the magazine of the CFR (Council on Foreign Affairs). By geopolitics, Mead means inter-imperialist rivalry.

Russia's annexation of Crimea, China's greater assertiveness in the South China Sea, and Iran trying to dominate the Middle East were some examples he gave of sharpening geopolitical rivalries. To this we can add the new developments in Iraq. (See box this page.)

Richard Haass, president of the CFR, criticizing Obama's West Point speech, wrote that his speech, aimed at many audiences, "failed to meet any, much less all, of its goals" and [although many things said] "are all arguably true, such generalities are more fitting for someone starting out in office than for an incumbent in his sixth year."

The Republicans also bash Obama, but Haass and Mead come from the clan of imperialists that Obama represents. The CFR speaks for the dominant wing of US imperialism. It plays a decisive role in deciding US international policies.

These imperialists are mad at Obama, among other things, for omitting from his speech their main international policies for "the part of the world most likely to shape this century, the Asia Pacific." He failed to mention their pivot to Asia and the TPP (Trans-Pacific Partnership trade pact).

The pivot is US imperialism's main strategy to contain and eventually confront China, their main rival for world domination. "One part of this pivot is a commitment to increase the presence and role of US military forces, the ostensible subject of Wednesday's address," insisted Haass.

The TPP, a regional trading pact, aims to increase US exports of goods, capital and services. Its main goal, however, is to exclude China, limiting its economic ability to build a blue-water navy.

Obama did talk, however, about US leadership being indispensable for bringing about "international order," the US bosses' euphemism for imposing their world domination.

Haass understands this task won't be peaceful. Thus, for him, Obama's biggest sin is not preparing "the American people... to back such a role for their country." They want a working class willing to sacrifice blood and pensions for the rulers' profits and empire.

### Geopolitical Rivalries Leading to World War III

Mead also assailed Obama for building "his foreign policy on the conviction that... the US's most important priorities involved promoting the liberal world order, not playing classical geopolitics."

Mead rightfully claimed these rivalries are intensifying because China, Iran, and Russia don't accept the geopolitical settlement following the Cold War. He says that they "are making increasingly forceful attempts to overturn it," and "that process will not be peaceful."

These countries, he explained, "want to avoid direct confrontations with the United States," ex-

cept when the odds are in their favor. They prefer to "chip away at the norms and relationships that sustain" the status quo (US world domination).

He fails to mention that no imperialist power has ever abdicated its top-dog position peacefully, and that World War III is looming as these rivals prepare for an eventual military clash with the US. He does, however, predict that figures like Putin will not, as the poem says, "go gentle into that good night, and they will rage, rage against the dying of the light."

### Communism Will Turn Off Capitalism's Lights Forever

Mead says that the fall of the Soviet Union meant "the ideological triumph of liberal capitalist democracy over communism, not the obsolescence of hard power."

He is right about the hard power to which the imperialists inevitably recur, launching local, regional, and world wars. He is wrong, however, about capitalism defeating communism. The fall of the Soviet Union was the fall of an empire built on state capitalism. It was the product of socialism, the goal mistakenly fought for by the 20th-century communists.

Class struggle – the life and death struggle between the working class and the capitalist class – is the determining factor in transforming society. The 21st century will be the century of the triumphant communist working class.

Today more than ever we are positioned to be the gravediggers of capitalism and the builders of the communist world we need.

Our class is bigger, numbering in the billions, and more international than ever. Learning from the errors of our predecessors, we are guided by the most advanced political line: *Mobilize the Masses for Communism*.

All we need is organization. That means building the International Communist Workers' Party and networks of our newspaper *Red Flag* massively worldwide. Masses of workers, soldiers, and students organized and mobilized for communism will turn off capitalism's lights forever.

## Communists in Iraq United the Working Class

As we go to press, the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), a fundamentalist Sunni militia, is advancing on Baghdad, threatening the Shia-led Maliki government left in power when the US Army withdrew.

The ruling-class press is wringing its hands over the possible desintegration of Iraq. Their experts, like former US ambassador Richard Galbraith, are predicting the division of Iraq into three separate states. The US imperialists know that their rivals, the China-Russia-Iran axis, will reap the rewards. Their rivalry will intensify. (See letter, page 6).

Galbraith alleges that the "irreconcilable contradictions" between Kurds and Arabs and between Sunni and Shia Moslem Arabs will cause the dismembering of Iraq. But the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) overcame those divisions in the working class, organizing a mass party, beginning in 1935 until it was wiped out in a CIA-backed Ba'ath coup in 1963. The ICP in 1959 had 25,000 members—Jews and Christians, Arabs and Kurds, Sunni and Shia Moslems, men and women—with about a fifth of Iraq's population participating in Communist-led mass organizations. They led a May Day March in 1959 of half a million people.

They were wiped out by their political errors, not by any supposed inevitable contradictions within the working class. They allied with the "progressive national bourgeoisie," like their counterparts from Iran to Indonesia. Their "allies betrayed them and helped to wipe them out.

Nevertheless, this experience shows that only Communists can unite workers of all religious and ethnic backgrounds, in Iraq and around the world. But we must go beyond the limits of the 20th Century Communists to abolish the bosses' borders and build a society of Communist solidarity within the working class.



