

RED FLAG



MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM

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



France: "He who sows misery, reaps anger" in mass protests against attacks on workers' pensions

Colombia protests: "They took so much from us that they took away our fear."



NEW COMMUNIST COLLECTIVES EMERGE FROM MASS STRUGGLES AND DEEPER SOCIAL TIES

INDIA

Madhu was seventeen when she came to New Delhi to enroll at the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU). She grew up in a remote village with no electricity, toilets or running water. Her father, a day worker with a family of six, borrowed money so Madhu could get an education and bring fame and prosperity to the family.

That dream was shattered when the government proposed increases of 400% in tuition and 600% in boarding fees. Instead of returning to her village, Madhu joined thousands of students to protest the fee hikes, confronting police armed with teargas, water cannons and live ammunition.

As the student protest grew bigger, the repression from police escalated. But the students were not intimidated. Protests spread to other cities, drawing in even more students, professors and staff. Tens of thousands of students defying police barricades and marching to the parliament inspired many others. Messages of support and solidarity came from South Africa, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Chile.

What started as a protest against fee increase began to question the role of education itself. For thousands of students, going to a classroom and listening to their professor made no sense. Large gatherings of thousands singing,

cooking, making plans for protests, and raising banners day and night created learning that does not exist in a classroom.

The government tried desperately to end the student protest. December is the month of final exams. The JNU administration threatened to expel and cancel students' scholarships if they did not take the exams. Many professors have refused to conduct exams.

Our fight is spreading and so are the opportunities to spread revolutionary communist ideas. Last week over 5000 ad-hoc faculty of Delhi University (DU) took over the central offices of the vice chancellor. We are spreading our ideas to faculty and staff at DU.

A former student of JNU found *Red Flag* four years ago on social media. When the JNU student protests erupted, he brought some students there a copy of the ICWP pamphlet on communist education. Madhu was among those who received our literature.

A small group of students started discussing *Red Flag* and the pamphlet. We discovered that many ministers in the fascist Modi government as well as reformist, fake communist leaders of CPI and

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SOUTH AFRICA

In November, comrades from Port Elizabeth went to Rustenburg, a mining center where a mass strike in 2012 exposed the African National Congress' betrayal of the working class. We have been uneven in our visits to this mining center, 1100 km (700 miles) distance from our party center in South Africa, but we decided it was important to be more consistent in our contacts with miners and to guarantee the development of ICWP in the region.

The day we arrived, we met two miners who were staying in the same place. We don't speak the local language, Setswana, so we reverted to English. We said that we were from

Port Elizabeth and that we wanted to meet miners and talk to them about communism.

The next day we distributed over 100 copies of *Red Flag*, mostly outside the hostels around the mines. However, it was hard to have meaningful conversation because workers were rushing to catch a transport for home.

The next day we went inside the hostels and were able to have better conversations. Most of the miners complained about the conditions. Workers stay in informal settlements even today. There are no roads, no houses. Workers still don't have

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THIS IS A FOUR WEEK ISSUE

WHY WE NEED COMMUNIST PHILOSOPHY, PART I

We see signs of the crisis of world capitalism everywhere. Workers, students, soldiers and farmers are joining mass protests from Venezuela to France to New Delhi and more. The bosses are losing their ideological control of the masses. Important politicians like Trump, Modi and Bolsonaro are allying with open fascists or embracing fascism themselves.

In times like these, it is more important than ever to build a mass International Communist Workers' Party – ICWP.

Political and economic crises are part of the nature of the capitalist system. But that system cannot last forever.

Workers can bring down the capitalists and create communism, the system where the international working class rules, without any bosses. Everyone will contribute their work and everyone will share the products of our labor, without wages or money.

Communist philosophy, dialectical materialism, helps us understand how the masses can make this change. That is the theme of the upcoming conferences to mark ICWP's tenth anniversary (see announcement below).

Philosophies describes reality: they say what they think is real and what isn't. Philosophies tells us how to learn about reality and how to change it.

Different points of view in philosophy are part of the struggle between capitalists who are trying to continue ruling us, and the masses who are try-

ing to survive and throw off capitalist rule. Philosophy is part of that class struggle.

Dialectical materialism teaches that reality is always changing, and we can understand how it changes.

We can use the knowledge learned from work and practical activity to reveal the weaknesses of capitalism and overthrow it. The ICWP uses dialectical materialism to analyze and improve our work. We will use it in building communist society.

One basic idea of dialectical materialism is that different parts of reality are connected.

To say that two things are connected means that one affects the other or both affect each other. The weather in the south Pacific ("El Nino") affects the weather in faraway parts of the earth. Protests and rebellions in one place inspire people in other places. Past events like slavery, apartheid, revolutions and wars have long-lasting effects.

One of the most important kinds of connections is the connection between things that are in conflict with each other.

The heart of dialectics, the communist philosophy of change, is this simple idea: **Things change mainly because of the conflicts that go on inside of them.** For us, a very important example of this dialectical principle is the connection between capitalists and workers.

Although capitalists exploit workers, workers need to work for them in order to live. Capitalists also need workers or they can't make profits. Within capitalism, workers and capitalists need each other and influence each other, but they are in conflict and often fight.

The capitalist-worker connection is a basic example of a dialectical contradiction. A dialectical contradiction is a pair of connected things with two characteristics. First, the two things are at least partly made what they are by that connection. Second, the two things interfere with each other, hold each other back or actu-

ally fight with each other.

This kind of "contradiction" is different from the ordinary sense of the word. "Contradiction" usually means saying something and then denying it, like "it is raining" and "it is not raining."

Dialectical contradictions happen between and within things or activities everywhere in the real world. There are contradictions inside a person who has conflicting goals. Trying to "stay out of trouble", for example, contradicts trying to lead workers to fight for communism.

