



# RED FLAG

**MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM**

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

Haiti:

## **RACIST CAPITALISM IS THE REAL DISASTER MASS COLLECTIVITY SHOWS COMMUNIST POTENTIAL**



Hurricane Matthew that struck Haiti was an act of nature, but the death and destruction it inflicted is the result of racist capitalism. Dire poverty and lack of infrastructure murdered more than a thousand people. Their homes crumbled around them. There were no safe evacuation shelters. Now more lives are in grave jeopardy because people lack clean water, food and health care. Cholera is on the rise.

For capitalism, workers' lives are cheap and expendable. This cries out for a communist system where the lives of the masses are cherished and appreciated above all.

**The capitalist profit system set Haiti up for this disaster.** Even before the 2010 earthquake, 1.9 million people needed food assistance. Around 60 percent of the population lived on less than \$1.00 a day. Malnutrition and anemia ran rampant.

In 2009, the Haitian Parliament unanimously passed a law raising the minimum wage to 61 cents (US) an hour. US garment manufacturers opposed this and the US State Dept., led by Hillary Clinton, pushed Haiti's president to lower the minimum wage to 31 cents an hour.

In 2010, a huge earthquake hit Haiti, where there were few secure buildings. Over 250,000 people were killed. Millions were homeless. 10,000 people have died of cholera since the earthquake in 2010 and 27,000 more have the disease. Cholera was brought to Haiti by UN troops sent to maintain "order" after the earthquake. Not using careful sanitary measures, they sent it massively into the water supply.

**Capitalist aid is to help the capitalists, not the workers.** The Clinton Foundation raised billions of dollars to "help" the earthquake relief effort. The US and UN put the Clinton Foundation in charge of reconstruction. Lucrative contracts were awarded to their friends. Hillary's brother got a gold mining contract. Promised aid did not reach those in need.

Hurricane Matthew worsened this. Crops and fruit trees, the food supply, were destroyed in the southwest, Haiti's "breadbasket." UN troops have attacked starving workers who have surrounded trucks delivering supplies, to get food and water.

**The most urgent need of the masses is to mobilize for communism,** to build a mass ICWP to mobilize for a society that meets their needs, not the needs of the murderous bosses. Freed from capitalism, masses of workers will use our minds and labor to collectively build everything we need—without money.

Immediately after Hurricane Matthew, Haitian workers in areas isolated by flooding, collapsed bridges, and destroyed communication systems, pooled their scant resources to survive collectively. Some who had lost everything found shelter in caves together and helped each other hunt for food.

We see the possibility and need for communism in the masses' collectivity in this disaster as well as in their daily struggle for survival. Haitian workers' valiant history of struggle for liberation in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles shows the potential for communist revolution.

Communist revolution will destroy capitalism and imperialism along with racist wage slavery. Workers will mobilize to plan and build everything we need: food and industrial production, health care centers, roads, bridges, early warning systems for storms and earthquakes, and shelters to withstand them. We won't produce anything for sale—only for use. Everyone will help plan, produce and distribute what's needed.

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Garment workers--Bangladesh--May Day 2014

### **COMMUNISM IN BANGLADESH**

We are a group of ICWP members and friends in Dhakka, the industrial and financial capital of Bangladesh.

We were introduced to ICWP and **Red Flag** about two years ago when **Red Flag** wrote a series of articles on the conditions of garment workers here. We were astonished to find how accurate the articles were and that they reflected the aspirations of the most downtrodden workers to end capitalism with a system without wage slavery.

We have never met any other members of ICWP from other coun-

tries but our communication has expanded. The recent general strike in India and the military adventure of the Indian army on behalf of the Indian ruling class, supported by US imperialism, gave us an opportunity to communicate with ICWP members in India and Pakistan.

It was a feeling hard to describe when we all see each other as a class, as members of the revolutionary ICWP to change the world. We are small, determined, with the conviction that the future belongs to us.

--Comrades in Bangladesh

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## Sexism is a Class Issue

### COMMUNISM WILL CREATE MATERIAL BASIS FOR ENDING SEXISM

Donald Trump's disgusting attacks on women have highlighted the dangers of sexism. His "grab what you can" attitude perfectly expresses capitalist ideology. But it's not just about him.

The super-oppression and super-exploitation of women is rooted in class society and private property. Its material basis today is capitalist wage slavery. To end sexism, we must mobilize masses for a classless society: communism. And to do that we must all fight hard against sexism, racism and xenophobia today.

In early communist societies, women and men often had different roles. But everyone's work and knowledge was valued. All contributed to the collective good. Everyone helped to make important decisions. Nobody "owned" or controlled anyone else.

Then private property arose. Men dominated the priestly and warrior roles that defined an emerging ruling class. They gradually claimed women as their possessions, hoping to pass their wealth to their biological sons. They imposed their sexist ideology – often framed as religion – on the masses of propertyless men and women.

**Rising capitalism made things worse.** Enslaved men and women saw their common interests. Agricultural societies distinguished "women's" from "men's" work but respected both. But capitalism elevated monetary "exchange value" above "use value." So wage-labor (for money) devalued women's unpaid (although

necessary) housework.

Twentieth-century bosses converted many tasks historically done by women at home into wage-labor. Examples include making clothes, caring for children and the sick, preparing food. This allowed capitalists to amass super-profits by paying lower wages to women workers and driving down men's wages too. In the US these were often black or immigrant women.

**Today women workers are super-exploited from maquilas in El Salvador to garment sweatshops in south Asia.** Their low wages are "justified" by an ideology that promotes men as "breadwinners" and women as "homemakers." Women's wages, though critical to most households, are labeled as "only supplemental."

A comrade in South Africa tells of working the hard and dirty job of road construction with her baby on her back. Today many working-class women everywhere shoulder a double burden: super-exploited wage labor and primary responsibility for housework and child-rearing.

