

RED FLAG



MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM

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

MASS STRUGGLE AGAINST ANTI-MUSLIM FASCIST LAWS IN INDIA DEEPENS COMMUNIST RELATIONSHIPS AMONG INDUSTRIAL WORKERS

INDIA, January 20—Garment worker comrades in Bengaluru traveled to Chennai to meet auto workers this weekend. Our group had four female comrades, one male comrade and two children. We were very excited to meet our Chennai comrades for the first time.

On the train, we discussed the ongoing mass demonstrations. These started as a rebellion of university students against fascist laws in India, but have turned into mass anger against capitalism. Our discussion focused on communist revolution as the only solution.

In the mass movement, bosses are injecting dangerous alternatives to divide the working class. Liberal politicians preach non-violence in the face of brutal police beatings and constant harassment by the RSS and ABVP fascist militias (both funded by the ruling party, BJP). We need to organize self-defense squads with the outlook of forming a red army to defeat capitalism.

A female comrade argued loudly, "We must organize the whole neighborhood to finish fascist youth when they come to us." Her voice drew the attention of other passengers who joined the conversation. They were all workers going to visit their families. Almost everybody joined our discussion. Many workers described the violent humiliation they face every day. An older worker said, "If we are united in a large number, they cannot abuse us." A female comrade who has led a struggle against sexust abuse in her garment factory responded, "Yes, but we need to not only prevent them from violently attacking us, we need to eliminate them forever. That is communism. We need masses of workers like you to join our party, ICWP, so we can build for communist revolution."

We can write a book filled with stories of workers who are so angry and desperate that a communist alternative brings hope, determination and direction to building our party. Even our 10 and 12 year old children, traveling with us, understood communist politics. They often interacted with passengers to explain why capitalism needs to go.

Eleven comrades met us at the Chennai train station. Although we were meeting for the first time, our common bond of communist revolution made us feel as if we had known each other for a long time. It took two hours for us to reach their homes, where we had a delicious dinner. We overcame the language barriers and started talking seriously about building the party.

Comrades felt that as the crisis of capitalism is deepening, workers can either join the communist path of ICWP or the nationalist/fascist path of keeping capitalism alive with a bloodbath. Our leadership in this struggle for communism is crucial. Reforms to fight for job security, pension plans, health and housing benefits attract many workers to join and fight for unions and political



January 8, 2020—General Strike in India

parties. In the midst of this capitalist crisis, these reforms are impossible because the bosses are looking for bigger cuts from the working class so they can compete with rival capitalists. We need to finish them all. That means building a mass ICWP.

We spent two days in Chennai. We read and discussed two articles on dialectical materialism. Many comrades found the reading difficult because we are not used to reading such difficult material. We read everything aloud. This forced us to ask questions and make things clear for each other. We talked about our own work and how we can improve it using dialectics. We felt that our

main ideological struggle is against the liberal and fake communist parties who give the illusion that capitalism can be reformed. We estimated that as a collective we have the ability to reach out to thousands of workers with communist ideas.

Our weekend was extremely useful. We need to regularly organize these activities with comrades from other cities. To see comrades from another state who speak different languages was very inspiring. The participation of female comrades along with Dalit, Muslim and other workers, shows that the world is ours and communism is the future.

VOL. 11 #1, January 29 to February 19, 2020

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Tenth Anniversary of ICWP

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ADVANCES STRUGGLE FOR COMMUNISM

LOS ANGELES (USA), January 18—Seventy-five comrades and friends from Mexico, Spain, El Salvador, Canada, Puerto Rico and several US cities met to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the International Communist Workers' Party. This was not just a one-day event, but an important day in a week-long process that brought comrades together to struggle sharply for communist ideas and practices.

In the industrial workshop, five MTA comrades help to lead the discussion. In another workshop, several young comrades who had been recruited when they were in high school or college but who had recently been inactive recommitted to the party. Plans were made to strengthen the party's work in a major university. New initiatives were taken to improve the party's online presence.

The Birth of ICWP

Ten years ago, fifteen people met in a comrade's backyard and formed the International Communist Workers' Party. We needed a newspaper right away. The first edition put forward our task: "BUIILD A MASS FIGHTING INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST PARTY!"

"The deepening world-wide capitalist economic crisis and the world imperialists' unrelenting drive to wider and more lethal oil wars have hundreds of millions of workers questioning capitalism. Billions of workers unable to live in the old way, will look for radical alternatives.

"Our task is to win millions of workers to embrace communist ideas so that they will fight for, win and build a communist society. It is a monumental historical challenge.

"We have accepted it with responsibility, humility, confidence in our class and great revolutionary optimism.

"We are determined to destroy forever the bosses' poisonous ideologies of racism, sexism, individualism, patriotism and nationalism. We are determined to fight for a world without borders.

"We are committed to building a communist world without bosses, where nothing will be bought or sold. A world where 'from each according to his/her commitment, to each according to his/her needs' will be the universal rule."

