

RED FLAG



MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM

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



SRI LANKA GARMENT WORKER EXPOSES FASCIST OPPRESSION

CHENNAI (India), August 1 — “Several hundred women perished during the third covid wave in July 2021,” said Geetha. “The bosses said they were dirty because they were spreading the pandemic. They wanted many of the sick women to produce more for the customers of Victoria’s Secret, Marks & Spencer, Hugo Boss, and H&M.” Geetha (not her real name) is a garment worker in the Free Trade Zone (FTZ) of Sri Lanka.

Seven workers attended our collective meeting of auto workers in Chennai. This was very difficult because everything is disrupted by an unrelenting monsoon flood. However, one comrade with a relative in Sri Lanka was very excited to report about Geetha. We have been circulating *Red Flag* in our neighborhoods. It was through this mass distribution we met Geetha and others in Sri Lanka.

The Sri Lanka crisis is creating possibilities for massive upheaval all around the world, especially in India and neighboring countries. We must build our party as fast as possible.

Just three years ago, the now ex-President of

See GARMENT WORKER page 2

SOUTH AFRICA MINERS BUILD NEW COMMUNIST COLLECTIVE

RUSTENBURG (South Africa), July 14— “Mobilizing the masses for communism!” We must recruit tens and turn them into hundreds, hundreds to thousands and thousands into millions of workers fighting directly for communist revolution.

This was our guiding understanding as we distributed hundreds of *Red Flags* and other party literature to mine workers in Rustenburg over two weeks.

Mine workers are disillusioned with the unions that purport to represent them. They understand that the bosses are their enemies, and that union officials collaborate with them. The workers are looking for a solution. Communism is the solution.

Two comrades who went there the first week recruited and befriended a new comrade. He organized his friends and showed us around while distributing the literature. Six mine workers joined ICWP. We aim to form a mine workers’ collective.

Our biggest challenge was the language bar-

rier. Many mine workers speak neither English nor Xhosa. Some do not even read English.

The second challenge is that the experienced comrades live far from Rustenburg. We do not want to lose consistent struggle with the new comrades and workers.

The last *Red Flag* described our July 11 visit to a Sibanye-Stillwater mine. The next day we went to the Impala mine. Before that we met with a new comrade who works around town and knows many mineworkers. We briefly met his friends before they went to look for a mine job.

We distributed around 80 *Red Flags* at the Impala mine and secured a contact with a mine worker. He warned us to beware of the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU). Many workers thought we are a union and feared AMCU might get hostile.

On July 13, the new party comrade organized two mine workers to meet with a comrade from Port Elizabeth. The mine workers were tired, coming from a shift underground, but they made time to attend. They are part of a group of

See SOUTH AFRICAN MINERS, page 3

Volume 13 Number 10, August 3 to 24, 2022

INSIDE:

INDIA: ORGANIZING INDIGENOUS YOUTH, PAGE 2

EL SALVADOR: COMMUNIST ORGANIZING IN THE FACTORIES, PAGES 3 & 6

NO WORKERS ESCAPE CAPITALIST DISASTER, PAGE 4

END ALL DIVISIONS WITHIN THE WORKING CLASS, PAGE 5

**EPIFANIO CAMACHO:
COMMUNIST ROOTED IN THE WORKING CLASS, PAGE 8**

INDIA: ORGANIZING INDIGENOUS YOUTH FOR COMMUNISM

DELHI (India), July 31— India has elected a new President. Droupadi Murmu will be the first tribal person (and the second woman) to be elected President in the history of India. This is a largely symbolic post much like the royal family in the UK.

India is emerging as a new imperialist power, with major investments in Africa and elsewhere. This position will project India as a progressive country with a female president coming from the most exploited tribal community in India.

In truth, Murmu represents the fascist Indian state. Its rulers, led by BJP, are attacking the most vulnerable tribal communities. There are about 104 million people (8.6% of the population) from about 705 tribes known as Adivasis (Indigenous people) mostly living in forest lands.

The land occupied by the Adivasis has rich deposits of minerals like iron, bauxite, uranium, gold, and coal. There is also a vast land mass of oil and gas. The forested rivers are converted into hydroelectric dams.

In 1985, the government started privatizing minerals and formed over 100 blocks within the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ). The blocks where most Adivasis live came under the jurisdictions of corporate interests. They started forceful evictions of large numbers of Adivasis. The mining mafia formed private armies to terrorize the Adivasis.

The land once communally occupied by Adivasis for thousands of years has now become private ownership of the corporations like Adani, Mittal, and Vedanta.

The state of Orissa, where Murmu was once a junior minister, has registered over 16,000 cases of rapes of Adivasis every year since the 1990s. The real numbers of evictions and rapes



India: Indigenous women protest destruction of forests

are hidden since the government is controlled by the BJP rulers.

Members of ICWP started organizing the Adivasi youth in the state of Chhattisgarh. The entire state was carved out in 2000 because it has the largest deposits of minerals. Our comrade reported that the local police are using endangered tigers as a pretext for uprooting these Adivasi youth. The youth know that the real goal is to clear forest areas for mining.

We explained to the youth that only under communism we will find ways for the masses to live in harmony with their surroundings because nothing will be bought or sold for profit. In a capitalist society, vast resources of minerals are lifted from the earth only for profit. For example, 79 million cars were produced in 2021 for an automotive industry of 2.7 trillion dollars.

