

# RED FLAG



## MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR COMMUNISM

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST WORKERS' PARTY



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SAQEZ (IRAN), October 26, 2022—Masses gather to commemorate Jina Mahsa Amini



SANANDAJ (IRAN), November 17, 2022—Young women in the streets

### Heroic Iranian Masses in the Streets Demand Fundamental Change

#### **TO END ALL OPPRESSION, WORKERS NEED COMMUNIST ORGANIZATION**

January 1—This is the 108th day of the protests that began with the death in custody of Jina Mahsa Amini after Iran's "Morality Police" arrested her for improperly wearing her headscarf.

The nationwide uprising against the fascist mullahs' regime has expanded to at least 282 cities. Over 750 people have been killed and more than 30,000 arrested. And the protests grow.

Throughout Iran, funerals and memorials for murdered protestors become anti-regime protests. Crowds shout "Martyrs don't die! Death to Khamenei and Down with the Regime!" Security forces attack them with tear gas and live ammunition and the crisis escalates.

On December 31, security forces killed a protestor at a memorial in Javanrud in Western Iran. The masses burned a police trailer, and the next day store owners shut down all commerce. Masses in nearby Sanadaj, the capital of Kurdistan Province, set up flaming roadblocks and fought the security forces in solidarity with the Javanrud protestors.

Students and youth lead these actions,

which are mostly spontaneous. The masses have shown exceptional bravery and heroism in the face of the regime's fascist terror. Protestors burned the Semiron, Central Iran, branch of the regime's Islamic Development Organization on December 31. That same day, others attacked the sites of the regime's IRGC paramilitary Basij units in Anzali, in northern Iran, and in Eslamsharh, near Tehran. Protests are closing bazaars throughout the country.

Spontaneous local actions like these have led to nationwide mobilizations like the one in December. Neighborhood committees are debating about how to overthrow the regime and what should replace it. Some propose liberal demands for a referendum, but others have anti-capitalist and pro-working-class politics. Some of the more anti-capitalist and pro-working-class committees are in provinces where historically marginalized Baluchi and Kurdish workers live and where the fascist regime has murdered dozens of protestors.

See IRAN, page 4

### **NEW LEADERS MAKE ICWP INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE A SUCCESS**

EL SALVADOR, December 28 — "We are all key to carrying out the revolutionary struggle. We are all developing as communists," a comrade told everyone attending the International Communist Conference here.

The development of new communist leaders, women and men, was one of the specific plans for the conference. The tactical and political preparation of the conference was mainly in the hands of developing leaders, mostly workers in the maquilas (sweatshops) of El Salvador. And it worked very well.

"This conference represents for us an opportunity to strengthen the fight for communism worldwide," said the woman worker, an ICWP leader, who gave the opening speech. "We must move from anger to action for the change we want. As the ICWP, we are organizing the working class to fight for communism. We fight for the change in our favor, for our class, that will happen, I am sure.

"We must contribute all our experience and knowledge possible in terms of the working class," she continued. "So that after these days of living and working together (in person and on Zoom) we will leave here as better fighters with more and better tools to develop political organizational work for the ICWP. I am certain that our effort will be possible," she concluded.

A worker comrade began his report on Party work in the maquilas by saying that "the main objective is to break the chains to achieve the change we need." He described the process of building Party collectives. (See report, page 3).

"I know that many women in India are going through the same

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**INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST CONFERENCE, from page 1**

problems that we are experiencing here in El Salvador,” said a worker who was recently fired from the APS factory along with hundreds of others. She and her two daughters participated. (See letter, page 5)

An important aspect of the conference was the attendance of young male and female workers. They were especially interested to hear about the importance of communist military work and how soldiers in armies all over the world come from the working class

The comrades from South Africa reported that as comrades and as individuals we are not immune to capitalist ideology. We are communists who are made, not born naturally, and individualism is the biggest challenge we face. They urged us to analyze the contradictions internal to ourselves and the Party.

A comrade from India showed a video about the fight against sexism, casteism, and fascism there. It discussed the growth of ICWP in India. A transcript of the video (which is available on the ICWP website, is on page 6)

A report from the USA focused on the importance of industrial workers and work among student, who receive the *Red Flag*.

Comrades from the Movement of Workers and Peasants (MTC) of Costa Rica participated with us for the first time. They detailed their struggles on behalf of the working class, which they prom-

ised to describe in letters to *Red Flag*.

Workshops discussed communist philosophy, specifically the concept of a dialectical contradiction as the unity and struggle of opposites. Communist philosophy teaches us to understand reality: everything that happens in the world. But the most important thing is how we transform that reality and reach the Communist system.

“The workers are a powerful force, but each one of us must overcome their own contradictions to continue in this fight. Talking about dialectics clarifies many things that

sometimes we explain differently from the capitalist discourse. And dialectical materialism helps us to know that It’s not real,” said a young worker.

