

# Proletarian

Organ of the International Communist Party

**WHAT DISTINGUISHES OUR PARTY:** The political continuity which goes from Marx and Engels to Lenin, to the foundation of the Communist International and the Communist Party of Italy; the class struggle of the Communist Left against the degeneration of the International, the struggle against the theory of "socialism in one country" and the Stalinist counter-revolution; the rejection of all popular fronts and national resistance blocs; the struggle against the principles and practice of bourgeois democracy, against interclassism and political and trade-union class collaboration, against any form of opportunism and nationalism; the difficult task of restoring the Marxist doctrine and the revolutionary organ par excellence - the class party - closely linked with the working class, and its daily struggle in opposition to capitalism and bourgeois oppression; the struggle against personal and electoral politics, against any form of indifferentism, of tailism, of movementism or the adventurist practice of "armed struggle"; the support of any proletarian struggle which breaks with social peace and rejects the discipline of interclassist collaborationism; the support of all efforts towards proletarian class reorganisation on the basis of economic associationism, with the perspective of a large scale resumption of the class struggle, proletarian internationalism and the revolutionary anticapitalist struggle.

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## Summary

... United Kingdom. The Bourgeoisie is attacking Proletarians ... France: Riots in the Proletarian Districts ... France. The Fight against Police Violence ... Spain. Metalworkers' Strike in Vigo ... Czechia. In the Face of an Impotent «Week of Protest» ... Mass Casualties at Sea. After Cutru and hundreds of other Cemeteries, Pylos proves it again ... Chile, 50 Years ago ... In Cuba: Poverty, demonstrations and repression ... Venezuela. The only Way out for the Proletarians: Class Struggle ... Brazil: 100 days of Lula Government ... Marx on the Impersonality of Capital ... March 8th, must once again become a Symbol of Proletarian Struggle ... May Day 2023

## Against Massacres, Oppression and Misery, Class Solidarity with the Proletarians and the Masses in Gaza !

A week after the deadly Hamas attack on Israel and the massive bombardment of the Gaza Strip, while the casualties on both sides number in the thousands (1) and hundreds of thousands of Gazans are trying to flee the bombardment, the Israeli army has issued an ultimatum demanding that more than a million residents leave the north of the territory within 24 hours! Which is clearly impossible under current conditions...

Prime Minister Netanyahu railed: «*Israel will take vengeance!*». In order to justify the currently announced total blockade of the territories with a com-

(Continued on page 3)

## Has the American Working Class Awakened? After Starbucks and UPS Employees, Massachusetts Nurses, Minneapolis and Brookline Teachers, and Proletarians from Dozens of other Companies, It Was the Turn of the Auto Workers.

It has not been 88 years since the three big American car companies (the so-called Big Three), General Motors, Ford and Stellantis (the French-Italian multinational that brought together the PSA and FCA brands), were simultaneously hit by a workers' strike. At midnight on 14 September, the collective contracts expired, for which the UAW (United Automobile Workers) has for months been asking the Big Three's top management to negotiate with demands that the trade union itself considers «ambitious»: an average wage increase of 40% over four years, less gruelling shifts, a reduction in the working week, the elimination of different levels of contracts, and improved pension and health insurance.

The UAW represents a significant proportion of Big Three workers (145,000 workers are unionised in total) but the strike initially affected around 18,000 workers, just over 10% of their membership. The UAW began this strike by shutting down one plant at each of the

Big Three's plants. In the case of GM, this was the Wentzville, Missouri plant, which, with 3,600 employees, produces the CMC Canyon and Colorado models. In the case of Stellantis, the target

(Continued on page 2)

## To Russian and Ukrainian Proletarians

### PROLETARIANS OF RUSSIA AND UKRAINE!

For some ten years now you have been bombarded with suffocating nationalist and imperialist propaganda, and therefore words like ours have hardly reached you and can hardly reach you. Nevertheless, we want to continue with this appeal of ours and to send it to your ranks, because sooner or later, in Italian, English, French, Russian... these words will reach you. Let it be a comfort to you to know that outside Russia, outside Ukraine, outside the states supporting this or that belligerent power, there is nevertheless a political grouping with its roots in