Communist society will have efficient public transport that will eliminate private cars that are

choking our roads, creating massive gridlocks, causing harmful emissions, and consuming oil. Communist society will explore ways to produce mass transit that can last for hundreds of years.

These youth were fascinated by the possibility of a communist world. They saw a bright future compared to the racist harassment they face every day in their life.

However, to achieve this goal, we must organize a mass ICWP with their friends and family. Many NGOs and other parties are organizing them to try to make their life a little better under the profit system. They are misleading the masses of people, just like Murmu is.

We must organize to change the world. We have introduced this group of Adivasi youth to ICWP and opened a new world of communist organizing. They are distributing our *Red Flag*. They are preparing the groundwork for another visit for an even bigger ICWP in the near future.

GARMENT WORKER from page 1

Sri Lanka Rajapaksa had won a massive electoral victory. He was credited with suppressing the civil war in Sri Lanka. His fascist army was invincible, having crushed Muslims and other minorities. He wanted to make Sri Lanka another Singapore. International tourists were flocking to Sri Lanka's serene beaches.

Sri Lanka's wealth was built mostly by 200,000 women garment workers (1% of the total population) who contributed 52% of the country's export income. Other significant exports came from the spice, fishing, and tourism industries. These sectors have many women workers.

Our comrades recognize that we need the most oppressed women workers in the leadership of the party. Geetha is looking for a solution that will free her from the wage slavery that brings her daily sexual harassment, horrible living conditions, and no escape from the sweatshops. Communist revolution is the only solution that will break our oppressors' ability to make a profit from their labor.

Every way Geetha has tried to make her life better has ended up worse. Amidst the covid crisis, there was a big demand in the apparel industry. She saw her fellow workers drop dead while the bosses demanded that she work at a breathless speed to fulfill the supply chain as far away as Europe.

Their exports rose 180% while Geetha made 800 LKR (US\$4.50) a day. Then in July 2022 the local currency collapsed. She will be making 1000 LKR a day, but it will only be worth US\$2.60. When the IMF, the Chinese, and Indian bosses demand more from the workers, they will make less than a dollar a day.

Geetha said that the bosses are demanding to get 'back on track' to restart the work that was crippled by weeks of upheaval. That means the work formerly done by twenty workers is done by five women or fewer. If they can't finish it, the next day they don't come back. Often the bosses' managers wave a termination notice the day workers start to intimidate them into finishing their unbearable quota.

She said that she has met some wonderful women, but the leadership always wants to compromise with the bosses.

Geetha said that what she read in *Red Flag* about the Sri Lanka crisis opened her eyes to a very new reality. She understood that the same system oppresses workers everywhere. She said the military has occupied Free Trade Zones. "The union demands that the army withdraw," she said. "Now I think, why not organize them? We need them and their weapons."

We asked Geetha to join ICWP and organize other workers. She replied that she hardly gets enough sleep to stay awake. Living in these conditions is extremely hard. We understand and we should be more thoughtful about what she is expressing. We are workers too, but we have not experienced the same brutality as Geetha.

It is our collective responsibility as an international party to come up with a solution. We need people like Geetha, thousands and millions of them. And we need them now.

We will continue our struggle in Chennai with more urgency. Geetha has agreed to take more *Red Flags*. We are trying to help our Sri Lanka comrades, including visiting her. Winning Geetha and others like her to our party can lead to masses joining our march to the communist revolution.

Geetha has approached Free Trade Zone Workers & General Services Employees Union.

Volume 13 Number 10, August 3 to 24, 2022

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



FACTORY WORKERS CONFERENCE STRENGTHENS PARTY UNITY AND COMMITMENT

EL SALVADOR, July 30— “This is a war against the system that requires sacrifice, but I am proud of the fight we are giving,” commented a worker at a large meeting.

Before starting the meeting, we showed a video about the struggle of organized workers in the International Communist Workers’ Party (ICWP) around the world.

The call of our comrades in South Africa reminded us how the “Law of Exception” in El Salvador is used to imprison and often kill their political enemies, the organized workers. For this reason, we take security measures before, during and after the meeting with maquiladora (sweatshop) workers, students, teachers, and health workers.

Then we talked about the recent international report. It discussed thinking about and practicing communist social relations. We considered two aspects: (1) strengthening our struggle towards communism and (2) avoiding the turn to the right, towards revisionism and reform

Our workshop discussions focused on three points:



1. How do we use Red Flag?

For the factory workers, *Red Flag* is a tool to inform, organize and strengthen knowledge of the class struggle and communist ideas among ICWP collectives, friends of the party, and readers of the paper.

“The call is to read a *Red Flag* article every day, write our experiences, our struggles to motivate and teach in other parts of the world how to confront capitalism and the abuse of the bosses,” added a comrade.

An industrial worker summed up: “*Red Flag* reflects the work at the global level, it helps us to have a broad panorama of the situation and the struggles of the workers of the world.”

“It is our weapon to organize inside and outside the factory,” commented two maquila workers. “With *Red Flag* we got to know ICWP and thanks to the newspaper we were able to make our children aware of the struggle that the communists are doing in ICWP. And today they are here.”

“Thanks to *Red Flag*, we are aware of all the situations that occur in the factory. It helps us unite. Knowing that we are not alone, that there are other groups that accompany us, encourages us to continue,” said another.