### ***Red Flag*: Revolutionary Communist Weapon**

Some workshops read aloud the article from India, “The fight for communism unites us all.” Many women workers identified with the woman quoted in it.

Participants were asked how to use *Red Flag* better, how to make it more useful, and were urged to write for the newspaper. (See *Red Flag* report, page 3)

One said, “I am a farmworker, and I would like to read in each edition of *Red Flag* what it will be like to live under Communism, for example, the subject of agriculture.”

Several letters came out of the conference (see page 5) and many more were promised.

This conference represented a great advance. More workers participated than had been expected. Newer comrades also led in translation and technical issues. It showed great communist leadership especially of women and youth.

“Although it means double effort for us women, what we are doing is for something better for our lives. I know that we are all going to achieve it together,” a worker concluded.



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## STRENGTHENING COMMUNIST TIES AND BUILDING THE ICWP IN THE MAQUILAS

EL SALVADOR, December 27—To build the work of the International Communist Workers' Party, we concentrated building collectives. Little by little, with a lot of dedication, we were able to establish the first three collectives. We met twice a week with 6 to 8 workers, women and men.

Organizing them took time, but we have made progress. This allows us to get closer as comrades, to learn about aspects of our lives, which strengthen ties among us. We learn from each other, and we grow politically. We also have the aim of increasing recruitment, which will serve to build workers' power.

Each group has a day and time scheduled to meet, after the workday. This process has been creating a sense of responsibility while we build communist social relations, so necessary for the fight for communism.

Likewise, at some point in this struggle, these comrades will be able to form collectives in the communities where working-class families live, expanding communist ideas and constructing the fabric that will be the basis of the party.

We mobilized our comrades for May Day under pressure that we hadn't had for several

years, but we came out stronger from it.

After the health crisis, the employers organized different schedules, so that some comrades no longer started at the same time. In view of this situation, it was necessary to see each other at lunchtime. This represents an obstacle because we have a few minutes, nothing more, to share. For this reason we hold extended meetings every two months that our family groups also attend.

Inside the factory, communication is quite difficult because we are being watched all the time. But the working class always breaks those locks. We strive to prevent workers from turning to reformism as it means prolonging wage slavery.

One principle that we try to practice is solidarity. A few months ago, when approximately 800 workers were fired from the APS factory, a new comrade who was one of those fired returned to the factory where we work. She contacted a worker who was her partner in APS, told her about our party, and passed her *Red Flag*. Among all the comrades of the ICWP we made a collection of basic necessities to support them in this very difficult moment. Now she meets with us.

We also distributed a flyer denouncing these

layoffs. We have organized within the factory under attacks by the bosses and union representatives. The fear of losing our job, isolating ourselves from the workers themselves, are obstacles that we must face. But there is a clear main objective. The communist philosophy tells us that everything changes, that nothing is impossible. But this requires permanent political work.

Recently we met with the comrades from the countryside. They shared their experience in the revolutionary struggles. We also talked about the need to always take security measures into account, due to the current situation.

In our collective meetings, we always mention that we deserve to live in a society without wage slavery where there is no fascism, racism, sexism, and xenophobia. Without exploiters or exploited, where our labor power will not be for sale.

We say that we will work based on our needs, and solidarity will be a main practice of a new world. Our practice must be well-planned and conscious. We cannot leave anything to chance. No change that favors the working class will come from the bosses. We will build that!

## CONFERENCE REPORT: USING RED FLAG TO BUILD ICWP AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST CONSCIOUSNESS

Thanks to everyone who contributes to *Red Flag/Bandera Roja* by writing and helping to write; to those who do the work reported in our pages; who translate or send photos and suggestions. We all help to produce our newspaper, as well as distributing it.

RF/BR is our weapon, or our tool, as P said yesterday. It doesn't do communist work. We use it to do the work. And like any weapon or tool, one needs to learn how to use it. Our goal today and going forward is to learn to use it better.

The recent India article has important lessons about this. Let's read the first part together in the workshops.

First, it shows that reading stories from elsewhere helps raise our awareness of being part of an international working class. Who has other examples of this? And how can maquila workers in El Salvador respond to the comrade in India?

Also, the comrade from India said that *Red Flag* gave her the opportunity to tell her story. As T said yesterday, we each have our own story of finding and joining ICWP. Let's share our stories in RF/BR to help others.

The article called for this conference to emphasize the fight against sexism. We often put this struggle forward in a not very dialectical way: "We need more women giving leadership." We must ask: What are the contradictions that we encounter? Here are a few:

- Some women workers are very angry with capitalism that super-exploits them. They often do double work: for less pay (in the factory) and no pay for the "second shift" at home. But this same situation that makes them want to fight for communism can make it hard for them to attend meetings or leave them too tired to read the

newspaper.

- Others have similar experiences but think—influenced by religious ideas or popular culture—that sexism is "natural" and can't be changed.

- Sometimes women comrades give important leadership in the practice of the Party—like the work of building communist relationships—but we don't always recognize this as leadership. We might think of leadership only as giving speeches or running meetings.