In the physical world, there are contradictions between forces that pull the parts of atoms together and those that push them apart. A volcano is the result of the pressure of melted rocks held back by the pressure of the earth's crust. A communist revolution is a social explosion that happens when the organized working class overcomes the armed power of the capitalists.

Contradictions are important because they cause changes or prevent them. The worker-capitalist contradiction produces the protests, strikes and rebellions that are happening everywhere in the world now. This contradiction will eventually drive the working class to overthrow capitalism.

Contradictions are always internal to some thing, process or system. They are the biggest influence on how that thing changes. People exposed to TB germs will get the disease or not, depending on the struggle of their immune system against the TB germs.

The most fundamental internal contradiction of capitalism is this: Capitalism needs an unlimited increase in capitalists' wealth and forces of production while it must restrict the mass of producers to bare necessities. This contradiction grows larger over time. It provides opportunities for the working class to eliminate capitalism and build up communism in its place.

Contradictions between imperial powers like the US and China can pass from mild conflict to trade wars to huge shooting wars, like the two world wars in the 20th century. These provided opportunities for communist-led revolutions in Russia and China.

In the next issue, we will discuss how dialectical contradictions affect the practical work of the party.

INDIA from page 1

CPM were graduates of JNU.

We talked about education to end violence against women, education to smash religious violence, to end poverty, to clean the air that is choking people in Delhi. This kind of education doesn't exist in capitalism because it is based on profit. We need a communist society.

We had lively discussions with the students. What started as a protest against fees has become a school for questioning capitalism and its exploitation of the working class.

Capitalist education perpetuates the ideology that greed is human nature and cannot change—rather than the result of the profit system. Our experience in the mass student protests has taught us otherwise. In the street battles when some students become targets of police beating, teargas or

water cannon, we all rush to help our comrades.

In communist society, when there is no profit motive, everyone will be educated. But this education will not be in the exclusive areas that we call universities. It will be in the factories, the neighbourhoods and in trains, buses and streets. Education will no longer be an individual endeavour of going to a classroom, taking a test and doing the same task defending capitalism for all our life. Communist education will come from our need to rebuild the society left in shambles by environmental disasters, wars and religious ignorance and hatred. This education of collective struggle and learning will be for all.

In one of the demonstrations, our friend and comrade Madhu got a direct blow to her head from a police baton.

Blood rushed down her face, but she stood defiantly. In a moment of agonizing pain, she showed her determination that the fight was no longer to roll back the fee increase. It is a fight win a world without capitalism. When her father saw Madhu's picture, he said, "She is bringing us the hope that we need in order to change this society."



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Tackling Racism with Communist Basebuilding

REVOLUTION, NOT RUGBY, WILL LIBERATE SOUTH AFRICAN MASSES

November 15, 2019 — The South African team Springboks recently upset England to win the World Rugby Championship. Siya Kolisi, the first-ever black captain of the Springboks, grew up in Zwide township, Port Elizabeth. Kolisi spoke of growing up, often hungry, in this racially segregated township. He thanked other hungry and homeless people for giving him strength.

Springbok started in 1906. It championed white supremacy, symbolized male domination and cheered for the apartheid system. Black youth in townships were excluded from rugby by the need for expensive training and a healthy diet. Under Apartheid, 140 out of 1000 black children died before their first birthday. The black masses hated rugby.

M, an ICWP comrade who works in a large bakery, also grew up in Zwide. “I knew the captain,” said M. “He’s younger than me. He used to attend this primary in Zwide but he was very talented and they took him to an expensive mostly-white private school, Grey High School, where there’s the best rugby in the country.”

M continued, “It’s their propaganda that if he can make it, everybody can make it. It’s always for the capitalist only. The capitalists want to use

you. There’s no such a thing as everybody can make it.”

Kolisi is not starving now. He literally ran

for money. In his open-bus victory parade around the big South African cities, he collected lucrative endorsements from large multinationals. He skipped Zwide, as there was no money to be made there.

Over 14 million people in the “new” South Africa go to bed hungry each night. Over half of all South Africans experience food insecurity.

Organizing in Zwide for communist revolution.

ICWP is organizing for communist revolution in Zwide and elsewhere in South Africa. The bosses have won one black youth to their side but we have millions to win on our side to destroy capitalism.

Our collective talked excitedly about how sports will be in communism. We will have no spectacle sports endorsed by multinationals where hundreds of millions watch while the bosses make huge profits promoting individualism, racism, sexism and nationalism.

Communist society will encourage everyone to be physically active and to participate in collective activities. This new society will create new sports to fight individualism and champion collectivity.

To build this communist society, we have to win a large number of workers and youth to our party now to prepare for revolution. This requires deep and consistent social, political and personal ties with many people around us. Distributing *Red Flag* helps us build this communist base.

In Zwide we have, over the years, recruited several comrades. Some became less active as they encountered personal problems such as family crises, joblessness, alcoholism or mental health issues. These are real and time-consuming problems, all created by capitalism.

For example, comrade L is a very promising organizer. He came on our first trip to Marikana. During the 14-hour drive, we discussed “Mobilizing Masses for Communism,” dialectical materialism, and the International Communist Workers’ Party. In Marikana, although he was new to the party, he was very bold in distributing *Red Flag*. He engaged effectively with the workers as he speaks a language commonly spoken there.

Later, personal problems led him to be less active but we kept in touch. We struggled with him but when he stopped attending meetings, we were disappointed and frustrated. However, as a collective, we never gave up on this comrade.

Last month L’s father died after a leg amputation due to diabetes— another death caused by profit-hungry capitalism. We sent a small contribution to help with expenses. A week later, he renewed his organizing efforts. “I am in ICWP not for personal reasons,” L explained, “but because I am passionate about communism.”