The struggle was to overcome the obstacles that keep some members from fully reading the newspaper. This fight must be sharpened to develop party leaders, hand in hand with *Red Flag*. They should feel the confidence in using our

newspaper to do the work with co-workers.

2. How do we recruit more workers to ICWP?

“We must deliver *Red Flag* to more workers.”

“We must not give up. We must lose our fear.”

“We must take advantage of the workers’ discontent and their problems to start political discussions.”

These were words from sweatshop workers about how to recruit more workers for communism. Certainly the massive distribution of *Red Flag* and the discipline, training and enthusiasm of the communist collectives will bring us closer to achieving our objectives.

3. What does it mean to be a party member?

“Being a party member means dedication, discipline, seeing others as comrades like family, treating others fairly and being responsible to organize more workers for communism,” said a factory comrade.

“Being a party member means knowing that we are not alone, that we are not just a small group trying to fight against the capitalist system, knowing that we are more than the bosses who oppress us,” said another worker. “It gives me strength, and I feel very happy to be part of the party,” she clarified. “My situation and that of my family and colleagues in the factory.”

A third commented that “Everything has been achieved through the struggle of other workers. Our struggle is to persevere, to seek the common welfare of the working class, to give part of ourselves and our lives if necessary for the common welfare and communist future for the new generations.”

Many of us insist, after the discussion, that only worker-military-peasant unity will be able to stop the horrors of capitalism. Only worker unity and communist internationalism will keep us on the path to our goal of a world communist system.

SOUTH AFRICA MINERS from page 1

workers who mostly grew up and studied together. These existing relationships can develop into communist relationships as we try to recruit them to join the party.

The new comrade explained that we are not a union or a party that contests election. We are the International Communist Workers’ Party (ICWP) that fights directly for communism. To seize power from the capitalist class, we need the working class in large numbers to join our party. The comrade further explained that *Red Flag* has articles from workers around the world detailing their experiences of this brutal capitalist system.

They started reading MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM. The comrade explained that capitalism can never be reformed. Any gains will be short term and the class struggle will continue. They are determined to work with us because they understand what is needed. We have to ensure they both know the theory and how to apply it to practical work.

We want to continue struggling ideologically with these workers so that they can join the party and continue the struggle with other workers when the Port Elizabeth comrades go home.

On July 14, we went to Marikana West to the former Lonmin mine (now owned by Sibanye-Stillwater). We distributed *Red Flag* inside the hostel. Another worker warned us that union officials inside the hostel won’t just let us continue telling the workers that the unions fight for their own interest, not the workers.

We met a comrade’s relative at Marikana East

who works at Sibanye-Stillwater. He showed us where the 2012 massacre happened. We explained that the ICWP wants to abolish this capitalist system. We want a communist society where the working class will own the means of production. To achieve this, we must unite as the international working-class and fight directly for communism.

This relative rises at 2:30 am to be ready to go underground at 3:30. There is no set time to knock off; depending on the work it could be 17:00 (5:00 pm). It is so hot underground that some faint. They’ll have to work every Saturday to get days off in December to visit their families.

He described how tribalism divides the workers (see box). He’s been working for the mine for about ten years. He can speak most of the languages, even the miners’ unique mixed language spoken mostly underground, called Fanakalo. He will help us to overcome the language barrier.

“The problems start with us,” a comrade explained. “If you were born in Gqeberha (Port Elizabeth), the Xhosa is not the same. In Rustenburg, most workers come from elsewhere. If you speak Port Elizabeth Xhosa, they don’t trust you because you sound like a gangster.

“You can’t just talk with an older person like you’re talking to someone your age. Your sentences must be full and proper Xhosa. Port Elizabeth is the only town that speaks different Xhosa. When you go outside PE you have to adapt to the language, even Setswana or Zulu.”

We promise the new comrades that we will try

by all means necessary to write *Red Flag* in languages they understand.

MORE FROM SOUTH AFRICA ON PAGES 6 AND 7

TRIBALISM: DEADLY TO THE WORKING CLASS

A mine worker detailed how tribalism exists amongst them. A week ago, a miner who’s a Sotho (from Johannesburg) killed someone from the Eastern Cape. Eastern Cape workers retaliated by killing seven Sotho miners. The police arrested some of the Eastern Cape miners, but all the Eastern Cape miners went to the police station. They threatened to come back the next day and burn the whole station if the arrested miners weren’t released. The following morning, they were released.

The police fear this group of miners because some survived the 2012 Marikana massacre and don’t fear a standoff with the police. Their anger and unity is what made the mine agree to a wage increase of R1500 (US\$90) two months ago. In contrast, another group of workers from a different mine had to strike, and even after that they settled for an increase of R700 (US\$43).

We want this mine worker to join the party so that he can also recruit more workers and turn their anger against the bosses in working-class unity to fight for a communist society where exploitation, wage slavery, and tribalism will not exist.

REJECT RULING CLASS MYTHS TO BUILD FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION EVERYWHERE

“Everyone following the economic situation, including central banks, do not have an answer on how to deal with this situation,” said a chief economist at a Norwegian investment bank.

The European and US ruling classes don’t know what to do about their deteriorating economies.

Financial crisis is unavoidable in capitalism. It is compounded by the irreversible decline of US imperialism. The bosses must respond by waging war on their international competitors. Economic depression also forces the ruling class to intensify divisive racism, sexism, xenophobia and more.

