

RED FLAG



MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM

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



COMMUNIST MAQUILA WORKER DEFIES BOSS AND UNION LEADERS

EL SALVADOR, January 5—“I went on a political outing with the *Red Flag* comrades,” said MC. “The atmosphere of comradeship and solidarity is very pleasant. They bring the families of the readers and Party members to very good discussions. They teach you that, if I am very busy, the comrades in the factory help you and that you also have to help others, I liked it a lot. I’m even going to tell a friend to make the T-shirts for May Day. “At work the next day, MC told this to the leaders of the bosses’ union that she is affiliated with.

As comrades of the International Communist Workers’ Party, we want to tell you a little about how the bosses and their servants are putting obstacles in the way of us being able to recruit more workers into the Party. MC has been taking *Red Flag* from us since last year. At the beginning of this year, she joined our broader meetings.

When the bosses and those in the union realized that she was joining the ICWP, they started discriminating against her. They don’t give her a stable place to work. A supervisor told her, “This is happening because you are paying attention to J. We know that they are from the *Red Flag* group, because of the bad advice they give, about communist ideas.” They said these relationships were causing her problems at work. And that’s why the union did not support her either; on the contrary, they were also attacking her.

But she answered the supervisor: “I am not a child. I am a worker and I know how to distinguish right from wrong in case someone would give me bad advice. And I know well several members of the Party that distributes *Red Flag*. They are not bad people; they only do humane things. They don’t like the injustices that you as bosses do to the workers.”

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Farmers, Workers, Students, Soldiers: EARTH-SHAKING PROTESTS IN INDIA CREATE POSSIBILITY OF MASS COMMUNIST PARTY

DELHI (India), December 28 — “I will never forget the last week of November,” said Satish, a new young comrade. “Farmers and their supporters overrunning barricades, water cannons, tear-gas shells. Entrenched barricades did not stop them. When one group retreated, others joined. There were thousands and thousands of them in every direction. They were all demanding Delhi Chalo (March to Delhi). The police were outnumbered.”

Satish took part in these earthshaking events. He did not know about the International Communist Workers’ Party (ICWP) before, but now he is ready to mobilize the masses for communism.

“Is it possible?” another comrade asked. “Can communism win under the leadership of the masses mobilized by ICWP?”

Satish answered emphatically: “My life has

changed. I cannot go back.” He was thinking of the future. “Communism for me is a society without the bosses, they are responsible for every problem we have. I did not know anything about communism a month ago. I was angry, my family was struggling to bring food to the table.”

There are over a million farmers like Satish. They are angry and willing to march on Delhi. But the leaders of various farmers’ groups are holding them back. Instead of advancing to Delhi, they have retreated to the outskirts. They are negotiating with the very same bosses that made Satish and millions like him angry.

The union leaders’ demands reflect their politics of making farmers dependent on becoming successful small capitalists. The capitalist bosses want to do away with small farmer-owners. They want complete control by huge corporations that

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EARTH-SHAKING PROTESTS IN INDIA CREATE POSSIBILITY OF MASS COMMUNIST PARTY, from page 1

also distribute farm products. Two of the largest owners, Ambani's Reliance Group and Adani, have amassed \$50 billion (5000 crore rupees) during the pandemic, making them among the world's largest capitalists.

The demands of the millions flooding Delhi and protesting throughout India will not be satisfied by farmers' unions or large capitalist owners.

"Why don't we fight for a system that will abolish money and private ownership of land?" asked one of the two dozen comrades visiting the farmers' encampments. "We will all work just like the farmers are in Delhi. We cook. We produce. We take care of the sick people. We build houses. We do not have to get the permission of the bosses. We can do everything with the power of the working class."

It makes sense to Satish. He is determined to recruit many more: "Modi is no match for farmers and soldiers marching in millions. He is nobody. The whole system will collapse."

"Look at my village," Satish continued. "Almost every poor family has a son who is in the military. Many poor farmers were in the military. And they want us to fight against China when we are struggling." Sikhs from Punjab have joined the military in large numbers. They have paid a heavy price fighting to defend capitalists like Adani and Ambani. A steady stream of wounded and dead coming home to Punjab adds to the agony of the poor in its villages. War inflicts violence on workers on even a larger scale than capitalism's daily attacks.

Now comrade Satish is thinking about the pogroms in Delhi last December. Over five hundred, mostly Muslims, were killed by fascist Modi. Many more were killed in Uttar Pradesh. Every house in its Muslim neighborhood was burnt, properties were damaged. Communist internationalism is the only way to respond to long-term capitalist campaigns promoting racism, caste di-

visions and religious prejudice.

Satish recalled a Sikh Langar (community kitchen) that came from Punjab to Delhi to help Muslim workers. The Langar food was collected by extremely poor Punjabi village farmers for the starving masses of Muslims. When they arrived at the Delhi gate, there was overwhelming Sikh-Muslim solidarity. But Modi's fascist police blocked them from distributing food. Then the Langar organizers threatened that masses would block railway traffic in Punjab, cutting off the food supply to all of India. The blockade was lifted overnight.

The times are changing. Two years ago, ICWP comrades joined a student protest at Jawaharlal Nehru University. They brought the idea of communism to the masses. There was fierce opposition from many who believed that we must fight first for socialism. We showed the masses that every avenue to socialism leads to capitalist wage slavery.

Our members grew in small numbers. But when millions of migrant workers were forced to leave their city homes, we participated and organized food distribution. We made more contacts and more of our comrades joined.