There are many similar examples. Recently a comrade was stabbed and had to undergo surgery in a horrific hospital. Another comrade was robbed. We reached out to them and helped them as much as we could.

This communist base building is crucial to recruiting masses to ICWP. Sometimes comrades have very liberal relationships with co-workers, friends, neighbors and family. They tend to look for unity and avoid political struggle for communism. Sometimes comrades try to win an argument without listening to a new worker.

We are becoming more aware of our strengths and weaknesses. By making collectives stronger, with urgency and patience, we are building a strong base for mass recruitment.



MARIKANA from page 1

access to water. Entire neighborhoods are using one tap of water.

They can see that five years after the massacre nothing has changed. The unions are not living up to their promises. The workers ask, “If you say that unions are bad, what is it that you can offer that is better than the unions?” “What is it that you can offer now in the present?”

We talked about something that was not familiar to them: that it is imperative to abolish money. The only thing that ties workers to the bosses are wages. We need to exchange our labor for wages, and then exchange those wages to fulfill needs. If we destroy money and wages and provide for the workers needs, we will be breaking the chain of wage slavery that binds workers to the bosses.

That is the only way to liberate the working

class. You can’t liberate the working class by building more clinics, more police stations, more schools. We are still tied to the bosses through wages. We need to break these chains. The reason there is poverty, unemployment, corruption, the reason people are sick—is because of the money system.

We explained that we are sold some toxic things that make us sick, with diabetes, etc. They sell them to us because of profit, to the detriment of our health. In communism, we would make sure that people don’t get sick in the first place. In communism, things we eat that make us sick will be abolished. Our message got through to some of them.

In our last day, the comrades who form the nucleus of the new collective in Rustenburg came to the mobilization. They helped distribute *Red Flag* for the first time and got some experience

interacting with workers on the street. This will prepare them to distribute *Red Flag* for themselves in the future.

The trip to Rustenburg also helped make the comrades from Port Elizabeth more committed and better leaders and organizers for the party. We learned how to better anticipate problems, whether it’s for accommodation or transport, to come up with remedies before they arise. We learned that we had to rely on other comrades in the collective to make sure that we had everything we need.



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Los Angeles Transit Workers:

“THE FUTURE OF THE WORKING CLASS IS ONLY ABOUT COMMUNISM”

LOS ANGELES (USA), November 28—Our weekly meeting of transit workers focused on inviting other workers to the January 18 celebration of 10 years of the International Communist Workers’ Party.

H talked about the party’s achievements during this time and the importance of continuing to develop our work. Inviting more workers to attend this event is very important for the party’s growth.

Comrade J added that the situation for the working class is getting harder. Shipyard workers are threatened with losing their jobs due to automation.

Other comrades also commented about how this situation could affect us too. Other transit companies hire one master mechanic and ten mechanics who probably earn the minimum wage. Someone said that they could easily do that at the

MTA too. That’s why it’s very important to organize the party so that we can fight more effectively when the situation sharpens.

Someone said that he was a little afraid about security. As things get worse, the bosses can attack us—especially communists who are spearheading fight.

There were many good responses.

Someone said, “Look, security is in numbers. If we recruit more people, we will be strong. If not, we are going to be screwed, because sooner or later we will be affected. Everyone talks about a recession, and an economic depression. That affects our lives and our children’s lives. It’s harder for the new generations to live a life even as good as ours. There’s less chance that they can get jobs like this one.”

“It’s very important to organize. If you don’t join the party, you are isolated. Together we are stronger. So it’s important for the party to grow and recruit more comrades.”

“Yes,” G said, “At times there is a lot of anti-communism because of the brainwashing that the ruling class has done for so long. We have to talk to our fellow workers. They are our brothers and sisters, our class. We have to win them to participate with us in the party. That’s why it’s important to distribute *Red Flag* and invite our fellow workers to meetings. The conference

on January 18 will be very important in that regard. We must try to bring as many other workers and family members as possible. They will begin to know more about the ideas. They can meet more friends or comrades from other countries and listen to their organizing experiences. We can learn from them.

“I think,” said Comrade X, “that fear cannot stop us. Whether we organize or not they will attack us one way or another. If we are politically prepared, we will be more able to lead the fight when it’s necessary.”

“And something that impressed me,” he said, “is the question of soldiers. Soldiers are from our class, youth from our neighborhoods. If we work with them, we could win them to join us.”

We ended by talking about the topics of the January 18 meeting. Comrade J said that it is important that we all collaborate financially so the event is a success. Money is needed for travel, food, for the place. All of us need to contribute economically what we can and according to our commitment. We mentioned countries that comrades will come from and many countries where people read the paper and are in solidarity with the party.

The situation seems to be consolidating more with these comrades. They are seeing things more politically.

As we finished, J said, “When the working class has lost everything, the only thing we’re going to have is communism. That’s why we’ve got to make it strong right now. We’ve got to fight for it. Because the future for the working class is only about communism.”



Trump impeachment sharpens fight among U.S. rulers

US IMPERIALISTS FIGHT FOR THEIR EMPIRE – LET’S NOT DO THE SAME!

USA, December 9 – Republicans call it a “witch hunt.” Democrats call it a “fight against corruption and abuse of power.” Actually, the Trump impeachment fight is about the future of US imperialism.

The international working class – not the imperialists! – must determine the world’s future. We must build a new communist society on the ashes of the old. A society without elections or politicians. A society where all participate directly in making the decisions that affect our lives.

The real indictment

“Trump has personalized, privatized, and de-institutionalized foreign policy to the detriment of the national interest.” (www.cfr.org). Translation: He works for himself, not for his class.

No “national interest” can meet the needs of both workers and capitalists. Capitalist rulers define their own class interest as the “national interest.”

A major faction of US imperialism thinks that Trump is sacrificing the capitalists’ “national interest” for his personal gain.