(Read the entire editorial at <https://icwpredflag.org/RF2-24-10.pdf>)

Mobilize the Masses for Communism

Inspired by the mass uprisings of the Arab Spring, after a year of discussion, we published our manifesto: *Mobilizing the Masses for Communism*. (available at icwpredflag.org/mmce.pdf)

We declared: *"Our program of mobilizing the masses for communism is in many ways a sharp break from the policies of the old communist movement. The old movement did occasionally follow this path. But it was persuaded that the times weren't right for communism and the masses were not ready for communism. The ICWP believes that these arguments were always wrong. But currently there is less reason to believe them than ever. Workers have nothing but our chains to lose by smashing capitalism."*

ICWP Spreads Globally

In its first years, ICWP consolidated party collectives in Mexico, El Salvador, and in the United States. We organized among aerospace workers at Boeing, MTA transit workers in Los Angeles, garment workers and students.

In South Africa, in response to the massacre of striking miners at Marikana, we were able to form a party cell in South Africa. Since then, comrades in South Africa have led the way in recruiting and writing for *Red Flag*. They have given our whole party a broader vision of mobilizing the masses for communism.

In recent months, ICWP has grown in India among garment and automobile workers, IT specialists and students. They have boldly raised communist ideas in mass struggles against racist attacks on Muslim and Dalit workers and on students.

Today, workers and students in forty countries read *Red Flag*. The potential exists for building new Party collectives in Puerto Rico, Canada, and elsewhere.

Masses Must Grasp and Apply the Communist Philosophy of Change

At our tenth-anniversary conference, a comrade charged us to improve our communist practice:

"We have the science of dialectical materialism and its laws of change. These help us to un-

derstand the process of mobilizing the masses for communism, to sharpen contradictions and to resolve them.

"We are confident that, like us, millions internationally can understand these laws and put them into practice in the struggle for communism.

"Today we want all of you to help us analyze our political work in industrial concentrations and concentrations of young workers and students."

Party members and friends broke into workshops. We discussed contradictions between our political line and our practice. Comrades talked about internal obstacles: capitalist ideas and behavior we learned in a capitalist society. These keep us from being the communists that the working class needs.

In our workshops we struggled sharply against passivity and liberalism. We made concrete plans to raise communist ideas with our friends and family, to respond to the attacks of capitalism on our class, and to write for and distribute *Red Flag*. We can see the results in this issue of *Red Flag* and in practical steps that have strengthened our communist collectives.

Workers Have a Communist World to Win

Capitalism-imperialism is increasingly deadly. Workers everywhere face a crisis of overproduction and its resulting trade wars. Members of our working-class family die every day in armed conflicts in southwest Asia and in Africa. Migrants from Africa, Southwest Asia and Central America are fleeing these wars and crises.

And as the December US-Iran confrontation over Iraq showed, any conflict has the potential to erupt into world war. The increasing crisis of the system guarantees that eventually it will.

These crises have created uprisings, and with them, increased opportunities to build ICWP. Thousands are on the streets in Chile, Haiti, France, Iraq, Puerto Rico and elsewhere. Forty ICWP comrades in five cities of India joined a recent general strike of 200 million workers, students and others. They brought a communist vision and organization to the masses.

This is how we will turn this capitalist nightmare into our communist future. Build ICWP!

May Day,
Los Angeles, USA
2010

Workers of the
World, Unite!
Fight for
Communism
International
Communist
Workers' Party



**MOBILIZE THE
MASSES FOR
COMMUNISM**

International Communist Workers' Party

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Transit Workers in Los Angeles

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES TO BUILD THE PARTY

LOS ANGELES, USA, January 28—“I really liked the Conference and saw that many are looking for the alternative of communism,” said a Los Angeles public transportation (MTA) worker during the Conference Celebrating the 10 Years of the International Communist Workers’ Party (ICWP).

The activity was positive and a qualitative leap in the process of consolidating a communist base at MTA. Five workers came. Some brought relatives. Many more were invited and for months we discussed this activity and its meaning.

One of the goals of our workshop at the conference was to try to identify and struggle against the obstacles to the advancement of new members and friends to become communist organizers, both at work and outside work.

The participation in the discussion among workers from MTA, Boeing and other Party organizers with a lot of experience enriched the discussion. Very interesting topics emerged. For example, an MTA worker said, “There is a little

fear to organize at work, because of the bosses’ repression, fear of being fired, or of becoming isolated from other workers.”

Also the issue of the family was raised, especially with couples when one spouse sometimes opposes the participation of the other for fear of reprisals.

The answers to overcoming these obstacles were very illustrative and helpful. It was mentioned that at work it is better to avoid reactionaries and concentrate on those who are open to communist ideas, who are the majority. Also that we should not expect them to agree with everything we tell them. It is an ideological struggle of communist ideas versus capitalist ideas. Most workers have communist ideas, but also capitalist ideas, although they hate capitalism.

That same ideological struggle that we carry out with our co-workers must be carried out with our family with tact and patience, but with perseverance.

In our workplace at MTA we have a broad base

of workers who take and read our *Red Flag* newspaper and with whom there is an ideological struggle to take that step of making communist ideas their own.

In general, the conference was an advance in the formation of communist leaders at MTA. Some comrades are taking more leadership. Two of them wrote letters for the newspaper, and as a group we have plans for activities outside work. We will have a trip to another city to meet with other workers. Some of these workers have been invited to see the development of how *Red Flag* is designed and produced.

All this work is the product of the Party collective. With patience and urgency we have struggled for the distribution of the newspaper and to have study groups based on the Party’s pamphlets.

Nothing is perfect. We have many weaknesses to overcome to do a more effective job. But we are more inspired and motivated to continue advancing to build a communist society.