We are entering a critical stage of our movement. Millions of farmers, 250 million industrial workers, soldiers, and ex-soldiers show the possibility of a communist revolution. We see signs of the masses rejecting wage slavery's old ways of living. More new comrades like Satish joining ICWP and recruiting many others shows that communism is on the horizon.



INDIA: SOLDIERS CALL ON OTHERS TO DEFY BOSSES' ORDERS

A video of over one hundred soldiers defying the Indian government gives us plenty of reasons to realize how weak fascist governments are all over the world. These soldiers openly called on their comrades around India to follow their lead. The soldier who spoke repeatedly told the viewers, "We are not rich. We did not come from factory owners. We don't live in mansions. We are sons of poor kissans (farmers) and we learned our values from them."

The state of Punjab is called "India's Breadbasket," with its many farmers. Punjabis form about 20% of soldiers in the Indian Army, although they are, overall, around 2% of India's population. Punjab borders Kashmir, with its restive population and 1 million soldiers. Further north is a vast icy land facing China, where most of the Indian soldiers are Punjabi Sikhs.

The soldier who said, "we will fight shoulder to shoulder with kissan" has sent a shock wave through the Indian ruling class. It shows a mass appeal among soldiers. The defiant soldiers' challenge reaches all farmers, not just Sikhs. Modi and his fascists have started a campaign of demonizing Sikhs, branding them as supporters of Khalistan, a separatist anti-India group.

It is crucial to distribute *Red Flag* to soldiers and farmers, especially the soldiers we already know or can get to know. Winning the soldiers to communism can change the course of history. Masses in India are in motion. It is creating unprecedented opportunities for us, as the working class, as we confront the oppressor class.

US DEMOCRACY IN CRISIS: ANSWER IS COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

USA, January 6—Fascist Trump supporters fought cops, besieged the nation's capital and stormed the Capitol Building today. Congress had to adjourn. The cops' unwillingness to counter-attack sharply (as they did against Black Lives Matter protesters) shows the racist rulers' intention to keep this fascist base in reserve.

Meanwhile, Republican members of Congress continue to contest the confirmation of president-elect Joe Biden. The Big Lie that Trump "really won" is a thin cover for a classic fascist idea: that the "will of the people" is embodied in a "great leader."

The US Capitol is now secure, and the confirmation will continue. But it is no cause for celebration that the US military, from former Secretaries of Defense to the National Guard, opposed Trump's attempted fascist coup. Nor that the Republican party is fracturing over it. Governments of both parties have implemented fascist policies and practices, bit by bit, for decades. These include increased executive power, surveillance, militarization and intensifying racist attacks.

A qualitative change to full-blown fascism will happen when the capitalist class decides it needs it. That time is approaching, with the economy in uncontrollable crisis and international competition sharpening into mushrooming wars. Whether fascism comes wearing Trump's MAGA hats or Biden's "America Is Back" banners is truly secondary.

Democrats Rafael Warnock and Jon Ossoff have won the run-off Georgia senatorial elections. The Democrats will be able to move forward freely with their plans to ramp up military strength.

But contradictions are also sharpening inside the Democratic Party, which will be hostage to its most "moderate" (openly pro-capitalist) members. To the extent that the huge Georgia voter turnout reflects mass faith in the electoral process, for the working class it's "heads they win, tails we lose." Capitalist elections can never bring about the change that the working class needs.

The hopes of grass-roots Democratic Party voters and activists, especially youth, will be dashed. We must seize all coming opportunities to convince them that only communist revolution can defeat fascism.

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We Stand with Teachers Who Want to Strike for Safety:

JUSTIFICATION FOR REOPENING SCHOOLS EXPOSES NEED FOR COMMUNIST EDUCATION

SEATTLE, USA, January 3—When they heard about the state’s relaxed guidelines and the Seattle district’s desire to prematurely open schools, my fellow teachers were ready to strike. Safety is crucial, but are there even bigger issues at stake?

Across the U.S., school districts, bowing to the will of the capitalists, are forcing the re-opening of physical classrooms. For example, a comrade’s niece is a counselor at an East Coast elementary school. Finances force her to go back to in-person counseling. She has three children still in school and has to consider their safety. This dilemma affects the grandparents as well. Although thus far most kids don’t seem to get very sick, bringing them together in an enclosed classroom increases the potential for spreading the virus throughout the community.

The pandemic has laid bare the role of schools in enabling workers to produce profits for the capitalists. The ruling class wants people back to work and they want schools open as warehouses for students, regardless of the suffering that causes.

Capitalist society, focused on the maximization of profit, has allowed 1.8 million confirmed deaths worldwide. There are over 350,000 deaths in the U.S. alone. Schools expose the failings of capitalism in non-pandemic times; they amplify them during the pandemic.

The ruling class is working hard to turn public opinion against teachers and school staff. Rather than being painted as the heroes they were in the spring, they are now being called entitled and selfish for demanding safe working and learning conditions. There are cries of “learning loss” and “students falling behind.” Educators know these attacks well. But they ring hollow after years of schools being defunded and any attempts to make education robust and meaningful for students being undermined.

Capitalist Schools Reinforce Class, Gender and Race Inequality

Schools are painted as the “great equalizers,”

the road to opportunity for all students. But under capitalism, they function as a social sorting mechanism. Over the course of 12-16 years or more, they reproduce and justify the reproduction of class, gender and race inequality. They reproduce racism and sexism through the curriculum. They justify inequalities using test scores and grades, ranking students according to their perceived potential to produce capitalist profits.

In the US, the real wages of workers have been stagnant for 40 years, but Wall Street profits have created 56 new billionaires since the beginning of the pandemic. Schools reproduce and justify those inequalities.