Marxism, in the glorious October 1917, in Lenin's formidable Bolshevik Party, which Stalin destroyed, and in the tradition of the current of the Italian Communist Left, which alone in the world, after the historical drama of the theory of "socialism in one country" and the second world imperialist war, worked tirelessly for the restoration of Marxist doctrine and the reconstitution of the international class party; a political grouping that firmly believes, as Marx, Engels and Lenin believed, in the inevitability of the struggle between the classes and in its necessary historical outcome in the proletarian and commu-

(Continued on page 13)

## Has the American Working Class Awakened? After Starbucks and UPS Employees, Massachusetts Nurses, Minneapolis and Brookline Teachers, and Proletarians from Dozens of other Companies, It Was the Turn of the Auto Workers.

(Continuation from page 1)

was a complex in Toledo, Ohio, which, with 5,600 employees, makes the Jeep Gladiator and Wrangler. In the case of Ford, strike action began in Wayne, Michigan, where the Bronco and Ranger pickups are built, specifically by shutting down the assembly and paint lines, and where 3,300 workers are employed. The models in question are the flagship models of the three carmakers (1). Initially, the possibility of extending the strike to other plants and to distribution centres and spare parts stores was announced if negotiations with the Big Three were to be drawn out without results. And indeed, on September 29, the UAW, seeing that overall negotiations were not progressing (the Big Three were offering an average raise of 20% over four and a half years), announced an extension of the strike after it had already hit 38 distribution centers and parts stores operated by GM and Stellantis; this extension has not yet affected Ford, because with that company, according to UAW chief Shawn Fain – who took office in March of this year – «negotiations are moving», albeit «too slowly».

This strike, although affecting a small number of workers, has nonetheless made the news, not least because it has become part of a two-year period of labour unrest in many sectors: the decision of the workers to force the UAW to call a strike and threaten to extend it to all other production lines has in any case alarmed the car companies, which for years have been used to «dialogue» with the UAW in order to avoid strikes, and essentially to subordinate workers to the company's basic demands. Since the 2008–2009 crisis, auto workers have been subjugated by unions to keep factories running, to tougher working conditions, the introduction of a new precarious workforce, wage freezes and, over time, a lack of wages to keep up with the rising cost of living. Then came the pandemic, another social crisis with declining car sales and continually stagnant wages. But since the end of the lockdown and the pandemic, sales have rocketed, car companies have started to make billions of dollars in profits again,

but wages have virtually stagnated, with inflation weakening them more and more.

The expiry of collective contracts was a unique opportunity to go into battle against harsh working conditions and huge social inequalities. Just to give you an idea: Ford's profits in 2022 were \$3.5 billion, GM's were \$4.7 billion and Stellantis' were €11 billion, while the Big Three's combined profits in the first half of 2023 alone were \$23 billion (and have reached \$250 billion over the past 10 years); meanwhile, the increase in CEO remuneration for the Big Three has increased by an average of 40% from 2019 to the present (2). The news that the CEOs of car companies are receiving astronomical remuneration thanks to the massive profits made by the car companies since 2019 has caused real resentment among workers. For example, the CEOs of GM and Stellantis are receiving bonuses equivalent to 350 times the average worker's wage. On the other hand, it is hardly surprising that, in capitalist society, these people are overpaid for their work, which consists of running companies with the aim of maximising profits and, consequently, minimising production costs so that they can stack up against and beat the competition. The production costs, which for the proletariat mean wage restrictions, increased work pace, longer working days, restrictions on all social benefits such as health insurance, pensions, etc. Well, it is these aspects that have forced the workers to go to the struggle: for higher wages, for less exhausting shifts, for a reduction in the number of hours worked per week, for improved pension and health insurance, and for greater job security. The strike proclamation states: «We work 60, 70, 80 hours a week just to make ends meet. That is not life. It's time for a change.» (3) Under pressure from the worker base, the UAW could not help but speak out loudly, especially after the recent change in leadership. Among the demands made, of course, the most stirring was a 40% wage increase over four years; as for this demand, the car companies initially proposed 10% over four and a half years; then Ford and GM proposed 20% and Stellantis 17.5%. The trade union in turn backed down and demanded a 36% in-