We need letters about our experiences with contradictions like these. Sometimes, how we have resolved them, to help others. Or, more often, when we don't know how to resolve it, we should write and ask for help.

We need to think and write more about how communism will change the material conditions that foster sexism and how the struggle will continue.

M said yesterday that understanding the contradictions in the imperialist world helps her better understand where she lives. That's why we must read the historical and analytical RF articles too. We need to improve the way we write them. We ask for your suggestions and even complaints.

The most important thing in the editorial process of RF/BR is the ideological struggle to put forward a sharp

communist line. Here too contradictions arise: more voices mean different opinions and more variation in how we explain communism.

These differences can help us advance our line. We can't be liberal and say, "everything is good." Instead we must struggle in a comradely way to resolve disagreements. That means more comments and letters.

And we need more comrades to participate in the RF/BR editorial collective's Zoom meetings. I invite you to help as you can.

Comrades, we are moving forward with *Red Flag* among the masses. Reports and letters about these experiences, especially conversations in the factory or among friends and relatives, will improve our newspaper.

*Red Flag* depends on all of you. Give yourselves a round of applause before we go back to our workshops!



SOUTH AFRICA, November 22, 2022—Civil Service Workers on Strike



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Spain, January 2: Ryanair flight attendants strike at ten major airports over pay and working conditions.



United Kingdom, January 3: Railway strikers demand raises to keep up with inflation.

## 2023: ALREADY A NEW YEAR OF CLASS STRUGGLE

January 4—Eighty-six thousand electrical power workers in Mumbai, India. Nurses, ambulance drivers, and railroad workers in the UK. Transit workers in the capital of Tunisia. Health workers in Chicago, USA. Ryanair cabin workers in Spain. All on strike in the first week of 2023!

The global crisis of capitalism is deepening. The rulers, desperately competing to maximize profits, are privatizing public enterprises and squeezing workers harder and harder. Many workers know that their trade-union reform fights, however militant, are at best defensive actions that can't and won't liberate our class. But they know too that they must fight back.

More strikes will come – including teachers in Scotland next week. More rebellions will come – as in Iran. More opportunities will come to share the news that communist revolution is both necessary and possible to end capitalism's destruction of our lives and our environment.

Let's bring communist literature, communist signs, and communist slogans to the picket lines and the streets everywhere we can! Let's meet, befriend, and recruit to our party many of these angry strikers who are desperate for change!



Tunis, Tunisia, January 2: Tram and bus workers strike over delays in salaries and the lack of an end-of-year bonus.



Chicago, USA, January 3: Howard Brown Health workers strike against layoffs. "It's hard to say this is an organization that believes in liberation when they want to slash programs that serve the community, not to mention the community they serve is often the people that work there," said a striker.



Mumbai, India, January 4: Electrical power workers strike against privatization of the state-run company.

## IRAN from page 1

### Students, Soldiers, Workers, and Youth Need Communist Organization

There have been periodic strike waves throughout the 43 years of this regime, but strikes are increasing in this period. Workers and employees of the petrochemical site in Dehloran, Western Iran, went on strike on January 1. Employees of the Azar oil company in western Iran and refinery workers in Abadan in the southwest are also on strike.

Truck drivers and sugarcane workers have struck in solidarity with the protests and also for their own demands. Although the regime has destroyed most workers' organizations, there are independent unions which are leading these struggles. They are, however, still sporadic.

There is no unifying organization, legal or illegal, that is capable of organizing a nationwide general strike. And none to lead a coordinated revolutionary struggle to overthrow the regime—let alone end capitalist oppression.

There is not yet a party rooted in the masses which can lead the fight for a communist system. And while it's hard to know for sure, there doesn't seem to be the underground organizing within the military and/or security forces that would be required to organize to seize state power.

A statement by the Haft Tappeh sugarcane workers' union illustrates the problem. They call for "an end to all oppressors" and "fundamental changes." They reject "organizations and parties, inside and outside the country," and proclaim that "the demands and interests of workers who make up the majority of society cannot be provided by any force, any heroes, except us."

### Build the International Communist Workers' Party

The Iranian working-class masses have been defeated and betrayed by parties from the revisionist Tudeh Party to the Provisional Mujaheddin of Iran which panders to European social democrats. So, it is not surprising that workers would reject "organizations and parties."

Nevertheless, the Arab Spring revealed the tragic consequences of an uprising without a party or a plan. The heroism of the masses of youth and students, especially the brave women and girls, and the workers in struggle, demands a plan. That plan must not merely be to replace the fascist mullahs with a coalition of capitalist oppressors.

The US and Israeli rulers would love to see the Iranian regime replaced with the pro-Shah coalition in exile. But it would be a mistake to attrib-



SANADAJ (IRAN), January 2, 2023—Protestors set up roadblocks to protest attacks on mourners in Javanrud

ute the anger of the Iranian masses against the fascist regime to the cynical plotting of rival imperialists.