The US political system has no official, immediate method (like a vote of “no confidence”) to bring down a government. When the rulers feel they can’t wait for the next election, impeachment is their extreme remedy.

Pro-impeachment forces can’t wait. They fear that Trump’s encouragement of foreign interference in US elections will compromise their entire so-called “democratic” system.

Imperialists prepare for more wars

The US ruling class is divided about how to preserve their endangered global empire. Some think that US imperialism must prepare to con-

front both Chinese and Russian imperialists. Others argue for prioritizing one over the other.

But Trump’s administration is placing US imperialism at risk in both regions.

It actively promotes Russian interests in Eastern Europe. It weakens NATO. The Trump administration’s Ukraine policy aimed only to attack Trump’s domestic rival. In southwest Asia, his abrupt withdrawal of US forces from Syria, a gift to Russia, horrified US military leaders.

The Trump administration has also weakened the US in Asia-Pacific. It withdrew from the Trans-Pacific Partnership. It deferred military construction projects in Guam, a key US military hub, to pay for Trump’s “wall.” His demands on South Korea have “heightened tensions between longtime allies and posed risks for regional security.” (cfr.org)

US military leaders see Trump’s support for a Navy SEAL war criminal as a threat to their whole chain of command and to military discipline.

That’s why he’s being impeached. Not for caging refugee kids and letting them die. Not for cutting food stamps. Not for encouraging violent white supremacists. Not for enriching himself at taxpayers’ expense. Not for calling himself “the Chosen One” and trying to buy Greenland.

Testifying against Trump.... and for anti-communist patriotism

Fiona Hill, a key impeachment witness, is a Harvard-trained Russia/Eurasia expert. Belongs to the Council on Foreign Relations and the Brookings Institution. A former intelligence analyst under Bush and Obama. A top advisor for Trump’s National Security Council until July.

The Republican lawyer George Conway proposed a #FionaHillFanClub. We are supposed to admire her, along with the staunch anti-communist diplomats Marie Yovanovitch and Lt. Col. Alexander Vindman (another Harvard-trained Russia expert) who also testified.

These three, all immigrants, are supposedly “people doing the right thing by the country.” The rulers want us to be inspired with patriotic enthusiasm – possibly for a war against Russia. They want us to identify Russia with “communism” even though the ruling Russian oligarchs openly embrace free-market capitalism.

Anti-communism is a cornerstone of the bosses’ anti-worker ideology.

Democrats attack Trump... are they the workers’ friends?

In 1979, the US-backed the brutal Shah of Iran. The Ayatollah Khomeini opposed him. Many left-wing Iranians thought that “the enemy of my enemy is my friend.” They supported Khomeini. But once he had power, he suppressed them. Many were jailed or killed or fled into exile.

“We are the masses.” “Trump is the enemy of the masses.” “The Democrats are the enemy of Trump.” Does that make Democrats the friends of the masses? No!

Obama escalated deportations. Democrats let Trump cut taxes on the rich, divide the masses with racism and sexism, and build fascism. But now he interferes with the imperialist rulers’ preparations for World War III — an even deadlier attack on our international working-class family.

Workers have no “friends” among capitalist rulers anywhere. Let’s prepare to dump them all with communist revolution.

IN COMMUNISM WE WILL BUILD HOUSING THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF THE MASSES

CALIFORNIA (USA), Dec. 11—There are some 63,500 homeless people and some 106 billionaires in the San Francisco Bay Area.. Something is rotten in an area where tent cities sprout in the cold rains of winter next to the heated mansions of billionaires.

Something is rotten to the core when there are 4 to 5 times more vacant houses than homeless people! That something is capitalism. Its operating principle is if you can't pay for it, you can't have it. Human needs are nothing next to capital's need for profits.

Of course, it's not just the Bay Area. There are 60,000 unhoused people in Los Angeles and at least 150 million (and growing) worldwide. There is no longer such a simple thing as "land" or "earth" on this planet. Every square inch has become (or is becoming) "real estate," or a precisely measured, privately owned, potentially profitable piece of land! The feet of humans are only allowed on this land under special circumstances.

The capitalists own it and we, the human masses, must pay them rent, mortgages (to the

banks) or be homeless. They use their state, laws, police and courts to enforce their ownership. Homelessness is a product of this system. It is especially a product of industrial capitalism. The only way we can end it is through communist revolution.

The revolution will restore the earth to humankind. We, the masses, will contribute what we can – building, converting and sharing what we have to meet the needs of our brothers and sisters.

Real Estate Investment and Crisis

It won't be easy. The real estate industry is worth \$217 trillion worldwide. It makes up 60% of the world's assets, mainly in housing. It's protected by everything from handcuffs to nuclear bombs to an information industry that says communist revolution is either undesirable or unattainable. You can bet the 106 billionaires in the Bay Area are up to their necks in making and defending these investments.

To them the 15% to 20% profits the owner of high end apartment buildings can make is not just irresistible, it's essential. Due to factors we've

outlined elsewhere, the rate of profit in manufacturing, mining and transportation has fallen drastically. Real estate is one of the few areas where capital can grow. The capitalists (and this is their strategic weakness) have no choice: they have to invest in real estate, driving up the rents and mortgages, gentrifying workers' neighborhoods.

To them homelessness is just unavoidable collateral damage. So are the millions displaced and

migrating in search of housing and jobs.

Banks, hedge funds and private equity firms like Blackstone are now the world's largest landlords. Rent burdens, the percent of income tenants put toward housing, is going way up, especially in black and latinx neighborhoods. The construction workers who build houses can't afford to buy them.

Reform makes housing crisis worse

In November, Apple, Facebook and Google announced plans to invest a combined total of \$4.5 billion in "affordable housing" in California. Amazon is doing the same in Seattle. "Invest" is the key word. They are not out to build homes for the masses. They are making loans so they can make big profits by building expensive housing and as a cover for causing homelessness.

