

RED FLAG

MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM



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

India: 200 Million Strike Against Anti-Labor Attacks & Fascist Anti-Muslim Laws RED YOUTH & WORKERS BRING COMMUNIST SOLUTION TO THE STREETS



DESTROY CAPITALIST PROFIT SYSTEM TO MAKE THE WORLD SAFE FOR WORKERS

India, December 30—Five comrades in auto factories of Chennai, India went to a mass rally against the fascist anti-Muslim laws (CAA and NRC). We got reports from our comrades in Bengaluru about their experience in a similar demonstration. We were very inspired by it.

In our city, Chennai, people are angry about these laws. We have almost 10% Muslims in the city and many more migrants. After the fascist laws were enacted, thousands of people including many Hindus, Dalits and Christians along with Muslims have held mass rallies.

The protest we went to was the largest, rally attended by people coming from different religious backgrounds and also secular people. For miles and miles all you can see is people coming to the protest. The unity of the masses is hard to describe. Muslims and non-Muslims standing shoulder to shoulder, in sharp contrast to fascist hatred and violence by the BJP government.

Our small group included two Muslim comrades. They said they never felt safer in their lives surrounded by so many Hindus. We realize that for the working class to feel safe, we need to destroy capitalism and its profit system that creates xenophobia, sexism and war for profit.

The auto industry is in serious crisis along with the economy of India. When so many people are losing jobs, fascists want us to think that our problems are due to the Muslims.

Fascist BJP was overwhelmed by an outpouring of anger of the masses. But now they are counter-organizing with its paramilitary militia and police. They are targeting Muslim property, vandalizing it. We need to build our own defense to defeat the fascists.

We are meeting every two weeks to talk and explain about the need to expand ICWP at the factories where we work. This experience has made us bolder and more committed.

—Chennai ICWP Auto Workers Collective

January 8 – The students of Jamia Milia University in New Delhi, many of them Muslims, led the way. Today the movement has exploded into an anti-fascist general strike of 200 million workers. The International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP) is injecting communist ideas into this struggle.

Forty ICWP members took our slogans and literature to marches in five cities and two universities. In one city, nine transit workers, mostly Dalit and Muslim, came home with us after the march to discuss our communist ideas. They live in the same neighborhood as one of our comrades, and are interested in being in a study group to continue the discussion.

On December 15, 2019 Jamia Milia students organized a demonstration against two newly enacted fascist laws. These laws require Muslim citizens to produce proof of birth in India. Those who cannot would be placed in detention centers to be deported.

Many people living in rural areas of India, and others who migrated to cities, have no legal documents. These fascist laws target Muslims but attack the entire working class. About 200 million people in India are Muslims, out of 1,339 million total.

On the night of December 15th, police forces smashed into Jamia Milia University.

These rampaging fascists mercilessly attacked students in their hostels and library for hours.

The response was swift and massive. Hundreds of thousands of students, at thousands of universities and colleges, walked out of class and marched in the streets. They included Muslims, Hindus, secular people and many more.

Workers joined them. Hundreds of cities in India saw unprecedented demonstrations drawing more than 100,000 people. In large cities like Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, Kolkata, Delhi, between half a million to a million people marched.

Dharavi (near Mumbai) is the largest slum in Asia. Its population includes both Hindu and Muslim workers. There is a history of deadly fights between them. The fascist ruling party BJP actively organizes there to spread racist hatred and divisions.

But in the aftermath of the Jamia Milia police rampage, almost every Dharavi resident took to the streets to form an endless mass of humanity outraged by police repression.

Women Give Key Leadership

An iconic image shows Muslim female students shielding a male student from vicious police (see page 4).

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International Communist Conference in El Salvador:

COLLECTIVE STRUGGLE AND COMMUNIST PHILOSOPHY HELP US RECRUIT NEW PARTY MEMBERS

EL SALVADOR—
“I feel solidarity with women workers from other countries. I joined the International Communist Workers’ Party (ICWP) when I saw that my comrades constantly support them. We recognize them in the factory as *Red Flag*,” said a young maquila worker at the recent International Communist Conference celebrating ten years of struggle of ICWP.



In Party meetings since January 2019, we invited maquila workers, farmworkers, teachers, students and state workers to the conference. Some commented proudly and enthusiastically about how long they had been party members.

Originally, we expected 20 comrades to come. When it was clear that more workers wanted to attend, party comrades internationally raised the extra funds needed. Thirty-two comrades attended. They included sixteen maquila workers, veteran farmworkers who had been FMLN guerrillas, teachers and students.

These days of comradely communist relations and struggle were a victory for the growth of the Party.

A young friend of the party organized interesting activities with the children who came with their parents. This was a taste of the future. In communism, women and men comrades will collectively nurture children so that all adults can participate in production. We will deepen communist relations and struggle to meet the needs of our international working class family.

Day 1. We shared videos of the struggles in India, including children and students, where women gave leadership. These struggles have led to increased distribution of *Red Flag* and other party literature. The masses’ spirit and the communist work of our comrades inspired everyone.

They felt connected to this struggle against racist, sexist capitalism. Some maquila comrades saw the similarities in how garment workers of India and El Salvador are exploited. There has not been any recent uprising of the masses in El Salvador, but sooner rather than later it will happen.

Day 2. A maquila worker welcomed us. She explained how she has changed her life and that of her family since her family group joined ICWP. She called on everyone to recruit more workers to organize the party.