Consider the *New York Times'* praise for recruiting teenagers for Bangalore sweatshops. Their "independence" supposedly lay in the cell-phones they could use to marry for love. Their real destiny is supposed to be marriage and family. That's why they (and we) are supposed to accept their pitifully low wages and backbreaking work.

This is straight-up sexist ideology. It comes from the same liberal rulers who hypocritically bewail Trump's crude remarks about women.

**Bosses use sexism hand-in-hand with racism to divide the working class.** Trump tries to rally white male workers by scapegoating Muslims and immigrants, demeaning women and insulting black workers. Liberal capitalist media try to turn women, immigrant and black workers against "uneducated white males."

"My passengers [mostly latino/a] won't talk to me anymore," complained a white male bus operator who reads *Red Flag*.

**Communism unifies the working masses.** We will organize production to build cooperation and solidarity among men and women of all "races," "ethnicities" and abilities. We will mobilize masses

to create arts and culture that promote respect for all.

Communism will abolish money and markets, including wage labor. When all work is to meet the needs of the masses, the material basis of sexism will disappear.

Communism

#### Bourgeois feminism only helps the bourgeoisie

Bourgeois (pro-capitalist) feminists have seized on US presidential candidate Trump's sexist attack on Hillary Clinton as a "nasty woman" as a chance to unite all US women behind Clinton. Videos promoting assertive women from veterans of the US war in Iraq to Queen Victoria have popped up all over social media.

The rulers, in this case the Democrats who represent the dominant wing of the US ruling class, want working class women to believe that they have more in common with their oppressors than they do with their class brothers.

As we asked in our article for International Working Women's Day this year: How can class enemies be "sisters"?

Any worker who has lived in Angela Merkel's Germany, Maggie Thatcher's Britain, Winnie Mandela's South Africa, Golda Meir's Israel, Indira Gandhi's India, or Dilma Rousseff's Brazil, to name a few, should know that electing a woman doesn't change the nature of class rule.

nism will abolish private property. No longer will social relationships be distorted by thinking of each other as commodities, as things to be used. Children will be cherished by everyone, not regarded as their parents' property. We will enter or dissolve long-term relationships without regard for the property relations that define marriages today.

**Communism will create collective ways of living that end the isolated drudgery of housework.** Bolshevik women created "creches" (day care) in early Soviet Russia. Later there were "children's palaces" and factory-based cafeterias. Still, the capitalist social relations that defined socialism undermined their best efforts to end sexism.

In China, the People's Commune movement of the 1950s introduced free cafeterias, laundry, childcare and more. The Chinese Communist Party declared that "women hold up half the sky." Their socialist goal was for women to boost social production. Our communist goal is for women and men to transform the social relations of production and develop everyone to their full potential.

**But ending the material basis of sexism will not be enough.** Growing communist party collectives will mobilize mass struggle against sexist ideas and habits left over from capitalism. This struggle starts today, as men and women communists confront racist or sexist language or abuse.

To mobilize the masses for communism we must explain and act on our political line in workplaces, barracks, classrooms, locker rooms, at the dinner table and at Party events. When we make mistakes, we are open to criticism and try to learn.

Female politicians and capitalists like Hillary Clinton are part of the problem (see box). The masses of women and men will create the solution: a communist world.



South Africa 2016



El Salvador 1980s



Yemen 2011



Vietnam 1966



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## El Salvador:

### SOWING SEEDS OF COMMUNISM

EL SALVADOR—"They invited me to meetings several times, but Sunday is the only day that we have to do housework and spend time with our families," said a worker. "And I asked myself whether I should go or not? In the end I got inspired and decided to come, together with my husband" (another worker).

A new member in the meeting said, "I set aside my Sunday to come to the meeting. It's the day I play soccer, but I was interested in knowing more about the Party."

With the sound of ocean waves hitting the rocks in the background, the ICWP political school began, with new women and men workers attending. Before beginning the agenda, we welcomed them. A comrade asked if they had already heard a little about the history of ICWP. They answered, "Yes."

A worker leader said, "First we gave them *Red Flag* and invited them to the meeting. We told them about the struggle of ICWP and where we are going, briefly but clearly. Today, they are members of the Party." Applause broke out.

The first agenda item was the conflict in Syria. A public-sector worker commented, "This is a proxy war. Why? In Syria the interests of Russia

and the US are at stake. Partly it is a struggle for shares of world oil production."

We addressed the importance of the US elections. There the bosses' strategy is to make workers in that country believe that the problem in the US is latino/a immigrants. But the real problem is the crisis of the capitalist system and the fluctuations in the free market economy.

Next we talked about sexism. Two teachers made the initial presentation with an historical review of sexist behavior in class societies. They explained that changes have been made until now but they have not resolved the problem. They also emphasized that the material base of the problem is capitalism.

"We as communists do not fight against men or women. We fight against the material base of the problem: money and capitalism. In the future we will be just people with responsibilities," commented someone about how the relationship between men and women will be in communism.

A worker gave the example that in the factory every three to six months they gave pills to the women, who didn't know why. A supervisor told a worker who was present, "Pregnant, you don't serve us, since you have created problems."

A co-worker from the factory said, "Sometimes I don't do things that my wife does but that is part of the education that I received since childhood. I went to the field to work until late, and the women stayed at home." Then he added, "With my children it will be different, thanks to communist education."

"How can we make more advances against the bosses?" someone asked. A student briefly responded, "Reading *Red Flag*, losing the fear of giving the newspaper to more co-workers and, most important, writing for the paper."

"We are all comrades; no one is more than anyone else. This is a party that fights to transform society," said another public-sector worker.

