



RED FLAG

MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM

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

“I WANT THEM TO HANG THE BOSS; IT’S HIS FAULT THAT SO MANY DIED.”

--A GARMENT WORKER IN BANGLADESH

FACTORY FIRE SHOWS AGAIN

THAT

THE TIME

FOR

COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

IS NOW!

DHAKA, BANGLADESH—On Saturday, November 24, the bosses’ thirst for profits and their capitalism again ended the lives of over 120 men and women workers, this time in a fire in the Tazreen Fashions garment factory. Those workers leave sons and daughters, parents, spouses, family, and friends. They, like all of us, had dreams of living a dignified life.

This mass murder provoked thousands of workers to close the factories and take to the streets of the city and in other parts of the country to protest the deaths of our class brothers and sisters. The bosses and the government sent the army, police and border guards to terrorize the workers, but they confronted them in street battles.

During this past year, hundreds of strikes and mass marches have put the workers on a war footing against the miserable conditions that the bosses impose on them.

Once again we can see how the bosses put their profits ahead of workers’ lives. Enough is enough! The best way to honor these class brothers and sisters is to dedicate our lives to fight for a world where the lives of workers and our families come first and where there is no exploitation, bosses, borders, or money. A world like this is a communist world.

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Angry workers protest murderous Bangladesh factory fire

International Communist Political School:

BUILDING COMRADELY RELATIONSHIPS AND RED FLAG NETWORKS AND ICWP

In a tree-filled place, enjoying convenient facilities and especially the good company, dozens of industrial workers, farm workers, teachers, students and intellectuals from different countries met last weekend to discuss and advance the line of ICWP, *Mobilize the Masses for Communism*, and *Red Flag*. Each topic was discussed with an impressively high level of understanding and seriousness. The focus of this political school was how to carry out our daily struggle for worldwide communist revolution.

We discussed the world situation: the moves to world war and the capitalist crisis that is sharpening its attack on workers. Things are different now. Masses of workers are in motion. They need to see that only communist revolution can lead us to a world that meets our needs. We are confident that they, and our own co-workers, are open to communist ideas now. Building more *Red Flag* networks is therefore key.

“We were very positively impressed the first time we heard communist ideas. And when we read *Red Flag* we got even more enthusiastic,” said a maquila worker from Central America. “However, the first time we went to a cadre school, my comrade and I were still unsure of whether we were doing the right thing, since anti-communism is so prevalent.”

The worker continued, “We had heard that the

communists made soap from people. I asked my comrade what she thought. ‘Let’s go,’ she answered. ‘If they make us into soap, well, it was our time to go.’ But the reality was so overwhelming and the atmosphere of solidarity and the serious discussion of communist ideas convinced us that this party is our party. After a year we have participated in the struggles for reforms but our main goal is to build a communist base in the different factories.”

This worker reported that “*Red Flag* is read with eagerness and enthusiasm even though the bosses are constantly watching so that we don’t stop working. When we get *Red Flag* we want to read it immediately and we resort to some tricks so that the boss doesn’t detect us. Other workers comment ‘now you’re reading *Red Flag*. Give it to me when you finish so I can read it,’ and it passes that way from hand to hand.”

Others said, “We want to thank the comrades who made it possible that we could be in this beautiful place with all the other comrades.”

“These activities fill you with enthusiasm.”

“I’m going back to the factory with greater interest in winning more workers to read *Red Flag*.”

Spreading *Red Flag* in the Factories

The workers spoke angrily about the terrible conditions they work under: low wages and pres-

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IMMIGRATION REFORM: POTENTIAL TO CREATE MORE GRAVEDIGGERS OF CAPITALISM

At his first press conference post-election, President Obama pledged to make immigration reform a top priority starting in January. He said that because of the “significant increase in latino turnout” he was “very confident that we can get immigration reform done.”

Millions of workers, nationally and internationally, welcomed it. They think it will improve the lives of 12 million undocumented workers living in the US, plus 1.9 million undocumented youth brought to this country as children.

Reality speaks differently. Capitalism created borders and racist immigration laws to divide, super-exploit and pit workers against each other in its bloodbaths for profits and empire. Capitalism can't survive without all of these evils.

Only communism's production for need, not profit, can free us from this capitalist scourge. Eliminating money and the market, with nothing bought or sold, communism will eliminate capitalism's competition that inevitably leads to war.

There will be no racist immigration laws, borders or nations to divide us. With no wage slavery condemning us to “work or starve to death,” we won't need to migrate for a job to survive. Free of borders, everyone will always be welcome and appreciated.

Electoral politics only serves the capitalist rulers

The bosses claim that the “show of the latino vote” in this last election will force Republicans to change their position on immigration. If not, some like Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX), predict the Republican Party might “cease to exist.” Thus, with numerous Republicans cooperating, 2013 might be year Congress passes the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act (CIR) and the DREAM Act.

The latino vote, however, has nothing to do with it. Behind the reform are the economic and military needs of the Rockefeller-led dominant liberal wing of the US ruling class. Divisions among the rulers had for years prevented enacting these laws. The Rockefeller gang seemingly has finally imposed its will.

A few creative immigrants or masses of low-paid wage slaves?

Jennifer Granholm, a former Michigan Democratic governor, claims that “immigration reform will determine the US economic future.” She says that immigrants, like those entrepreneurs in Silicon Valley, give the US its competitive edge: They invent products that “have a greater likelihood of global success.”

Inventions, however, must be produced and sold. Their labor cost then determines their “success.” To compete successfully in world markets, the US bosses are drastically reducing the wages and benefits here, while rebuilding their war industries on the cheap for wider wars and their eventual clash with China.