MASSES REBEL AGAINST COLONIAL CAPITALIST EXPLOITATION

PUERTO RICO—Puerto Rico is a US colony. Throughout its history, the Puerto Rican working class has suffered from government policies favoring US and local capitalists.

Since 1898, when it was invaded by the United States, Puerto Rico has been under the power of the US Congress and Wall Street. It has a local government with limited power because of its colonial status.

That limited local power has been further reduced because Congress created a Committee called the Fiscal Oversight Board, which decides the budget of the colonial government and how it is spent.

In recent months, the working class of Puerto Rico has been in the streets fighting against the abuses of the capitalist class. They have been receiving and resisting the blows of an economic depression over ten years long, and the anti-worker and imperial Board of Fiscal Supervision and corrupt politicians in charge of the government.

The working people in a short time have experienced the deterioration of the main basic needs of every human being, intensified by the effects of two hurricanes and recent earthquakes.

About 150,000 people in Puerto Rico have lost their homes, which were repossessed by the Banks. There are fewer quality health services, deteriorating the physical and mental health of citizens; increases in the rates of suicides and diseases due to poor quality of life and not having access to quality medicines and health services.

Public education is increasingly deteriorating, aggravated by closing hundreds of public schools



San Juan, PR: The government wants us dead while they hide what is ours!

and drastically reducing the budget of the University of Puerto Rico, the main university center in the country.

Jobs continue to be of lower quality. A large sector suffers from job insecurity. Many workers have two and three jobs to meet their obligations at the end of the month. To this is added a labor reform that reduces rights won in collective negotiations. It will reduce the number of unionized workers.

In the summer of 2019, working people participated in protests in the streets of San Juan for more than ten nights. The colonial governor resigned from his position under pressure because of the people’s demand. However, he was replaced by a governor who has followed the same policies.

Recently the protests in Old San Juan returned. They were provoked by the discovery of supplies—kept by the government in secret warehouses since the time of hurricanes

Irma and Maria - which were supposed to be distributed to those affected. However, they kept them for use in the electoral campaign and to favor certain political interests, while a major sector of the working people lacked food and other basic necessities.

This caused the outrage of thousands of workers who marched and protested once more through the streets of San Juan. It showed that the mere change of a ruler is not the solution. It also showed once again

the imperative need to fight for a change of the political and economic system not only in Puerto Rico, but also in the rest of the world.

For the Puerto Rican working class, the question arises of what should be done to permanently change the situation in today’s society. A change that results in eliminating the living conditions of this class. Where racism, sexism and other forms of inequality and discrimination are eradicated. Where we enjoy a better quality of life, with work for all, adequate health services, the right to housing and quality, public and free education for everyone.

It is not about who occupies the position of governor, or another position, because over the years, elections after elections, there have been different governors but no improvements in workers’ lives and wellbeing. Quite the contrary, these have worsened.

The only thing that can make real change happen is the struggle to eradicate the colonial capitalist system and achieve transformation to a society without the exploitation of the working class. For this, it will be necessary to elaborate the precise strategies to unite our class in a revolutionary communist organization and fight against exploitative capitalism. It is necessary for the majority to understand that the struggle between capitalists and wage workers is a life and death struggle. Because for a long time now, many people worldwide only survive. To live in a dignified way is something else entirely.

Workers of the World, Unite! Long live communism!



San Juan, Puerto Rico, January 2020

Boeing MAX Shutdown:**BOSSSES CAUGHT IN TRAP; WORKERS MUST USE OPPORTUNITY TO BUILD FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION**

SEATTLE (USA) January 26 — “All the company is doing is rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic,” said a Boeing worker during our crew meeting. We’d been discussing how the company is trapped in the global crisis of overproduction. If we let them, the bosses will drag us down with them. Communism is the only way to finally end these crises.

A few days later, the new CEO, Calhoun, confirmed that Boeing was trapped. The New Mid-market Airplane (NMA) was supposed to get the board’s approval last year. The go ahead was delayed because of the MAX crisis. The NMA was a totally new plane, unlike the MAX, which is a derivative of a 1960s design. During a webcast to Boeing employees, the CEO said the company would scrap their planned NMA.

The company will go back to the drawing board. If Boeing went ahead with their plans to produce the NMA now, they would run smack into new competing Chinese and Airbus planes. Any possible innovations won’t come until the end of the decade to take the developing Chinese competition into account.

“Things have changed... We have to plan for China,” Calhoun said.

In heated discussions throughout the plant, some blamed the company for “giving China our technology.” Another worker thought Chinese engineers were good at copying but couldn’t innovate. Our comrades argued that overproduction was bound to happen no matter what.

Capitalism can’t escape overproduction. In this system, the contradiction between the forces of production (factories, workers, etc.) and existing relationships of capitalist private ownership (we’re at the mercy of the bosses’ ability to make profits) leads to one crisis after another.

Only communism will resolve that contradiction by eliminating production for profit. Production will be collective, as will distribution. Money, sales, the drive for profit and even corporations will cease to exist. Technology will be shared to provide for our collective well-being. The working class will organize production logically to create what is needed at any particular time.

Currently the fear of overproduction shapes every decision the bosses make. Last year, Boeing had 87 more cancellations than sales, the lowest order count in decades. Nonetheless, the company is still trying to preserve its workforce. They have to be able to ramp up production as quickly as possible after the MAX is recertified so they are not left behind.