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## South Africa

### COMRADES BRING RED FLAG TO MARIKANA PLATINUM STRIKERS

June 11—Revolutionary greetings comrades! I've got very exciting news here. I was invited to attend a screening of *Miners Shot Down* by Uhuru productions. I had the privilege of interacting with striking mineworkers. I introduced them to ICWP and they were interested in the correct political line of ICWP. I promised to keep in touch with them and send them the *Red Flag* pamphlet regularly. This is an interesting development: to have a presence in the mineworkers in the Platinum Belt.

These are very young brothers and sisters; they are now back at Welkom in the North West province in Marikana. Yesterday, I called one of them who assured me that they are still firm in their resolve; they are not going back without the employer meeting their demands. These brothers and sisters are determined and are prepared to die for their demands. They despise their employers and the African National Congress (ANC) government.

Mineworkers have been fighting the same struggle they were fighting in August 2012. Their struggle for a living wage lies at the heart of an industry which has enjoyed gigantic profits in the past 15 years. The ANC, through its investment arm Chancellor House, has become one of the richest organizations in the world.

The strike continues in the platinum mines. The negotiations between the independent AMCU union and the mine bosses brokered by the minister of minerals and energy had collapsed. The ANC statement on the ongoing mineworkers' strike indirectly blames the strike on the influence of foreigners and everybody else besides the mine bosses who are refusing to accede to the legitimate and genuine reasonable demands of the workers.

I noted that in Brazil, in the capital Sao Paulo, workers are on strike demanding a 12.5 % wage



This photograph shows the struggle in Marikana, South Africa, after the police assassination of the striking platinum miners at Lonmin in 2012. The comrades in South Africa are organizing ICWP among these workers now.

increase whilst employers are offering a meager 8%.

These militant waves of strikes in South Africa, Brazil and elsewhere are unfortunately reformist: they do not seek to change the capitalist system but to win some gains which are going to be reversed or eroded anyway. It is important therefore for workers and the poor of each and every country to desist from these reformist battles and fight for communist revolution on a worldwide scale that will bring an end to world capitalism. Marching forward! Phambili nedabi lokuwisa onxixwa phambili!

We send revolutionary greetings from South Africa to everyone in the ICWP. We pledge solidarity with the striking workers in Brazil, for fearlessly raising the plight of the exploited workers. We salute the workers in Sao Paulo for standing firm in their resolve to highlight the treachery of the soccer world cup. Qina msebenzi qina!!! Amandla!

We had a very fruitful meeting today. We were

joined by exciting young comrades. The future of ICWP in South Africa looks bright; these comrades are knowledgeable and eager to learn and contribute meaningfully to the working-class struggles around the world. We do not know how are we going to fit in that small venue. We are expecting more numbers when we meet next Sunday. We are going to cross that bridge when we get to it. What we have decided to do beginning next week is to read the Dialectical Materialism series. There is more exciting stuff coming. We are the future. Nobody can stop us.

Also, I am very happy to announce that I have received from the post the *Mobilize the Masses for Communism* banner (flag) which we will use in our next meeting and all other activities. We wish to express our gratitude for such a wonderful gift, we will treasure it. Everyone has taken photo shoots of it flying high. Phambili ICWP Phambili!!! With the correct political line of Communist Revolution, we can never go wrong.



June 17—Striking rail workers fought police in Lille, France (pictured) and other cities as a massive nationwide railroad strike entered its second week. Strikers oppose reform legislation that would open the door to privatization and job cuts.

A week earlier, transit workers in Sao Paulo, Brazil tied up the city on the eve of the World Cup (see p. 1).

And on June 14, US President Obama signed an order that squashed a one-day strike of 400 rail workers in Philadelphia that had threatened to spread to thousands of bus drivers, mechanics, and other transit workers.

The tremendous power of these angry industrial workers must be turned against the capitalist system itself. We invite – we urge! – transit workers who read and discuss *Red Flag* in Los Angeles, Oakland and elsewhere to take the lead in spreading communist ideas far and wide among co-workers and their public.

## BRAZIL WORLD CUP from page 1

created. It's a working class they have to attack again and again as they scramble to create the conditions to extract their profits out of us. They are right to fear us!

When Brazil has to invade Brazil (the government occupied its favelas, threatened and jailed

strikers) in order to stage a World Cup, something has gone wrong. The capitalists can no longer rule in the old way and the working class can no longer live in it. In Brazil it shows up in the sustained battle against the World Cup. In Greece it's the battle against the IMF and sovereign debt crisis. In South Africa it's in the Platinum Miners strike. In Nigeria it's a general

uprising against cuts in gas subsidies. One way or another it shows up the world over. It's the opportunity for *Red Flag* and communist ideas and revolutionary organization to grow. In the 1950s the capitalists may have looked at the future with confidence; today we communists can, knowing that we have a world to win!

## MTA from page 1

To produce at a lower cost, they must work us harder. This is what MTA tried to do at Division 15 a few months ago:

"We got a new supervisor," a mechanic recently told us. "At first, he was very friendly, until he learned what we did and how we did it. Then he started demanding more work. He wanted us to do a complete brake job in one day,

when it normally takes two days.

"We told him we wouldn't do it and demanded to see the manager. We explained the situation to him, and said we were not responsible for any accidents. The manager spoke to the supervisor and he stopped harassing us.

"We read about the struggle at your Division in *Red Flag*. Please continue to send it to me, and let's get together sometime to plan how I can be

more useful to the Party," he concluded.