Parents who have to work are looking for some relief. There is an extra burden placed on them during the pandemic. This has an especially large, negative impact on women, and single mothers in particular. This sexist attack further exposes the failings of capitalism.

Communist Education Is the Real Equalizer; Promotes Collective Well-being

In a communist society, education will be focused on developing each student to contribute to the collective well-being, to reproduce equality and unity. A crisis like this would be an opportunity to learn more about science and public health. Society would be focused on mobilizing people as quickly and safely as possible to end the pandemic, thinking collectively about how to effectively protect lives.

We stand with the teachers who want to strike for the safety of their fellow instructors, staff students and their families. But capitalism can’t provide safety. So what should we strike for? We should strike to add our voices to the mobilization for communism.

Let’s prepare for this kind of political strike by widely circulating this *Red Flag* article. We can follow up by discussing the article’s communist ideas with our fellow teachers, staff and students. Coast to coast and around the world, let’s build a revolutionary movement for communist education.

WHO WILL CONTROL EDUCATION: THE BIGGEST BOSSES OR THE WORKING CLASS?

SEATTLE, USA, January 3—About a month ago, the Democratic governor of Washington State announced his relaxed guidelines for reopening the schools. In fact, these were shaped in secret by a think-tank called “Challenge Seattle.” These relaxed guidelines will prematurely force students, staff and teachers back into the classrooms.

Challenge Seattle is made up of 19 of the top bosses in the state. They include the CEOs of Boeing, Amazon, Microsoft, Costco, Starbucks, Nordstrom and The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Also included are the Washington Kaiser Permanente Medical Group and Pacific Northwest JP Morgan Chase, subsidiaries of the country’s biggest medical group and bank.

Almost all workers know the capitalists constantly plot to maximize their profits. Businesses are always looking for more ways to exploit us.

But it goes further than just business. The wage system is the material basis for all capitalist society. In times of crisis, the biggest bosses take direct control of every aspect of the social order.

In this case, Challenge Seattle took direct control of education. That’s the true nature of capitalist democracy.

In a communist society, education will both serve the collective needs of the masses and directly involve the working class. During the Chinese Cultural Revolution, communist plantation workers criticized the old schools as being divorced from proletarian politics, from workers and peasants, from labor and reality. At a party meeting, a veteran Seattle teacher described how middle-school students could learn much more about writing, speaking, history, math and science with the help of local factory workers.

The pandemic has shown the absolute need for the working class to take direct control of education and everything else away from the capitalists. Join the ICWP to build for the communist revolution that will make that possible.

Read our pamphlet:

COMMUNIST EDUCATION FOR A CLASSLESS SOCIETY

Available at:
icwpredflag.org/epe.pdf



Seattle, USA Teachers’ Strike, 2015

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And because she told the supervisor all that, they left her without a stable place, for several months. That worried us a lot because she was about to be taken off the job. However, MC, very sure of her status as a member of the working class, told us, “Calm down, don’t worry. I’m going to continue receiving and reading *Red*

Flag. These bosses aren’t going to scare me off so easily. And today I discovered that the bosses are the ones that the unions serve.” She continues with the ICWP in its revolutionary communist process.

Struggles like this one of this new ICWP comrade give us greater courage and strength, since the fear of losing our job is part of our life as workers. But our dignity and labor power also

lead us towards the final victory, where the working class will lead the communist world.

Our main goal is to recruit more workers, not the union leaders, to our party. Just as comrade MC realized that they are sellouts and only serve the boss, many workers will also realize that and will join us in mobilizing the masses for communism.

ICWP IN SOUTH AFRICA: ADVANCING UNDER ATTACK

FIGHT GANG VIOLENCE WITH COMMUNIST CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS

While the African National Congress and the South African government are still in paralysis because of their internal divisions, the workers are left to fend for themselves in the face of gang violence. Without unity within the working class, we will continue to suffer. ICWP exists so that we can try to heal this division and bring these different racial groups under our organization, which is multi-racial even from its founding.

Workers are facing a brutal assault from the gangs. We have lost two comrades in the Party due to this gang violence.

The most important message that we need to drive through to workers is that we are more similar than we are different. Of course, the bosses will emphasize our differences which is only colour. But if we look at things based on class consciousness, we will be able to see beyond these trivial things like race.

One critical aspect that goes largely ignored is the role of police in perpetuating the violence against the masses by the gangs. Corrupt policemen sell gangs the guns and ammunition, and look the other way when these gangs are selling their drugs. Even when there are raids, some gangs get tip-offs from the very same police. We can't rely on the police to protect us. We need to take matters into our own hands, to unite against these attacks and completely wipe capitalism from the face of the earth.

The most important thing is for us to fight the disease, which is the capitalist system. The gangs themselves are the first line of defence for the bosses. The second line of defence is the police.

The government has been negotiating with some of the gangs, therefore giving them legitimacy. Now they feel that they are kings in some of the neighbourhoods that have been carved out. The police know they can't go into certain neighbourhoods. Services like ambulances can't go in if someone is sick. They have to rent a car to take them to hospital. Some people who need emergency assistance die on the road. Some of them die in the hospital because of the poor state they are in. Unless we eradicate the system, the workers will continue to suffer.

—Comrade in South Africa

COVID PANDEMIC: CAPITALISTS ATTACK THE WORKING CLASS

SOUTH AFRICA, December 28—This pandemic has exposed for everyone to see the division between the working class and the middle class—people who cannot afford private health insurance and people who can. Public hospitals have become a slaughterhouse for the working class. They are supposed to prevent the spread of the virus, yet they are one of the spreaders. If you go into a hospital you are unlikely to come back.

