

RED FLAG

MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM

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



MASS PROTESTS IN PORTO ALEGRE, BRAZIL, NOVEMBER 20



GARMENT WORKERS ORGANIZE FAMILY AND COWORKERS

EL SALVADOR, November 24— “I am distributing and discussing *Red Flag* with fifteen workers, including a worker from another factory,” said a worker leader at a recent meeting of communist industrial workers.

In recent months, the members of the responsible cell of the International Communist Workers' Party (ICWP) have divided into groups to distribute *Red Flag*. In this way, they can bring the important information that *Red Flag* transmits to the different readers despite the changes in the schedules for leaving work.

One of the strategies they have implemented is that readers (including family members and neighbors as well as co-workers from the factory) fulfill the task of sharing it with their friends and discussing the articles or letters.

In addition, she tells us: “I also share it with my son at home (a university student and worker) and we debate certain topics. For example, he found one of the editions in October very interesting. It was about the conditions in South Africa, where a worker said that even though he is working fewer hours they force him to get out the same amount of work. At that moment, the same thing had been happening to him, because the bosses are taking advantage of this situation.

“*Red Flag* is so important,” she continued, “because this is how we realize that it is the same worldwide and that we need to organize more workers to the party, and fight for a communist world to end all the exploitation that the whole working class is living.”

Our families are important pillars in this fight to build a communist system. That is why it is necessary to involve them.

This is how young sons and daughters of

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Brazil:

ANOTHER BLACK WORKER KILLED, ANOTHER REASON TO RAISE THE COMMUNIST FLAG

November 23—Masses erupted in outrage across Brazil after João Alberto Silveira Freitas, a 40-year-old Black welder, was beaten to death by white security guards at a Carrefour supermarket in Porto Alegre, Brazil on November 19. One guard repeatedly punched him in the face and head while the other restrained him with his knee on his back.

A witness said that as the security guards beat him, Silveira Freitas “screamed that he could not breathe.” He lost consciousness and died on the spot.

The video of this brutal racist beating and murder went viral. It sparked mass fury on the eve of Black Consciousness Day, formerly called Quilombo Day. This holiday commemorates Black pride and resistance. The date marks the death in 1695 of Brazil's most historic Black

hero, Zumbi dos Palmares, who led the country's largest settlement of escaped slaves (quilombo) in the 17th century.

Masses of people gave the day more urgency as they protested at Carrefour supermarkets throughout Brazil. One large group shouted, “The real looters are capitalists!”

President Jair Bolsonaro did not speak, but the vice president, Antônio Hamilton Mourão (who is Black) did. He hastened to say that in Brazil “racism does not exist, what exists is inequality.” Another unsubtle way of saying discrimination.

Over half the people in Brazil are Black and, along with indigenous people, they have suffered the most deaths from racism and the coronavirus.

Black and mixed-race people account for about 57% of Brazil's population but constitute

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DON'T DEFEND DEMOCRACY MOBILIZE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM INSTEAD

USA, November 23 — “Defend democracy!” demanded broad coalition marches across the US on November 7. “Democracy in danger!” scream print and other headlines.

Trump’s openly racist coup attempt is a flop. The transition is happening. But leading US industrial and finance capitalists worry some about Trump supporters who distrust the electoral system.

However, they worry more about young workers and students who may have voted for Biden but don’t trust “the system” either. The rulers need to chain the masses to elections – or perhaps “nonviolent civil protest” — to keep them away from communism and the armed struggle to win it.

“What is democracy?” a comrade asked a group of liberal anti-racist friends. “What is it that you aspire to, really?”

“That’s a good question,” one responded. “I’ve never really thought about it,” admitted another.

Textbooks say that democracy is “government by the people” or “majority rule.” In this imaginary world, economics is separate from politics. The social relationships of production have no relation to “power.”

Everyone can see that’s not true in the US or El Salvador or Belarus or Peru or anywhere else. The wealthiest capitalists know it and love it. Masses see it as “corruption” and want to “get money out of politics.”

“DEMOCRACY = COMMUNISM!” posted Comrade T in an online chat.

“I don’t agree,” Comrade H responded. “Democracy, started by Greek slave holders, was a way to try to get their subjects who weren’t slaves to buy into their system. Communism is where the masses decide everything about our lives and carry it out together. It’s the only way the masses will control our future. Because it will be based on collective production for need without capitalists or wage slavery.”

“If communism is not democracy, why do we fight for it?” T asked. “The most democratic form of society is communist, I have always thought. How is that wrong?”

“In a communist society there is no class of exploiters or oppressors,” H replied. “So we are not using the fig-leaf of democracy to deceive the masses. We will run society with mutual relationships, not based on profits, to help each other as one human race.”

Communism: How Will Masses Decide?

The key is building one mass communist party. We understand that the international working class has a common interest. As a new friend put it, “Eight billion people working together can do anything!”

It’s not always easy to see what best serves the international working class at any moment. All who agree with communist principles and want to fight for a communist world need to figure that out through party collectives.

Unlike communist parties in the past, we want all these comrades to be Party members. Not just a select few. Not just those who can be on call 24/7. Not just those who have read a lot or have a lot of experience.

If you want to help build a communist future, we need you to pull up a chair and sit at the table. We need you to speak up.

We invite you to join a party club (cell, collective). Together, we all come to understand communism better. We fight for it more effectively. We recruit more members, build stronger communist relationships, expand our influence, build our power.

Local party collectives are linked globally through a unified structure of direct participation. We struggle for all members and friends to help make decisions. We struggle for all to help carry them out, evaluate them, and move forward. *Red Flag* helps in these struggles.

We all have the responsibility for thinking about and building the new society. Capitalism doesn’t train people to do that, but communism does.