Then a comrade party leader said that the masses internationally are fed up with racism, sexism, exploitation, and wars. They are looking for alternatives. Our responsibility is to bring them the alternative of communist revolution.

When ICWP started, some said, “They are a small group” that “will not last even three months, maybe one year.” But today we are celebrating ten years of struggle. The ICWP is active in India, Mexico, South Africa, Spain, El Salvador, the United States and elsewhere. Workers and youth in forty countries read *Red Flag*. There is huge potential to grow. Workers everywhere are open to communism.

He explained that dialectical materialist philosophy is an important tool to understand how change occurs, to advance the struggle for com-

munist. It allows us to discover the main contradiction that we need to sharpen to advance in recruiting more workers to the party.

A comrade worker said, “On May Day I heard the slogan, ‘Communism is coming and no one can stop it.’ I liked it a lot.”

For communism to come, we have to bring communist ideas to more workers and recruit them.

Another worker said, “In ICWP each of us can take responsibility to recruit workers for the party. If we want fruits, we have to have more commitment.”

The ex- FMLN guerrilla comrades said they had fought against repression in the 70s and 80s. The change they wanted did not come. But that did not break them. They never gave up. They are now fighting for communism in the ICWP.

“I see the workers in struggle in France and many places. The working class is tired of capitalism. We have this opportunity to continue our struggle to build the Party,” one said.

The South African comrades gave their report about a visit to the miners in Rustenburg with the goal of involving them again in Party activities. Many miners read *Red Flag*, but we have to visit them more regularly to recruit them to the Party.

The comrades from Mexico said that they are working to consolidate their relationships with young students. Someone suggested that they organize an international conference in Mexico in 2020.

Later, three workshops discussed our communist practice. We tried to understand better the contradictions of capitalism and how to overthrow it. We discussed the internal contradictions that hold back recruitment. These were some conclusions:

Our line says that we have confidence that workers will mobilize for communism. But we have to improve our practice. If our work doesn’t reflect our line, the line will change for the worse.

In one workshop, we struggled to increase a worker’s distribution of *Red Flag*. She hadn’t realized that she should distribute the paper to workers outside her job site, at home and at co-workers’ homes. This will open up many more opportunities. Another worker said, “This conference has inspired me to look for people in other areas and recruit them to ICWP.”

A teacher has introduced communist ideas to some students and fellow teachers. There is great

Communist Fight Against Sexism from India to El Salvador

In a previous edition of *Red Flag* we read and discussed collectively in our cell of men and women maquila workers, what a comrade has faced in India. She faced sexual harassment and verbal abuse by the bosses. The determined way in which she sought help from the unions and the response they gave leaves them looking very bad to the working class. They said that’s the way things are and nothing could be done.

An organization sought to report the case using the laws of India. Nothing happened. This greatly impacted us because we compared it with the situation that other women face in El Salvador. They are similar.

But we also value the work of a young *Red Flag* reader who changed the route of this case by bringing *Red Flag* to this worker. The workers read previous articles about the situation that women here in the maquila factories in El Salvador have faced. We think that meeting with her was important because she could feel the solidarity of the group. That helps a lot in these cases. But organizing the party there at the factory would help even more.

A comrade who was at the conference of our International Communist Workers Party, upon hearing the story, identified with the case of the co-worker in India, because she has experienced similar abuses by the bosses at work.

We think that we have to fight very hard to organize more women and men workers into the ICWP and put an end to capitalism. Only communism will be free from these kinds of problems since there will be an education that does not promote sexism, racism, where from childhood there will be an emphasis on respect for people. We will fight against these behaviors.

To our comrade in India, revolutionary greetings, and all our solidarity. Together we will build a just society free of sexism. Together we will build Communism

—Comrades in El Salvador

potential to go further. Her collective must help her organize activities, discussions and study groups about the need for communist revolution.

Inter-imperialist rivalry and attacks on workers are sharpening. It is urgent to organize workers and soldiers.

To understand and change reality, we need to study the development of dialectical contradictions.

The high energy of the discussions, the great interest shown by each ICWP member, and the general desire to recruit more rural and urban workers, soldiers, and students made this conference an important advance toward our goal of building a communist society.

Join the International Communist Workers’ Party
www.icwpredflag.org — Twitter @RedFlagBandera
 E-mail: icwp@anonymousspeech.com
 Instagram: @icwprf
 Write to: P.M.B. 362
 3006 S. Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90007, USA

SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE MAQUILAS OF EL SALVADOR WILL DISAPPEAR WITH COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

EL SALVADOR — I am a single mother, I have been working in a maquila for many years. From the day of my interview I noticed a great deal of friendliness from my boss. Over the years he invited me out, took me by the hands, and many other sexist attitudes. This happened for some three years. I felt sexually harassed.

In the end, seeing that I did not give in, he decided to fire me. One morning he did not let me into my work area. We had a verbal confrontation. I was afraid, but I took courage.

“I need to talk to you. You’re fired. We don’t need your services anymore,” he said.

“I don’t accept being fired, I consider myself a good worker,” I said.

“I’m paying you 100% of what I owe you,” he said.

“This check will not last me to meet the needs of my children. I need my job and I know that the firing is because I do not want to have sex with you,” I answered very angrily.

“You didn’t give in and this is what happens to stubborn people, like you,” he said.

I got so angry that I tore up the check, left the office and ran into the plant to get help from

a union, in which I have several friends. At the same time they called a member of the International Communist Workers’ Party (ICWP), which helped me to keep my job.