That plan is quickly crumbling as major suppliers layoff thousands. The company has 8,000 subcontractors, in every U.S. state and abroad. These suppliers employ hundreds of thousands.

Even if that plan collapses, it doesn’t mean an end to the bosses. They will always find a way until the working class ends capitalism with a communist revolution. Fascism expands during a global crisis of overproduction. It did in the 1930s and it has now. The potential for war, even world war, increases.

Things Have Changed; Now What to Do About It

Many Boeing workers—particularly those who regularly read *Red Flag* and socialize with comrades outside of work—are keenly aware that things have changed.

In response to the crisis, hundreds of millions have struck and demonstrated around the world. We’ve seen this kind of heroism before. It can signal the emergence of a revolutionary period.

At our recent ICWP conference, industrial workers wanted to know, “What can we do to win our fellow workers to communism?” Our friends wanted to better understand how communism works so they could struggle effectively with their fellow workers.

These same workers talked about their fears. Like Boeing workers, they fear for their jobs and what the future holds for their children. “There has to be something better than this,” one said.

Foremost, we have to appreciate the potential and opportunities to recruit communist fighters as the crisis intensifies. The opportunities must win out over our fears. Then a communist world will be our future.

CAPITALISM PROMOTES THE WORST OF HUMANITY

The company’s executives are not innocent bystanders. Fired CEO Muilenburg walked away with \$62.5 billion. The families of the 346 people killed in the MAX crashes got a measly \$150,000 each.

The new CEO Calhoun comes from the Blackstone equity/hedge fund. It regularly siphons billions from working class wages and benefits, often destroying jobs, pensions, healthcare and companies in the process.

These bad actors are enabled, promoted and obscenely compensated by the capitalist system.

Communism will never allow this. Without money, obscene compensation will be off the table. Instead, communism will enable and promote collective leadership of those who fight for the working class.

LETTERS**LETTERS****LETTERS****CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS****Comrade Fired from his Job—Continues the fight**

On Monday, December 13, I was fired from the garment factory where I had worked for years. I have been fired without any justification. The bosses made the decision to terminate my contract, since they had information that I was organizing to fight for a communist world.

Ten minutes before the end of the day, the person in charge of human resources called me to the office and told me to sign some papers that were on his desk immediately, without giving me any explanations. He gave it to me and forced me to sign it, without knowing why. Once I signed it, he told me I was fired, that from that moment I could no longer return to the work area.

It seems that it is a crime to fight for a different world. But despite all this, I remain firm in the fight because I am clear about communist ideology and capitalist ideology. My *Red Flag* comrades have not left me alone. That encourages me to continue forward in the trenches where ever I may find myself. I will remain strong. Ever onward to victory

—Garment worker in El Salvador

Communism will End the Material Basis of Sexism

To the comrade sister in the maquilas in El Salvador who wrote the letter about sexist harassment in the last issue:

Welcome to the ICWP and the fight for communism! I like millions of others around the world have experienced this harassment by my boss on

my job. And I am fighting for a world without bosses, without money, without “jobs.” When we win the revolution, we will get rid of jobs and bosses and organize all work collectively. We’ll decide together, led by the Party, what we want to produce and how to do it. And we’ll work together to produce what working people need. And no one will have to put up with sexual harassment because they need the paycheck to survive and for their family to survive.

In a communist society, we will fight against capitalist ideas and behavior including the sexist idea that men can abuse women. However, for a long time there will be men raised under the old system, or listening to older men raised under the old system, who think that sexual harassment is OK. But we will have collective struggle against these ideas and behaviors. All the comrades, regardless of gender, who understand the need for unity and mutual respect, will be organized to fight against the remnants of capitalist ideas and behavior. (This, of course, applies to racism, homophobia and xenophobia as well.)



El Salvador May Day 2015

**Read our pamphlet:
*The Communist Fight
Against Sexism***

Available at: icwpredflag.org/sxse.pdf

But even more importantly, we won’t have bosses. We’ll have production collectives. No boss will have the power to hire or fire anyone. No one will need a paycheck to survive. We’ll live and work together as one human family. We’ll make sure that no individual has the power to make anyone go hungry ever again. And we’ll be free, dignified workers together in a new world.

—Comrade in Los Angeles

ICWP & UNITED ARTISTS FOR SOCIAL CHANGE MAKE COMMUNIST ART



Rehearsal for the Revolution

Thursday January 16th in a community house, members of the United Artists for Social Change (UASC), the International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP) and other community leaders gathered to make art. The 10th Anniversary of the ICWP was having its convention in 2 days and the goal of the artistic gathering was to develop a theatrical performance to perform at the convention and inspire the communist movement through art.

Although it was the first time meeting each other for many of the participants, and many had no traditional theatre experience, the 3-hour workshop / rehearsal produced a foundation and skeleton for the communist theatre skit that the members were satisfied with.

The workshop facilitated by members of the UASC opened with a conversation as to what Communism is. Followed by theatrical exercises that analyzed the use of Politics, Media and Culture by the capitalist system in order to keep the idea of communism tainted, unheard, and criminalized.

One of the participants mentioned later "It was a really welcoming space. I learned a lot about how people can learn about a complicated topic through theater."