These incidents show that the bosses never stop waging war against us as long as their wage slavery rules the world. We need to destroy them and their money that chains us to them. This mechanic drew the right conclusion: we must spread *Red Flag* and join ICWP to bring us closer to the communist revolution we need.



## Obama's Climate Plan:

### “CAP” ANTI-CAPITALIST MASS SENTIMENT AND “TRADE” ON FEAR

“Growing numbers of people are beginning to realize that capitalism is the uncontrollable force driving our ecological crisis,” wrote Joel Kovel in *The Enemy of Nature* (2002).

Today, people's confidence in the world's rulers is melting like the Western Antarctica ice shelf. Their fear of global warming is rising like the ocean.

Those people, Kovel continued, “become frozen in their tracks by the awesome implications.” We need to get them moving again by making real the awesome potential of communism.

**Under capitalism, the working class always pays.**

“Drought-plagued California... hopes to prove that capitalism can work in the fight against global warming,” reported the *New York Times* last month. And capitalism's main strategy, “cap and trade” (see box) hasn't worked so well in Europe over the last decade.

Fluctuating prices for “carbon credits” (permits to pollute) make it difficult for companies to make long-term plans. That's a basic fact of capitalism: fierce competition for short-term profits creates long-term disaster. That's what caused the ecological crisis to begin with.

In the US, a move away from dirty coal-fueled energy to “clean” natural gas became possible because massive fracking increased the supply and lowered the cost of natural gas. But fracking is dirty and dangerous. Trains explode, tanks of toxic chemicals leak into water supplies, and the death rate among US oil and gas workers is almost eight times higher than the average for US industrial workers. Fracking may also cause earthquakes.

Capitalists pass along increased costs of generating electricity, raising prices while continuing to drive down wages. Politicians use revenue from sales of carbon credits for corporation-friendly projects like the “bullet train” that California governor Jerry Brown wants to build.

**No, capitalism can't work in the fight against global warming.**

A National Research Council report (December 2013) warned that “the planet could suffer serious and abrupt climate threats in the next few

years or decades.” But carbon isn't even the most urgent threat created by capitalism. That would be world war.

International capitalist competition drives inevitably toward imperialist world war. We estimate that the same time frame applies: “in the next few years or decades.” And since August 1945, world war has meant nuclear war.

The stakes couldn't be higher. The urgency couldn't be greater. The time to mobilize the masses for communism is now.

**Yes, communism can work!**

Communism means ending production for profit and all its consequences, including capitalism's unrelenting pressure to expand. Communist society will instead produce for human needs, which, unlike bosses' profits, have limits.

Communism will liberate us to collectively reimagine and reconstruct every aspect of life so that we and our descendants can live sustainably on the planet. Without corporations like Exxon, Gazprom, Total or PetroChina, we will be able to leave most carbon in all its forms safely underground.

Without the capitalists' nations and borders, imperialist war will become only a terrible memory. No longer will vast military machines chew up lives and spew carbon, radioactivity, and other poisons into the environment.

Workers' creativity will be massively unleashed to develop renewable energy sources. Huge reserves of labor will be freed for constructive work. There will be no money in communism, no financial “bottom line” to stop us from putting good ideas into action.

Work for the common good will replace the wage slavery of jobs. We'll collectively organize that work so that most can live closer to our workplaces and rely mainly on locally-produced food and goods.

More of us will be active in daylight and asleep when it's dark. Instead of passive entertainment delivered over energy-eating large-screen TVs, we'll create and share our own arts and participate actively in sports.

The most awesome thing is that we'll all take part in making and carrying out the decisions that affect our lives and the future of life on the planet.

### President Obama's “Climate Rescue Plan” is a Capitalism Rescue Plan!

Obama's climate plan requires states to lower carbon emissions from power plants. It encourages them to adopt more programs like California's “cap and trade.” Here is a short explanation of this complicated system:

Governments set limits (“caps”) on carbon emissions from power plants, and sometimes factories. Then they issue free “carbon credits” (permits to pollute) to allow plants to pollute up to those limits. More of these permits are sold in the capitalist marketplace.

The caps are gradually lowered, with the goal of slowing the rate at which carbon enters the atmosphere so that global warming also slows. When caps are lowered, companies must decide whether it's more profitable to invest in energy efficiency (natural gas instead of coal) or to buy more credits. In California, the company might also “offset” its carbon use by investing in some unrelated energy-efficiency project.

But finance capitalism, not industry, dominates today's marketplace. Speculators buy up the “credits” (pollution permits) even though they don't run businesses that pollute. Their goal is to sell them at a profit, most likely to someone else who doesn't run a factory. They bet on the fluctuations of the market and create “derivative financial products” to hedge their bets. This is just like what happened with mortgages a decade ago, which led to the 2007-2008 crash.

“Thirty years ago, the financial sector claimed around a tenth of U.S. corporate profits. Today, it's almost 30 percent,” wrote Mark Weissmann in the *Atlantic* (3/5/13). “It's supplanted manufacturing as the biggest profit center in the economy.”

Obama's capitalist “climate plan” is betting the future of life on Earth in the giant casino called “Wall Street.”

**Your part can start right now, by joining the International Communist Workers' Party.**

## India Bosses Fight Over Imperialist Alliances

### WORKERS NEED TO EXPAND RED FLAG NETWORKS

“Prosperous days are coming,” said Modi, as he addressed 700 million people on live TV on becoming the new Prime Minister of India.