The global economic crisis has become a huge political crisis for capitalism and hell-on-earth for the international working class. In Sri Lanka, for example, months of mass protests, daily power cuts and shortages of basics such as fuel, food and medicines (intensified by the war in Ukraine) have taken down a government.

Masses in Ecuador have protested soaring food and fuel prices and a 56% unemployment rate. South African unemployment hovers around 40%. Desperately trying to escape outright revolt, the South African government is promoting xenophobic and tribal divisions, including murder.

One common myth is that such economic devastation can’t happen in the U.S. Another is that economic downturns in the US and western Europe will always be temporary and short.

Decades of such propaganda can disarm the working class. It can blunt our sense of urgency to respond to US fascist developments. It can lead us to underestimate the potential for communist revolution in the US.

The ICWP fights to turn struggling workers into communist revolutionaries. Wherever we see our class taking on the capitalists, we mobilize globally. A vital part of this international struggle is fighting for communism where we work and live.

Workers Misled by Economic Myths About US Imperialism

A friend working at a US Boeing plant invited a comrade’s family to a barbecue. This east African immigrant is a regular *Red Flag* reader with many questions about our line. He trusts us based on many communist-inspired struggles against racism and xenophobia in the plant.

The friend said this “downturn” would soon run its course, then asked, “What is the union going to do?”

The union had betrayed this friend in the past.

It was the workers who read and distributed *Red Flag* who fought against a racist, xenophobic attack on him. Before the comrade could respond, he answered himself: “Yeah, the union works for the company.”

He introduced the comrades to his cousin, who has worked at Boeing for over a decade. The cousin thought the collapse of Boeing Commercial was caused by “bad management decisions.” That opened a debate about the decline of U.S. imperialism, with which their extended family is all too familiar.

Declining US Imperialism...

Often, we think of a declining imperialist power (like the US) in terms of diminishing ability to wage war and defend an empire. But it also means attacks on workers internationally, including those in the imperialist nation.

This suggests the potential for communist revolution, but it does not guarantee the growth of ICWP needed to realize it. Comrades who understand the necessity to end capitalism must explain this to co-workers, family, and friends. By abolishing money and wage slavery, communism will eliminate the material basis for racism, sexism, xenophobia, economic attacks, and imperialist war.

...Means Increasing Attacks on US Workers

A retired blue-collar Boeing comrade recently visited his former Seattle (USA) neighborhood, once the most diverse in the country.

He was shocked to see new million-dollar homes for sale everywhere. “Who can afford all these boxes?” he exclaimed.

As the area became gentrified, workers (especially workers of color) had to move out of the city, into poorer city neighborhoods, or onto the streets. The median home price in the US in 1950 was 2.2 times the average annual household income. By 2020, it was six times the average annual income. And that income now typically comes from more than one wage-earner.

In communism nothing will be bought, sold, or exchanged. Shelter will be free – like everything else. We will produce what the masses need. Housing will be a top priority, along with healthy food, childcare, and health care.

Communist Relationships Are Key

Masses worldwide, including in the US, cannot escape the carnage of this devastating economic and political crisis. Workers everywhere must reject capitalist illusions to prepare for communist revolution.

The ICWP has confidence in the working class

US WORKERS CAN’T ESCAPE CAPITALIST ATTACKS ON THE WORKING CLASS

“In the past decade, U.S. families were bled dry by landlords, hospital administrators, university bursars and child-care centers,” (*Atlantic*, 2020)

The trauma has only gotten worse with inflation and continued economic chaos. It falls disproportionately on women and people of color, but the whole US working class feels the pinch. For example:

A notorious 2019 undercount of people in shelters and on the street found 56,000 homeless in Los Angeles County (CA) and 11,200 in King County (WA). The mayor of Seattle, in King Country, ordered the destruction of homeless camps during the recent record-breaking heat wave.

US childcare costs grew 2,000 percent between 1972 and 2007. Family premiums for employer-based health insurance jumped 47 percent between 2011 and 2021. Deductibles and out-of-pocket costs shot up almost 70 percent. The average price for brand-name drugs on Medicare Part D rose 236 percent between 2009 and 2018.

One million California residents lack safe drinking water. Super-exploited immigrant farmworkers in the Coachella Valley suffer everything from rashes and hair loss to kidney disease and cancer from water with ten times the allowable limit of arsenic. Nine thousand children are still suffering from the lead in the water of Flint, Michigan.

Only communism—where there is no money, and production and distribution reflect the needs of the working class—can truly address these issues for workers in the US and everywhere. If you’re angry, act! Join the ICWP to fight for the communist world we can create with our anti-racist, internationalist strength and unity.

and the potential of collective struggle in the US and everywhere. Building relationships based on support and communist struggle are key to building a mass party. We work toward the communist revolution that will end capitalism’s horrors by strengthening these ties and convincing those around us of the necessity and power of communist revolution.

EASTERN KENTUCKY (USA)— The heaviest rain in decades caused catastrophic flooding on July 28-29 that killed over forty people in this impoverished mining region. Trailers, cars, and homes (some of which had lacked indoor plumbing) were swept away. Days later, thousands remained without electricity. The workers in this area (most of them white) mainly work in mines or for mining-related businesses, if they have jobs at all. They are among the poorest in the US and have lowest life expectancy – comparable to Indigenous tribal areas and the mainly-Black counties in the Mississippi Delta. Capitalism creates both these conditions and the worsening climate crisis responsible for the historic floods.