crease. But the carmakers consider other demands too onerous for themselves. In the Sole24ore article already linked, we read that the UAW «wants, first of all, the elimination of the two levels of contracts borne out of the 2007 crisis, a watershed moment of significant concessions by the union. Many workers hired since then are receiving much lower starting wages and face an eight-year period to reach the maximum pay of \$32.32 an hour. So far, companies have offered to shorten this period to reach the wage cap to about four years». The UAW also wants «a return to traditional company-run defined benefit pension plans for employees after 2007. And meaningful wage indexation to inflation, which is currently suspended for everyone. Demands also include a 32-hour work week, more paid time off for family-related absences, improved health protection, increased profit-sharing, an end to the use of temporary and non-guaranteed labour, and the equal establishment of collective contracts for joint venture plants producing electric vehicles.» This list of demands illustrates the extent to which workers have been driven to capitulation by the same union over the last forty years – according to the so-called «liberal» experts themselves – and have thus plummeted into unsustainable living and working conditions.

We are in the campaign period for the 2024 presidential election, and US President Joe Biden, struggling for support, did not think twice: he went to Wayne, Michigan, to express his «solidarity» to the striking workers. When a high representative of the bourgeois ruling class sets out to express his «solidarity» to striking workers – a strike that, according to Sole24ore, costs the economy \$5.6 billion every ten days, and in the industrial heartland of the country, with consequent effects on suppliers and consumers – nothing good can be expected. According to the media, Biden had already spoken to the Big Three and asked them to meet the union's demands, given the extraordinary profits accumulated over the past decade; however, his interventions were of little use, and so the current White House administration decided to take a theatrical move: on Tuesday, September 26, Biden appeared in Wayne among workers on the picket line at a GM parts distribution plant and, megaphone in hand, spoke to them, saying, «Companies are making huge profits and they need to share them with workers. You deserve a significant raise» (4). Words that are undoubtedly pure election propaganda, but the same principle works in reverse, in times when companies accu-

multate huge losses instead of huge profits, and thus justify that also proletarians are falling into worse conditions, because the recession had hit the whole economy...

Not even 24 hours have passed, and here comes Trump to make his election rally speech in a **non-unionised** factory on the outskirts of Detroit: *«I'm here to defend the working class, to fight the corrupt political class, to protect the results of labour made in the USA and the American dream from foreign products»*. The transition to electric cars, dominated by China, now looms as a major enemy of American auto workers. To them, Trump's message is that it doesn't matter if the strike leads to a favourable collective contract in negotiations with Ford, General Motors and Stellantis, because in any case *«within two years you will lose your jobs»*. Trump's recipe is, of course, the same as always: *«American production, made with American skilled hands and using American supplies»* (5). And so Trump touched another sore spot in the situation; if Biden points the finger at the super profits of car manufacturers, then Trump points the finger at China and its current dominance in the field of electric cars. Neither of them, of course, has come up with a concrete solution to the problems that are plaguing workers: one says that they have the right to demand a wage increase because the profits of the car companies have rocketed, the other says that their defence is to protect everything that is made in America, no matter what industry. The real difficulty for workers is that they still believe that their struggle can only have a positive outcome if it is championed by a union that will actually turn its back on them at the first hint of economic recession, or by politicians – let alone even the «President and former President of the United States» – who have physically traveled to show... their campaign speeches!