It's better to die at your house than to actually go to a hospital. That's how our class brothers and sisters feel about the state of hospitals here in South Africa. It is a comment on the state of our hospitals.

Not only that. The pandemic has also exposed the cruelty of the government and of the system. South Africa has reached a million cases. Thirty thousand have died in the last two months. And yet the government is considering another full lockdown, which is really a direct assault on the working class.

They expect people who live in houses that are no larger than match boxes to actually quarantine, expect extended families to stay inside. There's no plan. What will they eat while they are locking themselves up for a month or so? This is not the failure of individuals.

This is the general failure of the capitalist system because it prioritizes the bosses and neglects the majority, the working class, those actually suffering on the ground.

Townships are a hotbed for the virus because of the way people are living. They are thrown together, in many cases with no proper sanitation, no running water; in other cases, with no electricity. To expect people to lock themselves up: how are they going to survive, to eat?

It is important for us to highlight this problem but at the same time to come up with solutions. The only thing that will make this better, that will end our suffering, is the complete eradication of capitalism.

And for that we need the International Communist Workers' Party to lead this revolution against this murderous system. We need our class brothers and sisters. We need to be able to reach out to them, to recruit them, to spread our literature so that they can stand with us and fight against capitalism.

NEW COMMUNIST LEADERS, NEW COMMUNIST COLLECTIVES IN SOUTH AFRICA

January 3—The year 2020 was challenging for any collective of ICWP in every part of the world. The articles on this page about gang violence and the pandemic reflect that. But the comrades have risen to the challenge here. More comrades, especially women, have shown more leadership.

We have been discussing and building party networks. For example, C lives in a town close by. She has built a collective of high-school students and is teaching them about communism. She is not only an active member but a leader. We need to develop more female comrades to give leadership. We do have some challenges, but C's work was a highlight of 2020.

Other comrades, including V, are actively struggling with their co-workers to recruit them. In another neighborhood, comrades R and Y have distributed *Red Flag* in a factory three times. They made a few contacts. When the factories open in mid-January, they will continue to try to recruit these workers to establish a party cell inside that factory.

Advancing Under Attack

Comrade's Zipho's death has left a void in the organization as a whole, as well as in the collective. But it has also created opportunities for other comrades to rise up. He was not simply a member of the organization. He was a leader of the party here. That really destabilized our collective.

More comrades are starting to give more leadership. We've engaged mostly the youth who knew that he was not only a good guy, but a communist. We have recruited some few young people to join our collective in his name. For example, comrade P is giving leadership to the party and struggling to create another collective.

We will come up with concrete plans to bring

different people to the party this year. They can become active members. We have to struggle with our contacts here even though we can't see them physically. We will keep contact with them by calling and sending text messages.

Communist relations are the lifeblood of communism. We need to build personal relationships to build trust among us.

Comrades are taking some steps with encouraging results. K, another new comrade, has established a new collective in her community.

Also, comrades F and S have recruited more people in an established area. One of our leaders has moved away from there, but these comrades have stepped up. Sometimes comrades rely too much on one person. Now they have understood

the value of doing things more collectively. This is the message we have been trying to hammer home to every member

When we do things collectively, we are more likely to succeed. Two heads are better than one. Three heads are better than two. Comrades are seeing more and more of the value of doing things collectively.



South Africa, 2014—ICWP comrades explaining communism to students

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Covid-19 Vaccines: Science and Politics

COMMUNISM WILL RESOLVE THE CONTRADICTION BETWEEN SCIENCE AND CAPITALISM BY ABOLISHING CAPITALISM

USA, January 3— “After I got Covid-19 symptoms and tested positive, I participated in a monoclonal antibody therapy trial,” reported a comrade. “Driving home, a *Red Flag* reader called with holiday greetings and condolences for Comrade Zipho. He was surprised to hear I was sick because he follows a conspiracy theorist who says the pandemic is a hoax. I want our party to fight for a scientific and materialist approach to Covid-19 vaccines and treatments,” she concluded.

Many workers profoundly and correctly distrust capitalists and their governments. This can create suspicion of vaccines and treatments that could save lives now— if capitalism’s anarchic production for profit didn’t stand in the way.

The US capitalist media admit that the vaccine rollout is utterly chaotic due to almost no preparation. Unmentioned is that this was the result of a strategy to break the whole public sector, including health agencies.

A friend who calls herself “a scientist who cares about people” expects “plenty of surprises, because no one has had more than a year to study this.” She worries about long-term effects of Covid-19. But she also notes “how fast everyone mobilized to learn about this, so we know much more about it after these short twelve months than for any previous ‘new’ viral disease ever.”

Workers’ power, mobilized massively through communist collectives worldwide, could do far better at learning about, preventing and managing pandemic disease. Communism will resolve the contradiction between science and capitalism by abolishing capitalism itself. Public health, including scientific work, will be a mass activity in the service of the masses.

In capitalism, the most oppressed workers everywhere are the last in line for anything possibly useful to them. The World Health Organization predicts that most people in the world

won’t get vaccines until 2023 or later. Even the New York Times decries the racist injustice of a factory in South Africa where workers will produce vaccines only for export, with maybe a few doses reserved for the South African ruling elite.

Racism runs through the history of US and global medicine. (see *Red Flag* v. 11 #9) Right now, the age-adjusted Covid death rates for Black, Indigenous and Latinx people in the US are over 2½ times those for white people.

When racism pervades every aspect of life, why should any of us trust the authorities? When the cops who murdered Tamir Rice walk free? When a Black physician dies of Covid-19 after insisting to her doctors that she isn’t getting appropriate care? When imprisoned women asylum-seekers discover they’ve been sterilized without their consent?