Within days the second most powerful minister in his government died in a mysterious car accident believed to have been staged by Modi. This incident reflects serious division among the Indian capitalists who brought the fascist-led Modi government to power. They are fighting over which imperialist to ally with to best further their interests.

India, a nation of over 1.2 billion people, only produces 30% of the oil it needs. The remaining 70% comes mostly from the Middle East. The US invasion of Iraq quadrupled the price India has to pay for oil. This escalating cost of energy forced India to rapidly expand energy based on coal plants. In the last ten years China has given loans to major Indian capitalists to build coal based plants. It sold over \$50 billion of equipment related to energy. China has become India's largest trading partner.

The rise of a fascist government in India gives the Indian capitalist class the opportunity to take advantage of growing rivalry between the US and

China. As US power declines rapidly, it needs India as an ally to counter China. US Vice President Biden proposed an increase in US-India



**Communist Women in India, 1940s**

trade, from about \$65 billion currently to \$500 billion in five years. In return for opening US markets to Indian capitalists, the US rulers want India to be a military ally against China. There is a section of the Indian capitalist class that wants to build the India- Japan relationship with China to completely upstage the US from Asia. Another section wants to ally with the US, and others with Russia.

The new Indian government led by the fascist BJP has started a gigantic plan to create strategic highways along the China border to bolster India's military reach. All the capitalists around the world are preparing for war, just as Biden's half a trillion dollar trade with India wants the ‘military component’ to be a guiding aspect of the bilateral relationship.

Millions of workers in India are not fooled by Modi and his fascist government. In the 1940's, tens of thousands of communist workers and peasants in India rejected the nationalist movement led by Gandhi and took up arms to fight the nationalists, religious fanatics and British colonialism.

International Communist Workers Party (ICWP) is building the revolutionary movement to smash capitalism and replace it with communism. Many of our friends and readers of the *Red Flag* in India and other countries are now willing to step forward. Building ICWP now will pave a way for smashing capitalism-imperialism and building a communist society in which millions of workers mobilize to meet the needs of workers everywhere.



## Ending Racist Mass Incarceration: Part I

### US RULERS CHANGE THEIR TUNE – NOW IT’S AN ARMY CADENCE

“The American experiment in mass incarceration has been a moral, legal, social, and economic disaster. It cannot end soon enough.”

Did these words come from Angela Davis and the “prison abolition” movement? Or from Michelle Alexander and “All of Us or None”?

No! They came from the *New York Times* editorial board, mouthpiece of US imperialism, on Sunday, May 24, 2014. As in “the so-called debate over climate change,” they declared, mass incarceration “shows a crisis that threatens society as a whole.” It’s actually a political crisis of capitalism.

This editorial signals a major policy shift that is starting to have real effects on incarcerated people, their families, and the working class. When the liberal-Democratic American Civil Liberties Union joins forces with the conservative-Republication American Legislative Exchange Council, you can bet that core interests of US imperialism are at stake.

\* What are those interests?

\* Why would it be a mistake to conclude that radical reform movements can overcome racism and social injustice?

\* And why do we say that mobilizing the masses for communism, and nothing less, can end the “criminal injustice system”?

#### Imperialist Interests: Economics, Politics, and War Plans

The *NY Times* cites the “astounding economic cost” of mass incarceration, reported by the Brookings Institution to be \$80 billion a year in direct prison costs, “and more than a quarter-trillion dollars when factoring in police, judicial and legal services.”

That’s real money, even for Wall Street. A quarter-trillion dollars is over half of the Pentagon’s base budget for 2015, and almost ten times what Defense Secretary Hagel requested in additional funds to minimize budget cuts.

As Congress cuts the military budget while conflict sharpens among imperialist and regional

powers, Hagel wants the US Army to maintain a level of 440,000 active-duty troops. In 1940 the Army had 267,000 active-duty members. It surged to 1.46 million just before the US entered the war. The money now tied up in the prison system would make such a surge possible. And companies like GEO, which now make huge profits on private prisons, will morph into war profiteers.

Meanwhile, the US imperialists face a political problem: how to mobilize young workers to kill and die for a system that treats them like criminals and throws millions into prison. Immigrant youth see parents snatched away, locked up, and deported for things they supposedly did 20 or 30 years ago.

Capitalism needs a “reserve army of the unemployed” but it also needs loyal workers, especially in war industry. The US labor force is aging, with fewer workers in the 16-24 age group. Some imperialists saw prison labor (at pennies per hour) as the solution. For example, the Defense Department started buying more uniforms and other gear from UNICOR (which runs slave labor in federal prisons), and less from companies like American Apparel.

The *NY Times* speaks for a section of the ruling class that has changed its mind. Mass incarceration, long-term solitary confinement, and cases like the Trayvon Martin murder have inspired strikes in prisons (California, Alabama) and immigrant detention centers (Washington State and Texas) and angry street protests across the US.

The viciously racist “criminal injustice” system has massively alienated the youth, especially black and immigrant youth, who have felt its lash themselves or have imprisoned friends and rela-



tives. The rulers have a big problem building a political base among these youth, who threaten to become capitalism’s gravediggers.

The Rev. Emory Berry, a Virginia organizer against mass incarceration, wrote last November that “we still have an expensive and ineffective criminal justice system that doesn’t work well, is riddled with unfairness, [and] undermines our faith in the system.”