PLEASE SEND YOUR LETTERS, RESPONSES AND SUGGESTIONS TO
ICWPREDFLAG@NYM.HUSH.COM

We Learn Communist Theory and Practice Through Struggles

“We are under fascist attack and threatened by the bosses, but we are not going to back down in the communist struggle,” said an El Salvador comrade in a cell meeting in which ten workers were present.

This reflects the fatigue created by constant threats from supervisors and union leaders who obey the boss’s orders. They say that we are on a list of people who fight for communism, so we can be fired.

We decided to go in and talk to the manager and question him on those points. As expected, he denied that he was threatening us on the bosses’ order. Of course that’s why they have the unions to serve them.

We told him that we cannot be threatened for being part of the International Communist Workers’ Party (ICWP), that it is not a cause for dismissal, that we are free to organize ourselves.

These threats also come from the unions (which are the boss’s best allies) against their members who are part of ICWP. All for wearing our ICWP t-shirts inside the factory.

We also told them about the high cost of living and that they are not paying what they should for overtime work. The boss gave excuses for not being able to do it, first because of the pandemic, then because there is no increase in customers, and finally the war in Ukraine.

In that meeting I wore the shirt that they gave us to celebrate ICWP’s “Ten years of victory.” Others wore the shirt that we distributed on May 1, as a way of protesting the attacks.

“I know that our fight is not for reforms, but we cannot sit idly by in the face of all the attacks,” said a worker leader, explaining what happened.

Many workers, men and women, demonstrated their support of this action. And, of course, we took the opportunity to explain that we fight directly for communism, a system in which work will not be done to generate profits but to guarantee that humanity has what it needs.

But we need the other workers to realize that we need to be united and strong before the bosses.

Finally, we plan a political action of leafleting in the coming weeks.

—Comrade in an El Salvador sweatshop

Only the Power of the Working Class Protects Us

We salute the bravery and class anger of the factory comrades. We can’t comment on their tactics because we’re not there. The maquila party collective must make that evaluation together with the party leadership.

But here’s what we learn from this action: It’s fine to tell the boss in his office that you couldn’t be threatened for being part of the party.

But there is a much more profound truth that we must tell the workers.

No “labor code” or “declaration of rights” will protect workers. It is the bosses’ fear of the workers. If the bosses know that other workers support you, that firing you will disrupt their profits, that’s what will protect you if anything does. The labor code is not worth the paper it is written on.

The bosses’ celebrated “labor rights” and “freedoms” are lying propaganda. Capitalism is not a “democracy.” It is the dictatorship of capital. But it’s not absolute. The class struggle is constant. It’s the power of the working class that will protect you.

And the workers need you and our communist ideas to finish the struggle. That means armed revolution to finally end the dictatorship of capital. To give birth to a new communist society where we will work together to fulfill our needs and not to line the pockets of capitalist blood-suckers. Adelante!!

—Red Flag Editorial Collective

Demanding Pro-Worker Concessions Is Not Reformism

What is communist (as opposed to reformist) class struggle? Does it exist? Do we engage in it (enough)?

In a recent Zoom international meeting, comrades from one area explained how they distributed *Red Flag* and leaflets, met regularly, followed up on contacts with new people, and so on. One comrade asked them what else they did besides distribute literature and hold meetings.

The comrades replied that, for example, they met on Sundays to study dialectics and got together with new people who worked in specific plants.

Another comrade sharpened the struggle. “What about communist class struggle?” This

was what was missing.

Is there such a thing? Some comrades seem to think that any struggle to change things under capitalism is inherently a reform struggle and we don’t take part in reform struggles. I think this view is too narrow.

Here is a hypothetical example. Suppose you’re working in a shop and it’s getting really hot. The shop has air conditioning: all the boss has to do is flip a switch. But they won’t, to save money.

The workers in the shop spontaneously decide to stop working until the switch is flipped. As an ICWP member, what do you do?

I think you should enthusiastically support and help organize the stoppage and explain the power the working class has when it acts in a united way. If we can get air-conditioning, maybe we can get communism too. We should even organize the workers to flip the switch themselves if they’re up for it.

Turning on the A/C is not a reform – it’s what I would call a concession. Demanding a concession is not inherently reformism. Demanding union representation on the Health and Safety Committee – that’s reformism.

Organizing for A/C would be an example of communist class struggle. The crucial point is that we demand something that is unambiguously beneficial to workers. It would be combined with distributing communist literature and meetings about, for example, dialectics. If we skip the distribution and meetings, it degenerates into reformism.

Other issues we might take up could be rehiring fired or laid off workers; stopping a deportation; replacing a damaged and dangerous piece of equipment; striking against a pay cut; stopping a fascist march; commemorating the Russian revolution. It’s crucial that we do this as ICWP. For example, if we hold a support meeting, we make it clear that ICWP is organizing it. If we don’t enthusiastically support, help organize, or (best of all) lead these fights we come off as indifferent observers of the class struggle.

Distributing literature and holding meetings is vital, but I think it should be combined (and reinforced by) communist class struggle.

—Comrade in Canada



Tembisa



Motherwell



Soweto

SOUTH AFRICA, August 1—Masses continue to protest chronic electricity outages and the rising cost of living in townships across the country. In Motherwell (Port Elizabeth), hundreds of workers staged a day of violent protests after a worker was accidentally crushed to death by a defective electric pole.