The worker who came from a new factory was asked what he thought of the meeting. He answered, "To achieve something in life, one has to struggle for what you want. It's about sowing the seed and harvesting, like corn. We don't expect immediate results but we take care of the land to await the harvest. There are always changes. I also asked myself will I go or not? But I am here and I am eager to learn more."

## Mexico:

### BRING COMMUNIST IDEAS TO MASSES IN CLASS STRUGGLE

Building the worldwide party of the working class, ICWP, is indispensable and fundamental for our emancipation. ICWP members don't seek to become officials under capitalist governments. Instead we fight to eliminate the last form of the enslavement of humanity and to build a communist society.

In the last six months we have immersed ourselves in the workers' struggles. The teachers, in their struggle against "Education Reform" have been in the vanguard of these mobilizations. We try to take their thinking towards the elimination of the system of wage slavery.

We have explained to them, by being with them and distributing *Red Flag* and our manifesto *Mobilize the Masses for Communism*, that this is the only way in which our class will be emancipated from the capitalists. We have asked some teachers to read with us some of the articles in our newspaper.

We have also distributed 1,000 copies of our pamphlet against racism. This can help us to have deeper discussions with our base about racism in Mexico and worldwide.

Our forces are limited and we are swimming against the current of pro-capitalist politics. How-

ever, we trust that in the end the working class will make communist ideas their own. They will turn their backs on those who seek to maintain wage labor.

The youth have also taken to the streets against the corruption of the politicians, shouting "Peña Out!"

We have spread the idea that the leaders of these movements are wrong not to pursue the complete elimination of capitalism. Some believe that the evil is "neoliberalism" and advocate state regulation and national sovereignty. They align with the Chinese imperialists.

As in many countries, some follow the line that restored capitalist rule in the Soviet Union and in China. They divert workers' struggles into the arms of new exploiters of the workers' labor power. They are brave. The regime has killed several of their members. However, they still do not believe that it is possible to end the use of the workers' labor power by the capitalists (wage labor).

Each group that achieves some considerable political influence puts forward the idea of competing for power. However, their goal is not to "smash" bourgeois power but instead to participate in it.

Some criticize the "parties to the pact for Mex-



Mexico, October, 2016--Teachers in encampment reading *Red Flag*

ico" only in order to join in some way the bourgeois party in fashion (MoReNa). Others advocate the "self-determination" of ethnic groups, without taking into consideration the wage and market relations among them. They criticize the devastation of nature and the destruction from a pro-capitalist point of view.

To end the wage system, the working class needs, in the first place, to constitute itself as a Party. The current struggles all over the world are an opportunity to bring communist ideas to the masses and build the Party. Otherwise we will not liberate ourselves from the capitalist-imperialist carnage.

We invite you to join our effort to build the International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP). Read and spread *Red Flag*!



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# COMMUNISTS AND TRADE UNIONISM

**Do we need unions or are they capitalist organizations which perpetuate our wage slavery?**

A discussion concerning unions and trade-union ideology is going on among Los Angeles transit workers at MTA and among *Red Flag* readers and members of the International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP) in many countries.

Some say we need unions to fight for our immediate needs: higher wages, benefits, etc. Others claim we need them to defend us from the capitalists' daily racist and sexist attacks such as firings and suspensions. In contrast, some denounce unions as roadblocks to communist organizing.

**How do we communists do political work where unions exist? What is revolutionary communist class struggle?**

We fight directly for communism. Does that mean not leading reform struggles as communists did in the past? Does it mean we don't view these struggles as stepping stones to win workers to fight for communism? Then how do we move workers into revolutionary communist class struggle?

**This article introduces a series about major labor struggles worldwide since 1848** where the communist parties chose to win masses to trade-union reformism instead of to fighting directly for communism. Why did they think this was the only way to win them to a revolutionary communist outlook?

We hope to show that the potential to win workers to fight directly for communism has existed in all these struggles. It is the only way our class can end exploitation.

We invite party members and other *Red Flag* readers worldwide to help further develop our revolutionary strategy and tactics for winning workers, soldiers and youth to fight directly for communism and avoid the traps of trade unionism and all reformism.

**Our goal: World communism, a society without classes**

This idea is not outlandish. Classless society existed for more than eighty thousand years. In this pre-class communism, everything produced by human labor power, mental and manual, was shared according to need.

Class society, which developed in the last eight thousand years, changed this. Human labor power was made captive to produce mainly for



Read our pamphlet:  
***The Industrial Working Class and Communist Revolution***  
available on at [icwpredflag.org/IndustrialE/WorkE.pdf](http://icwpredflag.org/IndustrialE/WorkE.pdf).

the needs of a small, parasitical, exploitive ruling class. These rulers expropriated as their private property all the instruments of production, including most importantly, human labor power itself.

**Since the dawn of class society, the oppressed masses have waged a relentless struggle to end their exploitation and oppression.** This includes rebellions, armed uprisings and revolutions.

Victory, however, has eluded them. It can only be achieved by advancing on the basis of pre-class communism's collectivity and production of use value only.

This requires a revolution and the abolition of private property, money, markets and wage slavery. It requires building a world without racism, sexism and borders where everyone's contribution is welcomed and appreciated and everyone's needs are met.

**Only the working class is capable of leading such a task.**

We have learned much from the Russian and Chinese Revolutions, the Chinese Cultural Revolution of 1966-1968, and 168 years of communist experience in class struggle. We have learned that the key to victory is building a mass communist party that mobilizes the masses for communism, and nothing else.

Our predecessors didn't think this could be

done. Instead, they built relatively small communist parties. They mobilized the masses for reformism, mainly through trade unions, as the way to win them to fight for socialism. Instead of building one massive communist party worldwide, they organized reformist struggles on a national basis.