This boss followed me through the plant with the security guards to take me out. They told me, “Get out, you don’t work here anymore.”

“She’s not leaving. She hasn’t signed anything and if you take her out we will stop the plant,” said my co-workers. He got scared and called the main boss of the plant, who did not know about my firing. He was also scared when he saw the ICWP member go into his office along with other union members who are also part of the Party.

I explained to the main boss the reasons why he wanted to fire me, and exposed his lies. Seeing the strength and determination of the workers, the main boss accepted that I returned to work.

Before this incident, I had heard ICWP mentioned. I imagined it was one more union. But someone told me no, that it is a communist party that fights for the workers. It caught my attention and I kept asking about the party. I

asked my best friend who is a member of the party and he explained to me about the party. This made me even more curious to know more.

Recently they invited me to a meeting in the mountains. (I heard that they started with few people, and some said they would never grow.) . But those seeds that they sowed with faith grew and flourished, and continued to give more seeds, and now there are the children of the children, friends, family and acquaintances. That from childhood it is important to cultivate communism so that when they grow up they give great leadership and know how to get to the new seeds that will make up the party and know how to fight for communism.

In this conference in the mountains I took up the challenge of being part of the Party and in this way to be able to help more women inside and outside the factory to fight against bosses who exploit us everyday and want to abuse their current power. When the communist revolution takes place through the ICWP these capitalist behaviors will not occur.

—New Comrade

COMRADES ORGANIZE COMMUNIST SOLIDARITY WITH ANTI-FASCIST STRUGGLES IN INDIA



SEATTLE (USA), December 21, 2019— Fifty youths protested the new Islamophobic Citizenship Law in India, chanting, “2,4,6,8: Shut Down the Fascist State!” They were keenly aware that their protest was part of the rebellion sweeping across the world. Very happy to meet our comrades, they grabbed every copy of *Red Flag* that we brought and began reading them on the spot. Our news of international communist struggle was just what they were looking for. They were eager to talk about our party and its communist political work in India, Seattle and elsewhere. Increasingly frequent demonstrations like this, against international oppression, are opportunities to build the International Communist Workers Party (ICWP).

FREMONT (USA), December 21, 2019— The mass anger against India’s fascist Islamophobic laws spilled into the streets of Fremont, California. Fremont, the home of Tesla, is home to many hi-tech professionals from India who work in Silicon Valley and San Francisco.

The rally, called by a Dalit group, had over one hundred people at 11 am. Many were joining, coming in cars, on foot and with public transportation. Soon there were hundreds. Men and women, children, Hindu, Sikh and Muslim and secular. Never in Fremont had so many gathered to protest fascist Modi and BJP.

Many people took *Red Flag* from an ICWP comrade. Many had questions about communism, but nobody rejected it. People asked about the need to fight fascism with communist revolution.

An engineer said that when she was growing up in a small village in India, there was a lot of respect for the local communists. But these communists lost support when they started trying to get elected.

Another young engineer said, “Please keep me informed about ICWP and *Red Flag*. I will spread the word to others in India and here.” He was very interested in our article about JNU students and excited that the students have inspired masses to fight fascism.

We invited six people to upcoming Party conference in Los Angeles. We have had socials, study groups and attended conferences with some of the event organizers for about three years. We must deepen our ties with them by building unshakable unity to struggle against the obstacles we face. By focusing on building stronger collectives, we will open the door wide open for mass recruitment of workers, soldiers, professionals and students to communism.

Greetings to Student Comrades in India

The news of the repression suffered by the students of Jamia Milia University in India reached us through the Party’s communication networks. The Western bourgeois press does not report anything about the revolts that are taking place.

With the students and the masses in India — all our international communist solidarity! The old world is crumbling and the new one is late in coming. Meanwhile we have to be supportive and at the same time bold to mobilize the masses for the construction of the Communist Party of a new kind.

Strength, comrades!

—University students in Mexico organized in the International Communist Workers’ Party



Los Angeles (USA) December 21— Comrades bring communist ideas to protest against India’s fascist Islamophobic laws

WORKERS OF THE WORLD, UNITE!

MASSES RAISE FISTS FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

Friday December 20th, 2019 was like no other day in the history of Bengaluru, India.

Various anti-fascist groups had called massively for people to assemble in front of the largest mosque in the city. The organizers expected one lakh (100,000 people) to turn out against fascist, xenophobic laws passed by the government in India.

Bengaluru is the capital of the state of Karnataka, which is controlled by the fascist BJP. They had created every possible obstacle. Metro services were suspended, major roads were barricaded. Using a colonial-era law, military law was declared with thousands of vicious, racist police out in force.

For days in advance, comrade technical workers had created “post and delete” messages on micro social media groups. These said that only communist revolution, without borders and

money, can defeat capitalism and fascism. These messages were reposted, reaching thousands.

A group of ICWP members, mostly women garment workers, their neighbors and friends, joined the march. We immediately raised communist slogans.

A popular slogan in the street protests goes like this: One person calls out, “From hunger and starvation” and the crowd irrupts, “Azadi!” (the Farsi word for freedom). “From religious bigotry” and the crowd responds, “Azadi!” And it goes on and on, denouncing police, attacks on women, rape, bigotry – “Azadi!”

Our comrades started responding “Communist Revolution!” Many Hindu, Muslims, Dalits, secular people, women and men, garment workers and IT professionals raised fists in unison to loud chants of “Communist revolution!”