All the workshop members participated in sharing the misconceived notions that social bar-

riers like the Media imposed on our society. Then the comrades of the ICWP responded with the truth of the communist idea the skit was formed. A community Leader M. commented, "I think the group needed more facilitation when emotions ran high." This is a frequent comment made at these kind of rehearsals due to the unorthodox nature of

the style of theatre practiced and the subject at hand.

Comrade B. of the ICWP said after the workshop, "It was a great learning experience for me. I learned that there is a lot of potential to explain communist ideas and inspire people in this way."

Members of the UASC found the meeting to be a success because that is exactly what the goal of the organization is: "To use art to Liberate ourselves by expressing what oppresses us."

"In the end of the day what we are really here to do is learn," commented B, a UASC member.

The session ended with the foundation for the skit set, people exchanged numbers and contact information, hugs and goodbyes were given. The group was ready for the performance.

Day of the Convention

Saturday afternoon the UASC group drove to the convention, rehearsing their lines and developing their characters on the way there. Once the theatre troupe had arrived they met with an ICWP comrade to rehearse with him since he was playing the role of the communist voice defeating the social bar-

riers of Media, Politics, and Culture in the skit. After about 20 minutes of rehearsal, they were ready to perform during the dinner ceremony.

The UASC with comrade R. took the stage and got the multi-racial and international crowd of about 75 people inspired. The crowd reacted with boos, laughs, and screams until comrade R. asked the people to help break down these social barriers by standing strong and saying what communism really is.

Before anyone could respond, someone in the audience jumped on stage with a red flag in her hand and knocked down the barriers with the red flag. Once this happened people from the audience began to sing and clap. The crowd was energized and activated. The goal was achieved.

The Convention was a success. The workshops were insightful and candid. The topics discussed are necessary conversations that our generations need to be having in order to make a communist society a reality.

The need for Communist art to spread communist ideals is inexorable in the movement. The UASC is looking forward to collaborating with the ICWP in developing workshops and methodologies that will transmit all the means of artistic production to all the working class, Music, Theatre, Paint, Poetry, Dance, Art, and learning from each other.

As the Educational and Artistic Revolution unfolds so will the Revolution of the minds and leaders of our society and Future.



LETTERS

LETTERS

LETTERS

CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

LOS ANGELES TRANSIT WORKERS WRITE TO RED FLAG

Today we gathered for our weekly meeting. Some of the topics we discussed were what drives a capitalistic Society, are we on the verge of war, and the negative effects of media propaganda.

We understand that we are part of the working class. Our ideas can contribute to our own capitalistic enslavement, which only benefits the ruling class. Part of the discussion led into an understanding of the production of an abundance of goods, and about who controls the global market.

Then we discussed whether we thought we were on the verge of a world war. We also discussed whether there has been a worse time in our lifetime. We mentioned that some of us did not really follow current events in the past. We all came to an agreement that we are one bullet away at this current moment from a global war.

Then we talked about how resourceful media can be and how advantageous it may be to any particular party to spread negative propaganda about communist ideas. An article was summarized from Forbes.com. It included hidden messages that communist ideas are bad, but it didn't say why. In brief, it just said that Bernie Sanders would be bad as President of the U.S. because of some his socialist beliefs which the article said are the same as communism.

A member mentioned that he had also read an

article that stated that it is bad for our country to be open to other types of societies. The same article said that a survey showed that more than 50% of Americans from 18-40 years of age are open to socialistic ideas. The article said, in simple terms, that communist ideas are bad. Negative examples from previous nations that were only a socialist-style government and never a pure form of Communism were also mentioned in that article. In other words if you did not follow the capitalistic idea you were labeled a horrible communist.

After the discussions most of the members left with the mindset that tough times are near. That's because of the capitalistic ideas that thrive off of greed and keep the working class uninformed about the realities we live in today.

People want change but feel hopeless at the same time. It felt like the members have used these discussions to believe in hope. It is important that the working class gets informed about what is really going on and fight to stop the exploitation of our fellow working-class members from the reckless ways of the ruling class. There is hope, my friends, and hope may come from being open to change in our out-of-control society.

—MTA comrade

I am an employee of a public transportation agency. I work as a commercial mechanic. This is my story about how I became interested in knowing about our society we live in today and others that have existed. Let me also apologize in advance for my poor writing skills.

I recently have had numerous conversations with an ICWP member in regards to everyday things. Not once did we discuss any communist topics. I did know he/she read and carried **Red Flag** literature but not once did I think anything bad about it. I am the type of person that respects one's beliefs.

One day he/she asked if I was interested in joining a meeting with other co-workers who talk about political parties. I was unsure, but I did attend. My mind kept telling me not to get targeted by coworkers or management for attending this meeting so that I don't jeopardize by livelihood of my family. I am open to discuss and hear different ideas of a well balanced society.

I also attended an off site gathering that further discussed our experiences and concerns.

I have not chosen to be an official member of any sort and I have not said that Communist ideas are the best. It is my choice to learn, acquire knowledge, and be informed of today's ever changing society.

—Friend at MTA

HOW IS ICWP A “COMMUNIST PARTY OF A NEW KIND”?

Mexican student comrades said, in a recent letter to *Red Flag*, that we need to boldly “mobilize the masses for the construction of a Communist Party of a new kind.” Another letter said that the ICWP “has revived and revised the Bolshevik form of party.”