Lack of skilled workers or too-low wages?

Obama's bail-out of the auto industry set a new low-wage standard for industrial workers. Auto companies start new hires at \$14 an hour, one half of what autoworkers made before. Now, US bosses are imposing this standard on all industrial workers, including skilled workers.

GenMet, a manufacturer outside Milwaukee, starts skilled machinists at \$10 an hour, doesn't abide by work rules, nor does it hire workers that worked on union jobs before. US manufacturers claim there are roughly 600,000 unfilled skilled jobs available. The bosses call it a skills gap.

The problem, however, is a wage gap. Many skilled graduates from vocational schools refuse factory work under those conditions. Similarly, high school graduates show no interest in on-the-job training programs.

Meanwhile, the baby boomer time-bomb is ticking. The average age of a skilled US factory worker is 56. Many are in their 60s and ready to retire. Who will take their place and at what



wages and benefits?

The bosses hope that immigration reform will provide them the labor force they need. They also hope to force many immigrant youth into their military for their future war needs.

CIR-DREAM Act: Forced slave laborers and soldiers are potential communist fighters

ICWP welcomes our immigrant brothers and sisters in the factories and barracks. Many come from a militant tradition, including armed struggle, against their bosses and US imperialism. They are open to communist ideas and can be won to help mobilize the masses for communism and turn the guns around for a communist revolution.

With ties in other countries to families and friends, these workers can internationalize our *Red Flag* networks in schools, factories and barracks worldwide. This creates the basis for building a massive ICWP globally and for igniting and leading communist revolutions worldwide.

No matter what the bosses do, they can't stop us. The more they attack us, the more of their gravediggers they create. Join ICWP to speed their demise and the building of our communist future.

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST SCHOOL from page 1

sure to produce hundreds of dozens of pieces of clothing, under constant attack. Some comrades noted that communist production and distribution will contrast sharply with the conditions these workers face everyday.

These workers have only known ICWP for just over a year. They have taken *Red Flag* into their homes, factories and hearts. We discussed the tactics of how to mobilize the masses for communism by extending their networks to more workers in more factories—under harsh conditions of constant attack. They also plan to take *Red Flag* to friends in the army.

Comrade farm workers also spoke about distributing *Red Flag* and their plans to spread it and write for it. Youth and workers from other places made plans to write for and help produce *Red Flag*. There were criticisms and suggestions for improving the paper. A guerrilla veteran prom-

ised, “I will fill *Red Flag* with our histories and experiences.” (See p. 8)

Of course there are many questions about communism in the past (like the Cultural Revolution in China) and in the future. Some were discussed at the school, and these discussions will continue in *Red Flag*. For example, how will education be in a communist society?

There's no room to quote what every comrade said, but all were filled with pride in the collective of the International Communist Workers' Party. This demonstration of comradely love fueled our confidence that we are on the correct road for the installation of a communist system in which all activities will be full of collectivity, passion, respect and solidarity.

“These were three days in which we shared the ideals and the purest revolutionary conviction, internationalism in its maximum expres-

sion,” said a Party leader, “class consciousness willing to confront all the challenges to make ICWP grow. Glowing smiles poured forth, tears of proletarian conviction, expressions of solidarity with the worker comrades.”

This is our International Communist Workers' Party! Join us!



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Engineers Reject Boeing's Cut-Back Contract, Machinists Plan Solidarity

ICWP IS THE WORKERS' THINK-TANK

The Society of Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace (SPEEA) rejected the Boeing Company's contract offer by a 96% vote last month. Since then the old contract expired and a second offer was summarily discarded. As we go to press, a Federal Mediator has been called in, hardly a neutral party. Talks have been suspended until after the first of the year.

The second offer upped the wage increases to about 4% a year for engineers and 3% a year for technical staff. Few of the 23,000 union members were impressed. "They still are going to do away with the defined pension for new hires," complained a 12-year veteran technician. The company's new 401K plan will cut pensions by 45%.

There's been a call for a strike vote for the beginning of next year. This is not an idle threat, at least on the part of the union members. SPEEA members struck for five weeks in the fall of 2000 in the first-of-its-kind strike among white-collar workers in the U.S.

Blue-collar workers in the International Association of Machinists (IAM) have been discussing building support for our co-workers. If the company can eliminate defined pensions for SPEEA, that would leave us machinists the only ones who still have those pensions, and therefore vulnerable.

"Last time there was a lot of support for SPEEA; what's the hold-up now?" questioned some *Red Flag* readers. Actually, last strike the IAM leadership did everything possible to sabotage solidarity.

When we organized a group to pass a resolution at the union meeting to support the strikers with solidarity pickets, the leadership tabled the motion. They tried to get us to take back the mo-

tion, citing a secret order from the international not to go out of our way to support another union. We organized shop floor workers to break the secret order, marching out to support the strikers anyway.

"I thought of writing a letter to the union leaders calling for solidarity, but now [after hearing about their conduct last strike] I'd probably just curse them out," said one machinist.

"That wouldn't be bad," agreed the rest of the crew.

Capitalism's economic crisis has forced secret union collaboration with the company into the open.

To avoid a strike this fall, the IAM leadership railroaded a contract extension through last December, which included a new Joint/Boeing Council to review, among other things, increasing "productivity, multiple machine operation, utilization of [lower cost] non-Boeing labor." They even set up the Aerospace Machinists Performance Program where shop stewards explain why we should speed-up to get nominal incentives. The last thing the IAM leadership wants is for us to be reminded of the class war raging between the bosses and us.