From one lakh initially, the march started

swelling in numbers and militancy. The overwhelming presence of non-Muslims as well as women, and their anger at the fascist laws, showed us that they were open to communism.

Soon the march had grown to a million! Our contingent tried to stay together but it was impossible. Wherever we were, we tried to raise communist politics.

We returned to our neighborhood after marching and chanting for over 10 hours. We were exhausted but full of energy, talking, chatting and singing communist songs.

Our experience will translate into recruiting more to ICWP. We will spread our literature and messages more vigorously to the factories, schools and neighborhoods.

—Party collective in Bengaluru, India



Muslim female Jamia Milia students shielding a male student from police

New Chants from the Streets of India

Gali, gali mein nara hai,
Pujiwad jana hai.

There is an echo in every street,
Capitalism is going to be finished.

Gali, gali mein nara hai,
Samyawa ana hai.

There is an echo in every street,
Communism is coming.

Gali, gali mein nara hai,
ICWP abhi aya hai.

There is an echo in every street,
ICWP is now here to stay.

INDIA GENERAL STRIKE, from page 1

On the coldest nights in a century, thousands of women, mostly Muslims, have stood like immovable mountains. For three weeks, they (with their children) have blocked a six-lane highway in the Shaheen Bagh area of Delhi.

Their bold defiance has electrified the anti-fascist masses and demoralized the police. The women are supported financially by thousands of workers, mainly Hindu, Dalit and Sikh, who provide food, health care, sanitation and security. Our comrades have been invited to talk to workers in Shaheen Bagh about communism.

Sexist violence is rampant in India. But a group of Hindu and Muslim women joined a demonstration of a million people, mainly men. They described how safe they felt: nobody groped or even touched them. The class struggle against fascism gave them space and respect.

When the masses mobilize for communism, we will end the material basis of sexist violence.

Build Communist Red Army to Defeat Fascism

The massive demonstrations took the fascist BJP and its cops by surprise. They did not expect workers and students to confront them so boldly.

Now they are regrouping and counter-attacking the working class with vicious racism. The northern state of Uttar Pradesh (UP) has a very large Muslim population. The UP police are systematically attacking Muslim homes, sexually assaulting women and beating up children and adults. The fascist UP state is confiscating Muslims' property to pay for the damage caused by its own police.

On the night of January 5th, BJP's armed militia entered the Jawaharal Nehru University campus in New Delhi and brutally attacked students.

They attacked professors who came to intervene. For three hours, police protected the rampaging fascists and then helped them flee.

Volleys of tear gas, water cannons in the freezing cold, baton-wielding cops have made demonstrations bigger and masses angrier, bolder and more determined. We are learning to seize these opportunities to advance the cause of communist revolution.

More dangerous than the fascist cops and paramilitary RSS are the capitalists' ideological attacks on the working class. Liberals, trade-union leaders and even self-described “communists” try to contain the mass struggle with calls for a “secular democracy.” They push ideas like non-violence, reformism, nationalism, and identity politics that isolate Dalit workers and others from the fight for real communism.

Communism means a world without borders or exploitation. Where the masses, organized as an International Communist Workers' Party, make all decisions about what to produce and how to share it “from each according to ability and commitment, to each according to need.” Where the unity and practice of our class is grounded in the communist philosophy of dialectical materialism and there are no “races” or religions to divide us.

As capitalism sinks deeper in crisis, its horrors are exposed—including unemployment, hunger, sexism, racist and caste oppression, and barbarous religious dogmas.

Masses in India are yearning for communism. Our comrades are mobilizing for it amidst the street protests. We are building our communist collectives into the nucleus of a mass ICWP and the red army that we need to destroy capitalism.



Shaheen Bagh Protests

BOEING CRISIS: FROM THE FRYING PAN INTO THE FASCIST FIRE

The “proof” of the collapse of capitalism can only be the successful action of the proletariat in overthrowing it. ... On the other hand, capitalism does not recover from its mortal sickness.

— R. Palme Dutt, “Fascism and Social Revolution”

SEATTLE (USA), December 22—The Boeing crisis heralds the arrival of a fascist US political economy.

Just days after Boeing shut down the 737 MAX assembly lines, Chief Executive Officer Muilenburg was fired. He walked away with an outrageous \$58.5 million severance. Chairman of the Board David Calhoun replaced him. Board member Lawrence Kellner will become the new chairman.

After the MAX jets began crashing, the crisis that led to this shuffle developed openly. Behind the scenes, the disaster began in 2012 when the company rushed the MAX into production despite a fatal design flaw. Some on the shop floor referred to them as “flying coffins.”

At that time, Boeing executives required all employees to attend meetings that spelled out the competitive landscape as the bosses saw it. Soon China would be producing a similar commercial jet (scheduled to start delivery in 2021). The firm that came in second in the race between Boeing and Airbus would not be viable when China reached its stride. Three producers could not survive in the capitalist market. There would be a crisis of overproduction.

In communism, increased capacity would be good news. “We’re finally making enough planes. Now we can make other things, like trains, or improve the planes we make.”

That’s not how it works under capitalism. Overproduction sharpens economic competition and forces the capitalists to undertake desperate cost cutting.

To justify this cost cutting, they warned us about the falling rate of profit. They didn’t tell us that they planned to spend most of the profit we created buying back their own stock to arti-

ficially boost the stock price.