And that’s why we’re seeing policy changes such as reformed drug sentencing laws, the release of elderly prisoners, limits to long-term solitary confinement, and ending “life without parole” sentences for juveniles.

These are not steps on the road to ending racist capitalism. They are part of the US rulers’ march to world war. We must take this communist understanding to the angry masses whose lives, families, and communities have been destroyed, including those fighting mass incarceration. *Red Flag* is the shovel they need to bury the racist system and dig the foundation for the communist world we need.

*Next: The dangers of “radical reform” movements and the opportunities created by mobilizing the masses for communism.*

## Farmworker Comrade:

### ARMED VIOLENCE IS NECESSARY

*In a previous issue, a farmworker comrade told of incidents of workers’ organized violence against the growers in California in the 1960’s and 1970’s, the opposite of the pacifist line pushed by and about César Chávez. The history continues here.*

Another violent incident happened during the years of the past farmworkers’ strikes in California.

It was the time when the farmworkers no longer respected the pacifist philosophy of Chávez; they fully took up organized violence as the best weapon in the struggle and strikes.

In Shafter, a town in the Delano area, there is a labor camp which at that time was the nest of a great many scabs who left at dawn every day to work and break the strike. One morning, a big group of us strikers arrived at the camp. We blocked the exit and did not let them leave. We made those who tried to leave turn back by stoning them.

A scab ventured out with his camper full of people. It drove toward the strikers and passed them, but the back door of the camper was open and as it passed, a shower of rocks hit them. In a little while, they returned to the camp as fast as they left. They had several injured scabs due to number of rocks coming in through the door as they drove by. The police who were 100 feet away only observed but didn’t intervene at all.

And where was Chávez? Chávez was in his of-

fice praying. The scabs left the camp.

#### All the Scabs Left the Fields

Another morning before dawn we blocked two of the main roads out of Delano to prevent the scabs from leaving to break the strike. Since it was dark, the scabs didn’t expect that these places would be blocked. When they realized it, they were in front of the strikers. Those who could, put on their brakes and went into reverse, but others had no choice but to continue ahead. But for those who returned as well as those who continued, none had any good windows left in their cars, and maybe one or another scab was broken up too.

#### The Kitchen Knife

One more incident was in 1973. The growers refused to renew the contracts that they had with the Farmworkers’ Union and they gave them over to the Teamsters’ Union. So we farmworkers had to declare a strike against the growers to get the contracts back. The Teamsters, for their part, organized a group of thugs to protect the growers’ property, and they spent their time provoking the striking farmworkers. But one day they went too far. They went to Lamont, a town south of Delano, where there was a farmworkers’ picket line, including many women, where the goons carried out an attack as they pleased, beating up men and women strikers.

With that “victory” the goons were more em-

boldened, so much so that they decided to go another day to McFarland where there was another farmworkers’ picket line and do the same thing. I was on that picket line. We got together and agreed to give them a welcome. The women were told that those who didn’t bring something, even if only a kitchen knife, shouldn’t come to the picket line the next day. The next morning, the women discreetly came to me and said, “Look what I have!” And truly in their clothes they carried a kitchen knife. The men brought other weapons.

But the “party” we were preparing for never took place. The police told the thugs we were waiting for them, and they never came. We never saw them again in the whole area.

What I have related here is to refute what Chávez said and what is still said, that the farmworkers’ struggles were won only with prayers and passivity, and that they have never used violence.

While these experiences came from the farmworkers’ struggle for better conditions, the lessons show that there were no permanent gains from reform struggle. To end exploitation, we need to fight for communist revolution, a struggle that will not be a pacifist one. From these accounts it is clear that workers will step up with courage and strength against the class enemy when it is necessary.



## LETTERS

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## CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

## “In Communism, will there be soccer?”

El Salvador—The new World Cup is here. This country again was left out of the multi-million dollar profits. A sports fan said, “Have you read yet about the underhanded things that the Salvadoran teams are involved in?”

“That is nothing compared to the millions of dollars that Qatar spent in bribes so that they could host the world cup in 2022,” responded another sports fan. \$5 million were distributed initially, according to official figures.

Soccer is enjoyed by millions of people. According to official FIFA figures, 270 million people around the world regularly play soccer. Many more play informally. Many of them don't even imagine the lucrative deals that revolve around the beautiful game. Every four years comes the high point when products inundate television screens. “You have to buy a new television,” “drink this drink,” order the multinational companies.

This year's World Cup—an elitist event—has shown that the working class is not uncritical and no longer believes that “bread and

circuses” are the solution. Workers are taking to the streets to say that first world stadiums are not worth it when the most basic services—health care, jobs, education, and housing—are rotten.

The workers are indignant, because while billions are spent on stadiums, the hospitals lack medicine and a high percent of the poor have no place to live, no water or electricity.

Incidents of corruption have been made public. For example, the cost of transportation of the stands was to be \$4,700, but the consortium in charge has charged \$1.5 million to the Brazilian government, 318 times the original cost. This company, thanks to its contacts and its donations to politicians, was awarded 25% of the projects.

These enormous costs, supposed to have been paid by private business, will be paid by the working class: the costs are socialized and the profits are privatized. A Brazilian or Salvadoran worker will never be able to pay the entrance fee to see a World Cup game.

“So is soccer bad?” “In communism there won't be soccer?” ask many friends of the International Communist Workers' Party. The answers are clear: soccer is a sport that helps maintain healthy, athletic bodies. In communism there will be sports. Millions of men and women workers will practice this and other sports without the goal of getting profits for the bosses.