The Iranian masses deserve better. The fundamental change that can end all oppressors is a communist revolution. Only ending private property in the means of production will eliminate the material basis of oppression. Only the end of wage slavery will liberate us to build the communist society that we need.

Only when we work together in common, sharing the fruits of our own labor, will we be able to eradicate the sexism, oppression, and exploitation that the masses in Iran are so heroically combating.

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

### “Continue Fighting to Build a Massive Party”

I want to thank you for the opportunity you gave me to learn and share with you and my family during the International Communist Workers' Party conference. It leaves us thinking about how to continue fighting so that one day we can end so much injustice that the workers live day by day in this system. We will continue fighting to build a massive party and make the communist revolution a reality, and so that one day the *Red Flag* will spread to everyone and end so much mockery of the employers.

With this I say goodbye and send a cordial greeting, mainly to those who accompanied us on the day of the conference. Greetings to the comrades from India, South Africa, the United States, Costa Rica. And long live communism!

—Comrade “Delia” in El Salvador

### “Red Flag Helps Us Unite and Change Toward the Communist System”

Fraternal greetings!

I am the worker who was fired on August 30. I received the *Red Flag* newspaper through a friend. Then I read it, and I found it a nice expression because there I could realize that, nationally and internationally, we are going through difficult situations, due to the bosses. I am a single mother with two daughters, and unfortunately, they closed the factory where I worked.

Well now, it was my first international conference with the International Communist Workers Party, along with my two daughters who are students who are students aged 16 and 17. For me it was a nice and beautiful experience that I had with my daughters.

Now I have realized that I am not the only worker who goes through situations. We heard what the comrade worker from India wrote, and the difficulties that she also goes through, and how the *Red Flag* newspaper serves us as a means of communication, wherever we are.

It was very complicated, and I found it very good to have shared with all the workers from different factories and countries. And the only thing I would like to do is to continue to encourage more workers so that they can realize that we can change if we unite as one class.

*Red Flag* is an alliance of the international working class that helps us to unite and change towards the communist system.

—Comrade “Celia”

### “Join Us, Fight to Be a Huge Family”

I am a factory worker in El Salvador. My husband and I are workers and we both attended the conference with our son. We always form a team, dividing the obligations. We do everything together.

It all started when I saw that the worker E and the worker M got up and confronted the boss. Another worker comrade rose next to them and thus they took strength to face what could happen. And that was when I began to be interested in the party.

I asked the third worker what gave her strength at that moment. She gave me the *Red Flag* newspaper. I only read part of it while I was in the factory, a story like the one we faced.

She told me that they were going to meet at the end of the year and asked if I wanted to accompany them to understand what *Red Flag* means. I found it interesting, and that's how I attended the conference.

I really liked the kindness, the camaraderie, and the many stories I have heard from other international comrades. I have realized that it is not only in El Salvador that this type of problem exists. Many think that in other countries it is easy to survive, but we do not know that the situation is the same or worse.

I invite others to join, to speak up, not to be silent. Do not feel oppressed so much with the boss. With other comrades of the working class, continue to fight to be a huge family. Best wishes!

—Comrade “Ana”

### First Communist Conference as a Worker

Fraternal greetings to all comrades who read *Red Flag*!

I am a young worker, 18 years old. I have read *Red Flag* for 2 years.

I was invited to the international conference of the International Communist Workers' Party by my dad and my aunt. They are maquila (sweatshop) workers too.

In the past, I came to Party meetings as a student. It is the second time I have attended the international conferences of the ICWP. But as a worker in the maquila factory, it is the first time.

I am motivated to continue reading our *Red Flag* newspaper and mobilizing more co-workers from the factory. I started working in this factory three months ago, and I will share the experience with my trusted friends.

—Comrade “Riquelme”

### “Communism Is Necessary to End Borders”

We of the maquilas of El Salvador thank the comrades and members of our International Communist Workers' Party of South Africa, India, the United States, Costa Rica, and El Salvador. We know that if we remain united, sharing ideas and putting them into practice, we will grow until we achieve the triumph of the communist revolution.

The US report inspired me because it told us how they are doing political work, how they came together in a single feeling with immigrant families when the children were separated from their parents. That is why communism is necessary: to end borders.

In the workshops we committed ourselves to continue studying dialectics and above all to reading *Red Flag* because it is our weapon against capitalism.

—Comrade “Beatriz”



### OUR NEWSPAPER RED FLAG POLITICAL TOOL OF OUR STRUGGLE

We begin with our stories and histories-- without borders



We both learn and teach simultaneously and dialectically



We promote dialogue about both ideas and action

Our voices, feelings, knowledge and experience become vital



A tool that strengthens and builds us personally and collectively



## War in Ukraine: Capitalism-Imperialism Kills Workers Everywhere

### AS WORLD WAR APPROACHES, COMMUNIST ORGANIZING IS MORE URGENT

January 2— Ukrainian President Zelensky's US visit in December was timed to guarantee Congressional support for increasing US support for weapons to Ukraine before the new Congress takes office. US rulers used it for their propaganda campaign to get US workers to support, sacrifice for, and fight for US imperialism in the name of "helping the Ukrainian people" whom the US rulers are using as cannon fodder in their war against Russia for world domination.