Both their strategy and their goal were wrong. Trade union ideology is capitalist ideology. It strives to reform capitalism, not destroy it. It legalizes, justifies and embellishes capitalism's exploitation and oppression.

Absorbed by their reformist practice, most communist parties became reformist organizations and eventually disappeared. A few, which led successful socialist revolutions like in China and Russia, ended up creating capitalist-imperialist countries. They tried to do the impossible: transforming socialism – state capitalism – into communism.

It is not enough, however, to know what our predecessors did wrong. They did their best. Now it is our turn. The burning question for us today is how to avoid the pitfalls of reformism. **How do we build the International Communist Workers' Party by developing and mobilizing for revolutionary communist class struggles?**

## HAITI from page 1

Before any hurricane or earthquake strikes, communist collectives of workers living in the area will take the lead in planning and building secure structures. During an emergency, these collectives will lead evacuations, rescue, cleanup, food distribution and provide health care. Workers from all over will come to help and learn from each other to protect workers' lives and to strengthen communist relations of solidarity.

**In 1804, enslaved Haitians organized a revolution against slavery.** They gave the international working class a heroic example of tenacious struggle against imperialism. They defeated the French army, took power, and abolished slavery. The racist capitalist-imperialist system has punished Haitian workers ever since.

The French forced Haitians to pay \$ millions for their "lost property." Then the US invaded and occupied Haiti from 1915 to 1934, putting down massive rebellions and killing 15,000 people to establish US control. They set up puppet

governments and slave labor sweat shops, keeping the workers in dire poverty.

**Let's respond to the crisis in Haiti by building ICWP in solidarity with Haitian workers.** Let's spread *Red Flag* to Haiti and worldwide and build a mass party to mobilize for communism. Instead of donating to the Red Cross, donate money to ICWP to spread *Red Flag*. We cannot have a world where some live in luxury while

our brothers and sisters starve and die of curable diseases like cholera because they lack clean drinking water, health care, and food.

The racist wage slavery of capitalism-imperialism is the source of all the miseries facing Haitian workers and all workers. ICWP is mobilizing worldwide to destroy capitalism with communist



Protest in Haiti, October 2016

revolution. Haitian workers must give leadership in this fight. Join us!

**We need help in translating *Red Flag* into Haitian Creole and many other languages. If you can help, please contact us!**

## Lessons from US History

### ARMED STRUGGLE VS. ELECTIONS

The bosses' mass media claim that "free and fair" elections will guarantee a society that serves the interests of the working class. Peace accords in El Salvador and South Africa required freedom fighters to turn in their guns. All weapons had to be in the hands of the state. Revolutionary organizations became electoral parties.

Those who had fought for freedom and equality had to trust that the state would act in their interest. This was a betrayal of the struggle. The state always acts in the interests of the ruling class. "Free and fair" elections don't change that.

The working class needs communism. To get that, we must fight for political power, with guns in our hands. Soldiers and ex-soldiers will play a leading role in this struggle.

#### An example from US history

Four million people of African descent were freed at the end of the US Civil War in 1865. What came next was a period of sharp struggle. Northern capitalists tried to impose wage slavery and freed people resisted. Black Civil War veterans were key to this fight.

For nearly four hundred fifty years, enslaved Africans and their descendants worked as slaves. They grew rice, tobacco, indigo and cotton. They worked as cooks, servants, horse wranglers and blacksmiths. The fruits of their labor and the trade in their enslaved bodies created the capital that allowed US imperialism to become a dominant world power.

Enslaved Africans at first worked alongside Native American captives and British farmers displaced by English capitalist agriculture. After 1660 the colonists passed laws that made their slavery racial and permanent. It took a Civil War to end chattel slavery of Africans in the US. Escaped slaves, armed and fighting for freedom for themselves and their families, made the difference between victory and defeat.

During the Civil War, many slave-owners abandoned their plantations. In some places the

Union Army seized the land. Freed people went into the Big House and took the food, cooking pots, clothes and furniture their former master had enjoyed. They distributed all this based on need. They ran off their former overseers. They organized collectively to divide up the land. They made plans to work the land and use its fruits to support their families and communities.

This was not what the Northern "emancipators" had in mind. Their plan was to institute wage-labor agriculture in the same crops—rice and cotton—that enslaved people had produced. Union troops moved in and took over the plantations. They either gave the land back to the slave masters or sold it to northern capitalists. Union Army officers imposed contracts and labor discipline at gunpoint.

Captain Charles Soule of Massachusetts, for example, was in charge of the Orangeburg, South Carolina district. He went through black communities, laying down the law of the new regime of wage slavery. "Some people must be rich, to pay the others, and they have the right to do no work except to look out after their property," he told former slaves. "Remember that all your working time belongs to the man who hires you."

**Freed people refused to be re-enslaved.** They refused to do extra work that would take them away from cultivating their household plots. They struggled for collective organization of work, where family and community members pooled their harvest, instead of each person being paid for their individual labor. They refused to see their labor as a commodity. They struggled against money wages and insisted on equal distribution of housing, clothing, and food.

Army veterans played a key role in the resistance to wage slavery. They organized armed groups that included freed people from various plantations. They held armed drills and marches.



Political meeting during Reconstruction

They fought against evictions, held strikes, and defended their communities against criminals. They didn't put their trust in the Union Army or the Federal Government. These organizations took collective power into their own hands.

Eventually the militias became part of the Union Leagues. They continued to defend freed people against the landowners and the terrorism of the emergent Ku Klux Klan. But their illusions in the electoral process, like those of the class fighters in South Africa and El Salvador, blinded them to the nature of class rule. They concentrated on electing freedmen and their allies. Eventually their armed popular militias were banned. And when the Federal government withdrew US troops from the South in 1876, black communities were disarmed and defenseless.