Whether or not SPEEA workers can force a strike remains to be seen, but regardless, trade unionism has been unequal to the task of answering the attacks of capitalism in crisis. Almost all



the biggest corporations have cut defined pensions.

Neither contracts nor trade unions have stopped them. In fact, the unions, in many cases, have been active participants in their destruction in the name of preserving jobs.

The billionaire Peter Peterson, the past president of the bosses' chief think-tank, the Council of Foreign Relations, has long advocated the end of pensions to raise the money necessary to support US imperialism. He's even funded the Economic Policy Institute, which the unions rely on.

We need our own think-tank. A think-tank that helps us understand how to build a revolutionary society where begging the bosses for pensions is a thing of the past. A society where all contribute according to their commitment and ability, and gets whatever we need throughout our lives. A communist society organized around our collective needs, not the profits of the bosses.

The think-tank we need is an international communist party of millions of workers.

Transit Workers Denounce Racist Supervisor:

MTA WORKERS NEED TO DESTROY CAPITALISM

A leopard can't change its spots. Neither can capitalism. It lives off our sweat, blood and tears. The worse the capitalists make it for us, the more their profits grow. The intensification of our exploitation requires racist rabid dogs like the MTA Board, supervisor Barbara Maycot and docile lap-dogs like our "fearless" union officials.

Getting rid of all or changing any particular dogs won't change anything permanently. This can only happen if we get rid of the whole capitalist system with a communist revolution. Otherwise we will forever be on capitalism's deadly treadmill.

Barbara Maycot's case proves this resoundingly.

Drivers at Division 15 felt relieved when Maycot was run out of that Division. However, she was sent to Division 3, where she is now indulging in the same racist intimidation, harassment and firing of workers that led to Paul's death.

"Maycot pulls a tape and rolls 6 to 8 hours back, we call that 'fishing,' to see what she can find to charge operators with," said a driver.

"She gave a driver a 30-day suspension for listening, in the front seat, to the radio while on his layover. A customer had complained about something not related to this and she 'fished' the tape until she found this," added another driver.

Another driver told us that MTA sends "mystery riders" to spy on the drivers. One spy reported that a driver didn't offer any assistance to a person in a wheelchair who boarded his bus. "This was a lie, the driver asked the passenger 'Do you need to be secured?' and the passenger answered, 'No,' but Maycot wrote this driver up

for 'not offering assistance,'" said the driver angrily.

"She makes trouble. She's petty. She makes stuff up that's not true. She loves to fire as many people as possible," were the opinions of many drivers.

For Maycot, animals are more important than workers

One day, when at work, Maycot got a call that her horse was sick. Without notifying anyone, she immediately abandoned work to go take care of it.

Yet, when drivers' families have special medical needs, Maycot refuses to accommodate the operators' schedules or work locations to enable them to take care of their loved ones.

Her ethics are capitalism's ethics. For capitalism, we are expendable beasts of burden, wage slaves to be squeezed for maximum profits and thrown into the streets when no longer needed.

Our historical task is to bury capitalism.

The masses are the makers of history. Worldwide we are in motion. We are questioning capitalism, and are open to communist ideas. Once we embrace these ideas and act upon them, the

bosses, their racist system and their lackeys will be history forever.

Millions of workers, like the 100,000 wildcatting miners in South Africa, are demonstrating our class's perseverance, militancy and heroism in its life-and-death struggle against capitalism. This, however, is not enough. The fight must be for communism.

To advance this struggle we must organize communist political strikes against capitalism. Such strikes would not try to reform capitalism. They would put forward the need for a communist revolution to end the profit system, its racism, sexism, borders, money, exploitation and wage slavery.

Winning would be advancing our communist political understanding and that of our class. Winning would be pointing the way and inspiring those millions of workers in struggle to fight for communism.

We are the bosses' gravediggers. Let's start digging now! Let's join ICWP, read and distribute *Red Flag*, and support it economically to spread this understanding worldwide.



Movie Review:

“LINCOLN” VS. THE MASSES

Spielberg’s “Lincoln” opens with black Union soldiers destroying a Confederate regiment during the US Civil War. The arming of ex-slaves was the desperate act of northern capitalists who couldn’t have won their war without the efforts and sacrifices of 210,000 black soldiers and sailors and 300,000 more black Union support troops. Many had freed themselves and others by bravely and illegally organizing mass escapes. They would never turn back.

But that’s not Spielberg’s story. Instead, he zeroes in on Lincoln’s corrupt politicking for the 13th Amendment (making slavery unconstitutional) during January 1865. In Spielberg’s movie, black people mainly stand around hoping that Lincoln will save them. Even the black abolitionist Lydia Hamilton Smith (Epatha Merkerson), the common-law wife of radical congressman Thaddeus Stevens, barely gets to speak.

“The fate of human dignity is in our hands,” Lincoln (Daniel Day-Lewis) tells his rich white male advisors. Not true! It was and is in the hands of the multiracial masses.

Plantation Slavery Became Sharecropping and Wage Slavery

“Lincoln” lies that black people only wanted freedom. They wanted much more. They wanted to reunite with loved ones. They wanted land to farm, housing and health care, and respect as full equals.

Black soldiers helped freedpeople establish themselves on unused land and black professionals organized to fight for equality under the law. Neither social conditions nor radical organizers, however, turned black workers’ minds toward communism. That would come later.

Northern capitalists and their politicians, like southern plantation capitalists, saw black people only as an exploitable source of labor.

Lincoln’s government originally considered

ex-slaves “contraband of war” – as property. Later the Freedman’s Bureau looked for the “able-bodied” who could be exploited. Officials even separated “able-bodied” men from their families and sent them back to the cotton plantations as wage-slaves or as sharecroppers who were practically serfs.