Here’s where the executive shuffle comes into play. The new CEO, Calhoun, comes from the Blackstone group, a private equity and hedge fund. It’s among the world’s biggest with about \$600 billion in assets under its management and the world’s largest private property portfolio. The new chairman, Kellner, comes from Emerald Creek Equity, which focuses on real estate in Texas and California.

Neither of these companies produces a thing. As the rate of profit in manufacturing declines, their “way out” is to suck the wealth from industrial and related enterprises into the hands of the ruling class.

The new Chairman and CEO reflect the political economics of an era when capitalism can no longer rely on expanding production. Financial shenanigans replace expanding factories.

The fascist state is a natural outgrowth of this dying political economy. That’s why we call it the political economy of fascism.

Fascist attacks on the working class will reach levels we can’t yet conceive. Increasing destruction, poverty, war and decay mark the period. In order to survive, the fascist state intensifies racist, sexist, xenophobic and nationalist violence.

Bourgeois economists and media pundits ignore the basic character of the worldwide crisis. To them, the Boeing crisis is temporary, easily corrected by inspired leadership.

We would be equally in error if we expected the crisis to bring about the automatic collapse of capitalism.

We must now demonstrate that we have sufficient understanding and organization, close personal ties to the exploited masses, and the determination and skill to utilize this crisis to build for a communist revolution. Our immediate task is to expand the International Communist Workers Party (ICWP), with a special focus on recruiting youth, soldiers and the industrial working class.

Join us at the ICWP international conferences, where we will prepare to do just that.

The Multi-Billion Dollar Dilemma

The economic crisis increases the potential for war. The multi-billion dollar question for the ruling class is how to preserve war production in the era of the destruction of productive forces. This is crucial for Boeing, the second largest weapons producer in the US.

Over twenty years ago, McDonnell Douglas Aerospace was the “long-time dominant defense supplier.”¹ It ran into problems similar to those Boeing faces now. The government forced it to merge into Boeing by denying it the contract for the Joint Strike Fighter.

More recently, U.S. car manufacturers faced a serious threat when the 2008 crisis of overproduction burst into the open.

The government bailed them out. The stipulations for this bailout included massive cuts in auto workers’ pensions and medical care. It drove the wages of autoworkers to a new low, putting the industry on the path to a minimum wage workforce.

Other than the equity bigshots, the Boeing board is made up of ex-government politicians and military commanders. These political operatives are in a good position to enlist government bailouts if necessary.

These bailouts will come at a price, and not only to taxpayers. It’s conceivable that whatever pensions are left will be forfeited. Will Boeing workers be put on the path towards minimum wage as well?

The *New York Times* praises Calhoun as a turnaround specialist. Is this what the newspaper had in mind? You can bet he won’t sacrifice stock buybacks!

Whether or not these scenarios play out, or Boeing muddles through, the advance of fascist economics is assured. The growth of the ICWP is the only viable answer.

¹ *New York Times*, 12/16/1996

LETTERS

Proud to be a Member of ICWP

Greetings comrades, members and readers of *Red Flag*. We are celebrating 10 years of the International Communist Workers’ Party (ICWP), which is why I want to share the way I met the ICWP, of which I am now a member.

One day of a lot of work in the factory, as I was leaving work, comrades were handing out the *Red Flag* newspaper and they handed me one.

Afterwards, a co-worker introduced the ICWP comrades to me and they invited me to meet with them. After that I started reading the newspaper and what I did not understand, I underlined, to ask a co-worker at the factory later. He explained to me what the Party line was about. Thus began my participation.

Then I began going to the meetings to understand better the purpose to the Party. I went to these meetings several times.

But then I stopped attending because I was a member of a union, and they questioned me about why I was meeting with the ICWP. Some time passed and the comrades from the factory always invited me to their activities.

One day I thought about it very carefully and made the decision not to fight for small reforms any longer and to join the ICWP again. I appreciated that the Party fights for the entire work-

LETTERS

LETTERS

ing class and not just for its members, as the unions do, and fights directly for Communism.

And since then we have been fighting for Communism and we will continue to recruit

CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

more women and men workers every day to defeat capitalism and build Communism.

Greetings to all, I invite you to keep fighting.
—A Comrade in El Salvador.



WHY WE NEED COMMUNIST PHILOSOPHY, PART II

In the last issue of *Red Flag*, we discussed what dialectical contradictions are and why they are important in the fight for communism. In this issue we discuss how contradictions affect the practical work of the party.

Dialectical contradictions between capitalist powers are causing big economic and military changes everywhere. The network of dialectical contradictions between these powers that are competing for the planet's resources is now the main cause of changes in the world's economy and politics.

These big conflicts filter down to cause conflicts in specific regions. Syria, for example, is a battleground between the Russian and US capitalists. The US-Russian contradiction is the main factor that determines what happens there, but other contradictions matter, too.

The victory of communism will end the contradiction between the working class and the capitalist class by destroying the capitalist class. This is typical of how contradictions end: one side defeats the other or even destroys it.

Ending a contradiction always leads to new contradictions, and the defeated side always leaves behind traces of itself. After capitalism is destroyed, some of its ideology and habits such as racism, sexism, and individualism will remain temporarily, causing more contradictions. Our party will lead the masses to struggle against these things as long as it takes to wipe them out forever.

A contradiction moves toward its end when the conflict between the two sides becomes stronger. The masses move toward ending their contradiction with the capitalists by becoming more united around communist politics and better prepared for an eventual armed struggle.