Formerly enslaved people in the US fought for a society where they could be truly free, working and planning collectively and sharing equally what they produced. Armed veterans who had learned the power of collective disciplined action led the way. Their fatal error was in trusting elections and turning in their guns.

#### We won't make the same mistake again.

Read more: *The Work of Reconstruction: From Slave Labor to Wage Labor in South Carolina, 1860-1870* by Julie Savile

## South Africa Student Movement:

### OPPORTUNITY TO MOBILIZE FOR COMMUNISM



SOUTH AFRICA— The student movement against rising tuition fees (#feesmustfall) has entered its fifth week. Students have completely shut down thirty universities and hundreds of colleges. Campuses have turned into battle fields. Police use of rubber bullets, tear gas and physical assaults on students have left many seriously injured.

The South African workers and students have a long history. They have learned the hard way that repression by the bosses can only be countered by mass working-class violence.

Members of the International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP) have massively distributed *Red Flags* and the Communist Edu-

cation pamphlets (<http://icwpredflag.org/EDU/EdPamE.pdf>). Some students have joined our party. But it has become clear that we need to do more, to be in the forefront of the struggle.

The crisis in the education system in South Africa is really part of a deep crisis of overproduction in the world. Imperialism has unleashed tremendous productive forces, creating a huge surplus of oil, steel, cement, cars, housing, food and many other commodities. At the same time, it has created over five billion wage slaves who live on less than five dollars a day, barely able to survive in the midst of plenty.

Masses of workers and students are desperately searching for an alternative to capitalism's periodic crises and the unbearable life it creates for the masses. One student we met at a demonstration decided to join ICWP when the comrades offered a communist alternative. They explained that under capitalism, education also becomes a commodity. Racism and sexism have persisted and over 60% of youth (mostly black) are unemployed. In communist society without wage

slavery, education will be integrated with lifelong learning and sharing different tasks.

The masses in South Africa are disenchanted with the African National Congress (ANC). The hope that ANC can bring fundamental change is proving to be an empty promise. It is this feeling of betrayal and yearning for change that is propelling student demonstrations. Thousands of ANC supporters are deserting.

This gives us a tremendous opportunity to turn workers' and students' rising anger onto a revolutionary communist path. We had a very sharp discussion among comrades about how to be bold and advance our line in a mass way. We are determined to carry on our mass work with more collective efforts.



## Who needs recreational drugs?

# COMMUNISM WILL MEET OUR NEEDS FOR LOVE AND MEANINGFUL WORK

Will drugs be used for “recreation” under communism? Probably not.

Why do individuals decide to take drugs that harm them, have no medical benefit, and are used simply to “get high?” Even marijuana causes harm (see box). What is missing in the person and/or in society that leads to drug and alcohol abuse and addiction?

It is doubtful that we could ever accomplish a completely abstinent society. However, it is possible to reduce and perhaps eliminate addiction. Most people who use addictive drugs do not and will not become addicted.

Genes and also environment contribute to the likelihood of addiction. It is not possible to change your genetic make-up, but environments can certainly be changed. Would that make recreational drug use okay? Or should we consider why people use drugs at all?

**Capitalist society can't meet fundamental human needs, even those for basic safety, adequate shelter and enough to eat. Instead it offers drugs.**

Sigmund Freud is widely quoted as writing that the “two hallmarks of a healthy life are the abilities to love and to work.” He did not see a distinction between work and play. Instead he said we have a basic human need for both. However, Capitalism is a system where work and play are rigidly separated and organized to maximize profits. We grow up learning that there is a time for work and a time for play. And both are separated from learning.

We are supposed to accept that jobs – if we have them – are alienating and oppressive. We are supposed to find our “fun” in whatever time is left after paid jobs and housework. Capitalism pushes us to find “fun” in shopping or paying to consume capitalist culture.

As long as we are forced to live in a system

**This article on recreational drugs in a communist society is part of an ongoing discussion in ICWP. We invite further articles and letters from members and friends.**

that impedes the fulfillment of our basic human needs, we will search outside ourselves to fulfil our needs.

In communist society we will blend work and learning, as children do in pre-class societies and even in capitalism, before they start school. Learning is a constant process as we can't help but learn from EVERYTHING we do.

In communism the good health of individuals will be a community concern. Meeting basic human needs will be the priority. Work will be meaningful and enjoyable because we will know we are helping each other. Joy will come from social relationships, not from things.

**Under communism we will ensure that all have mental and physical stimulation for good health.** When the brain is lacking stimulation because of its physical and social surroundings, brain activity is reduced. Too little stimulation causes stagnation, making drugs more attractive. Under communism no one will be subjected to impoverished communities. Trees, playgrounds, opportunities for creative art and music will be considered necessities, not luxuries only available to a privileged few.

Communists will aim for striking a balance between too little or too much stimulation. Under capitalism many suffer from constant stress. Even small stressors seem like too much stimulation. Drugs again become attractive. Communism will wipe out most of our current every-day stressors, which mainly have to do with survival under capitalism. Everyone will have what they need for healthy development both mentally and physically.

Truly caring about humanity will shape how we treat problems of addiction. We will widely educate people about the harmful effects of drugs. Communism means no money or markets and therefore of course no drug dealers.

Drug use and addiction are useful tools for capitalism. Some capitalists make huge profits from the industry (prescription pills, cigarettes, alcohol). Some push for increased repression (the “war on drugs”). Racist drug laws target minorities and the poor, leading to mass incarceration.

### Marijuana: Think Before You Toke

\* Someone who uses marijuana three or more times per week is considered a “heavy user.” At this rate the body is storing more THC than it can get rid of. After three months of heavy marijuana use, brain cell membranes become 400 times thicker than they are supposed to be. The brain is significantly slowed because communication between cells is more difficult. In animal studies it took about two years to remove this THC completely out of the brain.