Whenever and wherever the party succeeds in mobilizing masses to establish communist workers’ power, this is how our “liberated zones” will function. We’ll throw out ballot boxes and elections along with money and markets. We’ll strive for consensus (or near-consensus) in a growing



Los Angeles, USA, November 7

mass communist party whose members influence even broader circles among the masses.

Why don’t we call this “the most democratic form of society”?

First, because communism unites the working-class to lead the oppressed masses – not “the people” – to rule. As long as there are classes, even remnants of formerly-ruling capitalist classes, it’s misleading to talk about “government by the people.” We don’t welcome class enemies into a government. We organize masses to suppress them.

Second, because the idea of democracy involves each person voting for what they want (as an individual) instead of resolving collectively what the international working class needs. We have to hear and consider everyone’s opinion. “Majority rule” closes off discussion. It often prevents the collective from reaching the best decision.

That’s why we don’t “defend democracy.” Instead, we mobilize masses for communism.

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74% of victims of lethal violence, according to the Brazilian Forum on Public Safety. The percentage is even higher, 79%, for those killed by police.

Masses have compared this cold-blooded murder in front of witnesses to the murder of George Floyd in the United States.

The French supermarket owners fired the security firm. The bosses fear the masses’ anger and are trying to pacify them.

But many thousands have come out to protest against racism. And the anger of the workers is growing, manifesting itself more and more. The coronavirus pandemic has uncovered the stinking capitalist sewer, but workers are no longer willing to submissively accept attacks against our working-class family.

The conditions are there, but we must not believe that we can end racism under capitalism. Capitalism’s wage slavery needs racism to divide the working class—to pay Black workers less, and to use racist terror to try to prevent our class from uniting to get rid of our exploiters.

We need to channel that mass anger by fighting for Communism, building the International Communist Workers’ Party. We are the only alternative for the workers. We know that taking power away from the capitalists and ending racism will require a violent revolution that puts an end once and for all to the bosses’ system of wage slavery.

“In the Chibata revolt, 110 years ago, sailors, mostly Black, completely paralyzed the entire



Chibata Revolt, Brazil, 1910

country for five days,” remarked a comrade in Brazil. “The rebellion spread like wildfire. Today we have to win the soldiers to fight for communism.”

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Transit Workers on the Job:

“HOW DO WE EXPLAIN TO OTHER WORKERS WHAT COMMUNISM IS?”

LOS ANGELES, USA, November 24 —A group of members of the International Communist Workers' Party who work for MTA (mass transit) met to continue investigating and learning about communist ideas. This meeting was saddened by the murder of our dear comrade Zipho in South Africa. We began it with a moment of silence and a few words about the example of struggle that he leaves us. Each of us promised to continue fighting for communism, which was our dear comrade's dream. We also collected money from several *Red Flag* readers to help his family.

Our meeting was based on the question: “How do we explain to other workers what communism is?”

Comrade A said, “The new society will create new relationships among human beings. Economic conditions (the material basis) will change greatly because exploitation will not exist, and equality will exist.”

He continued, “The new society is not the invention of a small group of people who are

dreaming. Rather, it is a process of social development. Communism does not exist yet, because in previous struggles mistakes were made. That is understandable, because mistakes are made in all experiments. That is why it does not exist yet, but more and more, the working class has been learning. Now, with our party, that theory has reached the point where hundreds of workers worldwide are embracing communist ideas. They are realizing what they want and this is what they are looking for.

“We try to tell others (like you, in this case) that they should attend our study groups so that they learn more,” he concluded. “Here we study political economy, philosophy, and I would like to invite you to join us.”

Comrade B said, “My approach is similar to Comrade A. But I disagree on the question of equality. Because I think that equality is not what we are looking for. That creates a false image of the new society — communism. It is not going to be based on people who are all the same or that everyone will get the same. The truth is that to

each one it will be given according to their needs. Suppose I have three children and Comrade A has only one. If we get the same, it would be a very difficult situation for me and very comfortable for him. That is why I believe it is necessary to make workers understand that we are going to create a society of equity in which each one receives according to their needs.”

We discussed that the bosses try to make workers believe that they will suffer in communism or that the party leadership is going to become a new bourgeoisie. Our line is very specific about privileges. In the future there will be no privileges for anyone. Everyone will receive according to their needs and no one will be given anything else, especially when money is not going to exist in that society.

The meeting was very lively. At the end we talked about the need to continue developing political work with more co-workers through the distribution of *Red Flag* and these study groups. The bell rang and everyone returned to their workplaces.

TO BUILD NEW COMMUNIST LEADERSHIP: DISCUSS RED FLAG!

SEATTLE (USA), November 22—Since the US presidential election, many of us in and around ICWP have talked with friends about voting. These discussions sometimes get heated, as many of our friends are convinced that getting Trump out of the White House will prevent fascism and that life will go back to “normal.” Nonetheless, these discussions have opened opportunities to advance communist ideas and build party leadership.

A social worker said, “Voting is a lot of time and energy wasted. A lot of us know deep down that the emperor has no clothes. The Black Lives Matter movement really got young people engaged. I wouldn't say I am a communist, but I would say I am anti-capitalist.”

My multi-racial family members were energized when one of them had a letter about voting printed in *Red Flag*. He was willing to trade his vote for a conversation about mobilizing for communism. During the pandemic, my family has become a *Red Flag* network. Here are parts of some of our discussions.

A young woman said, “I know under communism that none of these issues [racism, sexism, etc.] would exist, but since it may be a while until

we get there, I want to try to help those who can be seriously impacted by some of the laws passed.”