You won’t see this in “Lincoln.” Instead you’ll see a typical Spielberg camera shot lingering on the Great Father Lincoln, bathed in golden light with his little son on his lap.

Does Day-Lewis Play Lincoln.... Or Obama?

Bill Clinton’s buddy Spielberg contributes big bucks to the Democratic Party. His “Lincoln” was timed for Obama’s re-election. Obama, like Spielberg’s Lincoln, is a second-term president, battling for his policies and his legacy, who controls the Senate but not the House. Most important, he needs to rein in his more radical supporters.

Look at the portrayal of Thaddeus Stevens (Tommy Lee Jones).

Stevens, a life-long radical, hoped to “remodel all our institutions to rid them from every vestige of human oppression, of inequity of rights, of the recognized degradation of the poor, and the superior caste of the rich.” On his deathbed, he insisted on burial in an integrated cemetery.

“Lincoln” shows how Stevens was pressured into waffling publicly about his deepest belief in racial equality. Spielberg celebrates this because it supposedly reassured racists who were on the fence about the 13th Amendment. Stevens later



Soldiers must fight for our class

admitted that it reflected his deepening cynicism about the possibility of revolutionary social change. He forgot that the masses, not elite politicians, make history. Let’s us not forget it!

Spielberg wants us, too, to compromise. He wants Obama’s mass base to go along with back-room deals to raise taxes and cut spending on programs like Medicare that help some workers. He wants youth to fight Obama’s imperialist wars as black soldiers are shown fighting for Mr. Lincoln.

That’s probably why Spielberg stuck in a bogus speech about how democracy isn’t perfect but it’s getting better all the time. Lincoln actually said, “As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy.”

It’s much clearer now than it was in 1865 that capitalism, too, is a society of masters and slaves. Mobilizing the masses for communism means preparing for another civil war and another reconstruction, this time to end for good the oppressive institutions of class society.



PARAMOUNT, CA, NOV. 23: Comrades brought Red Flag to the hundreds of demonstrators at the Wal-Mart Black Friday protest, pointing out the sharp contrast between our position, of mobilizing the masses to fight for communism, and the passive strategy of “Our Wal-Mart,” of symbolic community demonstrations outside.

BANGLADESH: MURDEROUS CAPITALISM,

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Angry garment workers in Bangladesh and everywhere should join the fight for communism.

The fire in the factory started on the first floor of a new building. The emergency exits were shut with locks and chains. The only way to escape was to go down to the first floor, but the intense flames there consumed everything in their path. Many died from asphyxiation or burns, and others when they jumped from the windows. In the last few years more than 500 garment workers have died in fires in garment factories in Bangladesh.

These factories in Bangladesh look a lot like the old buildings, full of sweat shops, in Los Angeles (USA). In a fire or earthquake, these factories would become death traps.

Bangladesh has over 4,000 factories where more than 3.5 million garment workers work, 80% of them young women. The average wage, working 6 days a week for 10 to 12 hours a day, is \$37 a month. These factories produce clothes for companies like Wal-Mart, Gap, Disney, the U.S. Marines, Tommy’s, Polo, Nike and many others in the US and Europe. Both the contractors and the bosses of these companies are directly responsible for the exploitation and death of these workers.

Wage slavery forces us to live chained to these factories, whether it’s in Bangladesh or in Los Angeles, Mexico, or El Salvador. The same is true for

the workers in the stores or anyplace else. That’s why our goal is to destroy this slavery through a communist revolution, which will create the basis of a completely different way of producing. It will be production to meet the needs of the international working class, not for the bosses’ profits.

The centers of production under communism won’t be traps of exploitation and death, but centers of life, struggle and joy. We will produce in secure conditions and with the participation of all workers.

There are many ideas about how it should be and how we will combine education and production. We want all *Red Flag* readers to discuss with their friends and co-workers how they think these centers of production should be and send us their comments. But what we are sure of is that today’s capitalist-type factories will be things of the past and will only be found on the garbage heap of history.

Our best solidarity with the workers in Bangladesh is to join and build the International Communist Workers’ Party to lead a communist revolution which will put an end to this murderous capitalism and its blood-sucking bosses. In the garment centers and other places we should form study groups based on the communist ideas of ICWP, written in *Red Flag*.

Communism is Our Heritage and Future – Part VIII

RADICAL PROTESTANTS: “NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MINE & THINE”

The last article described Italian Catholic communist movements in the 12th through the 14th centuries.

Christian communism flourished especially where the wool industry – vanguard of capitalist production — took hold. Radical Christian sects like the Waldenses, the Apolisticans (northern France), the Beghards (Netherlands), the Lollards (England), and the Hussites (Bohemia) all recruited weavers, some of the first wage-laborers.

The 15th century Protestant Reformation attacked feudal rulers and served as a rallying point for their nationalist-capitalist opponents.

When the Church attacked rebellious Bohemia in 1415, one group rose up and took control of a town they called Tabor. They mobilized the masses for communism as they understood it.

The Taborites taught that “there shall be no king, ruler, or subject on the earth, and all imposts and taxes shall cease; no one shall force another to do anything, for all shall be equal brothers and sisters. As in the town of Tabor there is no mine or thine, but all is held in common, and no one owns anything for himself alone.”

The Taborites organized themselves as a military force, developing new tactics of warfare. They promoted mass literacy for women and men, while rejecting scholastic learning that only benefited the elite.

On July 22, 1419, over 40,000 people from Bohemia and Moravia converged on Tabor for a mass communist celebration.