\* Marijuana has four times more carcinogens than cigarettes. Any plant that is burned and inhaled carries carcinogens into the lungs. In cigarettes this is called tar and in marijuana it is called resin. Even when smoked through a bong, carcinogens are being inhaled. They can be seen along the pipe as it blackens.

\* The marijuana in the market today is 28 to 40 times higher in THC content than marijuana in the market prior to the 80's. This higher THC content makes marijuana highly addictive. There are clear withdrawal symptoms, including anxiety, depression, and anger/irritability. Often heavy users do not experience these until one month after the last use.

\* Experimental evidence shows that marijuana suppresses the body's immune system.

\* Marijuana affects short-term memory needed for learning. It affects brain receptors necessary for experiencing novelty, and increases the likelihood of psychotic disorders.

tion. The bosses benefit hugely from having a passive population, disconnected from reality, that can be easily attacked.

In communism, as we as a society become healthier the genetic predisposition towards addiction will be reduced. Mental illness, chronic pain and other conditions will be better treated and managed as health care will no longer be based on profits. We will live in communities that truly thrive, with no need to turn to drugs to escape, cope, numb, and/or entertain us.

### LETTERS

#### Fighting Racism by Mobilizing for Communism in the US South

Racism and exploitation are intensifying along with the bosses' crisis. We need more communist activity. But how do we motivate comrades and friends to mobilize for communism under harsher conditions?

My wife and I recently spent a day with a comrade in South Carolina. He knew about racist exploitation. It was in his face and, quite frankly, somewhat intimidating.

For example, one firm hired only white truck drivers to ferry Latino workers to the construction worksites. Undocumented workers could not get licenses.

The boss said that “he knew the drivers were racist, but he needed licensed drivers.” The next day he held a meeting to yell at the drivers. He didn't want them to stop to let workers pick up some coffee in the pre-dawn hours. Just who is building racism and increasing exploitation!

Other Latino/a workers picked the fall crops. Some weren't even scraping by.

At first we suggested some modest ways for him to distribute the party's anti-racism pamphlet and **Red Flag**. He was justifiably afraid of

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losing his job—or worse.

“I've read in the paper that the capitalists created racism,” he said, while serving a delicious lunch that he had cooked for us.

So blaming capitalism wasn't the issue.

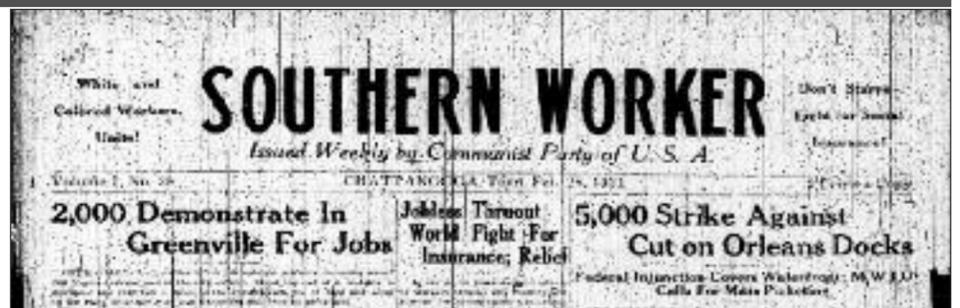
Then we got to talking about the material basis of racism and how communism offers the opportunity to eliminate it. The conversation became more serious.

We read in the party's pamphlet some of the history of how communists in the past fought racism. We learned from their strengths and mistakes. He read the global leaflet about the immigration crisis on the ICWP website.

We spent the rest of the day strolling through the town. The more we talked, the more we collectively understood what eliminating the wage system meant. It allows us to put an end to all aspects of racism.

By the end of the day, he was more enthusiastic about waging the struggle. He gave us a large sum of money (for him) to pay for the pa-

### CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS



#### Our pamphlet **To End Racism, Mobilize the Masses for Communism**

**discusses the strengths and mistakes of the CPUSA in the US South.**

<http://icwpredflag.org/RP/rpe.pdf>

pers we've sent him and to continue sending them.

He could work out the tactics; what he needed was a communist vision.

—Industrial comrade

**They oppress. We protest. They police.****We create history. They write textbooks. We go to their schools.****They call us enemies. We fight with ourselves. They televise our fight.****We die. They write news. We buy their newspapers.****They tell us what to speak. We speak their language. They dictate our thoughts.****We make art. They market it. We see art becoming cash.****They invent psychiatry. We become depressed. They make drugs.****We labour. They profit. We get wages.****They pollute the earth. We catch diseases.****They become ministers. We serve them.****They make laws. We get arrested. They chair courts.****We grow food. They belch with full stomachs. We starve.****They sell bombs. We die in wars. They celebrate patriotism.****We question. They give us God. We pray for answers.****We are wage slaves, they profit from us.****We have the power to change, they don't.**

—Reader in India

**Talking with Bus Drivers in Los Angeles**

“No thanks,” said a bus operator who sometimes reads *Red Flag*, when offered the latest issue.

“Did you watch the debate last night?” asked a comrade.

“Yes,” he said. That set him off on a rant that ended: “They are both out for themselves. Who is standing up for us?”

“Nobody,” replied the comrade. “That’s why you need this paper.”

The worker smiled, gave a “thumbs-up” and took *Red Flag*.

—a comrade

“Here is our pamphlet *To End Racism: Mobilize The Masses For Communism*,” said a *Red Flag* distributor to an MTA operator at Division 18.

“I would definitely like to see an end to racism,” answered the operator.

“Well, for that we would have to destroy capitalism. Racism was born with capitalism. Prior to capitalism there was no racism. Roman slavery was not based on the color of a person’s skin.”

“Yes, it was a social class question,” said the operator.