But neither tried to explain what the old (Bolshevik) communist party was like. Neither suggested how the ICWP was “new” or “revised.”

Briefly: The 20th century communist movement recognized two kinds of party: “mass” and “vanguard.” A mass party was open to everyone with even a minimal commitment. Usually it was a legal party that ran candidates in elections.

In contrast, the Bolsheviks built a “vanguard” (or “cadre”) party. It recruited relatively few but very dedicated full-time organizers. It was mainly illegal and worked secretly among the masses, though a few members were open as deputies in the “Duma” or parliament.

Bolshevik Party members were supposed to know the “vanguard line” (the full communist program). But they were supposed to put forward a “mass line” to the working class. They saw this as a partial program of reformism, nationalism and democracy.

The sad results of their heroic struggles show that this approach contradicted and soon undermined their long-term communist goals. Today our one line, for all situations, is “mobilize masses for communism.” We are trying to learn how to put that forward in many different particular situations and struggles.

A comrade asked in a conference report, “We want to build a mass party even as we consolidate recruits around a vanguard line?” Yes! That is what is “new” or “revised” about the ICWP. The comrade asked, “How do we resolve this contradiction?”

This would only be a contradiction if it’s impossible to win masses to fight for communism. But, as the comrade well knows, this is exactly what our illegal party needs to do.

What contradiction defines the process of Party-building?

Bolshevik-type communist parties described themselves as “democratic centralist.” They saw this as a contradiction between “democracy” (mass participation) and “centralism” (disciplined united action, decided by leaders).

We understand now that mobilizing masses to participate fully in decision-making should lead to more effective, committed and unified communist mass action. No contradiction, but much to think about!

Later, some correctly rejected “democracy” as a creation of liberal capitalism. They re-named the “main contradiction” as “communist centralism.” They said its two sides were “individualism” (doing your own thing) and “collectivity” (working in concert).

This is indeed a contradiction: individualism does interfere with working collectively. But it is only part of the story.

More accurately, the main contradiction defining a communist party is the struggle between

capitalist ideas and practices (including individualism) versus communist ideas and practices (including collectivity). It is the struggle of communism against revisionism within the Party in a form particular to the situation. Revisionism means capitalist ideas within ourselves and our Party that hold back the fight for communism.

The old theory of “democratic centralism” (or even “communist centralism”) focused mechanically on process. It saw unity (in action) as primary over struggle (over the line).

This meant a top-down concept of Party discipline: individuals subordinate to the collective, the minority to the majority, lower bodies to higher bodies, everyone to the top leadership. No wonder these parties fell into a cult of the Party leader!

We need every member to develop as a leader! We see leadership as “central,” not “on top.”

The discipline to carry out collective decisions must come mainly from deep understanding of communist politics. And from long-term commitment to our shared goal.

These things come from political struggle and strong personal ties, not from “rules.” They are the core of the International Communist Workers’ Party that we want you to join and build. They are the core of the communist society we will win.

RF Editorial Collective: *We hope this will initiate a discussion in our Party collectives. Please send comments and reports of discussions.*

Migrant Caravan

REORGANIZATION OF LABOR FORCE



MEXICO CITY—On January 17, a new caravan of migrants left for the United States from Honduras. Days later, another contingent, this time from El Salvador, was one its way to the same destination. Both ran into the wall created by Trump in southern Mexico and in the northern triangle of Central America (Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras).

The caravan was the migratory phenomenon that shook North and Central America in 2019. Thousands of Central Americans, who were later joined by Caribbean and Africans, entered massively through southern Mexico.

The caravans were a new way of migrating that revealed the devastating conditions of the life that migrants sought to leave behind, but also created a new community as protection against the dangers of the road to the United States.

In the last year, much has changed. Trump’s

threats to impose more tariffs on certain Mexican merchandise forced the López Obrador government to change its immigration policy. People who participated in the first caravan received transit, work, and shelter visas. Following Trump’s threats, Obrador eliminated all this and returned to the policies of the previous governments: repression, criminalization and deportation of Central American migrants.

The newly created National Guard, created by the administration of Obrador, was formed to dismantle the caravan and deport the migrants.

Trump, Mexico and the northern triangle

Thousands of migrants marching to the United States created a crisis for the Trump administration. Bowing to US pressure, the governments of Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador have agreed to be “safe countries.” The governments of these countries have to ensure the dismantling of the caravans and be places of refuge for asylum applications for the people of these countries. If someone from these three countries applies for asylum to the United States, they can only migrate to one of the other two countries of the northern triangle.

These agreements are an insult to the masses that live in the northern triangle. These three countries are in a very similar political, social and economic situation. Migrants will face the same economic conditions as well as the same violence in any one of these countries.

Meanwhile, Mexico intends to promote joint economic projects in Central America. At the same time, Obrador has announced that there are now 4,000 jobs available in southern Mexico for Central American migrants. This is no relationship of solidarity! This represents the interests of Mexican capital, which maintains imperialist practices in Central America.

Reorganization of the workforce

Humans have never stopped migrating over

the whole earth. How this happens is historically determined. Today, in Central America, migration is a process of reorganization of the workforce. Migration is an escape valve for unemployment and job insecurity in the northern triangle, caused by low technological development and poverty caused by imperialism—both US and Mexican imperialism.