Contradictions inside a political party can become so strong that they prevent it from doing anything significant—or even cause a split.

Contradictions within party collectives are mainly disagreements about political policies and actions. They should be seen as contradictions between right and wrong ideas, not as contradictions between the people who have these ideas. Ending these contradictions means sharpening the internal debate over what the line should be and how it should be carried out.

It is mainly the party's own internal conditions, especially its internal contradictions, that mainly hold us back from growing faster.

We need to use the experience of the working class and our revolutionary theory to decide on our priorities and follow them. Less important priorities, hesitations and fears can conflict with doing the main things we need to do.

The party's main day-to-day work now is to create and distribute *Red Flag* newspaper and pamphlets, to bring communist ideas into the specific struggles of the masses, and to recruit new members to strengthen the fight for communism. New members are recruited to the Party mainly by creating and sustaining communist political relationships, which include friendships and struggling together against the bosses.

The positive political struggle that can convince our friends to join depends on creating relationships where they feel comfortable telling us their disagreements and working them out together.

Since the internal is primary, our ability to carry out this work depends on how well we struggle to find the right policies, carry them out consistently, and evaluate our successes and failures objectively. This includes learning how to

overcome internal contradictions that hold us back.

Dialectical materialism is an indispensable weapon in the working class's fight for communism. We use it to understand reality and explain how capitalism and communism work. It allows us to overcome our weaknesses so we can take advantage of the openings that the contradictions of capitalism provide.

ICWP is committed to liberate this communist philosophy from textbooks and classrooms and arm the working class with it. Learn dialectical materialism and use it in the fight! Join ICWP!



LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

French General Strike Shows Workers' Potential

The French 'general' strike is in its fifth week and showing no signs of stopping. It's not really "general" since most French workers are still working. The train drivers and crew are on strike (trains are important in Europe) and the Paris subway workers as well.

The transportation workers and others are striking against the government's pension 'reforms' which will sharply reduce many workers' pensions and push back the retirement age by

two years.

The strike has not put much pressure on the government. Its train company (the SNCF) has lost hundreds of millions but that's small change compared to how much the pension cuts will save. The other major effect is huge inconvenience for commuters and travellers because of cancelled trains and closed subway lines. But the government doesn't care about this.

The outlook for the strike is not good but, as with all reform struggles, even if they win, they lose. The best they can do is restore the status quo ante ("back to square one"). What workers really need is a revolution to get rid of capitalism.

All over the world it's the same story. Workers rebel against the

bosses' increasingly vicious attacks and they're maneuvered into defensive single-issue reform campaigns. Repealing a subway fare increase in Chile, repealing a gas price increase in Ecuador, repealing a WhatsApp tax in Lebanon, and so on.

Many workers want to break out of this reformist dead end but don't know how. The reformist forces can take the leadership because the revolutionary forces are, for the most part, unorganized. Lenin and the Bolsheviks recognized this problem more than a century ago and created the party to solve it.

The parties of the movement founded by the Bolsheviks eventually degenerated into reformism, especially after the mid-1930s. They became conventional bourgeois parties run by cliques. The official French Communist Party still exists but what little influence it has it devotes to reformism.

The International Communist Workers' Party has revived and revised the Bolshevik form of party. Workers, get off the reformist merry-go-round and join us. Use your energy and rebellious spirit to put an end to capitalism forever.

—Internationalist Comrade



Railroad Workers on Strike

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LETTERS

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CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

SOUTH AFRICA; LEARNING FROM THEORY AND PRACTICE HOW TO BUILD COMMUNIST COLLECTIVES

In December we had a conference that was a three way call with Mexico, and El Salvador and us. It was eye opening; we learned a lot which will help us with organizing on our side.

We talked about how the comrades use dialectical materialism to advance their work. This advances the party line and our practice. It's not dogma—it helps our practice. The level of consistency and the way they do their work in El Salvador helps with some of the problems and challenges we face as a collective here. We do the work, we have to be more consistent if we want to see change.

We talked about our plans for the New Year. We are celebrating ten years of existence as the International Communist Workers' Party. Based on the potential we see, we can do better. The conference helped us see how to utilize our potential to the fullest to build the organization.

We have made plans on how to grow the collective and to create other collectives. We explained that for us to see more results in Marikana, we need to visit there frequently so that those comrades can be familiar with the line and the practice. Going there once every two or three months will help that collective be functioning and active. By consistently struggling with the comrades on that side, we will see change.

A comrade in the conference made an example about cooking. You can't put the meat on the stove and then remove it and then put it on again, or switch the stove on and off and on and off. The food won't be cooked. You need a consistent amount of heat so the food can be cooked.

To see change, we must be consistent in Marikana and also in Port Elizabeth. We also made some concrete plans to expand the ac-

tive collective in our area in PE and to create a new collective in another area here. We had a collective in that area but it became inactive. We kept communist relations with them even though they were not active. Now they agree to help us rebuild the collective.

So by May Day we will have a functioning collective there that will help organize May Day and help with the communist school after that.