“Yes, those defeated in war were made slaves. The Roman Empire had German, French, English, Greek and many other people enslaved. Early capitalism began by enslaving the darker-skinned indigenous people in the Americas. When these were exterminated from disease and hard work, like in the Caribbean islands, they hunted Africans and brought them to the Americas as slaves. Racist ideology was then developed to justify slavery based on skin color. This

racism is now used worldwide to super-exploit darker-skinned workers.

“To get rid of racism we must destroy wage slavery, the material basis of racism and the source of the capitalists’ profits. It plays a crucial role in maximizing profits by paying some workers less than others. In the US, this means super-profits from the super-exploitation of black and latin workers. This racist ideology also divides the working class, preventing us from uniting to overthrow capitalism with a communist revolution.”

“I guess you are right. To end racism we must end capitalism,” agreed the operator.

“And get rid of money!” shouted the *Red Flag* distributor as the driver drove off.

“Definitely!” answered back the operator.

“That is exactly what I was thinking while on the bus. That will be the only way to end racism,” said a Division 13 operator when approached in the same manner.

“And we will have to get rid of money. Keeping money and wages was the downfall of the Russian and Chinese revolutions. A communist revolution will eliminate money,” said the *Red Flag* distributor.

“Yes, then we will all be equal. No rich no poor,” agreed the operator taking *Red Flag* as he walked toward the entrance.

—LA comrade

**Unity and Struggle**

It was great to read about the dialectical materialism school. In fact just reading about it reminded me that there are two (not one) strategies for winning new people to the ICWP. You could call them the “negative” and the “positive” strategies

In the report on the school it says at one point “to be able to recruit someone else, we have to

understand their internal contradictions that hold them back.”

This seems like basic common sense: find out what’s holding them back and negate it (overcome it). (This is the “negative” strategy.) Clearly, this is the first thing we should try. It works fine if, for example, a simple misunderstanding is stopping them. Maybe they think that joining means turning your back on friends and family. We explain that the opposite is the case and problem solved.

However, if their objections are deeper the negation strategy is not so quick and easy and, more importantly, may not give the result we want.

This struggle could take a while but suppose we win. Our friend may say only, “ok, I might as well join”. Which is a step forward, but short of what we need – enthusiasm.

We’ve mistakenly applied a law of mechanical change, namely that two negatives is a positive. It may be true in arithmetic that - - 1 is +1 but it is not true in real life.

The other strategy is to look at the other sides of our friend’s internal contradictions: the forces that are pushing her to join the party. We try to find communist ideas and actions that we can unite on and that can generate enthusiasm in our friend. This is the positive strategy.

For example, it’s obvious from reading *Red Flag* that many workers are fascinated by dialectical (and historical) materialism. We can encourage our friend to get involved in discussions and events like the recent school. These experiences may lead her to, on her own, rethink some of her (say) anticommunist prejudices.

In other words, we concentrate primarily on reinforcing her strengths rather than combatting her weaknesses.

The positive strategy requires patience and restraint on our part. We have to avoid latching on to minor disagreements and making major issues out of them. For example, suppose that a friend is very keen on mayday but occasionally smokes marijuana. We should make our position on drugs clear but not nag him about it. Similarly, if he wants to vote for Clinton we can explain (once) that this is a waste of time and leave it at that.

Often when following the positive strategy their growing enthusiasm for communism leads them on their own to question and reject their negative ideas.

—Northern comrade

**NATIONALISM from page 8**

against them. This was soon to change.

In 1931 Japan seized Manchuria and prepared for more conquests in China. In 1933 Hitler’s Nazi party won power in Germany. Hitler’s invasion of Austria in 1934 was briefly opposed by a failed uprising. In 1934 the Chinese communist soviet areas were destroyed by the Guomindang. The USSR reacted to these alarming events by turning sharply to the Right, beginning by joining the League of Nations, an imperialist organization. The Communist International (CI) called a VIIIth Congress for the summer of 1935. The congress called for a broad united front against fascism that was to include the anti-revolutionary socialist parties of Europe. Hence it could not aim at the dictatorship of the proletariat, which was postponed indefinitely for developed countries, as it already had been in colonies.

In the colonies the united front was described as an anti-imperialist front, and it was

to include the very capitalists that communists had been fighting before 1935. In February 1937 the Communist Party of India said that the united front must include the National Congress and organizations of Indian merchants and industrialists. The Communist Party of China made an alliance against Japan with the nationalist Guomindang. This required a long corrupt negotiation that included kidnapping and then releasing murderous Guomindang leader Chang Kai-shek.

The VIIIth Congress tied the CI to nationalism much more completely than anything it had done before. The united front was supposed to be temporary but in fact it marked the end of the old communist movements’ fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat and communism. Only a new communist movement, begun in the 1960s, was able to learn from the various “national liberation” struggles and the Cultural Revolution in China that nationalism always misleads the masses and derails communist revolution. The next article in this series will discuss that crucial step forward.

**WHAT WE FIGHT FOR:  
MOBILIZE THE  
MASSES FOR  
COMMUNISM**

[icwpredflag.org/MMC/  
MMCnewE.html](http://icwpredflag.org/MMC/MMCnewE.html)



## History of the Cultural Revolution in China (Part 7)

# LEARNING FROM HISTORY: MOBILIZE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM, NOT SOCIALISM

The last article described the “military communism” of First Headquarters peasant rebels and the attempt of Wuhan students in the Juipai group to form a new party to fight for a Chinese People’s Commune. In mid-1968, Communist Party leaders used the People’s Liberation Army to smash efforts to move quickly to communism.

An upsurge in the class struggle inspired Wuhan “ultra-leftists” to regroup in spring 1969. But they were politically in retreat.

Following classical Marxism, they hoped that the new ruling revolutionary committees could be “transitional forms” on the way to a Paris Commune-type structure. They still believed in a peaceful transition from socialism to communism although the repression had smashed any illusions that this might happen quickly.