Several ICWP comrades went to organize there the next day. They distributed literature, talked to workers, and made contacts. These workers live in miserable shacks made of discarded metal sheets. They have no sanitation. Temperatures can fluctuate between extreme hot and cold conditions. These shacks are located not far from the multi-billion-dollar Coega port facilities that were financed by Chinese capital. We will be visiting the workers we met in the shacks where they have to live.

PLEASE SEND YOUR LETTERS, RESPONSES AND SUGGESTIONS TO
ICWPREDFLAG@NYM.HUSH.COM

Toward Building a Mass ICWP in the South Africa Mines

I really struggled to meet a comrade who works in a mine in Rustenburg where shifts can often end very late. You don't go out while your work is unfinished.

This comrade had to start work late. He told me to wait for him around six or seven. He's going to be an asset to the party. He knows a lot about mines and can speak English a lot better. So, I waited after our mobilization until it was getting dark. Finally, he contacted me, and we arranged to meet the next day.

He doesn't know the other six new ICWP comrades, so I told comrade A that he has to continue with the workers. Working with comrade A has boosted my confidence. He's not fully understanding the party yet and we will struggle with him by the phone. And I'll keep coming back.

I told a comrade that you cannot recruit workers while you are shy to talk. You need to have guts. Politics are dangerous. This is not child's play. This is peoples' lives.

We need comrades to join ICWP as quickly as possible. These proxy wars that are happen-

ing are all created by capitalism. The new comrades thought that Russia and China are communist. I showed them that in *Red Flag* we explain that these countries are not communist, they are revisionist.

What's revisionism? I made an example of the ANC. That's where they agree. It is people who are not really communists but instead fight for a capitalist position to control the world. Russia and China are new emerging imperialists. They are trying to overtake the others.

Our party doesn't want transition of power. We want to eliminate everything that is created by capitalism, not leaving even a single branch. Everything has to start from fresh.

When you talk about the communism of ICWP, without money, workers don't always take it seriously. I emphasize that everything in capitalism is based on producing profit. The means of production, everything we live on, is for profit.

They also create divisions. They can't survive without racism. While we were discussing this racism, we made examples about tribalism. In the mines there are Mozambicans and Zimbabweans. Some South Africans claim that these

guys are "stealing their jobs." I explain that no one is a "Mozambican" or "Zimbabwean." All these people are workers.

The capitalists know that we are going to fight as workers. That's why they created these borders. So, we have to be one. All workers in the world have to unite and fight this dragon because this dragon is united to kill the workers.

We're on the same page, but they need more time. For example, I explained about capitalism and the liberals and the nationalists. If someone is HIV+ they have a virus. The medication ARV doesn't kill the virus but makes them feel better for a moment. If they stop the medication, the virus will overtake the body and they will die. Like that, the liberals, the nationalists, and the revisionists are just reforming the problem they are not eliminating it. The ICWP objective is to eliminate the problem.

We need this comrade to join the party very fast and work with other comrades here. There are a lot of opportunities here in Marikana. We can make a mass party if comrades have the skills and flexibility to approach the other workers who are coming up from the mine shaft.

—Comrade in South Africa

Strengthening Communist Relationships

Our collective discussed a recent report that said, "Every communist relationship has two aspects. The struggle about communist ideas and practice is primary, but we will never make progress unless the connections are personal as well."

A comrade started the discussion with a reflection that personal connections among party comrades seemed much less close than in the past. Then, she remembered, we spent much more time together at birthday parties and other social events.

Another comrade said that was true of her circle of old (non-party) friends. They used to socialize informally a lot. But as they got older, they "became more concerned about appearances – more bourgeois." Get-togethers became more formal and less frequent.

The growing isolation and alienation of many people in the US became well-known with the book *Bowling Alone* (2000), a third comrade mentioned. We need to fight that by building communist relationships instead of the patriotic solidarity that the bosses want.

But what is a communist relationship? Or better: How can we strengthen relationships among communists and with the masses?

"When we have similar goals and do work together," one comrade offered. "It's showing up."

"We haven't shown up for each other enough," said another. She related, with emotion, several stories of comrades who became less active while going through personal difficulties. "We need to check in with people especially when they disappear." She was critical of herself and others who hadn't done that.

"It's a struggle between individualism and collectivity," she continued. "We have to go out of our way to continue communist struggle and not let it go because of busy-ness. We need to build unity to continue the struggle. People want to be heard. You can't convince them of anything if they don't think you are listening to them."

Another comrade questioned the idea that a communist relationship meant doing communist work together. If that were true, how would comrades bring others into doing communist work?

"We need to spend quality time with them," one offered. "We have to mix the political and personal." She also urged the importance of developing more younger leaders. And agreed to think about what more she could contribute, given her skills and interests but also the constraints on her time.

"We need to cultivate friendships between age groups," reflected an older comrade.

The discussion left a lot more for us to think about. It ended with each comrade present committing to specific tasks toward strengthening communist relationships inside and outside the party.

—Comrade in California (USA)

Let's Debunk the Concept of Races

I appreciated how the article "Deadly Racists 'Replacement Theory' Serves Capitalist Interest" exposed the racist practices and ideas of "Replacement Theory" and "Manifest Destiny." It did an excellent job in tracing such racist practices to ruling-class interests. However, it did not state directly that the whole concept of "races" is a social construct created by the capitalists to divide us and maximize profits.