We need communism! The communist masses will resolve the contradiction between private property and the masses' needs by abolishing private property, along with the capitalists and their state, through communist revolution.

Production centers, land, transportation, water, and all natural resources will be the collective resources of the masses—to share and use to meet our needs and to take care of for future generations. Money, rent and mortgages will be bad memories of the past.

We will all contribute what we can and receive what we need. We will, however, have personal property: our own toothbrush, eye glasses, etc.

The masses, through ICWP will organize housing, collective dining halls and common spaces. We won't "own" homes or apartments, but live in and care for them. As peoples' needs and household size change, they may move to another place or other housing. Everyone will have adequate housing.

Masses of workers mobilizing for communism can take over the bosses' private property and make it useful for us all. Mobilizing for communism now is the way forward.



June 2015, San Salvador, El Salvador
Fighting evictions; fighting for communism

Hong Kong:

INTER-IMPERIALIST RIVALRY AND THE ILLUSION OF DEMOCRACY

December 11 — Hong Kong residents, mainly led by students, have protested massively for close to six months. These protests are part of a continuing movement that opposes Chinese rule over Hong Kong. They were provoked by threats to send protestors to mainland China, where they would be subject to long prison sentences.

As in Hong Kong's "Umbrella Revolution" of 2014, police and other pro-government thugs have attacked the recent protests with gunfire and tear gas. Youths have responded bravely, but bravery isn't enough. They need to fight the Chinese capitalists by mobilizing for real communism.

Economic Roots of the Protests

These protests not just caused by anti-Beijing politics. They are driven by serious economic issues. Housing in Hong Kong is among the most expensive in the world. Many workers live in tiny unsafe illegal shacks built on rooftops. A huge real estate "bubble" has pushed the average home price to US\$ 1.23 million. Many in Hong Kong resent rich housing buyers from mainland China and the mainlanders who occupy many spots in Hong Kong's elite colleges.

The inter-imperialist rivalry between the US and Chinese capitalist classes is deeply involved in the Hong Kong movement. The US Agency for International Development (that is, the CIA) funds "pro-democracy" projects in Hong Kong. New U.S. laws threaten sanctions against Hong

Kong and Beijing officials over "human rights violations." US capitalists want to use this issue to embarrass the Chinese government, as they do with the Chinese government's vicious oppression of the Uighurs, a Muslim minority group.

China's capitalist government has been making aggressive moves against US capitalism, now that it has become a major imperialist power. President Xi Jinping's government is challenging the US in the South China Sea and the Taiwan Straits. It is producing new aircraft carriers, bombers, missiles and fighter planes. The Chinese government is being tough in the trade war with the US that Trump said would be "easy to win." The attempt to impose Chinese mainland law on Hong Kong is part of the same imperialist muscle flexing.

Democracy is Still Capitalist Dictatorship

The Hong Kong movement is a real mass movement with real grievances. However, many protesters are unfortunately falling for the capitalist illusion of "real democracy." Democracy, with its trappings of elections, campaigns and media ads, is a strategy of the capitalist class for legitimizing its rule. It promotes the lie that the masses have some say in what the government does.

In all democracies, candidates can't win elections unless they win the approval of a combination of party leaders, the big media and rich contributors. Candidates that lack this approval

will be ignored or they will be attacked in the press or in expensive TV ads.

In the US, capitalists have so far been able to rely on this charade to maintain their rule. But that may be changing. In general, capitalist classes resort to mass violence whenever elections might not give the results the most powerful capitalists want. We have seen that recently in Bolivia and Ukraine.

Capitalists Always Rule – Until Workers

Take Power for Communism

Hong Kong capitalists have their conflicts with the big capitalists in Beijing. However, capitalists have ruled everywhere in China since the Cultural Revolution. That mass movement in the 1960s tried but failed to prevent the victory of capitalism in China.

The capitalists who now rule China will never give up their power without a new real communist revolution. The Hong Kong masses will not be better off if some different politicians get elected there. We challenge these determined fighters to redirect their energy and courage to fight for communism.

See our series "The History of the Cultural Revolution in China" available at

<https://icwpredflag.org/wp/wordpress/pamphlets-and-article-series/history-of-the-cultural-revolution-in-china/>

Worldwide Crisis of Capitalism is Deadly for Migrants

FIGHT FOR A COMMUNIST WORLD WITHOUT BORDERS

In the 1970s, workers from Mexico and Central America fled their homes. US imperialism and local capitalists had made survival impossible. Some came to escape the US-paid death squads that had killed their friends and comrades in civil wars. Some came because capitalist exploitation had made it impossible to feed themselves or their families in the countryside or the cities. They came from Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador and Mexico. And many of them ended up in Los Angeles.

Some of those migrants are revolutionary communists today helping to lead the International Communist Workers' Party to fight for a world without borders, wars and exploitation. A world where no-one will be forced to flee their home to survive and no-one will be called a foreigner.

Their path brought them into contact with communist workers and students in Los Angeles in a group called the Progressive Labor Party (PLP). It was mostly made up of students who knew that workers were key to a communist revolution. They joined PLP and fought to make it a working-class party.

They led strikes in garment factories, a walk-out in a shoe factory and confronted the immigration cops in a garment factory. They fought against racist conditions in the public schools, and led other workers and students in fighting the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan. They fought against apartheid in South Africa. And they built long-lasting ties among industrial workers and their families in Los Angeles as they maintained their ties to their countries of origin and encourage communist organizing there.

When PLP succumbed to reformism ten years ago, they were instrumental in the founding of the ICWP in the US, Mexico and Central America.