The US embassy in San Salvador has announced a plan for 6,000 work visas, but has only granted 500 work visas for farmworkers. Mexico offers 4,000 jobs and immigration regularization. Workers’ lives only have meaning as long as their labor power is a commodity. Work visas and co-operation projects manage the resources that capital needs for its survival.

Communist solidarity

As soon as we learned about the first caravan, members and friends of the International Communist Workers’ Party went to a refugee shelter in Mexico City and launched a solidarity campaign within a UNAM community college.

To solve these problems the working class needs a resounding change in the social forms of production, a cultural revolution and a way of doing politics that involves the masses in making fundamental decisions for society

To achieve this, we must build ICWP. Solidarity can help us create and build communist social relations. We must fight against nationalism with all our friends, organize actions of solidarity with Central American migrants, invite more people to our meetings and present our ideas through *Red Flag*.

The experience of the masses in Central America, full of pain and boldness, can inspire us in the fight against colonialism, imperialism and capitalist social relations of production. From these experiences, we can imagine a new way of life, where we migrate willingly in order to contribute to building a better world.

LETTERS

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CRITICISM AND SUGGESTIONS

Opening our Doors to Communism

I was completely inspired after attending our forum to celebrate ICWP's 10th anniversary. And I'm writing to describe how our conference helped me understand how we can genuinely construct a communist society.

I consider myself a veteran comrade, and we always need that extra boost to motivate us to recognize our triumphs and internal contradictions in order to persevere against capitalist ideology.

Since we had visitors from all over the world, I was asked to house a comrade from Europe. I live in a house with three children, my spouse, and numerous pets. My family and I had never met our comrade, and we had to trust the communist relationship that he had built with a member of ICWP who I have known for many years. Frankly, there was a nervousness that sneaked in when agreeing to allow a total stranger to enter our house. In fact, this is the first time that my family has ever done such a thing.

In this nasty capitalist system, we have been trained to always question our safety from fellow workers. Through the media, we are constantly bombarded with all the violence, robberies and murders that exist in our current society. Consequently, we allow these incidents to sink into our psyche, preventing us from establishing genuine relationships with workers. We build this "stranger danger."

But violence and murder exist now because of capitalism. It is capitalism that sickens the minds of workers to think that they need to hurt someone else in order to acquire monetary gain. This is why we stress that the end of capitalism is also the end of violence for greed.

But we must struggle against these internal contradictions because our comrade from Europe is definitely not a stranger if his relationship has a strong political foundation. Members of ICWP are not strangers no matter what part of the world they are from. In the future, we will have to open our doors to unfamiliar workers with one familiar political goal: communist revolution.

So what does it mean to be a communist, or what does a communist world look like? The answer truly lies in our creative power, but some basic practices include opening our doors in order to strengthen the working class. So I thank ICWP for intensifying a contradiction in my household because it allowed me to solidify my belief that we can truly build a communist world.

—Communist parent

Communists need to be in collectives

I want to talk about what it means to be a communist for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. I have observed many examples that show that most of us here tend to lead two different lives. They only become communists when they are doing the work of the Party. They may be distributing the paper or recruiting or in meetings. After that they forget that they are communists.

That mind set creates some problems because that's where liberal tendencies usually arise.



Southern California, January 19—ICWP takes communist ideas to rally against fascist anti-Muslim measures in India

Therefore we behave in a manner that is anti-communist.

There are many examples. We have some old comrades who were in the movement for many years. These are active comrades. They distribute and attend meetings. Others are students. But when they are in school, they forget that they are communists in carrying out the work among other students.

When we decided to join the movement, we made a commitment for life to communism. Our actions, our thoughts and also our words should reflect that, not just at a particular moment. Our constant lives should revolve around communism, around building the party.

Comrades who are in universities, who are supposed to recruit students, are not doing this. We are struggling with them to do this. That's why I decided to enroll in a course in college so that we can be able to have more success with students, to set an example and give leadership to the students and to encourage other students.

We should be mindful of these liberal thoughts because one of the problems is that when you are in these institutions, you are constantly bombarded by capitalist propaganda. Therefore you need to be inside a collective where we can struggle collectively against capitalist propaganda. The collective is there to help every comrade to overcome these weaknesses.

It's important for us is to struggle against these things and for the leadership to set an example for the whole collective as to how we should conduct ourselves as communists. To show the level of commitment that is required for us to build the party. We should become an example or a reference point for other comrades.

Thank you, comrades,

—A Comrade in South Africa

Workers and Students Fight to Resolve Internal Contradictions

During our conference in Los Angeles, workers and students both youth and old came together to discuss dialectics. The workshop I attended was

the college students and young workers. A student comrade from Mexico talked about the challenges of her political work and inspired us all to overcome obstacles in our own work.

We talked about issues affecting our generation of workers. Many of us have been won to the false narrative that education and hard work will get us out of manual labor. We all recognized the failures of the system. We said that we all have one foot in the door of trying to work hard and gain a decent life for ourselves and our future families and the other in organizing for a communist society. It is here that we got into the meat of our conversation.

One young worker mentioned that he feels isolated because most of our interaction in today's society is done online. Another comrade spoke of how work and focusing on paying the bills makes him keep his head down and isolates him from communication from others.