Her uncle answered, “*This presidential sh-t is really just a show. These conversations are needed all over the country.*”

From a teacher: “*I also agree that while we do need to struggle to change our current system, we also need to figure out how to operate within it as well, until change comes.*”

From another young relative who has become more involved: “*No matter who is in office, capitalism will still exist so long as the current system is alive. As a ‘young’ person who has not been thoroughly educated on communism throughout my life and has lived to know this current system (democracy) it's hard to get a grasp on what a world under communism would be like, or how it would even be possible.*

“*So much of society has been brainwashed into thinking communism is one thing,*” they continued, “*when clearly it is not. For me this is where the fight has to start, erasing the stigma attached to communism. There needs to be more of a focus on the positives of communism rather than the negatives of our current social systems.*”

And what better way to start the fight than to develop more *Red Flag* networks of readers and distributors, who, like my family and friends, debate the articles in the paper?

Inspired by this collective conversation, I contacted other friends.

A healthcare worker said, “*Many people I know felt they had to vote because they see Trump as a threat. The blatant racism and anti-communism they push just pissed everyone off. I want an end to the system but do I think it's possible, not sure. I will continue to read Red Flag... I will always talk to my friends with a class analysis ... keep up your work.*”

When the people around us read *Red Flag* and we struggle with them about mobilizing the masses for communism, we win others to ICWP and we build new communist leadership. Friends who read *Red Flag* and share it with others can discuss the conversations they have and write about them for the paper. These discussions will generate new ideas for articles for the paper.

In this way we will strengthen our ties to our friends, improve our work, build new leadership and hasten the end of the deadly capitalist system.



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workers have begun to write for the newspaper. It is a way that they are informed of the need to organize from an early age, and they can share these ideas in school and universities.

We still cannot hold broader meetings. That has affected us a lot, but even under these conditions we have managed to recruit four co-workers. We have used social media to keep in touch with ICWP members, readers and friends.

The workers are organizing to leaflet at other factories. No matter how difficult the conditions are, our party must keep fighting to overcome the obstacles and advance. *Red Flag* is a key tool to make this a reality.

LONG LIVE THE WORKING CLASS!
LONG LIVE COMMUNISM!

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Health Care Workers:

EXHAUSTED, ANGRY AND READY FOR COMMUNISM

USA, November 22—“I went back to work part time,” said a recently retired New Jersey healthcare worker, “because my department is so understaffed. People are on medical leave and the hospital refuses to hire anybody else. I felt I had to help, and I can use the little extra money to help with food for my daughter’s family.” Their work hours had been cut.

“The problem is all these hospitals are businesses. Even the non-profit hospitals are run like a capitalist business. What a joke!”

A healthcare comrade in Texas agreed. Texas has a rule that once the percentage of COVID patients goes above 15%, the hospital has to shut down elective surgery and other non-essential operations.

“Somehow, the percentage always stays just below 15%,” he said.

Everyone working there knows the hospital is shipping COVID patients outside the region to keep the count low. The hospital makes the most money from elective surgeries.

Even here, the hospital refuses to hire enough staff. The administrators recently negotiated contracts that have workers on call almost all the time. On-call status often requires essential personnel to stay at the hospital. The surgeons don’t want to wait 20 minutes or so for the necessary personnel to arrive from home. It’s all about mak-

ing as much money as possible from elective surgery.

The capitalist media admit that there aren’t enough beds to take care of the surge of COVID patients, let alone for other urgent care. But as these healthcare workers were quick to point out, it’s not about beds. It’s capitalist healthcare.

The capitalist healthcare model can’t properly prepare for pandemics. And it is woefully inadequate when it comes to all public health.

Like any business, healthcare is based on getting by with the least number of workers. The bosses brag about this as “capitalist efficiency.”

Communist healthcare relies not only on science, but also on mobilizing masses.

“Mask-wearing is a good example,” said the Texas comrade. Even if the bosses want people to wear masks, hundreds of years of pushing individualism makes it harder for them to mobilize the population to do so. On the other hand, the public health strategy of wearing masks fits right in with communist collectivity.

The role of mobilizing masses becomes even clearer when we start talking about vaccines.

A. David Paltiel, from the Yale

School of Public Health, was very clear. “Vaccines don’t save lives,” he said, “Vaccination programs save lives.”

He and his colleagues published a study in the journal *Health Affairs* simulating the coming roll-out of coronavirus vaccines. They found that when it comes to infections, hospitalizations, and deaths, mobilizing internationally to get the vaccines to the masses matters just as much as the efficacy of any particular vaccine.

The pandemic has made it clear: communist revolution is a life and death issue for tens of millions of people worldwide.



Lancaster, PA USA, November 21 Nurses strike for increased staffing



“If there’s no bread for the people, there will be no peace for the government”

GUATEMALA, November 21—Protests erupted against the new general budget approved by the Guatemalan parliament. The crisis began when the working class repudiated cutbacks to healthcare programs. The protests of students and workers show the decisive power of the masses when it comes to confronting the politics of the state.

Resignations of presidents and chiefs of police are not enough. It’s necessary to mobilize to build the structure of the communist system.

Masses suffered police attacks, but workers and students knew how to fight back. Communist cells of our International Communist Workers’ Party should give revolutionary leadership to these struggles. We should organize political strikes for communism, which can and will meet the masses’ need for healthcare and everything else they deserve.

COMMUNIST WORKERS’ HURRICANE WILL BLOW CAPITALISM INTO HISTORY’S GARBAGE DUMP

EL SALVADOR— The death and destruction left by hurricanes Eta and Iota, from Colombia to Central America and even to Southeast Mexico, once again shows the horrors of capitalism. Over 260 dead and tens of thousands affected by the hurricanes are mostly poor workers, farm workers and independent fishermen.