Some Taborites, (the Picards) lived communally on an island. They rejected marriage, individual property ownership, and distinctions of rank. This sect attracted tens of thousands before it was crushed, in part by more conservative Taborite leaders.

The Taborite movement was defeated by a coalition of feudal and small-capitalist forces.

More important, the prevailing mode of production (individual family farms) limited their communist imagination and the possibility of realizing their aims. For most, communism meant sharing the proceeds of their labor, but not the collective production and planning that lay far in the future. Their principles were rooted in religion, not science.

Christian Communism and Peasant Rebellions

Peasant conspiracies and insurrections repeatedly threatened European rulers in the late 15th and early 16th centuries. Thomas Müntzer (1498-1525) led a landmark uprising that linked Christian communism to the mass peasant movement in Germany.

On October 24, 1524, Stuehlingen peasants refused food deliveries to the town, assembled in force, and marched towards Waldshut. There they allied with townspeople against religious persecution of a Müntzer disciple. They aimed to end feudal power, destroy all castles and monasteries, and eliminate all masters – except the emperor.

The uprising spread rapidly. Nobles panicked: their armies were away fighting the French in Italy. Stalling for time, they opened negotiations.

By March 1525 there were thirty or forty thousand armed insurgent peasants. Most fought only for concessions, and their morale was deteriorating. Before they could bring their demands to the



out these decrees.

The rulers offered peace in exchange for Müntzer’s head, then treacherously attacked. Eight thousand peasants fought valiantly but were routed and massacred. Müntzer himself was captured. Under torture he recanted theological heresies, but insisted that *omnia sunt communia*, all things are in common. This brave young communist was executed on May 27, 1525.

Less than a decade later, communists would again seize power in a German town. Our next article will tell that story.

See Engels, *Peasant Wars in Germany (1850)* and Kautsky, *Communism in Central Europe in the Time of the Reformation (1897)*, available online.

Workers’ Solidarity Shuts Down Ports

COMMUNISM WILL PROVIDE MEANINGFUL WORK: NOT JOBS!

LOS ANGELES—The eight-day dockworkers’ strike at the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach has ended with a new contract that “guarantees” that jobs won’t be outsourced and that they won’t be laid off—at least until June, 2016.

The Los Angeles County Federation of Labor is organizing a solidarity caravan to the port, under the banner: “Save American Jobs: Don’t Outsource Good Jobs!” These fascists promise to provide a US flag to every vehicle.

Workers of the World Unite: Communism Will Provide Meaningful Work, Not Wage Slavery!

The County Fed is carrying out the bosses’ dirty work of building patriotism in preparation for war. The working class is an international class. Under capitalism, workers everywhere need jobs. The County Fed’s position amounts to saying that “Americans” deserve to work and others deserve to starve. That shows the bankruptcy of trade union politics.

Jobs mean wage-slavery. We don’t have to fight like dogs over this “bone.” Instead we must fight to end this bosses’ system. In a communist system, instead of “jobs,” everyone will have meaningful work. Instead of being faced with the choice of selling our labor power to a boss or starving to death, we’ll organize work collectively to produce for the needs of the masses.

Workers’ Solidarity on the Docks Shows Potential of Workers’ Power

The shutdown of the docks was initiated by 800 clerical workers of Local 63 of the ILWU

who direct the incoming and outgoing cargo. But what made it possible was the solidarity of 10,000 ILWU longshore workers who refused to cross the picket lines.

These two ports are the leading contributors to the regional cargo transport industry, which employs about 595,000 people. Last year the two ports handled 40% of the total value of all cargo container imports entering the U.S., mainly coming from Asia.

Striking workers went up against some of the world’s biggest shipping lines and terminal operators. They shut down 10 of the 14 cargo container terminals. The mayor of Los Angeles claims that the shutdown cost the bosses \$1.1 billion a day.

Red Flag Brings Communist Ideas to Strikers

On the fourth day of the strike, under a rainy sky, picket sign in hand, a striker told *Red Flag*, “We are out here because we do not want our jobs being outsourced. They want to get rid of our union and hire nonunion workers.”

“Under capitalism the union leadership negotiates the terms of our exploitation. Some of us get more exploited and others get less exploited, but all workers are exploited,” we replied.

“And besides,” we added, “you, the workers, in this port make everything possible. As you can see with this strike, without you nothing moves. We are talking about a communist world where workers without any bosses run things.”

The striker nodded in agreement and promised

to read *Red Flag* and our manifesto, *Mobilize the Masses for Communism*, as did the other workers on the picket line.

High School Students Discuss the Longshore Strike

A high school student said, “I’m glad this strike is over. Now my dad can start working. My dad is a truck driver and he didn’t have anything to do with whatever is going on at the ports.” She added, “I don’t think that strikes are always necessary. Sometimes they affect people that have nothing to do with what’s going on.”

“But who do you blame, the striking workers or the company?” asked another student.

“At least the workers got what they wanted, including a contract,” said another.

“But with communism there won’t be any need for contracts. A contract is an agreement between workers and the bosses, and we’ll no longer have any bosses,” answered another student.

Even though the strike is now over, we’ve seen the power of the industrial working class in its ability to shut an entire industry down. But as long as capitalism continues, workers will be forced to negotiate the terms of their exploitation

We must transform every strike into a political strike for communism—a system that instead of tying us wage slavery for the bosses profits, frees us to organize meaningful collective work to meet the needs of all.

LETTERS

MTA drivers protested a dinner given by healthcare providers to the persons in charge of administering the health funds of their union (UTU). This administrative body is composed of the UTU top officials, including General Chairperson James Williams, and some special employees of MTA.