While arming Ukraine with Patriot missiles and more, US President Biden admitted that European allies (France and Germany) don't want these weapons to be used to attack Russia itself, which would "start World War III."

**But the expanding war in Ukraine is already headed precisely toward World War III.** Ukraine has sent US-made drones deep into Russia to attack a Russian military base, killing Russian soldiers. On Jan 1st, Ukraine used US guided missiles to attack and kill Russian soldiers in Donetsk.

Russia rulers won't give up control of Crimea and the Donbass region (both part of Ukraine until recently). And the US rulers won't give up on pushing Russia back. They are locked in a fight against their Russian and Chinese rival imperialists for control of the world's markets, including which currency will dominate world trade.

Capitalism's competitive drive to maximize profits makes ever-deadlier imperialist world war inevitable.

**This means growing attacks on the world's workers.** Tens of thousands of Russian and Ukrainian soldiers and workers have been killed in this battle over which imperialist will control the world's markets, labor, and resources.

Masses in Europe face rising prices and a cold winter because of cuts in energy. Worldwide, increasing energy prices and lack of Ukrainian

grain are causing suffering and starvation from Africa to Afghanistan and beyond.

**The war is expanding.** Zelensky's one-day trip to Washington followed Putin's announcement in Minsk that he would provide Belarus with nuclear weapons as a "deterrent." After Ukrainian forces attacked a Russian military base deep inside Russia, the rulers of Belarus announced the deployment of the Russian-made Iskander ballistic missile system on combat duty.

Both the US and Russia are increasing their military spending. In 2021, 1.3 million active-duty personnel served in the US Armed Forces. Russia is increasing its military from 1 million to 1.5 million personnel, expanding its officer corps and weapon systems and its commitment to spread the war against NATO. The US has begun to increase its military presence in Europe.

**But who are those soldiers?** Most often they are working-class youth with few other options (if any). Their families are already paying the price of imperialist war with their declining standard of living. Workers and soldiers everywhere have no interest in fighting and dying for any capitalist or imperialist. Soldiers organized by communists in the barracks – as in Russia during World War I – have turned the guns around and joined the revolutionary forces.

At the recent ICWP international conference in El Salvador, young workers (women and men) listened very attentively to speeches about the importance of communist military work. They talked about how the armies in the world

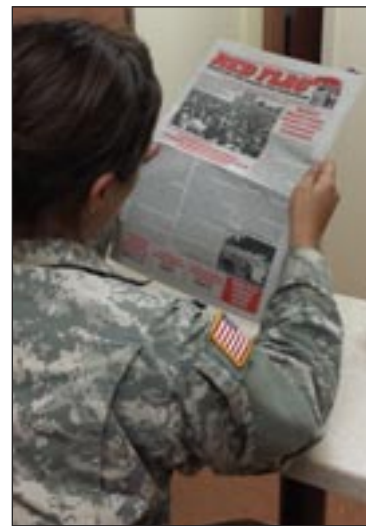
come from the working class but serve the bosses. Our task is to organize soldiers into the International Communist Workers' Party so that when the time is right those weapons turn against the capitalist class. They were encouraged to join the army to do the revolutionary work of organizing for ICWP.

**Communism means an end to the profit system and its wars for empire, along with its money, wage system and markets.** It means workers everywhere sharing resources to meet the needs of the international working class, not the profits of the bosses.

The Chinese communist Red Army during World War II organized itself on the communist principle "from each according to ability and commitment, to each according to need." There were no ranks, and for a time soldiers chose their own leaders. They recruited many captured "enemy" soldiers.

After the war, many former Red Army soldiers led the way in building communist-inspired social relations in their villages.

The wars spreading in Ukraine and around the world show the urgency of communist military work today.



Read our pamphlet:

### Soldiers, Sailors, Marines Crucial to a Communist Workers' Revolution

Available at  
[icwpredflag.org/mpe.pdf](http://icwpredflag.org/mpe.pdf)

## REPORT FROM INDIA: ICWP GROWS AMID CLASS STRUGGLES

*The following is an edited narration from a short video report produced by comrades in India for the December ICWP International Conference in El Salvador. The video is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8uqZ2S6f-Q> or [www.ICWPRedFlag.org](http://www.ICWPRedFlag.org).*

Since 2014, the fascist Modi government has intensified attacks on the working class in India. Dalits, Muslims, other minorities have borne the brunt of these fascist attacks on workers' daily lives. However, it is an attack on the entire working class. By isolating Dalits and Muslim workers as "the enemy," the capitalists are deceiving the workers. It is the working class who suffers.