Today's Migrants Can Be Tomorrow's Revolutionaries

Forty years later, millions of workers and their families are fleeing their homes. Late-stage capitalism, with its environmental crisis, mass unemployment and violence all over the world has made survival impossible on an unimaginable scale. According to the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees, there are 25 million refugees in the world today. These are people in refugee camps who have crossed the bosses' bor-

ders, running from violence, persecution, war or natural disaster.

These figures do not include those who have left their homes without crossing the bosses' borders. And it doesn't include the much larger numbers of people who are leaving home because the capitalist crisis has made it impossible to earn enough money to survive.

The crisis—and the hypocrisy of the rulers—is extreme. **In the first ten days of December alone:**

*Video surfaced of the death of 16-year-old Guatemalan Mayan migrant Carlos Gregorio Hernandez Vasquez who died, alone and unaided, in his cell near McAllen, Texas, in May. Eight migrant children, seven of them Mayan children from Guatemala, have died in U.S. custody in the last year.

*A ship carrying migrants from The Gambia in West Africa, a country looted by both French and British imperialists and rocked by corruption and unemployment, sank off the shores of Mauritania. Sixty-two people lost their lives.

*Seven hundred refugees fleeing from the conflicts in Syria and Afghanistan were saved by Lighthouse Rescue, operating on the north shore

of the Greek island of Lesbos, 18 miles from the shores of Turkey. Over a thousand migrants have drowned in the Mediterranean this year.

*Six hundred refugees from those same wars are trapped in a snowed-in refugee camp made of tents—without running water or electricity—on top of a former landfill on the northern border of Bosnia.

Sailors, rescue workers, doctors and lawyers fight for the survival of our working-class family in these horrific situations. While we applaud their efforts, even they know it's not enough. Pia Klemp, the German captain of a boat whose crew has rescued thousands of refugees in the Mediterranean, spoke out this summer for revolution, and freedom of movement and residence for all. (See "Let's Fight for a Communist World Without Borders" *Red Flag* Volume 10, Number 10.)

Our experiences from the 1970s teach us that those who have fled the worst of capitalism and imperialism, if armed with communist ideas and organized in a communist party, can be among the best fighters to end capitalism and its horrors. Communists must aggressively recruit migrant workers everywhere to hasten the fight for a communist future.



Garment worker comrades in a protest against deportations and wage slavery from Los Angeles to Bangladesh in 2013.

El Salvador:

CHINESE & U.S. CAPITALISTS COMPETE TO EXPLOIT WORKERS

EL SALVADOR—Salvadoran President Nayib Bukele has announced more Chinese "aid" for cooperation projects as well as the signing of cooperation agreements in tourism, economy and other areas. China is expanding economically and militarily throughout Latin America, as it is in Africa and Asia.

China has already signed such agreements and initiated projects in Nicaragua, Panama, Costa Rica, and South America. Through these cooperation projects, China has a greater presence in the region, to compete for natural resources and labor, as part of its geopolitical strategy in opposition to the influence of the United States.

The Chinese capitalists-imperialists, like those from the USA, care little about the environmental damage caused by the projects they develop, both in mining and hydrocarbons, nor the vicious attacks on the working class. In the areas where large Chinese consortiums work, even small nations like El Salvador are part of the inter-imperialist fight between these two powers.

The rulers can make alliances and business

deals, but the workers are only exploited. It is time to organize workers in Latin America and worldwide permanently and politically for Communism within the International Communist Workers' Party.

Asian capitalists are pushing to gain control of tourism and commerce, as happened with the recent sale of Perico Island in El Salvador to a Chinese businessman. Hundreds of people will be evicted and sent to live in distant places, so that they don't frighten the tourists with their poverty.

Despite the multimillion-dollar Chinese investment in many countries, poverty is still the workers' daily life. The money goes to the local bourgeoisie and the Chinese businessmen who travel to these places. The rest returns to Beijing. Companies like Huawei help spy on political enemies of local governments that are friends or allies of Beijing and those that are a threat to the Chinese rulers.

Capitalist policies have wreaked havoc on the environment and caused human losses (for example, the killing of indigenous people in Bolivia

for opposing Chinese investment projects).

Whatever the imperialist flag, the capitalists only bring death and environmental destruction where they arrive. They buy national governments for juicy amounts of money so that they do not oppose labor violations and precarious working conditions.

The army and the centers of production - factories - are key to ending this rotten profit system. It is time to strengthen and create ICWP communist collectives that build the path that the working class must travel to build a new communist political, social, and economic system.

There is a lot of work ahead. We need the help and collaboration of all the sectors exploited by the bourgeoisie who want better conditions of life for the present and the future.

We need to read and discuss history to learn from the successes and mistakes of the past to build new communist forms of distribution from the factory to the worker's table. Join us!

LETTERS

LETTERS

LETTERS

CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

SOUTH AFRICA—Struggling with miners about the role of unions

On our trip to Rustenburg, comrades from Port Elizabeth met with some of the new comrades who are forming the nucleus of the ICWP collective there. We have been struggling with some of them, like comrade Lwazi, for several years.

We talked about the role of unions in a communist revolution and in communist society. The comrades in Rustenburg said that unions have a role to play in the emancipation of the working class. We strongly disagreed with this position.

Unions have no role in the emancipation of the working class. Instead they help the bosses exploit the workers. Unions are not saviors of the miners, but servants of the bosses.

We gave examples from the massacre in Marikana five years ago. Most of the workers who left NUM joined a new union named AMCO, because AMCO was promising that miners would get 12,500 R (\$843) a month and housing allowances. AMCO said they would push for these companies to build clinics because in Marikana there's only one clinic that services thousands of miners. None of this happened. Most of the workers are earning 8500 R (\$573) a month. The highest earners

get 8700 R a month.

Most of the workers are loyal to a union because of the strong propaganda machine that they have and also because they are suffering and they see them as their salvation, which in time proves to be fatal to the workers.