Nevertheless, the fact that American workers of the three largest car companies went on strike together for the first time for common goals and also in defense of the precarious workers hired in the last decade is extremely positive. It is the first step in a struggle that could potentially actually awaken the entire American working class. A struggle that, in turn, has already been anticipated by other sectors of the economy, such as Amazon, Kellogg's, Starbucks, the hotel industry in California, nurses at Kaiser Permanente, longshoremen on the West Coast, teachers in Minneapolis and Brookline, and even Hollywood writers and screenwriters who have been on strike since May 1 of this year; sec-

tors where proletarians have been plagued and are plagued by both a lack of union organisation and a lack of tradition of struggle.

Workers' struggles in America have always had one age-old handicap, and that is the belief that tug-of-war with the bosses only serves to achieve «victory» today, while as for the future... that remains to be seen. But the material facts related to bourgeois relations of production and ownership will sooner or later confront even the American working class not only with glaring social inequalities – which have always existed in America and are far deeper than in other industrial countries – but with the permanent need to go beyond the immediate struggle, the struggle within enterprises, beyond the limits set for a century by the politics of collaboration between the classes, for which negotiation, bargaining, regulation by contracts are important, as if there were no alternative outside this society, a society based on capitalist profit and wage labour; as if society could only be a huge market in which one sells and buys, in which one «makes a profit» or «loses» in business, and in which the very life of every single human being is at stake in a perpetual roulette.

Long, rough and difficult is the road that will lead to the emancipation of the proletarians from the condition of wage-labourers, that is to say, the masses destined to be slaughtered in factories with shifts of 60 to 80 hours a week and starvation wages, or to be slaughtered in the wars that the bourgeois ruling classes of each country will sooner or

later declare in order to continue to dominate their own country or to subject other countries to their domination. It is a long, cruel and difficult road, but a vital one, because the development of capitalism in America and in the world inevitably leads to general war, of which the earlier wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria were only a kind of preparation, just like the war in Ukraine, for which billions were allocated for armaments, ammunition and funding, without sending American soldiers, but whose negative consequences in terms of working and living conditions still affect all proletarians.

**They said the workers' struggle is dead... It will be reborn again and with more vigor than ever before.**

29 September 2023

(1) «Il Sole 24 ore», 15 September 2023.

(2) Panorama.it, 18 September 2023, «Il malessere dietro gli scioperi del mondo auto negli USA».

(3) <https://www.wired.it/article/auto-sciopero-stati-uniti-stellantis-ford-general-motors> («Lo storico sciopero nell'industria dell'auto negli Stati Uniti»).

(4) «Il Sole 24 ore», 26 September 2023.

(5) 28/09/2023 - <https://www.rainews.it/articoli/2023/09/trump-svolta-biden-su-auto-elettriche-favorira-lacina-e-cancellera-migliaia-di-posti-di-lavoro-c8729b1f-8efc-4129-b106-9ec8b2a5f5d4.html> - 28 September 2023

## Against Massacres, Oppression and Misery, Class Solidarity with the Proletarians and the Masses in Gaza!

(Continuation from page 1)

plete cut-off of water, electricity, fuel and food, the Israeli defence minister and head of the Israeli war cabinet declared: *«We are fighting against human animals and we act accordingly»*.

Western imperialisms have given the green light to the Israeli response – starting with the United States, which immediately sent arms and ammunition and dispatched two air and naval groups (with aircraft carriers) to the eastern Mediterranean, followed by the UK, which also decided to send warships; the other European imperialisms are on the same line in the name of «Israel's right to defence». Needless to say, there is no «Palestinian right to defence» for

them! The same people who are outraged at the massacres of Israeli civilians, women and children and condemn Hamas terrorism have never been outraged at the massacres caused by the Israeli army and settlers and have never condemned Israeli terrorism. This is despite the fact that the Jewish State has been committing massacres and violence of all kinds for decades in order to establish its rule over the Palestinian population.