Capitalism is the virus that contaminates sports that should be healthy recreation for our class. In communism we will develop athletic qualities and promote soccer as part of the socialization of the whole working class. The best goal that will be scored in the communist system will be to make the sports merchants who profit from the skills and abilities of young athletes disappear. ICWP organizes and motivates the working class for communism.

Read and distribute **Red Flag**, our newspaper.

--Comrade in El Salvador

### World War III is Inevitable

The article “Imperialism Creates its Own Gravediggers” was very helpful in showing that the industrial working class is the biggest in history, and winnable to communism. It points the way forward.

But it could have also explained that because of the nature of capitalist competition, declining rate of profit, and overproduction, world war is inevitable. More workers worldwide are wage slaves producing more goods in more factories. This sharpens the competition for markets, raw materials and cheap labor. This then makes the inter-imperialist rivalry for those markets fiercer, and eventually they have to destroy the productive capacity of their rivals.

But more wage-slaves world wide, furious at the bosses' attacks, super exploited at levels never before seen, and future soldiers in the imperialists' armies, have a huge potential for communist revolution internationally. To make that a reality, we need to build ICWP internationally, especially among industrial workers and soldiers.

As the article explained, the imperialists are dividing the world, but these divisions are not neat. Everywhere they are locked in conflict with each other. In the face of China's growing investments in Africa, AFRICOM (US military) has troops and drones in most African countries and plans for more. The US is actively fighting for control in Eastern Europe, Germany and Russia's back yard. China is making huge advances in Latin America. The canal the Chinese bosses plan to build in Nicaragua directly challenges US control in the Central American region.

China, Brazil, India and Russia seek new markets, resources and cheap labor to profit from, but the US is the military power most likely to launch the war. It is in decline and needs to defend its empire from rising capitalists-imperialists that are hounding it. Chinese, Russian and other imperialists are also preparing militarily.

Since World War III is inevitable, we should continuously show how the contradictions are sharpening. That way, workers can see that only by mobilizing for communism can we put an end to deadly competition and mass murder for profit.

--An LA comrade

### Engineers, Workers Must Smash Division of Mental and Manual Labor

“Boeing Engineers” (V.5 #8) presented important information about how workers worldwide are feeling the pressure of intensified exploitation as capitalists compete for the profits of our labor. Also, it usefully noted that the bosses divide and weaken our class by creating distinctions between “mental” and “manual” labor (among many others) that communism will end.

The division of labor between engineers and production workers is an important example of this. Engineers “design” things; machinists and assemblers “make” them. Even the capitalists know that work is smoother when engineers are close to production. Workers also know how designs can be improved, but they are usually not asked and have little incentive to volunteer information that will probably be used to exploit them more.

Engineers are trained in college to think like management when designing products and production processes. We should write more about this. But clearly the bosses have historically paid engineers more to keep them from allying with workers instead of management.

The current attacks on Boeing engineers show that their real interests lie in uniting with production workers and the rest of the working class to mobilize for communism. I think that the article could have been stronger if framed around this political point instead of around the narrower economic point about intensifying exploitation.

I hope that future articles will include conversations with Boeing engineers as well as production workers about the capitalist division of “mental” from “manual” labor (even though the two are intertwined in production) and how communism will end it.

--LA Comrade

### This is the paper of the working class.

**We get no funding from the capitalists, their foundation or NGOs. This newspaper is not a commodity produced for sale. We fighting to abolish commodity production. However, we have to pay for the costs of producing and distributing the paper, as well as for other expenses of building an international party. The box below includes a suggested donation of \$20/year which is about the current cost of mailing a single copy to a U.S. address. PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY.**

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## U.S. High School Students Salute Comrades in South Africa

We are part of a high school ICWP collective in Los Angeles, California, USA. We meet regularly to study, plan events and read and discuss **Red Flag** (RF) which you guys also have over there. Some of us have read and discussed party literature like **Mobilize the Masses for Communism** and are currently studying the party's pamphlet **Dialectical Materialism: The Philosophy of Struggle**. We also have developed an extensive **Red Flag** network in which we distribute a little over hundred..



We recently saw a video of you guys. We noticed that some of you were wearing the red ICWP shirt; many of us have that shirt. With that same shirt we proudly marched together with other workers on May Day, our international working class day.

In the video we were able to witness that all of you, like ourselves, need and want a real change in our lives. We are very excited, and it's very heartening that in this great part of the world the ICWP is known and it is growing. We invite you and encourage you, like we do ourselves, to continue participating in ICWP activities. And believe us, comrades, all of the pain, struggle and wait will be very well worth it.

In a recent meeting we read your article in **Red Flag**. We would like to know what questions you guys have. We, like you, are fighting for communism; we are both helping to mobilize the masses for a better world. The better world we all want: a world with no borders and no bosses, a world where the poor aren't forced to live in the worst conditions and where the rich exploit us all; there won't be poor nor rich. Everyone will work and everyone will help out however they are able to.

Together we are fighting to extend communism all over. Together we are breaking down barriers so that our futures change. Together we are waging struggles so that the party of **Red Flag** will organize under only one flag all

over the world.

In ICWP we will bring together our unbreakable power; we shall be a red world like the color of our blood. We are showing all of these racist exploiters, politicians and all capitalists that the ICWP grows each year and that we will take back all that belongs to the international working class.