Explaining this is helpful to understand the dangers of union bosses and helps us understand the reason why workers are not joining us in droves. Many are joining the EFF (Economic Freedom Fighters). Comrades explained that we are not populists. We do not make ridiculous claims.

Another miner's criticism is that what we are promising is something for the future, not something that can be realized in five years' or two years' time.

We were clear and honest with them that we don't have a quick fix for capitalism. We offer now a chance to fight for a communist future. For us to be in a stronger position to do that, we need them and others to join us and to spread *Red Flag*. Once they do that, we will be closer to effecting the revolutionary change we need. We need their help and commitment. We need them to invite more workers to join the organization.

The miners we met with appreciated our honesty. They are not accustomed to this. Every time they have meetings with union bosses or shop stewards, they make some elaborate promises. The workers see that those promises have not materialized. They can't say that the unions are helping workers in the present because they are not. They are just facilitating the exploitation of the workers.

The shop stewards are picked among the workers. They are given some board seats and once they are there, they get housing allowances, car allowances, etc. They forget about the workers. They are not in these positions to represent the workers. They are there to suppress the workers and to shut them up. Those positions are only bribes so they can further facilitate the exploitation of the working class.

Before the meeting our new comrades were pro unions but after the meeting we got the sense that some of them are realizing how futile it is to trust the union bosses. They believed us because we are talking about something that they see every day.

—comrades from Port Elizabeth, South Africa

Gaza Crisis Demands Urgent Fight for Communism

November 18—I had a heart-wrenching conversation with a 24-year-old comrade in Gaza this morning. She reads *Red Flag* when she can with the use of a translator. She described the horrific situation in Gaza. She has a family of 11. Her parents had a small olive grove decades ago which is now replaced by an expensive housing project. The Israeli fascists razed it and built a wall to protect it.

Three of her sisters have a life-threatening illness caused by the atrocities of the blockade. She said the family goes without food for days to help the dying members. Every day she spends her day in lines to get some charity food and then she goes looking for jobs that don't exist. At night the whole family cries in agony and desperation. Constant fatigue tires them so they fall asleep only to be woken up by the merciless bombing of the demonic supersonic Israeli fighter jets.

She told me that most people think that Hamas is as brutal as the Israeli rulers. She believes they are both the same. "We can manage things ourselves if we get rid of them," she said with disgust and disdain. "Managing things ourselves" would require us to smash the capitalist system and its repressive state.

"The working class from Bolivia to Gaza to Kashmir can manage things without the bosses," I said. I was beginning to engage with the comrade.

"Yes, for sure," was her resounding answer, "but what can you do? What can we do? My three sisters are dying, we are hungry." The call came to an abrupt silence. I really hope her family is managing to survive.

What can we do? We need to build for communist revolution with the utmost urgency, dedication, seriousness and humility. We have the power to overcome all obstacles because capitalism survives by creating its own grave diggers.

At this time, we are unable to send our comrades food or doctors to take care of the family in need. But we can intensify our struggle wherever we are, fighting for communism with

more dedication and confidence that this sick and degenerate system of profit can and must be crushed.

—Comrade in North America

Doing the Right Thing Is A Class Question

December 7—At this point, the debate surrounding the 737MAX crashes is not about the facts. It's about racism, xenophobia and siphoning wealth into the hands of the ruling class.

How else can you explain the continued publication of lies about foreign pilot error? Even as Boeing suspends publicly offering this excuse, these lies continue popping up like a bizarre game of whack-a-mole.

Many of us at Boeing have fought this kind of racism and xenophobia on the shop floor. We should have no illusions. We may have momentarily driven the racist xenophobes underground, but there is no escaping them under capitalism. (Boeing is still using the "foreign pilot error" argument in hidden legal proceedings.)

Red Flag helped us understand the material basis for these persistence lies. An article (Trump Is Small Potatoes Compared To Those Who Rule Boeing, Vol.10, Number 14) showed how the private equity and hedge fund Blackstone dominates the board.

Blackstone doesn't produce a thing. Producing commodities hasn't generated the biggest returns (profits) as the global capitalist crisis of overproduction intensifies. Instead, Blackstone relies on financial tricks.

Chief among those tricks at Boeing is the artificial inflation of its stock price. Boeing has spent an unprecedented \$43 billion buying back shares over the last six years. In comparison, the development of the whole 737MAX cost less than \$10 billion.

Boeing could have built a completely redesigned safe plane for a few billion more. It would still have had billions left over.

But that is not how Blackstone works. More and more of our labor goes into siphoning wealth into the hands of the rulers at firms like Blackstone. They do this is by scheming to raise the price of the stock rather than by investing in production.

When that fails, the ruling class falls back on its traditional scapegoats, racism and xenophobia. In Boeing's case, that's foreign pilots from Africa and Asia.

Now we know what board chairman Calhoun, from the Blackstone group, meant when he said, "He (CEO Muilenburg) is doing everything right."

Mobilizing for communism means no more Calhouns, no more Blackstones, no more racist or xenophobic excuses. The value we make with our labor will go into providing for our class. That's our definition of "doing everything right."

—Boeing workers



20th Anniversary of the Battle of Seattle:

WHEN MASSES DEBATED COMMUNISM

Only social practice can be the criterion of truth. —Mao Zedong

SEATTLE (USA), Nov. 30— Here, twenty years ago, fifty thousand demonstrated against the World Trade Organization (WTO). They broke martial law and fought cops in the streets for days. US President Clinton and his Secretary of State were trapped in their hotel rooms.

In the midst of this “Battle of Seattle” US comrades fought for a communist vision. This helped put us on a path towards forming a party that mobilizes the masses for communism: the International Communist Workers’ Party (ICWP).