"Races" simply don't exist. We haven't proactively stated this as a fact in *Red Flag*. We should revisit this given the current onslaught of polarization in the US and the world: all divisions based on "races."

One of the first to use "races" was a German scientist, Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, around 1776. At that time, European Americans gobbled up his lie that there were five categories: "Caucasian," "Mongolian," "Malayan," "Ethiopian," and "American."

That lie was twisted to fit the needs of land- and power-hungry imperialists. Dividing human beings into different "races" made it possible for white Americans to enslave Black Africans, driving the capitalists' profits through the roof.

To this day, capitalists use "races" to divide us and to maximize their profits. "Races" is always on their terms. Look at the history of US Census "race" designations. In 1800, there were three categories: "Free Whites," Slaves, and "All other Free Persons except Indians not taxed." In 1860, there were: "White," "Black," "Mulatto," "Black

Slaves," and "Mulatto Slaves." In 1980, there were: "White," "Black or Negro," "Japanese," "Chinese," "Filipino," "Korean," "Vietnamese," "Indian (American)," "Asian Indian," "Hawaiian," and the division continues. Fast forward to 2000 and you can even choose more than one "race."

Racism is a byproduct of the idea of races itself. We all have rich and valuable ethnic backgrounds based on cultures, practices, and beliefs. We may have different ethnicities, but we share one race: The human race.

Most importantly, the ruling class uses "races" to control our behaviors and biases towards those workers who we think are different. But we have more in common than they want us to believe. Yes, we must embrace our cultural and ethnic differences, but we must reject the idea of "races" at every opportunity.

"We must know our real history" which is that there is only one human race. We are all members of the same class: the working class. Destroying capitalism means destroying the capitalists' many exploitative ideas and "races" is one of them.

In Solidarity,

—Red Teacher in Los Angeles (USA)



EPIFANIO CAMACHO (1924-2022): INDISPENSABLE COMMUNIST FIGHTER, ROOTED IN THE INDISPENSABLE MASSES

“There are those who struggle all their lives. They are the indispensable ones.”—Bertolt Brecht

How do we honor comrade Epifanio Camacho, a working-class hero, without promoting a dangerous cult of the individual? The masses make history, not “great men and women” as capitalist historians tell us. These “heroes” would be nothing without the masses.

Camacho had already made history when he first met our comrades in October 1972. He had helped convince César Chávez to organize a farmworkers’ union instead of a “community service” organization.

But Camacho and Chávez would have been nothing without the fifty workers from the rose farms who came to the first meetings. These workers helped organize a strike that shut down McFarland’s largest rose farm.

Camacho and Chávez would have been nothing without thousands of farmworkers who, inspired by 2,000 striking Filipino grape workers, organized thousands more Latinx workers to strike for a union. That strike lasted five years and won recognition for the United Farm Workers.

Camacho was not yet a communist in 1972. He was a militant class fighter who had defied the pacifist, religious, anti-immigrant, and class-collaborationist leadership of Chávez and Huerta.

Once Camacho became a communist, capitalist historians ignored him. They praised instead faithful anti-communist servants of the bosses like Chávez and Dolores Huerta. They despised the farmworker masses, portraying them as passive, blind followers.

Camacho was never arrogant, despite his long fighting history and his enormous influence and popularity. He was humble and respectful to everyone except the bosses, their supervisors, and strikebreakers.

“We met Camacho in Lincoln Park (Los Angeles),” recounts a comrade. “He was speaking to twenty other strikers about the origin of racism. When he finished, we respectfully explained that capitalism created and propagates racism to divide workers and super-exploit sectors of our working class.

“Camacho responded, ‘That’s what I wanted to say. Thank you.’ He gave us his contact information. We struck up a friendship that lasted almost fifty years.”

This relationship, and an international collective effort, helped develop Camacho into a communist leader of Progressive Labor and later of

the International Communist Workers’ Party (ICWP).

From Reformist Struggle to Communist Struggle

The UFW won recognition and its first contracts in 1970. It grew to almost 100,000 members. In 1973, ranchers refused to sign new contracts. The fight had to start over. This showed Camacho the correctness of the communist idea that capitalism cannot be reformed, it must be destroyed.

Camacho began to introduce communism to other strikers, and Chávez expelled him from the UFW. In a public letter distributed regionally, Camacho explained that as a communist he fought to liberate the working class from the bosses’ exploitation and oppression through an armed revolution. He accused Chávez of defending the interests of the ranchers and capitalists. Chávez never replied.

Camacho recruited more farmworkers into a Party collective that distributed hundreds of communist papers every issue for decades.