When these catastrophes happen, the causes and effects of the bosses’ predatory system come to light. It seems that nature is cruelest to the poorest people, but no. They are workers that the capitalists have consigned to oblivion. That’s why they are forced to live in highest-risk areas.

Working people have seen the little they have wiped off the face of the earth. “When one is poor and has nothing and loses everything, it is better to die,” said a man with a sunburned face. He saw his house crumble from the strong current of a brown river overflowing in Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua. It is a terrible and common tragedy in Honduras and El Salvador also.

Despite the magnitude of this disaster, aid from the bosses of the most powerful countries has been minimal and laughable. Instead it is the solidarity of our working-class family that shows that, in situations like this, they are the ones that will always act to benefit our class.

“We are hungry, we are hungry,” a woman

began to shout. In unison more women, men, and children joined the chorus of mud-covered human beings. They screamed their anger against the Sandinista regime.

Soldiers and members of Sandinista paramilitary groups were paralyzed, not because of the mud, which reached up to their knees, but because they feared the workers. Lifting their legs heavily, they withdrew. The workers kept shouting “Out, out, out!” celebrating it as a great victory.

Hurricanes are not new, but they are more powerful and destructive due to climate change caused by the greed of the capitalist system. Similarly, deforestation to grow palms for profitable palm oil contributes significantly to the emission of greenhouse gases, due to the drainage of carbon-rich soils and the burning of stubble. It also leaves poor peasants without arable land.

The situation in this region reminds us of a presentation that ICWP comrades made a few years ago about the proper use of land for crops and housing.

This planning is based on scientific criteria to get better results in cultivation. It locates the best spaces for families to build homes in places that may represent greater security, when natural phe-

nomena like hurricanes Eta and Iota occur.

Natural phenomena cannot be avoided. But collateral damage can be minimized with communist planning which will put the wellbeing of the working class first. For example, not building houses on the banks of rivers and streams, and having monitoring and information centers.

We will also work collectively to reverse climate change using safer forms of energy and ending the destruction of forests.

The International Communist Workers’ Party (ICWP) stands in solidarity with all who have been affected by these hurricanes throughout the Caribbean, Central America and Mexico. We want them to know that we are organizing and fighting for a system that responds to the needs of the working class. We call on all workers to join the fight for Communism.

Our *Red Flag* newspaper is a powerful weapon to organize our class. Let’s distribute it and make the bosses tremble. Let’s turn factories, schools, and all workplaces into centers for the study of communist ideas.

Now is the time to break the chains and fight for a better future. The next hurricane will be to sweep away the bosses and throw them into the dustbin of history.

WAR IN ETHIOPIA SHOWS NEED TO FIGHT PATRIOTISM AND ETHNIC NATIONALISM

November 25—The Ethiopian Army is poised to attack Mekele, the capital of Tigray province. This war started three weeks ago. It has already claimed hundreds of lives and forced tens of thousands to flee across the border to Somalia. Rulers on both sides are committed to a fight to the death.

Whose death? Workers on both sides are dying. And for what?

Soldiers and young workers in Ethiopia grew up in a country which capitalists have ruled, since 1995, on the principle of ethnic nationalism. It's now more urgent than ever that they turn this deadly fight among capitalists into a revolutionary struggle for communist workers' power.

When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, US imperialists ushered into power the Tigray People Liberation Front (TPLF). This was the strongest of the guerrilla armies that had been fighting against the Soviet-backed Dergue.

Eritrea, formerly an Ethiopian province, seceded. The TPLF, representing a small minority, led the reorganization of Ethiopia into eight semi-autonomous regions, based on ethnic nationalism.

Each regional ruling class has promoted ethnic nationalist cultural institutions and ethnic nationalist ideology to cover up their exploitation of the masses.

In spite of its initial support from US imperialism, the TPLF government has been using this divide-and-rule strategy and a fascist police state to provide a "stable investment climate" for Chinese capital.

China, the rising imperialist, has built infrastructure and many factories in Ethiopia. Ethiopian workers of all ethnicities slave for \$27 a month in textile and other small manufacturing.

This exploitation can't last forever. But ethnic nationalism has allowed the masses' anger to be directed away from class struggle, into ethnic-nationalist movements and uprisings.

Two years ago, the old coalition fell apart. Abiy Ahmed became prime minister. All the regional partners except the TPLF joined his new

"Prosperity Party." The government instituted neoliberal reforms that have opened Ethiopia to European and US imperialists.