Our party ICWP in Delhi, India was formed during the time of increasing fascist attacks. Every fascist attack in Delhi has led to a massive counterattack by the working class. The violent protests at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) and Delhi University gave us the opportunity to organize some workers and students with *Red Flag*.

Delhi has become a center of massive rebellion by the working class, from JNU to the Shaheen Bagh neighborhood. In the face of attacks on the Aligarh Muslim University and systematic pogroms of the Muslim workers, the masses have heroically countered the narratives of the fascist forces.

Each of these struggles involved more and more of the working class joining ICWP and massively spreading *Red Flag*. From the despicable gang rape and murder of a young Dalit

woman in Hathras (which cops covered up by burning her body), to the horrors of Covid, our members have organized the masses. ICWP comrades have protested the Bulldozer drives that the Modi government is using to destroy Muslim homes.

From the rebellious students and the railway agitation in Bihar, the Ukraine crisis where Indian students came back to Delhi, ICWP members were there to give the communist alternative and we recruited more students.

We participated in the langars (mass collective food distributions) during the Covid crisis and massive farmers demonstrations for months. We have been part of the working-class movement in opposition to the racist anti-immigrant laws (NCR, CAA) to cement our ties with the workers.

We are facing fascist conditions when governments legally kidnap people under the 2019 Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Act for many years without legal charges.

Masses of workers have organized in the garment neighborhoods of Bengaluru against oppressive conditions. Millions of other workers, including ASHA (community health workers) in

India's so-called Silicon Valley have been in the forefront of the protest movements.

In Bengaluru we have been able to establish a small number of workers of ICWP. They work in garment factories that produce for H&M, Tommy Hilfiger, Target, Zara, Benetton, Mango, SportsZone, and more. We distribute *Red Flags* in the factories to some friends, and to others in our neighborhoods.

We have been able to reach out to many other workers like the ASHA workers and some workers in Colombo, Sri Lanka. We met the women in the garment industry of Sri Lanka during the massive crisis that burnt the palaces of the President there.

*The video ends with the words of the women garment comrades (see article page 7) while the Internationale plays in Bengali and Hindi.*



NEW DELHI (INDIA), December 2020—Langars serving farmers during mass protest.

# GARMENT WORKERS: DEFEAT CAPITALISM AND ITS DIVISIONS WITH COMMUNIST ORGANIZATION

BENGALURU (India), December 2022—“Yes, comrade, it is true. We have no facility to survive,” said Poonam. “Why? Because the capitalists are taking money from us. They live in luxury, but we live in slums.

“But that is not the only problem,” she continued. “They make profit from our work and then they use it to oppress us more. How? Because they use modern machines to lay off workers. This is capitalism, the only way the workers can get what they deserve is by getting rid of the capitalist system and build communism.

“Communism is a society without money, the bosses, the banks,” Poonam explained. “Only when we have communism, we share everything among the working class because nobody is going to profit. So we have to organize the working class with our *Red Flag*, recruit more workers, bring them to meetings like these. We don’t have to feel hopeless. We have the world to win! Join ICWP!”

Alisha spoke up. “See, comrade, we are meeting today because the problems we face are real. But if you read *Red Flag*, you will see that our

problems are not unique. We have unemployment, comrades in El Salvador have unemployment. We all suffer from the lack of healthcare. Capitalists make profit, it does not matter where.

“We have different languages, different cultures, different religions,” she said, “but in the end, we as workers face the same oppressive bosses. And so we need communism that will eliminate all the backward aspects of our society. Dalits, Muslims, and the rest of the working class will live together, eat together, and share lives as a working class. That is the real meaning of communism.

“Without a communist outlook,” Alisha concluded, “they will divide and conquer us. But the other side is the working-class unity. So let us fight to achieve one class in a fight to smash the bosses.”

Rajashree declared, “Comrades, I want to send our greetings to the comrades all over the world. The example of our comrade Manju, who came to look for a job in Bengaluru and is harassed by sexist bosses, this cannot continue to exist. We need to fight this sexist outlook. It

only makes us divided and makes the bosses powerful.”

“We feel your pain, comrade Manju,” said Mehbooba. “The next time you have a problem, call me and I will call others in the neighborhood. We will confront this sexist pig. I always go to my neighbors with a leaflet of ICWP and communism. These neighbors will protect you. They know what real communism is.”



BENGALURU (INDIA) 2016—Garment workers fight back

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## Questions about India’s Caste System

It has been exciting and upbuilding to read articles on the growth of our party in India. These articles describe the protests, the sharing of work, and development of new groups.

I recently read a magazine article by a well-known Indian American woman. She reviewed a book, *The Trauma of Caste*, by Thenmozhi Soundararajan. The reviewer mentions that her family is from the highest-level caste, one that is only 5% of the population but owns almost half of the whole country’s wealth. This writer admits that she benefits from belonging to this “upper-level” group, even though her parents say they don’t believe that some people are superior and others inferior.

I am wondering if this system of “castes” has affected the party’s work in India? Are there any party members who are from a privileged group but want to end this very unjust system?