Since 2007, with the consent of its imperialist cronies and under the pretext of fighting Hamas, it has been subjecting the Gaza Strip in particular, apart from bloody attacks (1) accom-

(Continued on page 4)

## Against Massacres, Oppression and Misery, Class Solidarity with the Proletarians and the Masses in Gaza

(Continuation from page 3)

panied by the destruction of many buildings and various installations, to a blockade; the consequences of these attacks have been catastrophic for the population: more than half of the workers are unemployed (and more than 80% of those who have jobs receive less than the minimum wage), poverty is omnipresent (according to some estimates it affects two thirds of the population), living conditions are deplorable. None of this, however, moves the political leaders of the European and American democracies who are eager to defend this pillar of Western imperialism in the Middle East, represented by the State of Israel. The massive Israeli bombing and other military actions are not so much to avenge the more than 1 200 dead and 2 700 wounded that the Hamas attack claimed, but rather, with imperialist approval, to bloodily avenge the terrible blow to the reputation for invulnerability of the region's leading military power at a time when the dominance of the West is being challenged.

**Only international communist revolution can put an end to the oppression, misery and perpetual massacres experienced by the Palestinian masses**

Israel's strength is largely due to the untiring military, economic and political support of the US and other Western imperialisms: they bear a fundamental responsibility for the suffering of the proletariat and the impoverished masses in Palestine. This strength also rests on the national unity which binds the Jewish proletarians to «their» bourgeoisie and «their» state, and which makes them ready to make sacrifices in their defence, because of their privileged position compared to the Arab proletarians and masses, including those who have Israeli nationality. The massacre of hundreds of unarmed civilians by Hamas can only strengthen this national unity, which make possible, at least for a time, to overcome the political crisis in Israel and legitimise the current far-right government.

If Hamas can present itself after its attack as a much more effective opponent of Israel than the old secular guerrilla organisations ever were, it cannot

however represent any solution for the emancipation of the proletarian masses. This attack cannot advance that emancipation (it entails terrible reprisals against civilian populations), nor can it endanger Israel, which on the contrary it strengthens. For 15 years, Hamas has been managing the status quo in Gaza, with the complex, implicit but undeniable consent of Israel, which maintains economic control over the territory: the Israeli government, for example, authorised the transfer of funds from Qatar to Hamas in order to weaken the «Palestinian Authority» in the West Bank; through its religious propaganda, it imposes a strict order on the population and the proletariat. In fact, its only real prospect is to be openly recognised as the prison guard of the proletarians in Gaza for the benefit of Israel, its Arab neighbours (starting with Egypt) and the imperialists.

Palestinian proletarians cannot count on Arab or Muslim states, which have largely given up even mere verbal support. If Iran seems to be an exception, it is only because it exploits their cause for its own national interests.

The only real support they will be able to find will be from the proletarians of other countries, and especially from the proletarians of the imperialist metropolises, once they get back on the path of class struggle against capitalism. By weakening imperialism, and therefore its support for Israel, they will create the conditions for the disruption of the national unity in this country and for the Jewish proletarians to understand

the necessity to stand in solidarity with the Arab proletarians against the Jewish and Arab bourgeoisies.

This prospect of international revolution against capitalism and against all bourgeois states may undoubtedly seem utopian today; but it is the only one that will be able to break the eternal series of wars and massacres, of misery and oppression, which have for too long been bathing the region in blood.

14 October 2023

(1) The Israeli army has claimed to have killed more than a thousand assassins: apparently it takes no prisoners and the wounded are killed.

(2) In late 2008, Israel launched an air and ground offensive after a rocket attack: 1440 Palestinians and 13 Israelis were killed. In late 2012, the Israeli army carried out a «targeted assassination» of Hamas military leader Ahmad Jabari. Eight days of airstrikes followed, killing 174 Palestinians. Six Israelis also died. In July 2014, Israel launched Operation Protective Edge to stop rocket fire and destroy tunnels dug in the enclave. The war resulted in 2,251 Palestinian deaths, including 65 children, mostly civilians, and 74 Israeli deaths, almost all soldiers. In May 2021, a new war in Gaza claimed at least 232 Palestinian and 12 Israeli deaths in 11 days. Two years later, in May 2023, 35 Palestinians, including Islamic Jihad leaders, were killed in five days of war.