These healthcare providers, unbeknownst to the UTU membership, have been for many years now holding exclusive dinners “honoring” this administrative group and their invitees. Somebody, how-

LETTERS

ever, spilled the beans, and some outraged drivers quickly organized a demonstration in front of the Pasadena Hilton where the dinner took place.

The billions in profits made by this health care providers, like Kaiser’s (more than \$2.5 billions last year), are ill-gotten from the high premiums and deductibles we pay, and the worsening services they provide us. This is all done with the complicity of these union officials who don’t pay monthly premiums. With friends like Williams and his gang, who needs enemies?

CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS



MTA Workers: Whose Revolution?

“I’m going to make my own revolution!” said a bus operator who sometimes gets *Red Flag* from me at Division 3.

“Wait a minute!” I said, as he started to walk by. “What’s the first thing you’ll do after your revolution?”

He thought a minute. “Make everyone equal – no rich, no poor,” he declared.

“That sounds like our revolution,” I said.

Seriously, though: The International Communist Workers’ Party wants you to make “our” revolution “your” revolution, “our” paper “your” paper and “our” party “your” party.

We who have been handing out *Red Flag* for almost three years are seeing a difference in the mood of the workers. At first, lots of MTA workers took papers mainly out of curiosity. Now some have decided they’re not interested, but if you get this paper outside your Division, you can be sure that anywhere from 40 to 140 others get it there, too. At least 100 workers take extra copies of each issue to share with co-workers, family, or their public.

But there’s a limit to what can be accomplished by a few comrades outside. Our organizing strategy is to build networks of readers inside.

We’d like to meet with you and a few trusted friends, perhaps in a public place away from work, like a restaurant or coffee shop. We want your group to take a stack of papers and make a plan for how to get them to individuals, or how to spread them around. We want to hear from you what others are saying, as well as your own ideas or questions. We’d like to connect your group with similar groups in other Divisions.

Out of networks like these, action plans can be developed to advance the class struggle. Out of networks like these, our Party will develop its line and practice as well as grow in numbers and influence. Expanding networks in transportation, industry, the military, and other key sectors will make revolution and communism a real possibility, not just something to joke about!

Please give us a call at (310) 487-7674, or give your contact information to the person who gives you *Red Flag*. Ask for extra papers. Give us a generous donation.

We’re waiting to hear from you.

—Your Friends Outside

Inspired by Sweat-shop Workers

November 2012—This weekend I participated in a meeting with comrades of ICWP from different countries.

It was the first international meeting that I have attended. We shared reports, ideas, approaches, doubts and many realities about the current outdated system and the clarity that

Communism is the only road to a just and dignified world for all. For me it was an informative and constructive meeting about the solution for the whole working class.

But what caught my attention the most were all the comments from the men and women workers from the maquilas, to hear them speak in their own voices about the exploitation, the injustices, the terrible treatment they receive and the miseries of this bosses’ system. Listening to words that fill you with rage and indignation, at the same time they fill you with anger and determination to keep fighting for Communism, to accompany and be part of the workers’ revolution.

Those are naïve who believe in a political electoral system that makes no difference, where elections are a business where victory goes to the highest bidder and the unions and other organizations are part of the circus. That’s where you’ll find the fmln which calls itself the “party of the poor” and which is run by the county’s new entrepreneurial bourgeoisie.

I remember paraphrasing the Colombian writer Gabriel Garcia Márquez, that the day that sh-t has some value, that’s the day that poor people will be born without an a—hole. I think that this isn’t very far from the capitalist reality. I hope that these words, like sh-t and a—hole, aren’t offensive, even though I would understand because for me there are also words that offend me, like hunger, injustice, exploitation, racism and more. These are words that make me indignant when I see them, hear them, and live them every day.

Capitalism is a desert that wants to make us believe that communism for all is a mirage, an oasis. But hearing my comrades in struggle in this meeting, which was also an echo of the reality of those who weren’t there but are there, makes me more convinced that the oasis of communism is more real than ever.

This struggle for your whole life, for a better world, organized in the International Communist Workers’ Party, is now. Tomorrow is an illusion. The future is today. I am not the best communist, I know, but I don’t stop believing and fighting for this real communist dream, this dreamed of place. These are the words of a communist who fights and dreams while awake.

—Young Red Poet

If we mobilize the masses for communism...

About a month ago, a few others and I met with the ICWP to discuss global and domestic issues. The first topic we discussed was the gold and platinum mines in South Africa. Much of the world’s gold and platinum is located in South Africa. Sadly, the South African miners who are working long, hard hours to collect these raw materials are mistreated and paid a disgustingly low salary.

Recently, however, the South African miners said “No More.” Many miners have gone on strike, but unfortunately many of them have been murdered or have been victims of police brutality because of their striking. The only way these miners and other hard working, low-salary workers can get what they truly deserve is through communism. Everyone in the study group agreed to that. Some said that the working class needed to end wage slavery. Others explained that what this meant was to get rid of money and work for the real needs of all workers.

The next topic we discussed was about the upcoming Presidential election. We discussed who would be a “better” president. Some people in the group said that Mitt Romney would take away money from the middle class and treat the working class worse than the Barack Obama would.

A young man dissented and said that Democrats do more harm to the working class; although others say that they (Democrats) are helping the working class. The young man also added that most voters vote for the candidate that is “lesser evil,” but in reality, is there one? Another person said that no matter who gets elected, the working class will be taken advantage of. The ruling class lives off of us, and we in turn live off of their scraps.

We also discussed the world wide capitalist crisis. World wide, more than 65% of the human population goes hungry on a daily basis. Under capitalism we have tons of food go to waste; all the food produced that isn’t sold gets thrown out. This is due to the nature of capitalism that leads to overproduction and the falling rate of profit.