But we can’t trust all those anti-vaccine rumors either. Some come from small capitalists promoting profitable but ineffective remedies. More dangerously, anti-Vaxxers are merging with fascist conspiracy theorists.

For example, QAnon and Alex Jones circulated a thoroughly debunked rumor that vaccines make women infertile. Some folks believe the completely false rumor that vaccines contain microchips for the rulers to track us. These rumor-mongers may be the “enemy of our enemy” but they are surely not our friends.

Our Party and Red Flag readers have a huge responsibility to make our literature into the source of information and analysis that the masses can rely on.

A friend guessed that the bosses want the virus, or maybe vaccines, to kill us off. A comrade agreed that the capitalist rulers don’t care if a lot of people die —of starvation or preventable disease or in their wars.

But the pandemic is tanking their crisis-ridden economy. Capitalists everywhere need enough healthy workers and soldiers to protect their

power and produce the goods and services they sell to realize their profits. They need us. We don’t need them.

“Covid vaccines will make tons of money for the pharmaceutical industry,” said a comrade. “I don’t trust them.”

Nobody should trust the capitalists or their governments. Even when they say they’re for distributing vaccines based on medical need rather than ability to pay. Their entire profit system of production and distribution contradicts that.

Only communism – not even socialism—operates on the principle “from each according to ability and commitment, to each according to need.”

One third of our global family lacks clean water. The capitalist solution is to fund vaccines while privatizing water supplies. The communist solution would be to mobilize masses to provide everyone with clean water. For everyone to learn, do and practice the science that will help keep us healthy.

That would mean collective planning to produce and distribute Covid-19 vaccine everywhere it’s needed. And training masses of people to educate and vaccinate everyone – fast.

The food most of us can afford is not healthy. The air we breathe and the water we drink are not clean. The work we do – when we have jobs– is often stressful, dangerous, and not even useful to the working class. The bosses exploit us and profit off us at every turn. The same is true for health care, even where it is “socialized.”

These are not reasons to stop eating, drinking, breathing, and working. Nor to refuse Covid-19 vaccines that health-care workers expect will save lives. They are reasons to join the International Communist Workers’ Party to fight for and build the communist future masses everywhere need.

COMMUNISTS FIGHT FOR THE COLLECTIVE GOOD

“Vaccines don’t save lives,” declared a Yale epidemiologist. “Vaccination programs save lives.” And he has the scientific data to prove it.

The most important aspect of the vaccine issue is what the capitalists underplay and call “distribution.” We call it mobilizing masses. That’s the key to Public Health that communism can provide.

The US capitalists’ vaccination program is more than chaotic. It is based on racism, individualism, profits, to beat the international competition and unscientific favoritism towards capitalists and their administrators. When a New Jersey hospital worker comrade went to get her shot, she saw 600 suits in the front of the line.

It turns out they were all businesspersons that ran the hospital. Some were from a huge medical group that plans to gobble up the hospital.

They had all been “working” remotely since the pandemic started.

A private panel at the Centers for Disease Control recommended priorities for vaccination. They were not going to include any older adults until someone noticed that it would look bad. It’s all about their profits and international rivalry.

A medical worker comrade in Texas said that if you wanted to distribute vaccines efficiently, you would give it first to those over 65 worldwide and essential workers (not Boeing workers!) who must work in physical spaces to provide the necessities of life. And you would mobilize masses to spread out the work and give them some relief.

When the pandemic first hit, a group of Boeing workers read two articles on the 1918 flu pandemic in Seattle. One article blamed the spread on the lack of discipline among the workers. The other blamed the capitalists and their individualist culture.

The New Jersey comrade convinced her co-workers to get the vaccine by arguing that you get it, not for yourself, but the good of the people around you: to create collective immunity. The bosses derisively call it “herd” immunity.

Her co-workers didn’t trust Big Pharma and the political climate either. But the communist idea of the good-for-all won the day. She reported it was easier to deal with other objections once she put the argument in that context. Fighting for the collective good is a powerful argument for our goal of communism.

In short, communist politics is primary. The communist ability to mobilizes masses will free science from capitalism and advance public health in ways the capitalists can’t.

—Seattle (US) Comrade



Florida, USA—Waiting in line for the COVID vaccine

COLLECTIVE DISCUSSIONS ABOUT COVID-19 VACCINES

1. *How do the vaccines work? Can they give you Covid?*

The Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTec vaccines use mRNA. It encodes instructions for cells to manufacture a “spike” protein like the one coronavirus uses to enter your cells. Your body then learns to make antibodies to that “spike” that prevent coronavirus from replicating and making you sick. The mRNA vaccines cannot morph into viruses. However, it’s too soon to say how long protection lasts.

The AstraZeneca-Oxford, Johnson & Johnson and Russia’s Sputnik 5 vaccines use adapted, non-replicating versions of a common-cold virus. They contain genetic materials of the spike protein but not of SARS-Covid-2. They cannot give you Covid. After vaccination, cells produce the spike protein, stimulating the immune system to attack the virus.

The Chinese Sinopharm and the Indian Bharat Biotech vaccines use inactivated disease viruses to strongly stimulate the body’s immune response. This is the technology used for Hepatitis A, Flu, Polio and Rabies shots. If the SARS-Covid-2 virus is carefully and thoroughly inactivated, it will not make you sick. But can the masses trust these companies and their governments to be careful enough?

Other vaccines (MMR, smallpox, chickenpox, yellow fever) use a weakened form of the disease-causing virus to create a strong, long-lasting immune response. Some people get a mild case of the disease. No current Covid-19 vaccines use this technique.