—Comrades in South Africa



ICWP/PCOI INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES AND CELEBRATIONS

LOS ANGELES (USA) January 2020

PORT ELIZABETH (SOUTH AFRICA) MAY 2020

Plan to attend a conference as a participant or an observer
Contribute money for international travel and other expenses

Read, distribute and write for Red Flag/Bandera Roja

Join and build the International Communist Workers' Party



Gas Price Protest, Iran, November 2019

critique of government corruption and the governmental structure imposed by US occupation forces in 2003. In this system, political representation is based on religious, ethnic or sectarian identities. The protestors, like the 20th century Iraqi Communist Party, call for national unity against domination by the US and Iran rather than international working class unity. This anti-government movement has also faced internet blackouts and fierce repression. Government and paramilitary groups have killed more than 500 since October.

Will workers and soldiers fight for the bosses, or for our class?

Some young friends and relatives are posting memes of themselves going off to fight in World War III. So many people worry that US youth will be conscripted that the US Selective Service website crashed.

The ruling class does not fight its own wars. And outside of Trump's fascist base, working-class US youth are not enthusiastic about another Middle East war. They see the devastation of war every day in the thousands of homeless veterans on the streets and the tens of thousands in prison.

It remains to be seen if the Iranian bosses and their Shi'a allies in Iraq will be able to use patriotism and religion to win the masses to war.

But Trump has already ordered 3500 more US troops to Kuwait. And Iran has responded with missile attacks on Iraqi bases housing US troops—with no fatalities. War will surely come. And just as surely, many working-class soldiers, sailors and marines on both sides can be won to side with their class siblings instead of their own bosses.

During the Vietnam-US war, many US soldiers refused to follow orders.

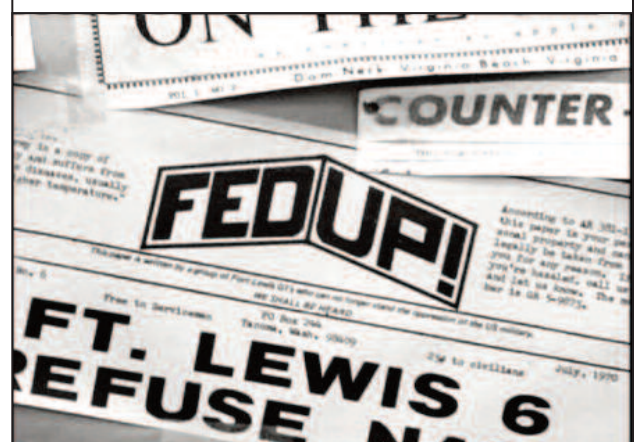
Some killed their own officers. Their rebellions finally made it impossible for the US bosses to continue their genocidal war against the Vietnamese masses.

During World War I, soldiers in the Russian Army, organized by the communists, joined together with workers and peasants to overthrow the Czar and build the world's first socialist state.

If you see the need for communist revolution, join ICWP. Help us organize in the capitalist and imperialist armies and among industrial workers. We must win these two key sectors to give communist leadership to the angry and militant masses in Iran, Iraq, India, the US, and everywhere around the world. Let's fight for a communist world without borders, capitalists, money, exploitation and imperialist wars. There is no time to waste.

Read our pamphlet:
**SOLDIERS, SAILORS,
MARINES, CRUCIAL
TO A COMMUNIST
WORKERS'
REVOLUTION**

<http://icwpredflag.org/MIL/mpe.pdf>



One of dozens of underground anti-war newspapers put out by US soldiers during the Vietnam War.

IMPERIALIST WAR from page 8

When that failed, government security forces attacked the protestors, killing hundreds. The US attack has apparently united most Iranians in patriotic protest, but the contradictions between the masses and the rulers remain.

In Iraq, demonstrations that started in 2019 continue. Youth and workers, both Sunni and Shi'a, protested unemployment and inadequate public services. They have created a spontaneous movement that has spread across central and southern Iraq.

In Baghdad, these protests have centered in Tahrir Square. They have developed into a



Baghdad Tahrir Square Protest, October 2019

Baghdad Drone Strike Brings World War Closer

WORKER-SOLDIER UNITY NEEDED TO FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

January 8—Since the US assassinated Iranian General Qassim Soleimani and Iraqi Commander Abu Mahdi al Muhandis, the world is much more dangerous. The possibilities for revolutionary change are also much more real.

As Iranian Ayatollah Khamenei and US President Trump trade threats, millions in Iran and thousands in the US and elsewhere are in the streets. Will they be won to fight for their rulers, or for a communist world that can end racism, exploitation, and wars for profit? The answer depends on us: readers of *Red Flag* and millions more workers everywhere.

On December 27, Iraqi Popular Mobilization Unit rockets attacked a US base in northern Iraq (see box). The US retaliated, leading to an attack on the US embassy in the Iraqi capital of Baghdad on December 31. Trump surprised his own advisors by escalating the conflict sharply. He ordered the drone assassination, at the Baghdad airport, of the Iran's top military commander and the head of the PMU militias.

Trump's dangerous incompetence reflects the decline of the US as the dominant world power and is a cause of further decline. But the deepening crisis of world capitalism has increased competition worldwide and is the cause of more and more dangerous conflicts on every continent.

US Isolation Accelerates the March to World War

Many anti-imperialists think the US is still the world's pre-eminent imperialist power. Their justifiable hatred of US imperialism can blind them to new realities. US power has been in decline for over a decade. Clearly, China is an ascending economic and military imperialist power and Russia is the key imperialist actor in the Middle East.

Iran, Russia and China completed another joint naval training exercise in the Gulf of Oman on December 31. This illustrates the new reality. It shows that the US cannot isolate Iran and that Russia and China are ascendant in the region. So, too, does Iran's January 5 announcement that it will renew its development of nuclear capacity.