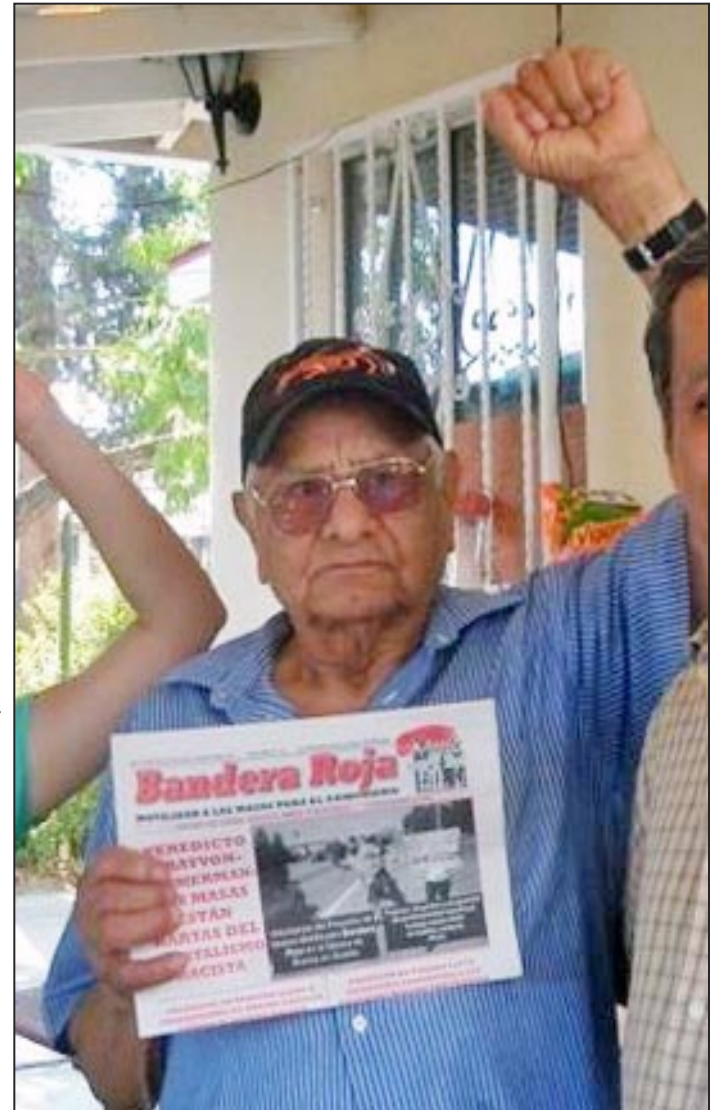
In 1982 we concluded that we had been mistaken to fight for socialism, which was state capitalism. Our fight should be directly for communism. Camacho and the farmworkers collectives were key to developing and spreading this new understanding.

McFarland became a communist center, hosting annual Summer Projects to train young communists. Many saw that masses supported communist ideas. Workers and youth easily understood Camacho’s comments, which wove together his life experiences and political analysis.

“It was so inspiring to listen to Camacho,” remembers a comrade from El Salvador. “He planted a seed in each of us. From his house we visited homes in the neighborhood, and his experience strengthened us to talk to other workers.”

In the 2000s we realized that despite our communist line, we were mobilizing workers mainly around a reformist approach to fighting pesticide poisoning, racist police, exploitation. Reforms, rather than communism, had increasingly absorbed our time and energy. Without a clear goal of a communist world, some comrades had become discouraged. The McFarland work dwindled. But Camacho struggled on.

Camacho joined the group that broke from PL in 2010 and organized the ICWP. He embraced the guiding principle of mobilizing the masses to



fight directly for communism and nothing less.

We respond to capitalist attacks on our class with communist class struggles. Instead of formulating reform demands, our political slogans offer a sharp vision of the communist world that we urgently need. Camacho spread our *Red Flag* newspaper and wrote for it while he was still able.

Camacho was an indispensable communist fighter. And so we must all become.

Comrade Camacho’s story will inspire generations. He raised high the red flag of communist revolution. He helped to develop and implement the most advanced political line of the international working class

Revolutionaries draw encouragement, inspiration, and determination from the masses. Every worker’s small action – taking communist newspapers for themselves and friends, attending a meeting or a demonstration – helps to steel everyone and builds confidence in the masses.

Comrade Camacho was indispensable because of his relationships with the indispensable masses.

EPIFANIO CAMACHO HAS LEFT US, BUT HIS LEGACY CONTINUES MORE THAN EVER.

Camacho spent half of his nearly one hundred years organizing for communism. Many workers participate militantly for immediate demands: better working conditions, wage increases, against sexism and racism. However, they stay within that limit and do not join the revolutionary organization to end the system of wage slavery that causes these evils. Camacho, an outstanding leader of workers’ struggles, was convinced of the line of mobilizing the masses towards Communism.

In 1975 I was invited to a Trade Union Conference in San Francisco, California. On the bus I met Camacho, who had joined the Progressive Labor Party, which organized the Conference. I had traveled from Tijuana together with two

workers from the Ciudad Industrial del Valle de Cuernavaca, Mexico.

I was surprised by his enthusiasm for the workers’ struggles and by his criticism of Cesar Chávez, leader of the United Farm Workers (UFW), where Camacho had played a leading role in a strike of workers who grafted rose bushes.

At that time, the struggle of farm workers in Texas was taking place, led by Antonio Orendain; Camacho also spoke about this at the Conference. But what impressed me most was his resolve to join a communist party.

I participated in a Summer Project, one of those organized annually in Delano, California. We distributed communist literature house to

house and entered a field to talk to the workers. The enthusiasm of the volunteers was great and the farm workers, Camacho’s neighbors, collaborated by lodging us and contributing for the stay.

Camacho traveled several times to Oaxaca, Mexico, to help grow the communist organization. Some comrades there had joined the Party in the San Joaquin Valley under Epifanio’s leadership. He met my many brothers as they were staying with us when he was in Mexico City.

In the last ten years we both joined the communist effort led by the International Communist Workers’ Party.

We will always remember Epifanio Camacho as a great communist.

—Comrade in Mexico