2. *What about side effects?*

Seventy thousand volunteers tested the mRNA

vaccines. Many experienced short-term minor effects (a day of low-grade fevers, muscle aches and fatigue, headaches). A very few had dangerous allergic reactions, but these are rare and treatable. Once tens of millions have been vaccinated, we’ll see rarer side effects. There are of course no data yet on long-term effects, but the risk is much less than that from Covid-19.

3. *How could the vaccines be developed so fast without dangerously cutting corners?*

Trump’s self-promoting noise about “warp speed” vaccines makes it understandable that many would fear political interference. **However, the real question is why the capitalist pharmaceutical industry usually takes so long to develop a vaccine. Some reasons:**

*It can cost \$billions to get a vaccine from a lab into full-scale use. Very few vaccine candidates end up getting licensed. So pharmaceutical companies usually wait longer before conducting expensive clinical trials. Communism will eliminate this problem. In this case, governments and NGOs fronted the money, cushioning the pharmaceutical companies from loss and guaranteeing their profits.

*It usually takes longer to recruit willing vaccine test subjects than it did during the pandemic. In communism, we’ll be able to trust our comrades who do science, and a fundamentally collective society will encourage us to take risks for the common good.

*Capitalist bureaucracies are unnecessarily slow with regulatory paperwork—as many of us know from getting drivers’ licenses or visas. Partly, that’s because everyone understands that profit-hungry companies are likely to cut corners

and cheat. Partly it’s because the technical workers tasked with verifying safety are enmeshed in the capitalist state. Communism will solve both problems.

With the Covid-19 vaccines, a great deal of previous work developed the mRNA and common-cold-virus techniques. For example, mRNA vaccines had already showed strong immunity in animal studies with influenza, Zika and rabies viruses. Also, mRNA cancer vaccines have been used in many human clinical trials. And mRNA vaccines bypassed the time-consuming work of growing and isolating viruses in quantity.

Many scientific, technical and production workers put in lots of overtime. But all standard vaccine-testing procedures were in place. Nothing was rushed to make Trump look good.

4. *Why do I hear about health care workers refusing the vaccine?*

According to a Kaiser Family Foundation study (December 2020) about 3 out of 10 (29%) of workers in a health care delivery setting said they probably or definitely would not take the vaccine. About 7 out of 10 were looking forward to taking it, about the same as the general population. That is, more than twice as many health care workers want the vaccine as don’t want it.

Why are we hearing more about the ones who refuse? And why don’t we hear more about the people who want it but can’t get it? These are political questions about the capitalist media.

These discussions will continue. We are trying collectively to learn how to deal with this process while fighting to destroy capitalism.

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.

Win the Leadership of Workers and Soldiers

“At the end of the day, these presidents are doing what they are told to do,” said a transit worker during a lunchtime meeting of *Red Flag* readers and ICWP members. “There’s basically no difference. I didn’t like Trump. He said a lot of racist stuff and did it because he felt like that would put him in office again. Now, Biden he’s racist also. He’s kind of under the ground with it. The thing about Biden he’s put a lot of women in power.

“Like I’ve said before, they’re all puppets,” this *Red Flag* reader continued. “It’s the big bosses who run this country.

“We’re running out of resources—they’re already preparing for it. There’s going to be a war. They’re talking about that there’s going to be a war in other places. But there’s going to be a war right here. We’re in a crisis—an all-out crisis. It’s slowly coming.

“You can’t even buy bullets any more. Guns and bullets have doubled and tripled in price. I bought bullets five years ago because everybody was buying them. The government, school board, everybody. The reason was to prepare what we are coming to now. It’s coming so close. We’re about to be in a depression. It could create a civil war. There’s no money circulating. The rent is higher than the money you’re making.”

Workers’ discontent increases. Fascism comes from both the Republicans and Democrats. Republicans with a fascism based on open racism, and Democrats with fascism based on nationalism.

Our communist movement appears weak, but objectively we are strong. Because as a Party we are prepared to lead, we have an



idea, a plan, based on the study of communist ideas and on the history of the class struggle.

As for the military, thousands of workers know how to handle weapons. For example, Comrade H and his son are army veterans. Many other MTA workers and family members are, or have been, in different branches of the US military.

The important thing is to reach more workers and soldiers with communist ideas. Despite all that has been said before, nothing assures us that we will automatically win the leadership of the proletariat. We have to win them. We are not the only ones who propose answers for the crisis. There are idealists, reformists, fascists and revisionists who also try to win the hearts of the workers.

May these current conditions serve us to accelerate, to advance in the organization of more study groups, wider networks of *Red Flag* readers, and to recruit many more members for the Party!

—MTA transit worker comrade, Los Angeles (USA)

Read our pamphlet:

SOLDIERS, SAILORS, MARINES: CRUCIAL TO A COMMUNIST WORKERS’ REVOLUTION

Available at:

icwpredflag.org/mpe.pdf

Letter to a Comrade

Thank you for being my friend. Knowing one another is a gradual process and here are few things I think you should know about me. I am a US citizen and a soldier working in a United Nations peace-keeping force in Iraq. I love meeting people and sharing ideas and also, I care about nature and human beings.

I received your newspaper *Red Flag*. I was very impressed by some stories from India and another from South Africa. It is really amazing to get the news from El Salvador because my parents came from Peru. I am all for the farmers in India. On my way to Iraq, I spent three weeks in Mumbai. I know farmers as very hard-working people and there are so many rich people who don’t work for a day.

I want to know more about communism. Almost everybody in my unit likes to help people. I am planning to talk to them about your newspaper.