These damn politicians and capitalists spend their time in their huge mansions when not travelling all over the globe with their great fortunes and their great luxuries while millions of children or entire families go hungry.

Let's continue the fight, South African comrades. We know that we will defeat all of these capitalists. Let's continue the fight for our families, continue the fight to achieve every worker's dream of eliminating the savage wage system. Long live ICWP!

We invite you to read, study and discuss **Mobilize the Masses for Communism, Dialectical Materialism: The Philosophy of Struggle** and other party literature and fight to develop and extend **Red Flag** networks. We have a world to win. In the study of dialectics we learned that there are contradictions everywhere and that the only way to resolve them is through struggle.

### Ukraine: Who's to Blame?

Dear **Red Flag**: I have recently discovered and become very positively impressed with your website [icwpredflag.org](http://icwpredflag.org) and its proletarian politics.

As regards your latest view on the situation in Ukraine, I agree that it is dominated by various aspects of imperialism. But I see a danger, for the international proletarian fight against capitalism and its manifestation in fascism, to equate what the Nazi-dominated regime is doing in and from Kiev with what 'Putin' is said to be doing or not doing, and with what the proletarians in the east and elsewhere in Ukraine are doing to cast off being dominated by Kiev's NATOist Nazis.

--Comrade in the United Kingdom

### RED FLAG RESPONDS:

On May 2, Right Sector fascists and other Ukrainian nationalists murdered at least forty pro-Russian protestors in Odessa, Ukraine. This attack highlights the fascist character of the U.S. allies in Ukraine. The Russians were burned to death in the Trade Union Palace where they had sought sanctuary from a pro-Ukrainian mob.

But just because the Ukrainian nationalists are fascists, it doesn't follow that the pro-Russian forces are anti-fascist, pro-working-class fighters. They weren't waving the red flag, but wearing the ribbon of Russian patron Saint George.

Russian Prime Minister Putin is trying to sell the story of Russia vs. Ukraine as a fight between fascists and anti-fascists. The May 9 Victory Day celebration march through the streets of Sebastopol, Crimea, and other cities featured photographs of Russian soldiers who had fought the Nazis in World War II, overtly portraying the current struggle as a continuation of that fight.

The Red soldiers who defeated the Nazis would turn over in their graves if they could see what Putin is doing in their name.

Putin has overseen the emergence of Russia as an imperialist power, a key oil and natural

gas supplier to most of Europe. He has reformed the military, aiming to make Russia a key strategic imperialist power. His policy of mass privatization led to a sharp increase in mortality, especially among unemployed male workers.

Putin's creation of "National Champions," such as Gazprom and United Aircraft Corporation, expected to advance the interests of the nation while they make a profit, illustrates the creation of a fascist corporate state. Virulent nationalism justifies Russian expansion.

Putin is no anti-fascist. The struggle in the Ukraine is not a struggle between fascists and anti-fascists. It is part of a fight between U.S. and Russian capitalist/fascists over who will rule the world.

### Working Class Youth: The Only Decent Future is Communism

According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), worldwide unemployment will continue to worsen, even though "gradually," to reach over 215 million unemployed people in 2018. During this period about 40 million net new jobs will be created a year, a number lower than the number of people expected to enter the job market, which is about 42.6 million each year.

The number of NEET youth (those who are neither employed nor receiving education or training) has continued to increase sharply since the crisis began in 2008. In some countries, it is estimated that about one fourth of the youth between 15 and 29 years old find ourselves in this situation. The worldwide youth unemployment rate has risen to 13.1 percent, which is three times greater than the adult unemployment rate.

The electoral politicians tell us that they will save us from poverty, unemployment, and violence. In reality, they create all this. Throughout the world they terrorize us with their fights for business, some illegal, all for profits, that end

up in "legal" businesses like banks and industries. They have even reduced the migration of Central Americans to the US through killings by drug dealers.

Mexico occupies fourth place among the 40 countries considered by the ILO in the percent of "NEETS." It is only surpassed by Turkey, Macedonia and Israel, nations where the number of young "nini's" is growing rapidly. Spain is just two rungs below Mexico.

While the capitalist system adds more years until workers can retire, many youth find ourselves at home without having the financial capacity to study or work because the jobs require a "minimum of two years of experience." But how can we have experience if they don't even give us the opportunity to sell our labor power?

In Mexico in recent months, about 1,200,000 Mexicans were out of work in the formal sector of the economy (three out of every four who tried to find a job), without including those who lost their jobs before, in previous administrations.

The ILO warns that, besides the current job insecurity recorded in Mexico, the weak generation of formal jobs is more than disturbing.

There are millions of us NEET youth not only in Mexico but in the whole world. This is a product of the capitalist system in crisis. But many of us are fighting for communism, organizing, distributing **Red Flag**, and mobilizing the masses for communism. We are convinced that the system affects all of us and that's why it is urgent to change it.

I am a youth from El Salvador and a member of the International Communist Workers' Party. It is evident that the ILO, together with the bosses, are correct to worry because the NEET youth, hand in hand with ICWP, are a threat to the capitalists since we can be builders of a communist revolution.

The working class needs to liberate ourselves from all the capitalists and for that we need to join ICWP now!