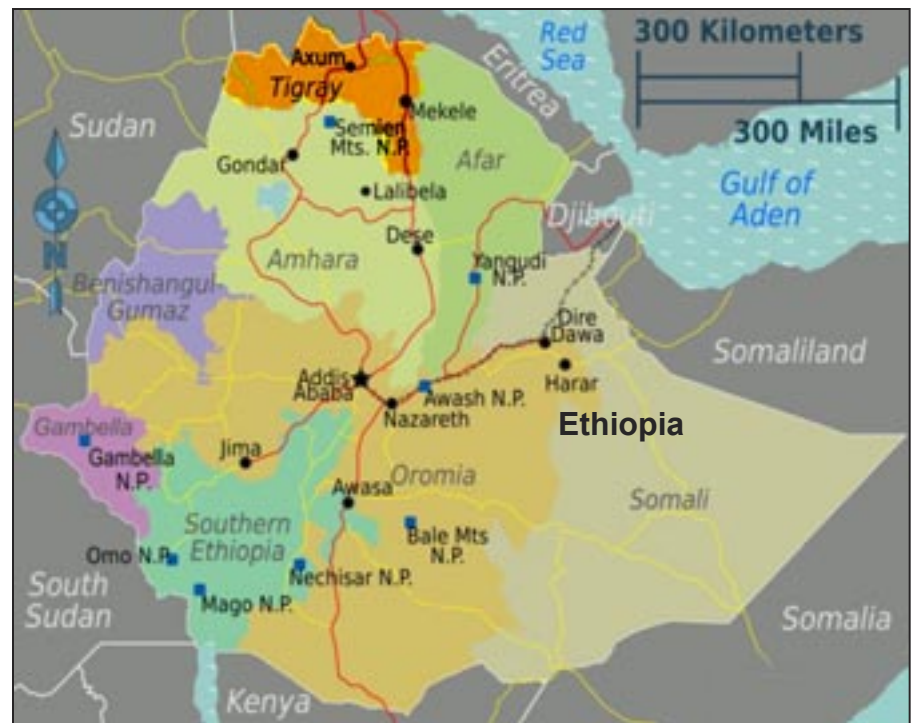
Abiy won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2018 for ending the long-standing Ethiopia-Eritrea war by throwing the TPLF under the bus. Just days later, the International Monetary Fund loaned Ethiopia \$3 billion to help European & US imperialists compete with China in exploiting the working class in Ethiopia.

As Abiy moves to consolidate power in the hands of the federal government, ethnic nationalist misleaders have mobilized mass protests and ethnic violence. Nowhere has the resistance been as fierce as in Tigray—ruled by the TPLF nationalists who formerly ruled the entire country.

This summer, confronting political instability, Abiy used the excuse of the pandemic to postpone parliamentary elections. The TPLF regional government in Tigray held elections in September anyway. The federal government responded with economic reprisals. The Tigray regional army attacked a federal army compound in Tigray and the war was on.

Both ethnic nationalism and patriotism are deadly illusions—in Ethiopia and everywhere. They are based on the idea that workers have more in common with bosses who speak the same language than they do with working people who may speak a different language, but face the same oppression, poverty and exploitation, day after day, week after week.

How does it help you if the boss who pays you a starvation wage waves the same national flag? If the boss speaks your language or worships in the same temple? How does it help you if your ethnic rulers make deals with Chinese imperial-



ists instead of European imperialists?

As long as we see ourselves as different from our working-class family of another country, religion, language, ethnicity or "race," the rulers will continue to get rich off our sweat and rule off our dead bodies.

Once we see that we are more like other workers than different, our common class interest is the material basis for unity. For all its weaknesses, the 20th century communist movement acted on that basis. In Ethiopia, the Marxist-Leninist movement against Haile Selassie and the Dergue united workers and students of all ethnicities. However, its line didn't attack nationalism or patriotism.

Today the ICWP is organizing in South Africa against xenophobic attacks on migrant workers. In South Asia against the fascists who would divide Hindus from Muslims. Everywhere in the world against the racists who would divide us.

We proclaim loudly that nationalism and patriotism are everywhere attacks on the masses. We are building one International Communist Workers' Party for our one international working class.

We have nothing to lose but our chains! We have a world to win!

Shifting Imperialist Alliances in Asia Increase Threat of World War

NEW CONNECTIONS AMONG WORKERS CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNIST GROWTH

On November 15, China and 14 other countries signed the world's largest trade deal apart from the World Trade Organization. The new Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) forms a free trade zone in the Asia-Pacific region. It encompasses a third of the world's economy, where 2.2 billion people live.

The pact will increase exploitation of workers throughout Asia as competition increases to produce more for lower wages. It doesn't even give lip-service to improving labor conditions.

But it will connect workers throughout Asia, workers who can act together against growing attacks. It can open doors to the growth of a powerful communist movement.

The RCEP is the product of eight years of negotiations. It's the first-ever trade agreement that includes China, Japan and South Korea. It could herald the start of a post-COVID-19 regional supply chain.

Importantly, the pact leaves out India and the US. India chose to drop out of the negotiations. Indian capitalists see China's exports to India as a threat to their profits. They are betting on an alliance with the US.

RCEP could shift the center of world trade to Asia. The Chinese Minister of Trade predicted optimistically that "In the next five to ten years, the Asia-Pacific region will become the engine of the world's economic development in terms of both production and consumption."

This agreement, not yet formally ratified, represents a direct challenge to US imperialism. It renders hollow Biden's promise to make the US central again to global economic and political development. By sharpening the rivalry between the largest imperialists, it brings world war closer.

We must take this opportunity to show workers everywhere that we have the same interest. We all need to get rid of capitalist wage slavery, competition, and wars for world domination.

Communist revolution will put an end to capitalism. Communist workers' power will replace crises and sharpening exploitation with a communist world. The masses, organized in communist collectives, will produce to meet everyone's needs, not for profit.

Communism will build ties based on relationships of respect, nurturing and collectivity, not

deadly competition for jobs, money or maximum profit.

Contradictions within RCEP

Two days after fifteen nations signed RCEP, China's *Global Times* warned two signatories, Japan and Australia, to back off their recent defense pact (the Reciprocal Access Agreement).

This pact was to be a step to an "Asian NATO," a vision the US has long pushed. The *Global Times* called it "a new lever for the US to divide Asia" which will force China to seek deeper military cooperation with other Asian countries.

Trump withdrew from the Trans-Pacific Partnership a US sponsored anti-China trade pact, in 2017. This opened a void that RCEP fills.

Japan and Australia hope the US will rejoin and re-invigorate TPP. But for now, the US is reeling with Covid while China, South Korea and Japan are beginning to emerge from the pandemic and moving forward with their imperialist plans.