—Active-duty Soldier

PLEASE SEND US YOUR LETTERS, RESPONSES AND SUGGESTIONS TO
ICWPREDFLAG@ANONYMOUSSPEECH.ORG

Armed Struggle Today Must Be for Communism

EL SALVADOR, December 2020—"Do you remember when we bought rifles from those Honduran officers?" C asked at an end-of-the-year gathering in a rural area.

"Yes, and from here," P responded. (We also bought them from Salvadoran officials.)

C explained: "In a meeting of the Central Committee and the Military Committee of our organization in 1976, that afterwards became part of the FMLN, the decision was made to send comrades into the Salvadoran army.

"Commander Licho was a comrade farm-worker, among others, sent into the government army. Commander Alfredo was one of the Commanders who were sent to support the Sandinista National Liberation Front in 1979 in the seizure of Managua, Nicaragua.

"When they finished their time in the government army, they returned to our camps. They were our military instructors. Other comrades were sent to several countries to be trained militarily. They returned with the political-military mission of organizing the leadership of our group.

"The military committee was very clandestine in recruiting the comrades to be sent to the army. The majority of them were rural and urban workers. Some officers were won over to revolutionary ideas, but that was a more complex task.

"The comrades who joined the army did so to prepare militarily and get weapons for our



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nascent guerrilla army. When they went on leave, they met with us in clandestine places to analyze their political-military advance. They studied and knew the positions of the government army and thus we had an advantage at the time of a military attack.

"Another way we worked was to have contact with the families of the soldiers who were recruited by the government militia. We managed to meet with them when they came home on leave. At home their organized relatives made them see the plan of our organization, and many of them became part of the FMLN. Commander Goyo was one of these recruits."

As ICWP we meet in the homes of some of these ex-guerrilleros who were soldiers in the government army. We have been able to recruit them, based on political struggle, to be part of our working class and to distinguish the injustices committed by the officials and the rich of the country against the rural and city workers.

Some of them read and distribute *Red Flag*. They are also part of the discussions of the ideological line of ICWP and participate in our meetings since they see the need to be in the struggle for communist revolution.

—Ex-Guerrillero, now comrade of ICWP

Capitalism's False Promises Exposed: Workers Need Communism

I am a "baby boomer," a child of the late 1940s and 1950s. My generation was brought up on the so-called "great all-American ideals:" love of country, motherhood and a certain sweet dessert. We "pledged allegiance" in grade school each morning to a nation that promised that our word and dedication would be repaid. President Franklin D. Roosevelt had the "social security" system set up to take care of "senior citizens," meaning those considered too elderly to work.

What we are receiving now, instead, is that corrupt elected officials twist language to rob those who paid into this system for decades. The poorest of African and South American countries have national healthcare, from birth to decrepitude. Their clinics may be the simplest of structures and care and supplies, minimal, but their existence stands in stark contrast to the heartless, uncaring US for-profit insurance plans.

Governments, many called democracies or

republics, have fallen short on providing even the most basic of necessities to their populations. We understand that the problems are simply the result of uneven and uncaring modes of governance, under the grinding heel of self-interested capitalists.

The coronavirus has had the worst effects on the poorest populations, even in developed countries. Natural disasters, many the result of abuse and neglect of ecological systems, have devastated low-lying coastal and island lands. Elected officials are lining their pockets and carrying out the will of the super-rich, the monied upper class.

This was on my mind as I participated in a recent international Zoom party forum about the importance of the party message and how to carry and spread it further. All workers are vital and needed to grow the party, to further our efforts to build a communist world where are all taken care of, none is left behind.

—Comrade in Los Angeles (USA)



ONLY COMMUNIST REVOLUTION CAN STOP WORLD WAR III, from page 8

Capitalism chokes on capital that can't be invested profitably amid mountains of unsold goods. The crisis deepens into recessions and depressions. More productive capacity is idled and the masses are impoverished even more. Capitalism then needs war on a global scale to destroy the excess capital, productive capacity and workers.

This restores the rate of profit to a "healthy" level. Capital can now be invested profitably in rebuilding cities and factories over workers' dead bodies—until the next crisis.

Only a communist-led working class can end this unending capitalist cycle of horrors and wars. We need urgently to mobilize industrial workers to communism, a system that eliminates money and profit, producing instead for human needs.

WHY THE US-CHINA CONFLICT IS SHARPENING NOW, from page 8

penetrated into Europe. Covid has given them a more prominent role as an apparent good actor toward small countries.

The US has responded by re-arming Taiwan, changing economic relations with Hong Kong, continuing naval actions in the South China Sea and the Taiwan Strait, and seeking an alliance with India.

US imperialists plan to rebuild US alliances under Biden. They may try to revive the anti-China Trans-Pacific Partnership trade alliance. Covid exposed the US dependence on foreign supply chains, especially in China. This is a strategic weakness even when not involving military hardware.

Trump was an inept imperialist, but the US weaknesses are real. The Council on Foreign Relations, a key bosses' policy group, once hoped that the US could find a "soft landing" from its sole superpower role as other powers rise. That isn't happening. The contradiction between US and Chinese capitalists continues to grow. A shooting war is entirely possible, perhaps starting over Taiwan.

Serve the International Working Class, Not the Nation

BUILD COMMUNIST COLLECTIVES INSIDE THE CAPITALISTS' MILITARIES AND "NATIONAL SERVICE"

USA, January 3—“America is back! Ready to lead the world, not retreat from it,” declared US President-elect Biden on Nov 27th as he announced key members of his foreign policy team.

A more consistent and coherent imperialist foreign policy perspective is back in control of the White House. But the world has changed.