One student worker said that he didn't feel like people would see the certainty in a communist society. I responded that under capitalism there is no certainty either. If you don't work for your check then you won't have one and there is no guarantee that your check will cover all your necessities, so where's the certainty in that? I asked the student worker. He agreed.

An older comrade said that being in the party, building communist social relationships and fighting for a better world was a beautiful life. She said she wanted that for us.

The student from Mexico urged us to remember that just because the meeting ends doesn't mean we stop being communists.

It was something truly beautiful and out of that discussion came a concrete plan to keep in communication.

People say that there's a communist dog and a capitalist dog inside you, fighting for dominance. You have to feed the dog that you want to win and we want to feed the part of us that wants communism to prevail.

—Young worker comrade

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1920 Palmer Raids:**ANTI-COMMUNISM AND XENOPHOBIA ARE ATTACKS ON ALL WORKERS**

As 1920 began, US federal agents arrested thousands of communists and others in the "Palmer raids." Immigrant communists were held for deportation. US citizens were turned over to state officials for political trials.

US Attorney-General A. Mitchell Palmer and his aide, J. Edgar Hoover, served under racist, imperialist President Woodrow Wilson, a Democrat. The raids soon ended but the xenophobia and anti-communism didn't. We are still fighting their long-term effects.

The background was the massive strike wave of 1919. Seattle shipyard workers sparked a general strike. Garment workers in New York City, mainly immigrant women, struck for a shorter work week and won. Male cloakmakers and other needlework trades followed suit.

Telephone workers in Boston, mostly young women, led the shut-down of communications across New England. Public transit workers struck in Chicago and Nashville.

Over three hundred thousand steel workers, mostly eastern European immigrants, shut down the industry in September. Left-wingers, including future communists, gave key leadership. But in their syndicalist outlook, economic struggles were everything. They shunned politics – revolutionary or otherwise.

Wildcat coal strikes in the summer mushroomed into a national strike. Miners rebelled against union and government officials who called strikes illegal because the war was technically not over. Four hundred thousand miners walked out on November 1st.

The New York Times ranted about what it called "the foreign element... steeped in the doctrines of class struggle... ignorant and easily misled." Immigrant workers proved their understanding by giving important leadership to their class.

Maj. Gen. Leonard Wood declared martial law in Gary, Indiana at the height of the steel strike. He justified military raids on labor radicals by claiming that "the influence of the Reds on workingmen is a real and a great danger to the United States right now." It was dangerous to the US capitalist class!

But without a mass communist party, revolution was impossible.

Immigrant sections split from the reformist Socialist Party to form the Communist Party of America in September 1919. English-speaking left-wingers also split to form the Communist Labor Party. In May 1921, pushed by the Communist International, these merged.

The new Communist Party suffered from factionalism, syndicalist politics and isolation

**RUSSIA DID IT**

SHIPYARD WORKERS—You left the shipyards to enforce your demands for higher wages. Without you your employers are helpless. Without you they cannot make one cent of profit—their whole system of robbery has collapsed.

Leaflet from the Seattle general strike 1919, urging striking workers to follow the example of the workers in Russia in overthrowing the system

from the masses. Its efforts to fight the racism rampant among white workers were "too little, too late." Worse, the Communist International steered it away from underground organizing and into electoral politics.

These weaknesses made revolution seem remote for the young US communist movement.

But the US capitalists intended to stamp out any sparks of Bolshevism. Since 1917 they had relentlessly attacked the IWW (Industrial Workers of the World) with beatings, jailings and murders. These peaked when the IWW defended its hall in Centralia, WA from an attack led by local businessmen and the new American Legion in November 1919.

By then the once-influential IWW was rapidly becoming irrelevant. A stronghold of syndicalism, it refused to join the new Soviet-led Communist International. Some of its best leaders left to join the Communist Party.

November 7-8, 1919, marked the second anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution. That night, US Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer, coordinating with local police, raided homes and offices of labor radicals across the US. A prime target was the Union of Russian Workers.

Two hundred fifty immigrants were deported to Russia on December 21. With them were two famous anarchists, Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman. The January 1920 Palmer Raids followed. These were soon condemned even by federal courts.

But xenophobia and anti-communism were baked into 20th-century US culture.

White women won the vote in 1920, supported by racists who hoped they would counter the votes of immigrant men. Political prisoners, including pacifists, stayed in jail. The US Army began an anti-communist training program. Immigration was increasingly restricted. The 1924 National Origins Act imposed racist quotas.

Loyalty oaths, textbook censorship and "Christianization" campaigns became common. Anti-communist labor union leaders pledged loyalty to capitalism. Comprehensive high schools aimed to "Americanize" immigrant children.

Sadly, Goldman and other anarchists contributed to the anti-communist crusade with attacks on the Soviet Union. The communists who led the Soviet Union were wrong about many things. But the anarchist critiques – then and now—came from the right.

Today, we generally get a great response to Red Flag from workers and youth at job sites and mass demonstrations. But we still must confront the xenophobia and anti-communism that have been part of the mass culture here for over a century.

We need to confront anti-communism directly, whatever its form. We need to expose it as an attack on the international working class.

By sharpening this struggle, we can resolve contradictions and build a bigger, stronger International Communist Workers' Party.

**March on May Day
with ICWP**

**MOBILIZE THE MASSES
FOR COMMUNISM!**

**San Salvador
Spain**

**Mexico City
South Africa**

Seattle

**Los Angeles
India**