Los Angeles (USA)

US isolation is also demonstrated dramatically by the open criticism of the Soleimani assassination by key US allies Britain, France and Germany and the UN Secretary General.

Richard Haass, head of the US ruling-class think-tank Council on Foreign Relations, tweeted, "One sure result of the U.S. strike is that ...US diplomatic and military presence will end in Iraq... The result will be greater Iranian influence, terrorism and Iraqi infighting."

It's not hard to see that a global confrontation between the declining US and its ascending rivals Russia and China is dangerously near. "This could be World War III," said a friend at the Los Angeles protest against the US assassination of Soleimani.

Meanwhile the class struggle has intensified both in Iran and in Iraq

US-imposed sanctions have sharpened contradictions between Iranian workers and their rulers. Mass protests swept the country in November, sparked by a 50% increase in government-controlled gas prices. Angry masses torched hundreds of banks, gas stations and businesses. They attacked fifty military bases.

Protests were sharpest in working-class communities and in the Arab-majority region where Iran's largest industrial petrochemical complex is located. In an unsuccessful attempt to stop the protests, the government shut down the internet.

See [IMPERIALIST WAR](#), page 7

US IMPERIALISM'S MURDEROUS HISTORY IN IRAN AND IRAQ

1953—US CIA coup in Iran overthrew moderate nationalist President Mosaddegh and put in Mohammed Reza Shah—a puppet for US oil companies

1963—US CIA supported Baathist coup in Iraq that murdered thousands of communists: Kurds and Arabs, Christians and Jews, Sunni and Shi'a Muslims

1979—Shi'a movement in Iran overthrew Mohammed Reza Shah, held US Embassy employees hostage for a year; installed theocratic government of Ayatollah Khomeini that killed and exiled Iranian leftists

1980—US supported Iraq's Saddam Hussein in Iran-Iraq war while secretly selling arms to Iran.

1990-91—US President Bush, Sr. invaded Iraq; tens of thousands of Iraqis died

1996-2000—US President Clinton imposed sanctions on Iraq; half a million children, among many others, died from lack of medical care

2003-2011—US war and occupation of Iraq and Iraqi counterinsurgency. Half a million Iraqis and 5,000 US troops dead; entire cities leveled; prisoners tortured; depleted uranium caused epidemic of cancer and deformities.

2011-2014—Instability in Iraq encouraged growth of jihadi fascist ISIS (Sunni militants also known as the Islamic State and DAESH).

2014-2017—US joined with Iraqi government and semi-independent, Iran-backed, Shi'a militias to defeat ISIS in Iraq

2017-present—US military maintains huge base in Iraq, but limited role in combating ISIS remnants; under increasing attack by Shi'a militia groups loosely organized as Iraqi Popular Mobilization Units and formally a part of the Iraqi Armed Forces

Trump's Impeachment and US Imperialist Iran Policy

Impeachment was on the agenda when the US Congress re-convened on January 6. An image of a front-page 1998 *NY Times* headline circulated on social media: "Impeachment Vote in House Delayed as Clinton Launches Iraq Air Strike, Citing Military Need to Move Swiftly." Some alleged that Trump ordered the murder of Soleimani to distract attention from his own misdeeds.

That's possible. The Democratic Party's impeachment charges emphasize Trump's lack of patriotism. Their essence is that he betrayed the "national interest" for his partisan advantage. Maybe Trump did order the assassination to make it harder for his opponents to call him unpatriotic. Certainly, he and his allies are consolidating their fascist base around patriotism, racism and Islamophobia.

But it may very well turn out that Trump is more isolated within the US ruling class. One example is his former Secretary of Defense John Bolton, an Iran "hawk." Bolton, who was reluctant to testify in the impeachment inquiry, has now said he will testify.

Another is Republican Senator (and 2012

presidential nominee) Mitt Romney. He is now urging the Senate to hear Bolton and others. That means a real trial in the Senate instead of the sham acquittal that Senate Majority Leader McConnell has promised.

US imperialism has no clear path to regaining the chokehold it once held over Persian Gulf oil, or even maintaining its current influence. For this reason – as well as ideological differences – there will continue to be major disagreements over Mideast policy among the capitalists who rule the USA. At this point, however, most of them seem angry that Trump is not carrying out a consistent (much less effective) imperialist policy regarding Iran.

The US ruling class agrees in general that the United States must shift its focus to China while not abandoning the Middle East. They approved that Obama sent US troops back to Iraq in 2014 and supported his initiative on the Iran nuclear deal. They agreed that in order to pivot to Asia, the US needed allies to help guarantee the oil and strategic value of the region.

The US had been gradually becoming more

isolated. Trump accelerated this process, thumbing his nose at key European allies. He surrounded himself with Christian-Zionist advisors who are Iran "hawks" and dismantled the Iran nuclear deal.

At the same time, Trump has also seemed reluctant to respond to Iranian provocation, like when Iran targeted Saudi oil refineries in September. So the killing of Soleimani does appear impulsive. The *NYTimes* described it as "outside of any coherent policy context, and without adequate contemplation of near- or long-term strategic consequences."

This reckless incompetence has impelled important forces in the US ruling class to push for Trump's impeachment.

It is not in the interest of workers anywhere to take sides in the rulers' quarrels. We must not champion more effective war-makers. It is in our interest to expose them all as imperialist butchers and to fight for the revolutionary victory of our own class.

—Comrade in Los Angeles (USA)