The caste system is based on religious beliefs and is very ancient and accepted. The writer mentions that even in the United States and other places with large groups of Indian emigrants, the caste system comes along with them. This is disturbing; but of course, it would be one of the things that a new and better system (communism) would end!

—Comrade in the USA

## Red Flag responds: Caste, Colonialism, and Capitalism

Understanding caste in India requires us to understand the history of the working class in South Asia under British colonial rule.

In 1857, Hindu and Muslim rulers united, attempting to overthrow British rule. This mutiny, known as the Sepoy Rebellions, was unsuccessful. The triumphant but shaken British rulers decided to divide Hindu and Muslim rulers as never before. They used religious divisions to occupy India for the sole purpose of creating agricultural products, minerals, and coal to support capitalist production in Britain. Direct British rule replaced the East India Company.

British colonial administrators learned from Ireland, where divisions between Protestants and Catholics had allowed them to subjugate Ireland for British capitalism. In India also, religion became the foundation of capitalism’s divide-and-conquer policy.

Hinduism’s ancient caste system embodied a social division of labor. Brahmins, the highest caste, performed religious duties, and had the privilege of reading texts. The Kshatriyas were warriors and soldiers. The Baniyas were traders. And Shudras did manual work.

The caste system was hereditary. It was brutally enforced with religious justification, with

the Brahmins playing a significant role.

After 1857, the British realized that India, a vast country, needed locals who would function as junior colonial administrators. For this they trained some Brahmins in the English education system.

Capitalist agricultural production of jute, indigo, cotton, and rice broke the feudal system based on the hereditary caste system. It slowly created a class of proletarian wage slaves. This wage system required a divided working class, and casteism became a capitalist tool. The Shudras, given the most difficult manual work, became modern Dalits. The Brahmins were supervisors, the Kshatriyas were recruited into the army, and the Baniyas were traders and accountants. That is, the caste system is used to ideologically justify capitalism.

Our party struggles to eradicate the caste system by uniting workers as a revolutionary class that will end wage slavery with the communist revolution. India’s capitalist rulers still use caste and religion to divide the working class. We struggle with the masses by spreading *Red Flag* and recruiting young Dalit, Muslim, and Hindu workers to one communist party.

We will write more for *Red Flag* about the communist fight against caste and religious divisions.

## CHINA & COVID from page 8

know this is a big threat to their divide-and-rule tactics.

Working-class leadership and anti-racist solidarity signal a qualitative difference between the Covid protests in China and those we’ve seen in the US and western Europe. And the Chinese masses have shown, over three years, their commitment to the collective good – unlike the individualism rampant in the west.

Some demonstrations of overseas Chinese, and some forces inside China, seem to be trying to discredit the Chinese capitalists to support their US imperialist rivals in the name of “democracy.” In China, as everywhere, workers and youth must reject all capitalist-imperialists and mobilize for actual communism.

The Covid protests in China – like the continuing rebellion in Iran – show that censorship and violent crackdowns cannot keep the masses down indefinitely. But reform struggles don’t lead to revolution, whether or not they achieve their immediate goals.

And 20th century Chinese history shows that even communist-led revolution doesn’t automatically lead to a communist society unless that is what the masses are organized to fight for and build.

The International Communist Workers’ Party must organize everywhere for just that. Unlike the Communist Party of China, we are a mass party that is open to everyone who wants to work collectively to fight for, win, and build communism. When masses grasp and act on communist ideas, they will be unstoppable.



Read our 2016 series on the  
Cultural Revolution in China

Available at:

<https://icwpredflag.org/wp/wordpress/pamphlets-and-article-series/history-of-the-cultural-revolution-in-china/>

## UK NURSES' STRIKE: THE HEALTH OF THE WORKING CLASS REQUIRES COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

December 30— One hundred thousand nurses, members of the United Kingdom's biggest nursing union, are on intermittent strike in England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. This strike against the National Health Service (NHS) is the largest in the union's 106-year history.

To care for patients, these workers are forced to skip breaks and work overtime for free. Many must sell back their annual leave to make ends meet. Some even sleep in their cars, unable to afford fuel to and from work.

A 15-year nursing veteran stated, "What we are left with is a group of workers carrying the entire burden of keeping patients safe, while the government washes its hands of any responsibility or accountability for the state of the service within which they work."

The nurses, along with ambulance drivers, rail workers and mail carriers, are part of the largest series of labor actions in the United Kingdom in over a decade.

We support workers fighting back against terrible working conditions, low pay, and other horrific aspects of wage slavery. But a strike for better conditions under capitalism can never get real change. Many strikers will come to see that a system that thrives only when it derives profits from our wage slavery can never meet our needs. We need communism.

The NHS, like any capitalist employer, does not function in the interest of the working class. The working conditions of the employees make it clear that even a "free" healthcare system must respond to capitalism's bottom line: money. Medical research, access to medicines and healthy food, clean water, and decent shelter – and certainly our wage labor —all serve the capitalists' profits.