Richard Haas, head of the influential Council on Foreign Relations, warned that blaming

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November 18, Paris police attack migrant camp at the Stalingrad metro in Saint-Denis. Communist-led masses defeated the Nazis at Stalingrad in 1943 but capitalism's fascism lives on.

So, too, does anti-racist and pro-migrant resistance. But only communism can create a world without borders, where everyone is welcome everywhere.

Red Flag thanks readers who have written with criticisms, comments, and stories. We encourage more to take part in the ongoing struggle to develop our communist political line.

Never Give Up!

I wanted to share a wonderful experience with a longtime friend. She and I worked together in the 1980's and became fast friends. Even when I left that job, we continued to see each other, talk on the phone, etc. We agreed on many things, but politics was not one of them. She considers herself a liberal; I am a longtime communist. We would have struggles over world events, and always disagree strongly at election time, since I think voting is just a capitalist ruse.

She is cynical about the potential for a revolution for communism. I believe her cynicism comes from being brought up in a religion that stresses original sin. She has long since left the religion, but that kernel stays in her mind.

Our strong friendship continues and we have agreed to disagree. I try to highlight humans fighting back, how people try to help each other all over the world. She reads and listens to too much of the bosses' media and tells me awful stories.

Last week I got an email from her that her grandson, who is in college, had interviewed her for a paper he is writing for his Women's Studies class. He wanted her "historical" take, since she has lived through a lot.

Here is what she told me about her response: "You would've been proud of me. I unexpectedly kept returning to the topic of capitalism. And how it impacted women's rights for those in lower socio-economic groups."

I was so happy and told her so. All those years of base-building and struggle did eventually have an effect. Now I need to convince her that the answer to capitalism is building a base for communism. Time to try again to get her to read an article or two from *Red Flag*.

The struggle continues!

—Seattle Comrade

To the New Comrade in Pakistan

We welcome you to the Party, especially because you join us by immediately engaging us in struggle to clarify (and strengthen) our line.

It's true. We do use the word "victory" when talking of the Paris Commune, the Soviet revolution, the Chinese revolution and the Chinese Cultural Revolution. We mean it in the sense

of a great advance – an advance that had previously been thought impossible for workers or peasants.

Perhaps when we update the pamphlet, we will use the more accurate term "advances" to describe these four revolutions. We see these as the most important in advancing the fight for a communist world. When we look at these revolutions we see great achievements that all ended in defeat. Why, we asked ourselves? What was the way forward?

We concluded that the one factor central to all of them was the failure to reject commodity production – producing for wages (workers) at one end and profits (private or State) at the other end. We saw that socialism did not pave the way forward to communism. Even though we could recognize there had been forces within the socialist states that wanted and fought for communism.

The way forward, we decided, was to fight directly for communism. We would advance the need for communist revolution in every struggle we found the masses engaged in. No matter whether the fight is against imperialist war, racist police murder, sexist atrocities or deepening exploitation, we would enter the struggle patiently, persistently, insisting on the need to build a revolution for a communist society. No other solution could liberate us from "the horrors of capitalism," as Lenin called it.

And that is the Party that is excited to welcome you comrade!

—California (USA) comrade

Talkin' Bout a Revolution

Recently, a teachers' union Social Justice committee was listening to a report about "Universal Basic Income" (UBI). The speaker mentioned that some conservatives support it to pump more money into the economy and also because growing inequality can lead to "social instability."

This was a continuation of the discussion described in *Red Flag* (v. 11 #12) a month ago. We wrote then that "UBI is a capitalist attempt to resolve the irreconcilable contradictions of the capitalist system. Before increasingly impoverished and infuriated masses join the communist revolutionary movement to destroy it."

Chinese capitalism-imperialism is clearly on the offensive. US capitalism-imperialism is on the defensive. The US imperialists will continue to fight to defend their rapidly declining empire.

But as contradictions among the imperialists are sharpening, so are those between the workers and the capitalists. Every capitalist fights for market share by attacking workers' wages and living conditions harder. Workers are already

When the speaker finished, a comrade asked a question. "Is it possible to fight for UBI without falling into the trap of helping maintain the stability of the capitalist system?"

"That takes us back to the fundamentals: compassion and justice," said another teacher. "Obviously our society does not work for improving human lives. Profit comes first." That led him to bring up revolution. He mentioned that "Dr. King gave his 'I Have a Dream' speech in 1963. By 1967, his dream had become a nightmare. He began talking about economic justice."

Suddenly everyone was talking about revolution. "Even if we get UBI, you still need to have a revolution," said one.

"I don't want all-out revolution," replied someone else. "The conservatives worry about the sustainability of capitalism. Faced with radical social revolution, they would opt for fascism."

"I care about the sustainability of the planet," she continued. "I think about local cooperatives. Large revolutions don't always end up the way we want."

Another teacher identified himself as a socialist. He talked about the National Basketball Association. "Don't laugh," he warned. "The players have a contract that guarantees them 50% of the revenue. Imagine if factory workers got that!" But, he said, one owner got half while a dozen players shared the other half.

He hurried to add that UBI would provide immediate help to the worst-off among us. As someone who had experienced extreme poverty himself, he felt this was very important. "They can't wait for revolution." As for economic sustainability in an era of disappearing jobs, he proposed the fight for a shorter work-week: "30 hours work for 40 hours pay."

With that, the meeting moved on to its next topic: single-payer health insurance.

Two things are clear: First, that even many teachers who are deeply involved in electoral politics and reforms are, at the same time, thinking about revolution. Some have read *Red Flag* or have met with us. And second, that we need to build closer ties with these folks, to be able to have serious discussions about communism with them.