China's economy has risen rapidly. Its military might is increasing. Russia's strength is growing. And the US has declined sharply. That means the US doesn't lead the world. It means that the workers of the world face growing dangers of world war.

That's why the masses can and must build the International Communist Workers' Party worldwide to get ready to lead the world! Communism will end racism and wars for profit and control. Instead of competing for slave-labor jobs, the masses will share nature's resources and the products we produce to meet the needs of the international working class.

Richard Haass, head of the influential Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), stresses that the US must reestablish international alliances like NATO that Trump disrupted and try to rebuild the Trans-Pacific Partnership—to better confront China and Russia.

Both US Democrats and Republicans are hell-bent on war against China. On Dec 30, Congress overrode Trump's veto to pass the bipartisan Defense Authorization Act. “Eyeing China's rise as a global military and economic power, lawmakers unveiled a compromise defense policy bill that targets China on multiple fronts, with \$6.9 billion prescribed for a new Pacific Deterrence Initiative over two years.” (Defense News, December 3, 2020)

The rulers are also preparing for war by expanding national service.

Influential US imperialist think tanks, including the CFR and the Brookings Institution, are calling for dramatically expanding “national and international service” for young adults between high school and college. This is supposedly for youth to get skills and money for college.

They propose giving slightly higher stipends

and educational benefits to get a million youth to enter national service—like the military. The CFR cynically says that “the healing bridge for youth who will shape the future is voluntary service for the public good.” It's really to prepare for large-scale war, when “public good” will mean working, fighting, killing and dying for the profits of the US bosses.

The US rulers' national service aims to build patriotism among young workers. They will push xenophobia and racism against workers and youth from other countries, especially China.

The CFR suggests a “John Lewis Fellowship Program for Public Service.” Lewis was a civil rights activist and then a Democratic Party Congressman for 33 years. He was loyal to capitalism-imperialism, pushing voting and reform to end racism. But racism was born with capitalism and only communist revolution can end it.

Youth facing unemployment and racism, and unable to pay for school, are already steered into the military and existing national service programs. We urge young comrades and friends to sign up alongside them to make friends with many other angry youths. Together they can spread *Red Flag* and build ICWP collectives to mobilize to end racist capitalism with communist revolution.

Soldiers, sailors and future soldiers and sailors have a key role to play in fighting for revolution and building communism. They are children of the working class. Soldiers won to defend the bosses can crush a revolution; soldiers won to defend the interests of their class can join with workers to win.

During World War I, communist-led soldiers in Russia turned their guns on their officers and the bosses. They joined with the Bolshevik Party,



refused to fight other workers and instead took their weapons to the cities and countryside to unite with workers in a revolution to take state power.

Russian communists mistakenly fought for socialism (state capitalism) not communism. We have learned from their victories and their mistakes. Now we know that to end capitalism's unemployment, racism, sexism and wars for profit, we need communism and nothing less.

We need to abolish wage slavery, police, money and profit. In a society based on communist relations, not competition, everyone will have useful needed work serving and fighting for our class.

The ICWP collectives we build today pave the way for a Red Army where there is no rank or privilege. Where we collectively learn, teach, produce and fight for the future of the worldwide working class, not for any capitalist-imperialist exploiter.

When masses of workers and soldiers read *Red Flag* and join ICWP, many will gladly fight together to build communism and end the bosses' wars forever.

ONLY COMMUNIST REVOLUTION CAN STOP WORLD WAR III

The influential US Council on Foreign Relations published “Coming Storms: The Return of Great-Power War” in its latest *Foreign Affairs* magazine.

It explains why war between China and the US is inevitable. China aspires to be the dominant power in East Asia on the way to becoming the world's dominant imperialist. Crucial to this is reintegrating Taiwan to the mainland.

For this to happen, the US would have to “retract its security guarantee to Taiwan and recognize Beijing's claims on the island,” among other things. But doing so would mean “acknowledging the end of U.S. primacy.” This isn't about to happen. And, as the article concludes, “if Washington does not cede its dominance in East Asia it is on the fast track to war.”

Class Society, Capitalism-Imperialism and the March to War

Two insoluble contradictions push capitalism-imperialism towards global war, regardless of the capitalists' desires. These are the falling rate of profit and the crisis of overproduction.

The capitalists' short-term efforts to stop the rate of profit from falling are counterproductive in the long run. They intensify and deepen the crisis of overproduction as automation increases production while displacing workers. Capitalists chase ever-shrinking markets.

See [COMMUNIST REVOLUTION/WORLD WAR III, page 7](#)

WHY THE US-CHINA CONFLICT IS SHARPENING NOW

Decades ago, US companies were happy to get access to Chinese markets. They were even willing to give up some of their intellectual property to get it. China wanted the investment to shore up its domestic economy. The contradiction between US and Chinese capitalism was weak, and unity dominated over struggle.

But now China has an auto industry and is becoming strong in critical high-tech areas like 5G communication. Chinese capitalists have less need for foreign investment that competes with domestic production. The struggle aspect of the contradiction now dominates. The contradiction is becoming more intense.

Premier Xi's China is more assertive at home and more aggressive outside. He has dumped some of the most corrupt party leaders and turned the screws on Hong Kong. He has tried to give his rule a more solid intellectual basis by reviving bits of Maoism and publishing his own collected works.

China's armed forces are growing much stronger, with aircraft carriers, 5th generation fighters, anti-ship missiles, and more. They now talk openly about conquering Taiwan and are prepared for border war with India.

China has more foreign bases and is creating alternate transportation routes, in particular for oil. They are more aggressive in the South China Sea, have wider economic relations with Southeast Asia and have

See [WHY CONFLICT IS SHARPENING, page 7](#)