Union leaders lie that we can win under capitalism. They don't challenge the capitalist relations of production which are at the heart of all public health issues. Only communism can provide what humans need. Only communism can destroy the racism and sexism that make healthcare under capitalism so deadly, especially for women and people of color

A US healthcare worker, hearing about the strikes, said, "Healthcare will always be limited under capitalism. Hospitals are run by business majors and the bottom line is always profit!"

With communism, we will share the responsibility for each other, as well as sharing the emotional, mental, and physical rewards of a united working class. This sharing of both responsibility and rewards will eliminate much of the stress that underlies many illnesses.

We will also be healthier because we will have access to clean air and water, safe housing, and uncontaminated food. We will work to understand healthcare in a whole new light: one which emphasizes the health of everyone in our working-class family. Keeping us healthy will be the bottom line.

### Chinese Communists Began to Show What's Possible

*Away with All Pests*, by English surgeon Dr. Joshua Horn, describes his time working in Chinese hospitals from 1954-69. It is revelatory, giving a window into what is possible when healthcare focuses on the well-being of our class, rather than on making money.

Horn discusses the struggles to eliminate medical hierarchy. Everyone from doctors to nurses to janitors were involved in discussing and providing patient care.

A million rural workers were trained as "barefoot doctors" after the Chinese revolution. Their education included half a year of classroom work. Then they labored in the fields alongside their co-workers, taking their knowledge straight to the masses.

But the Chinese Communist



Party never moved beyond socialism, retaining markets and wage slavery. With a real communist vision and the knowledge and work of our mass party, we will be able to respond quickly to the healthcare and other needs of our class. This could include quick, efficient training of medical personnel when there is a crisis, such as the current pandemic. The masses of workers would decide what is needed and when and how.

If readers have ideas about what medical care might look like with communism, please share them in a letter or an article for *Red Flag*. We begin now to envision and plan for a communist world.

We urge the UK strikers to see that the best they can hope for is not the pittance they might wrest from the capitalists. We invite them to join the ICWP and fight for a world without bosses or money or for-profit anything! We have a healthy, communist world to win.



## CHINESE WORKERS PROTEST THEIR CAPITALIST RULERS' "ZERO-COVID" POLICIES

December 24— How do we understand the protests in China against its government's "Zero-Covid" policy?

China's capitalist rulers abruptly abandoned "Zero Covid" just weeks after promising to continue it. Perhaps they saw the protests as an opportunity to lift restrictions that hobbled the economy while deflecting blame for the result. Maybe it was an attempt to defuse calls for top party leaders to step down.

Either way, now they must manage the rapid spread of Covid without adequate preparation. Hospitals are overwhelmed, and thousands are dying daily.

Capitalist rulers? Isn't China ruled by the Communist Party of China (CPC)? Yes. But the CPC has been communist in name only for decades. It's capitalist to the core.

The 1960s and 70s saw a huge internal struggle within the CPC between open "capitalist roaders" and the opposing faction that favored socialism. Smaller groups of students and workers organized around a line of moving directly to communism. They were suppressed, but their brave, principled efforts still inspire us.

The open capitalist-roaders won. Their 1978

"economic reforms" privatized land and other means of production. Within ten years, the state had sold the assets of almost all its enterprises to private investors. Most of those investors were CPC leaders or their close allies.

Does anything remain of the communist principles and goals that inspired masses to collectivize production and distribution in the 1950s and 60s? To revolutionize gender relationships, education, and more? To mobilize mass public health campaigns?

Not so many Chinese people today remember those days. But we are confident that many there, as elsewhere, believe in a society where all contribute what they can and will. Where all share according to need. They have seen that capitalist relationships – realized in a market economy – corrupt everything they touch.

We are confident that when we find ways to bring *Red Flag* to the Chinese masses, the ICWP will take root and grow there.

Meanwhile, if you have any connections who can help us understand the recent Chinese Covid protests, please share what you can. Translating *Red Flag* articles into Mandarin or other Sinitic languages would help.

Here's what we know:

In mid-November, hundreds of migrant textile workers in Guangzhou, a manufacturing hub, broke through lockdown barriers, breached checkpoints, marched through the streets, and fought with local health authorities.

Foxconn factory workers protested massively against strict measures that affected the wages and living conditions of newly hired workers. The company founder, one of China's biggest foreign investors, warned Chinese leaders that its Covid policies were hurting China's global supply chains amid a slowdown of economic growth.

Weeks later, a fire in Urumqi, capital of the predominantly Muslim Xinjiang region, killed at least ten. This sparked the main wave of protests across China as many believed that the victims had been trapped by a Covid lockdown.

Many protesters in Shanghai and elsewhere belonged to the majority Han Chinese ethnic group. Their solidarity across the rulers' ethnic and religious divisions showed an understanding that the systematic repression of the Uighur Muslim minority will affect everyone. The rulers

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