—Teacher comrade

ALLIANCES from page 5

Trump for "all or even most of the international challenges that will await Biden would be to misread history. Many were in play long before Trump and will persist long after he exits the Oval Office: a rising and more assertive China, a Russia willing to use military force and cyber-capabilities to advance its goals."

fighting back.

Our fight-back, in Asia and everywhere, must aim to get rid of capitalism's exploitation and wars by winning and building a communist world that meets our needs. ICWP collectives and networks need to spread *Red Flag*, especially among soldiers and workers. Please help translate *Red Flag* into many more languages!

FOR THE DEAD—OUR DEAD—WE SWEAR TO WIN!**REMEMBERING COMRADE ZIPHO**

PORT ELIZABETH, SOUTH AFRICA, November 23—Comrade Zipho worked in an auto factory. Before that, he worked in cold-storage facilities where he had to work in freezing temperatures handling meat and vegetables. This is when he got to know ICWP. Instantly he was attracted to communism. He would, for hours, describe how he hated the bosses. Communism gave him the vision to change the system.

Capitalist violence took Comrade Zipho's life when he was only 25 years old. He left behind hundreds of friends and family members. The outpouring of social-media messages testifies that thousands of well-wishers fondly remember the comrade who will always remain with us. He was a communist. He remained a determined communist to the end.

Hundreds attended comrade Zipho's memorial in George Botha Hall. We remembered him as a free-spirited smiling guy and as a Communist who dedicated his life towards the emancipation of our working-class family all over the world.

We were able to carry out the memorial service with great help from international comrades. Red flags flew in the hall. Those who came clapped enthusiastically after we read a short poem and tributes and greetings from around the world.

It was the same hall where ICWP held a May Day event a few years back. Comrade Zipho was well-known for being late to meetings. That May Day was no different. But once he joined the meetings, his smile, enthusiasm and encouraging voice naturally drew people's attention. Nobody could stop him from distributing the last copies

of the *Red Flag*.

As a young man in high school, he had met a mentor who introduced him to militant Black Nationalism. He was part of a nucleus of friends who talked about changing the system. A few years later, one of the close friends from this nucleus joined ICWP. Comrade Zipho joined as well. The two comrades recruited the entire group, and many of them are leaders of the party now.

The party introduced comrade Zipho to communist philosophy, dialectical materialism. He grasped it because, as he would later explain, it's the only philosophy to change the world. Comrade Zipho wanted to change the world.

After years of working in the auto factory, comrade Zipho wanted to work in Marikana, near Rustenburg, in the mining industry. He visited Rustenburg with a group of ICWP members. His native language was Xhosa but he had learned some Sotho and Zulu. Comrades distributed hundreds of *Red Flags*, and comrade Zipho always wanted to try his new language skills with enthusiasm. Friends in Rustenburg sent heartfelt messages of support and solidarity for his memorial services.

Comrade Zipho met with other comrades of ICWP from the US, Mexico, El Salvador, and Spain in Port Elizabeth a few years ago. He greeted them warmly. After they left, he would remember each one of them and ask how they were doing.

Our young lion has fallen, his life cut short by brutal capitalism. His untimely death leaves us with deep sadness and anguish. He gave us a vision of communism, a society without money and exploitation. His vast network of friends will rise to fulfil this vision. Forward! Long live communism!

**MESSAGES FROM COMRADES AROUND THE WORLD**

These are but a few of the many messages of condolence and solidarity from friends and comrades around the world

From Pakistan: This is a great loss for the international working class...Comrades from Pakistan share their solidarity. Comrades from every part of the world are in pain because of the murder of our comrade.

From Spain: Comrade Zipho: Presente!

From Mexico: This is devastating.

From El Salvador: This news hurts us deeply. Solidarity to the comrades and family members...Those who die for life cannot be called dead. Comrade Zipho! Ever onward to victory! Hasta La Victoria Siempre!

From Canada: To paraphrase Joe Hill: "From Rustenburg up to Seattle, in every mine and mill, where workers fight and organize that's where you'll find comrade Zipho."

From a comrade from Ethiopia in the US: We will march to victory with the torch of our fallen comrade.

From a comrade from Mexico in the US: Bella Ciao, comrade. "I'm a comrade for life and I will die a communist."

From a comrade in the US: Let us dedicate ourselves to a whole life of communist struggle. Long live communism! Power to the communist working masses.



Memorial Service

**TO THE PARENTS OF OUR BELOVED COMRADE ZIPHO:**

On behalf of Zipho's comrades in the International Communist Workers' Party around the world, we express our deepest condolences to you, his parents, and to all his family.

Words cannot express the grief of parents who have lost such a fine son in the prime of his youth.

Your sorrow is our sorrow.

Your loss is our loss.

And your pride is our pride.

Zipho was our comrade. He dedicated his life to the struggle for a world without exploitation, racism and xenophobia.

He, like us, fought for a world without money, where the crime of exploitation and all forms of theft will be but a painful and distant memory.

He, with us, spent his days working to build a world where we do not prey on each other, but join together as one human family to pro-

duce what we need and to share what we have. Zipho will always be with us.

He lives on in our hearts and in our memories, and in our renewed commitment to a lifetime of struggle.

For him, and for all the fallen comrades, we rededicate ourselves more firmly to the fight for a communist world. To him, and to every fallen comrade, we swear to win!

A luta continua!

RED FLAG NETWORKS: KEY TO DEVELOPING COMMUNIST ORGANIZERS

In the 1970's, Detroit autoworkers introduced me to the concept of socialist newspaper networks. These comrades expanded distribution within their factories by enlisting the help of sympathetic workers to circulate the paper.

So began a comrade's reflections on what he has learned about revolutionary newspaper networks.