Leading capitalist nations established the WTO supposedly to govern international commerce. US imperialists viewed it as another vehicle to ensure their dominance.

It failed. The emergence of other imperialists and the beginning of the long decline of US power became clear. The battle foreshadowed the choices ahead: fascism or communism.

During the preceding week, protestors with different causes poured into Seattle. Debates erupted about what to do.

The US ruling class thought their usual agents would control the protestors. Then-AFL-CIO president Sweeney vowed to “support US interests.” Well-funded non-governmental organizations (NGOs) formed the other arm of the reformist bloc.

But mobilizing students and workers, especially industrial workers, turned out to be a big problem for them. Our comrades saw the potential to fight for our communist vision.

A Global Exchange workshop panelist said he wasn’t against the accumulation of wealth (billionaires). He just wanted better wealth distribution. A young comrade explained how capitalist accumulation of individual wealth leads to greater exploitation, economic crisis and eventually to war. The Global Exchange organizer responded by advocating for “cool capitalism.”

That night, the comrade said it wasn’t good enough to be anti-capitalist. We needed to show how communism is the solution to capitalist exploitation.

We took this self-criticism to heart. The next day, we confronted a panelist who said communism was too simplistic. We explained how to build a new system without wages and commodity production. We won the majority of the 400 participants to applaud communism.

About 1,000 workers and students heard our communist message during that week.

The Day of the Battle

Meanwhile, Boeing comrades and friends built their forces in the plants. Hundreds of Machinist Union members comprised the march’s security force. We organized a critical communist core within this force.

This core helped others distribute over 8,000 pieces of communist literature. They helped comrades bring a “Fight for Communism” banner into the unions’ rally at Memorial Stadium.

Thousands in the stands saw it. Nearly everyone was discussing communism. A couple called later to say that those debates “made their day.” Responses like this gave our comrades confidence to give communist speeches as 20,000



Seattle, 1999



ICWP, Seattle, 2012

streamed out of the stadium.

Soon after, we led the chant, “It’s time to march, it’s time to go!” The protestors took off, leaving the union hacks behind.

At a crucial moment, the communist core won an even bigger security group to ignore AFL-CIO orders. The union bigshots told us to direct 30,000 industrial workers to a peaceful sit-down far from the fighting downtown.

Instead we offered the rank-and-file the option to enter the battle. Thirty thousand did. The ruling class lost control.

The Aftermath

A Boeing comrade was kidded upon returning to work. “Was it you setting fires downtown?”

“I did something much more radical,” our comrade answered. “I spread the communist alternative by distributing communist literature in the midst of the battle.”

“I listened to a two-hour presentation of alternatives to the present state of affairs at a WTO teach-in,” said a high school teacher at our follow-up potluck. “Why can’t we have a two-hour presentation of your communist vision? That’s what will motivate people.”

After an hour-long discussion, she told us, “I may not have gotten two hours, but I did get one!”

Comrades in many places seized the opportunity to present our communist vision. Frankly, we were shocked at the mass response to our line.

We weren’t the only ones. We expected to earn the hatred of the bosses’ reformist agents. But we hadn’t anticipated the consternation of those on the “left” who wanted to ingratiate themselves in the reform movements.

THE BATTLE OF SEATTLE THROUGH THE EYES OF BOEING WORKERS WHO WERE THERE

A group of friends informally discussed their experiences during the Battle in Seattle twenty years ago. Some are still working at Boeing; others have retired. Two were in the communist core among the security forces. Another marched with union leaders and a local congressman. Everyone gained a new perspective as we swapped stories.

One core member recalled the struggle among security forces at the front of the march. The machinist union leaders argued that we should march against Chinese prison labor. Comrades and friends countered that Boeing was exploiting prison labor twenty miles north at Monroe prison. This argument held up the march, but not for long.

This story had a profound effect on our friend who marched with the bigwigs. He started to view the role of reformist unions differently. “You can put lipstick on a pig,” he concluded, referring to the union leaders, “but, it’s still a pig.”

He admitted that reformism in general was not working. We had fought for an extra 25 cents for decades. Most times we didn’t even get that. Meanwhile, the bosses were raking in billions.

Eventually we got to the main contradiction that was holding him back from joining the party.

We talked about the effect of working as a party had on the masses of demonstrators. And the effect the enthusiasm of the masses had on us!

We were not a collection of reformists or anarchists, but a disciplined party. He stood up and took notice.

He had viewed his role as having a “place at the table.” But now he thought he should be a spy, so we can know what is going on. Our recollections about the mass response to communism gave him hope but couldn’t completely break the hold of reformist politics. The struggle continues.

Even leaders of the party our comrades belonged to then (PLP) thought that recruiting communist activists would isolate us. They said recruitment had to rely on advancement (often personal) in reformist organizations “for the foreseeable future.” They feared our bold communist approach.

To the contrary, we thought we were too timid. We made many contacts, but we should have recruited many more communist activists. Our key weakness was that we didn’t have a party that made recruiting communist fighters a priority.

We do now. After more and sharper disagreements like this one, we split from PLP ten years later to form the ICWP. Our upcoming conferences will mark ten years of fighting openly and directly for communism. Let us take with us the key lesson of the Battle of Seattle and build the ICWP!

CELEBRATE 10 YEARS OF MOBILIZING THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM INTERNATIONALLY!!

SAN SALVADOR, DECEMBER, 2019 PORT ELIZABETH MAY, 2020

LOS ANGELES, USA, JANUARY 18, 2020 1 PM-7:30 PM

Dialectical materialism is about the way things work. As workers we struggle to build the world we envision. Come join us in discussions as we learn from each other and teach one another how to overcome our contradictions and obstacles as we build for a communist world where we produce for human need, not profits, without racism, sexism, or borders.

Contact us by email at : icwp@anonymousspeech.com