So they became reformists. They hoped to limit the power of the revolutionary committees, instead of pursuing a long-term strategy to overthrow them.

The ultra-leftists demanded that the workers’ congress (which had no real power) should be allowed to supervise the revolutionary committee: “the workers’ congress must exercise leadership.” This appealed to a broad range of rebel groups, which were represented in the workers’ congress. But it ended the ultra-left’s potential as a revolu-

tionary communist force.

Ultra-leftists framed their arguments using quotations from Mao. But their proposal flatly contradicted Mao’s principle of unified top-down leadership.

In late September, the Maoist leadership arrested a dozen leaders of Juipai (now called Beijue-yang). It denounced them as “a hotchpotch manipulated by a handful of renegades, spies, and counter-revolutionaries.” The New Thought “ultra-left” movement was over, and with it the real Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

Mao’s Cultural Revolution agenda failed, too. It ended with the rise of Deng Xiaoping, the most open capitalist-roader of them all. But its brightest moments – like those of the Paris Commune of 1871 and the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution – help light the way to our communist future.

### Lessons of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution

Millions fought bloody battles, hoping to get rid of the capitalist bureaucrats that oppressed them. The “capitalist road,” however, is inherent in socialism. Socialism is a form of capitalism. It cannot evolve peacefully into communism. Only a massive revolutionary fight for communism can finally defeat capitalism and end class society.

Neither the New Thought/Ultra-left movement nor its supporters elsewhere understood this. That was their fatal error. But we have much more to learn from them:

The masses make history. But a small group can make a big contribution to the world communist movement. Juipai might have had a few dozen members. Shengwulien was even smaller. Yet their exposure of

Mao’s “red bourgeoisie” advanced workers’ understanding of revisionism worldwide.

Loyalty and party unity are important, but struggle over the line matters more. Juipai made a heroic effort to split radical activists from the Chinese Communist Party leaders who had betrayed their ideals. Party leaders knew that masses could be won to the ultra-left’s line – and feared it. They started the cult of Mao to prevent this.

The ultra-left focused on “smashing the old state machinery” without talking much about how to organize communist society. Their model was the Paris Commune but they didn’t write about how it worked, much less its limitations. Today we understand that to mobilize the masses for communism we need mass discussion of how we plan to organize communist society.

### From the Defeat of the Ultra-Left to the Victory of Open Capitalism (1969-1978)

The “ultra-leftists” were the most advanced revolutionary communists of their time. Virtually the entire leadership of the Chinese Communist Party – including Mao’s circle – had become counter-revolutionary and pro-capitalist, all in the name of socialism. They were responsible for most of the abuses committed in the name of “cultural revolution.”

After suppressing the real left, party leaders cynically attacked anyone else who disagreed with their line as “ultra-left.” That included Lin Biao, the Gang of Four, and (after 1978) even the line of Mao from 1956 until his death in 1976. Don’t confuse these factional fights with the class struggle that this series has described.

Committed grass-roots communists continued to fight to transform education, health care and other aspects of socialist society. We are inspired by the best of these efforts, but we must recognize them as reformist.

Mobilizing the masses to fight for and build communist society will enable us to realize the aspirations of millions of communists who came before us – and more. We have a world to win!



## COMMUNIST MISTAKES ABOUT NATIONALISM, IV

**Today ICWP knows that all nationalism is wrong and that we need to build one international party to mobilize for communism everywhere.**

This was not the line of the old Communist International.

**Part III of this series described the debate in the Communist International (CI) after the nationalist Guomindang had turned on China’s communists and murdered many thousands in 1927.** This debate did not change the CI’s basic line for colonial countries, that workers and peasants in colonies cannot fight directly for communism or even socialism. They must go through a “bourgeois-democratic revolution” against feudalism and foreign domination, and some capitalists were expected to play a supporting role in that revolution.

In the early 1930s Chinese communists applied this idea by creating rural “soviet” areas where land was confiscated from landlords and distributed to peasants. In 1930 party leader Li Lisan proposed a policy of also confiscating the capitalists’ factories, businesses and banks but

this idea was defeated.

Allying with bigger Chinese capitalists would have been impossible for communists in the early 1930s since they were fighting a desperate armed struggle against the Nationalist Guomindang that was trying to destroy the rural soviets. The party only survived by moving to a remote area of northwest China.

**The Communist Party of India (CPI)** was younger and smaller than China’s, but active in large, hard-fought strikes and in organizing peasants. The CPI denounced the National Congress, led by Gandhi and Nehru. They charged the Congress with siding with the manufacturers, landlords and moneylenders, and “doing all in their power to restrain the masses” in the fight against British imperialism. Some CPI leaders correctly understood that what kept the Indian working class “from turning into an independent leading class force” was the “widespread illusions of an all national united front, which actually meant the subordination of the proletariat to the bourgeoisie.” Thus the CPI pledged a “ruthless war” on the “‘Left’ national reformists” to “isolate

them from the workers and the mass of the peasantry.”

Although they rejected the “national reformists” of the National Congress, the CPI’s own program clearly had a nationalist side, to “abolish national slavery, sweeping aside the fetters which check national development, confiscating the land and effecting far-reaching democratic construction of a revolutionary character.” This was to be accomplished by the organization of worker and peasant “soviets,” councils “elected directly from the factories, works and villages.” This worker-peasant government would still allow capitalism, but fight for socialism at some later time after British rule had been overthrown.

**In the early 1930s the Indian and Chinese communists refused to fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasants,** and continued to defend the idea of “revolutionary nationalism.” In practice, however, they actually did fight domestic and foreign capitalists and organized the masses for revolutionary struggle

**See NATIONALISM, page 7**