## United Kingdom The Bourgeoisie Is Attacking Proletarians in Struggle by Reinforcing its Legal and Repressive Anti-Strike Arsenal

In a previous statement in August 2022 (1), we described and denounced the impasse in which the state and its transmission belts for the defence of social peace, the labour union bodies, have locked the proletarians in order to defend the general interests of British capitalism.

Although perfectly framed by the official trade union organisations, the proletarians have shown throughout the last year, and will show it again this year, that they are capable of mobilising to defend their class interests against the brutal attacks on their living conditions, which have been severely degraded notably, but mainly, by inflation. This degradation of their material living conditions was also superimposed on the

continuous degradation of their social living conditions, of which the decay of public health is a major factor. Their struggle also showed how serious the state's repressive escalation against strikes is. At the end of the year, the pressure from the state took the form of the mobilisation of the army and civil servants to hinder and reduce the im-



pact of strikes, including that of the ambulance drivers. A staggering 2,000 different personnel were mobilised against the strikers, including 1,200 military personnel!

Every time there is a major movement of proletarian or more generally social struggle, the bourgeoisie seeks to defend its interests as immediately and radically as possible by strengthening the restrictions of rights and the criminal charges against the actors of the struggles. At the moment in the UK, it is a question of worsening the conditions of the right to strike so as to further paralyse the working class, thus paralyzing all spontaneity and independence of struggle, by erecting more and more legal obstacles allowing it to use its justice and police against it. Bourgeoisie «law», which is by nature unequal for the working class, is the arsenal from which the bourgeoisie and its accomplices in the trade union world and opportunism draw to confine the proletariat within the high walls of «social peace» and «dialogue between partners». And it is from the parliaments, the factories of bourgeois law, that the cannon shots against the proletarians are fired.

The parliamentary or extra-parliamentary lefts in general, speak of a «frontal attack against democratic rights», already orienting the proletariat in a false direction. Let's remember that bourgeois democracy, which they want to be so pure and perfect, at the service of the people and the workers, is by nature anti-working class and represents the political organisation of capitalism and the dominant bourgeois classes. To always bring the proletariat back to more democracy is the best way to paralyse the development of its struggle in a classist and ultimately class sense, i.e. as a class antagonistic to capital. On the contrary, it is necessary to get the proletarians out of this illusion that democracy, represented by the bourgeois state, can be called to the rescue when they suffer the attacks of the bourgeoisie, notably by the restrictions or prohibitions of liberties. They must not «beg», even if they engage in an appearance of struggle for it, for «good» laws, but fight to bring down anti-proletarian legislative measures by the means of class struggle.

After the disastrous episode, for the «image» of the British Parliament, of the resignation of Liz Truss, the Prime Minister who succeeded Boris Johnson and was debunked by the London Stock Exchange, Rishi Sunak, the newly elected Prime Minister, has just gone on the offensive by proposing new anti-labour and anti-strike laws. This is not a surprise, he had already expressed this powerful idea of tightening the screws on social struggles at the beginning of

the strike movement. At the end of October, at his investiture, he announced «*difficult decisions*». Difficult for whom? For the proletarians, not for the bourgeois, who were all delighted by his words.

So on Thursday 5 January Rishi Sunak announced the colour of his «*new hard laws*» by confirming the preparation of yet another anti-strike law consisting of imposing a minimum service on workers in certain sectors, such as health, rail or road transport, postal services, education, etc. (2) in the name of «*public security*». This kind of justification is very old-fashioned. If the bourgeoisie really cared about workers' health, why would they let the NHS fall into ruin? It's the security of profits that we should be talking about, since the very nature of the balance of power imposed on capital by the strike is to attack what it holds most dear: profits, the level of which we know is inversely proportional to that of wages. Moreover, it should be noted that inflation is always put at the service of capital as a tool to devalue wages against profits and thus to bail them out in times of crisis at the best of the relations of force between classes. This is a unique opportunity at the moment for the protagonists of the economy to defend their wallets and this explains why they are fighting so hard to never compensate inflation on wages. This announcement is therefore a logical accompaniment to the British government's clear refusal to compensate public sector wages, encouraging and supporting all other capitalists to do the same and more.