If we mobilize the masses for communism, no one will go hungry, and instead of going against each other due to political views, disagreements, we would all just work together to help humanity strive.

—High School Student

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Mobilizing for Communism Will Destroy Capitalist Leeches

A few days before the Presidential election my high school organized a mock election convention. It started with a propagandistic display of the national anthem, a disgusting praise of capitalist "America." The US, its government and its businesses tell lies to justify their imperialistic conflicts in foreign nations.

The band transitioned from the anthem to jazz, so the African Americans in the crowd would think, "Democracy is cool!"

Once the music ended a student posing as a "Republican" spoke, blamed his predecessor for the nation's problems and said, "We are \$16 trillion in debt, and nobody's doing anything."

The \$trillions in debt would be instantly erased, along with worker exploitation, with a workers revolution for communism.

The next "Republican" said that Medicaid and Medicare needed to be revamped. But with communism there would be no need for Medicare or Medicaid. Anyone needing medical care would receive it.

After another popular song, the head of security took the stage and demanded that we pay attention to politics because it affects us all. But these are only the politics of the capitalists' powerhouses, who use their profits to manipulate the puppet bureaucrats that they place in Office.

The "Democratic" candidate brought up social security, welfare, and the economy. She quoted John F. Kennedy, "Ask not what the country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." The capitalist machine takes our labor, sweat, and lives and they have the audacity to ask for more-and tell us not to ask for anything!

After more music, a bizarre rap video was shown, in which Romney criticized Obama for unemployment, Guantanamo Bay, and other issues. After Obama criticized Romney, the "Great Emancipator," Abraham Lincoln, arrived on the back of an eagle and assaulted both of them.



ICWP has published our manifesto *Mobilize the Masses for Communism*. It's available in English and Spanish. Order your copy or copies. Please send donations for the costs of printing and mailing. We also ask for your suggestions and criticisms.

**Write to : PMB 362
3175 S. Hoover St.,
Los Angeles, CA 90007**

I told a girl next to me, "This is ridiculous. This is why we believe capitalism is bullshit."

"Capitalism is better than communism because communism is a leech", she said. When I asked why, she asked, "How we would erase the national deficit? "Debts would not exist", I said. She futilely repeated, "Communism is a leech".

How so? Is it a leech because there would be no capitalist class to exploit us? Is it a leech because there would be no money to enslave us? Capitalists are the true leeches.

A student "Democrat" took the stage and claimed to represent the people, lower taxes, and fix the economy. Both parties claim to represent us and neither one does.

Democratic governments don't represent the interests of the working class. They represent the interest of the capitalists who control the nations with the economy that they create. The only legitimate government will be one run by the worker for the worker, not by the capitalist for the capitalist.

Today's atrophying capitalist system produces enough to solve all problems but doesn't, simply because they refuse to lift a finger if it will not result in a profit. Why can probes be sent to explore Mars while workers go hungry and homeless? How can futuristic military technology be developed while "promoting world peace?"

What the world truly needs is a proletarian revolution for communism. There will be no unemployment, wages, or capitalist leeches, a.k.a. CEOs who suck workers' blood. All industries will be globalized — not nationalized—and produce according to the need of workers. The true answer is to mobilize the masses for communism.

—HS Comrade

MORE MEDICAL NEGLECT + LACK OF MEDICINES = UNBRIDLED CAPITALISM + CERTAIN DEATH FOR THE POOR

The exploitative capitalist system that sees the worker as one more commodity has never been interested in the health of the working class.

In Central America, it is an especially worrying situation. In Honduras, in the public hospitals, it's normal that at the time of delivery, they accommodate up to five recently-born babies in cardboard boxes on the floor, and they don't even have diapers, cotton and other needed materials to care for and manage the treatment of sick children.

For adults, it's even worse because these centers are always saturated with patients and have no medicines. Sometimes they schedule surgeries up to a year later, which in most cases means imminent death. Women give



Barefoot doctors in China after the revolution mobilized the masses to insure healthy communities.

birth in the hallways. The most inhuman and cruel scenes that the human mind can imagine are occurring. The state apparatus and its local oligarchy don't do anything to improve the situation. Recently several people died for lack of medicine, which led to mass protests.

The majority of the cases of illness are the product of the conditions to which workers are subjected, like the conditions in the jobs in the maquila, agriculture, transportation, and other industries, as well as malnutrition that affects the majority of the population since childhood. In this poor country with a lot of illness, there are four times as many lawyers as doctors. And there aren't nearly enough nurses or hospital beds.

In Honduras the distribution of medicines is in the hands of a powerful mafia protected by the state apparatus. The production of medicines and hospital equipment is in the hands of the big corporations. The capitalists aren't interested in making low-cost generic drugs, nor expediting the discovery of cures of diseases which kill millions of people, like cancer, and AIDS, among others, because it is more profitable marketing current expensive medicines.

In addition the government wasn't paying the health care workers their wages. Recently, they've been on strike demanding their pay and protesting the lack of medicines and the looting of the medicines that were removed under rampant government corruption.

In a communist society, medicine will not be linked to money. Money won't exist. Medicine won't be produced for profit, but only to cure disease. Without exploitation, workers will be healthier. Also, masses will be involved in finding cures for diseases that affect workers, producing and getting medicine where and when it's needed.

All these inhuman calamities that the working class and the poor in general suffer will end, since the basic goal is the person in all his or her dimensions, guaranteed adequate health, with a timely supply of medicines, education, housing, and work on equal conditions for all society, without discrimination for which ICWP will carry out the great revolutionary battle.