--NEET Red Youth



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

## LENIN AND REFLECTION

In previous columns we discussed Lenin’s defense of materialism in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, a book that later became a fundamental source for Marxist philosophy in the USSR. Although the book’s case against idealism is a good one, its explanation of how people learn from experience is fundamentally flawed. In this column we explain this flaw and discuss its importance for communist politics.

### The Theory of Reflection

Marx and Engels often used the term “reflection” to express the important materialist idea that reality is the source of our ideas. As Engels put it, “All ideas are taken from experience, are reflections—true or distorted—of reality.”

Ideas that reflect reality don’t have to be true, however, but can be completely wrong. Engels wrote that “All religion ... is nothing but the fantastic reflection in men’s minds of those external forces which control their daily life, a reflection in which the earthly forces assume the form of supernatural forces.” The fact that forces are reflected in some people’s minds as supernatural forces does not mean that the supernatural actually exists. Illusions promoted by capitalist propaganda reflect the reality of capitalist domination, but that doesn’t make them true.

### Lenin’s Copy Theory of Reflection

In Lenin’s version of reflection, knowing is copying reality, and our “perceptions and ideas” are “images” of reality. “Matter is a philosophical category denoting the objective reality,” he wrote, “which is given to man by his sensations, and which is copied, photographed and reflected by our sensations....” It isn’t just sensations that copy reality, but theories: “The recognition of theory as a copy, as an approximate copy of objective reality, is materialism.”

Lenin’s “images,” “copying” or “photographing” metaphors express the true idea that sense perception and theorizing can provide true or approximately true information about reality. Talking about copying or photographing suggests, however, that coming to know is a straightforward or automatic process, which certainly isn’t true. Some ideas and even some sense perceptions are not like copies at all. The smell of a rotten fish warns us not to eat it, but the smell is not a copy or an image of the fish or the chemicals that cause the smell. Knowing something about reality isn’t necessarily copying it.

Lenin’s copy theory leaves out two critical aspects of knowing: (1) the practical and mental activity of the knower and (2) the dialectic of theory and practice.

### Activity of the Knower

Whether an individual or group of people can learn from experience depends on what they already believe and what they actually do. False beliefs, racism, superstition, dishonesty, laziness, arrogance and other defects inside a person can prevent people from knowing by keeping them from gathering the right experiences or drawing the right conclusions from them. (How many leftists have drawn the correct conclusion from the evidence that socialism cannot lead to communism?).

Learning from experience is not very much like copying or photographing. Even seeing correctly requires action, paying attention and getting into the right position to see, like a soccer referee. Fixing an old theory or thinking up a new one is not copying, either.

### The Dialectic of Theory and Practice

Lenin understood that success or failure in practice tells us whether our ideas are true or not.

He wrote: “Things exist outside us. Our perceptions and ideas are their images. Verification of these images, differentiation between true and false images, is given by practice.”

What is missing here is the role of practice in allowing us to find true theories and the role of theory in guiding our practice. Better practice makes possible better theories, which make possible even more successful practice. This dialectical process is not copying reality, it is interacting with it. Knowing is a two-way process in which people change the world to understand it and understand it to change it. Lenin’s book focused only on the effect that nature and society have on the knower, which is a mechanical materialist approach, not dialectics.

### Later Developments

Many of the points made here were recognized by later Soviet philosophy, which developed a better theory of reflection that included the activity of the knower. Lenin also brought dialectics into his later philosophical ideas. In China, Mao Zedong explained the dialectics of theory and practice.

Soviet philosophy textbooks never faced up to the errors of Lenin’s book, however, since they wanted to portray him as a great genius who was right about everything. In China’s Cultural Revolution, Lenin’s book became the bible of pro-capitalist philosophers. It was useful to them because if knowledge had to copy reality, then we couldn’t know about communism since communist reality doesn’t exist yet.

We can know about communism, however, not by copying, but by combining the theoretical and practical knowledge gained in past revolutions and putting it in hands of the working class.

*Next time: Lenin’s later philosophy.*



## Los Angeles Summer Project Starts with a Bang

# GARMENT WORKERS SUPPORT RED FLAG

June 17--Los Angeles Summer Project volunteers found a warm welcome at the American Apparel factory this morning, as workers on their way to work contributed money to help ICWP bring *Red Flag* to other workers. This is the beginning of a summer project where we will distribute *Red Flag* to workers in garment and aerospace factories, and to transit workers, teachers, students and military personnel from Seattle to Oceanside. We also plan study groups, forums, barbecues and a pool party. JOIN US!



## Telling Stories About Our Lives

This year we are having a summer project in Seattle that will be closely connected to the release of a new pamphlet about the role of the industrial working class.

We were trying to come up with a theme that would engage the youth participating in the project. It will be something that will demonstrate that winning these workers is not mechanical, but requires study, political discussion, social connections, creativity, etc. Also, we want to be

able to answer questions these workers and students have about communism as well as we can.

Knowing that young workers and students enjoy storytelling, I thought that we could write two stories simultaneously about the life of a fictitious worker living under capitalism, as well as one living in communism. What will the differences be in their upbringing, their education and training, their family relations as well as relations with other workers. How they would access health care, etc. And so on...

Already two experienced Boeing workers have volunteered to be interviewed and share their experiences living under the racist repressive conditions of capitalism. What a great start!

So hopefully this idea will blossom and help win some more volunteers to the summer project. Upon completion of the stories, they will be able to present them to guests at our closing barbecue, and also publish them in *Red Flag*!

--Seattle ICWP member