Today, the ICWP's guiding principle of mobilizing the masses for communism opens up new possibilities. *Red Flag* networks go beyond expanding the distribution of our literature. They go beyond organizing class struggles, as militant as they may be. *Red Flag* networks are a vital aspect of building the communist relations we need to grow party collectives.

Our comrade continues:

Soon after I heard about the Detroit networks, I enlisted in the U.S. Army. During the Vietnam War era, the mission was to win soldiers to our party and ultimately to "turn the guns around." But we faced an obstacle. It was illegal to distribute revolutionary literature in the armed forces.

To overcome this, we adapted the "Detroit networks" model to our military work. "Your party must be serious," said my friend's friend when he saw the paper and noted its wide-spread dissemination.

My friend was impressed. As we became "brothers in struggle" (his words), he joined our military collective.

Eventually, we recruited another soldier, creating a three-person multi-racial club. Despite courts-martial, imprisonment, FBI and U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command harassment and constant attacks, our networks maintained the circulation of the paper. Not only did these networks spread our ideas, they also were able to organize open rebellion, sometimes fighting directly to spread the circulation of our paper.

After the army, I began work in a factory. My club again adapted the network model.

For a decade and a half, I went to work in a 12-passenger vanpool. Most in the vanpool read the paper. Readers who left the vanpool maintained contact; some continued distributing it.

Our organizing relied on this vanpool. For example, preparing for mass marches through the plants started there. Eventually, two Black women involved in this network joined the party.

One contract march is particularly notable. The 9/11 attack unleashed a torrent of U.S. national-

ism, racism and reactionary politics. The union misleaders couldn't mobilize workers, even for their pathetic reforms. With the aid of these networks, our small party collective rose to the occasion. Before the union traitors even knew what was happening, we organized a multi-racial march through the plants. Not a U.S. flag in sight!

The bosses were determined to stop the circulation of the paper. They threatened to fire readers and distributors. Anti-communist union misleaders helped management. But often the vanpool networks had spread party literature far and wide before these enemies could even get going. More importantly, some friends stood up to the anti-communist attacks directed at the paper.

Red Flag Networks: Opportunity to Advance Communist Work Today

These experiences are important everywhere in today's conditions. *Red Flag* networks rely on activating all around us to spread communist ideas and to grow the collectives we already have. Our goal is to build one international party. *Red Flag* will help our networks unite the party internationally.

Active *Red Flag* networks are vital to developing new communist organizers and building enthusiasm for our communist mission. By participating in these networks, veteran and new comrades—as well as close political and social friends—will learn a lot about bringing communist ideas to the many varied battles against capitalism. These lessons are invaluable for every collective and comrade around the world.

Red Flag networks are necessary to maintain and build our collectives no matter what the bosses throw at us. The process of getting as many as possible to distribute *Red Flag* (either by hand or via the internet) will lead to wider discussions about the communist articles in the paper.

When our friends discuss articles with their friends, we need to write about these discussions for *Red Flag*. These kinds of letters and articles will encourage us to incorporate the struggle for communism into our lives.

There is no reason to limit *Red Flag* networks to the factories. Teachers, students, hospital workers, soldiers and others have employed this tactic to

good effect. Some workers are very clear about this, taking scores of papers to family members and to their volunteer activities in the communities and schools.

Red Flag networks cannot be maintained without a collective struggle to develop communist relationships. These networks bring the party's ideas and experience to workers worldwide, nurturing all our political and social relationships.

Communist relations on a mass scale will be a defining characteristic of our future communist society. These relationships allow us to function for the collective good without money defining our existence.

Red Flag networks will help develop communist relations among broader masses. In this period, they will not only help grow the party, but will give current and future comrades a taste of communist work.



Boeing workers march through factory, October 2001

COMMUNIST NETWORKS IN PRE-REVOLUTIONARY RUSSIA

Illegal communist work in Russia, before the 1917 revolution, centered on the Bolshevik "All-Russian" newspaper *Iskra* and on communists' relationships among the masses. "Can a newspaper be a collective organizer?" Lenin asked. Yes, he answered, and it's absolutely necessary.

That's how circles of workers and youth can engage in common work. Debate and organize around a common line. How the revolutionary communist party can develop relationships and establish lines of communication extending into far-flung factories and working-class districts. How it can be built up organizationally. How it can maintain a hard line and flexible tactics. How it can prepare for a revolutionary uprising.

Lenin explained this in Chapter V (parts B and C) of *What Is to Be Done?* (1902). This is not easy reading. Lenin was arguing against his critics, and it's easy to lose the thread. But many

party collectives will find it useful to read together.

Twenty Years in Underground Russia, by Cecilia Bobrovskaya, and other Bolshevik memoirs show how this worked in practice. Getting stacks of papers into a worker's hands involved printing and transporting copies illegally. It meant hoping that one's contacts hadn't been arrested—and having backup plans.

As we often find today, many workers were illiterate, or not comfortable reading. Their literate comrades had to be able to read or at least explain the line to them. This usually couldn't happen openly in a factory, but many workers lived near each other in the factory district – also like today.

Bolshevik organizers knew well that the essence of their work was developing leaders for networks of workers, who in turn would lead

others. In this respect, our "*Red Flag* networks" today are the same.

The big difference between then and now is our concept of a mass party. We want the emerging leaders to become party members, fully engaged in the life of the Party, and not just supporters. Of course, we need these comrades to maintain discretion, security and discipline – just as the Bolsheviks expected from their "cadre."

We have confidence in the potential of such a growing mass communist party to do more than distributing papers, more than leading communist class struggle, more than taking advantage of opportunities for insurrection and revolution. Unlike the Bolsheviks, who compromised with capitalists to build socialism, our party of a new type will be the core of a new and fully communist society.