—Comrade in Honduras

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

Capitalism's Goal: Profit

OUR GOAL: COMMUNIST SOCIAL RELATIONS

“The theory of communism may be summed up in one sentence. Abolish all private property.” Marx wrote this in the *Communist Manifesto*, when violent revolutions and civil wars engulfed Europe in 1848. Capitalism, born out of the violent overthrow of feudal society and its ideology, is based on private property. The capitalists own all the means of production. The working class has nothing but our labor power to sell.

When capitalism was emerging from feudalism, the rising capitalists had to fight many violent battles to smash the feudal lords and their state power. They had to win the workers to the idea that capitalism meant freedom for workers to decide where to work, live and what to buy.

By analyzing capitalism, Marx showed that capitalists are the enemy of the working class. They materially profit from our labor, and their so-called freedom is nothing but wage slavery. The superficial appearance of “fair” exchange of wages for our labor power through money hides the essence that the capitalists steal part of the value we produce. Payment of money for our labor power is therefore a punishment, not a reward.

As we have shown, the contradiction in commodity production is between use value and exchange value. Capitalist production is primarily for exchange value, to make profit. Before workers can use a commodity, it must first be exchanged. No matter how hungry workers are, if they can't buy food with money, they starve. Workers spend all their lives as wage slaves, exchanging money for things they need to survive.

For workers, money is a commodity to be exchanged for other commodities. But for the capitalists, money is a social relationship, it is capital. Capitalists own factories, banks etc., where capitalists and workers face each other as

exploiters and exploited with opposing interests.

This private ownership of the means of production propels a capitalist frenzy to compete for maximum profit. We witness the horrors of profit as we see factory fires incinerating garment workers in Bangladesh, bombs falling in Gaza and capitalists facing off in Syria to decide who will control enormous oil profits

ICWP is mobilizing the masses to build a communist society after overthrowing capitalism. This will involve hundreds of millions of workers in smashing centuries-old capitalist ideologies of individualism, racism and sexism.

The foundation of communism will be the abolition of money and private property, which make exploitation possible. Money is what makes private ownership possible, at the same time that it makes the sale of commodities possible. Only a handful of capitalists decide what to produce and distribute-for profit.

Under communism, what we need will be distributed without money.

This distribution and its production will require a mass party entrenched in the lives of the international working class. This party, involving millions upon millions, will guarantee collective planning and action about what to produce and how to distribute it to satisfy the needs of the masses.

These are not abstract ideas. We can see glimpses of how society can be built without money when we see workers organizing and helping each other under horrific conditions. After Hurricane Sandy, workers risked their own lives to save others. Food and other necessities

were distributed based on need. In Bangladesh, after the deadly garment factory fires, tens of thousands of workers walked off their jobs for several days to help thousands of other workers affected by the fire.

Workers gladly sacrifice at enormous personal risk to reach out to fellow workers in times of need. These are nascent communist relationships that will thrive when private ownership is abolished and workers will be able to produce for need, not profit.

Under communism, because production will be for need, masses will train the whole working class to do many things with scientific understanding. The narrow division of labor that capitalism creates for profit will be abolished. No one will only be a doctor, engineer, teacher, or garment worker. By eliminating the division between mental and manual labor, we will unleash everybody's creative potential. When workers realize that no bosses benefit from their labor, they will gladly work hard for the common good.

Because production under communism will be for need, it will free up the labor of millions of people doing useless things that only support the profit system, like salespeople, accountants, insurance agents, lawyers, managers, supervisors, police, people employed in advertising, etc. These things promote individualism and capitalist relations.

In communist society the most important goal in the production and distribution of things will be creating communists and winning the masses to communism. To consolidate and advance communism, masses of communists will have to wage a life and death ideological battle against individualism, as we develop broad communist social relations.

FORTY YEARS OF REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE

EL SALVADOR--This is part of my history of struggle since 1972. I am a farm worker who was first organized in that year and started to take some classes to make me aware of why we have to struggle against a system called capitalism.

I started my clandestine activities, like distributing leaflets and propaganda, and participating in marches in San Salvador in the years 1973-1975. When we went to these demonstrations, we were met with repression from the National Guard and the State Police. That was the answer the bosses gave to our struggles then, and they still continue this system of repression now.

In the years 1976-1977, I worked in the community. The government already treated us as communists and subversives, and I still didn't know what that was. At the end of 1977 I was taken prisoner and they took me on foot through the whole country, from Morazán to Santa Ana. I spent months in prison and I was tortured by the police. They released me in 1978.

When I went to trial before a judge and he told me that I had accepted that I was a subversive

communist, I did what a comrade told me to do: I never lowered my gaze and never took my eyes off my hangmen.

When they released me, I returned to my family and started to sleep in the mountains together with them and the whole community I'd lived with. In 1978-1979, when the government's repression was greater, I was transferred to the guerrilla camps, together with other companions,

and began receiving instructions in handling weapons.

At the beginning we didn't have large weapons and only defended ourselves with pistols, sling shots, and machetes. When the larger weapons came, like the G-3 Israeli assault rifle and others, we could confront the police with greater force.

In 1983, I was wounded in combat in the city of Berlin in the eastern department of Usulután. When I recuperated, I went into the area of logistics of weapons and ammunition, until 1992, when they signed the peace accords, which had nothing to do with peace.

But the struggle didn't end. Now, organized in the International Communist Workers' Party, I am conscious that the struggle together with the city workers is immediate and necessary. My life-long partner and I are organized, working for a better world in which we workers are the ones who lead.

This is only the first letter that I'm writing. I will continue writing for the newspaper *Red Flag*.

—Veteran Red Farmworker