But it is not only the Tories who are against the proletariat. In December 2022, the Labour Party declared that if it came back to power, it would not accept the demand of nurses, who, as in France, have seen their purchasing power plummet in recent years and have therefore legitimately presented the bill for a 19% adjustment to their salaries.

This law under discussion to impose a minimum service could be only the preamble of a law going even further in the state brutality against proletarians: that of prohibiting the act itself of strike. We can quibble about the chances of success of such a project in Parliament, but in the immediate future, waving it around as a scarecrow will make it possible to toughen up the package of other laws on minimum service.

Limiting the right to strike through the obligation to maintain activity in the public-private service sectors is, however, only the first part of Rishi Sunak's project. The second is to further strengthen the maze of laws concerning the legal conditions for strikes, in a way adding another layer to the already numerous anti-strike regula-

tions. The plan is to break the legal possibility of strike action from the very beginning of negotiations. In practice, the unions will have to submit the employers' proposals resulting from these first imposed negotiations to a vote of their members. Only if the members reject these proposals will the unions be able to start the long and tortuous procedure of authorising a strike. The principle has been retained, and it remains for the government to discuss the modalities of application, such as the limits of the approval or refusal rates of the employers' proposals by the union members. But let's bet that at this level it will still be able to raise this first obstacle to the strike.

The aim of this new legal trap is of course to complicate the procedures and to increase the number of bureaucratic obstacles in order to lengthen even more the time necessary to authorise a strike and thus to tire and demoralise the proletarians more and more effectively (3). The method is to suffocate the proletarians with mind-boggling formal procedures. And beware of the judge's sentence if the envelopes of the ballot papers used during the consultations organised by the unions among their members are not pre-stamped in accordance with the rules, if the consultations are not supervised by an office and certified control agents, etc... There are all sorts of «codes» to follow for the organisation and the running of a strike. For example, the «code of practice» for organising votes is 25 pages long, but there is also a «code» for picketing (Code of

(Continued on page 6)

**«Communist program»**  
**Organ of the International**  
**Communist Party**  
 No. 9 (May 2023)

*Summary*

- Forty Years of Reconstituting the Class Party
- About the Russian-Ukrainian War. Against the War, on Both Sides, while the War Goes On
- Theses Project Presented by the Left to the Third Congress of the Communist Party of Italy (Lyon Theses - 1926). (Introduction / I. General Questions / II. International Questions / III. Italian Questions)
- Iran. Arrests, Torture, Murders, Disappearances and Secret Burials: the Fundamentalist Religious Regime Uses an Iron Fist to Keep itself on its Feet

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 Cdn \$ 3 / Latin America US\$ 1,5

## United Kingdom ...

(Continuation from page 5)

practice on Picketing) of 20 pages and 67 articles. And there are many more that we will not mention here!

In this context, with such road-blocks, it is easy to understand that proletarians are incapable of organising strikes which would respect the legal frameworks and protect them from legal wrath. Faced with bureaucratic procedures, they need other bureaucrats, trade unionists this time, who are the only ones who can master this procedural jungle. It's a gift from the bourgeoisie to the unions which offers them the opportunity not to lose control of the working class by avoiding any autonomy of struggles, any attempt to escape the programmed channelling of these struggles.

The bourgeois order, the one which ensures an efficient exploitation of wage labour, needs relays within the working class. In the United Kingdom, these procedures and this tight legal control of the use of the strike weapon are the striking formalisation of this.

The classist and independent

struggle of the proletariat in the UK must not go through a democratic debate on the «right to strike» which would only lead to new legal-administrative instruments more presentable to a certain «public opinion» certainly, but no less effective for social control. If the proletarians want to recover their independence of struggle, as they masterfully used it during the miners' strike of 1984-1985, they will inevitably have to fight, with their class weapons, the corset of anti-strike and anti-organisation laws which throw them into the arms of the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy. It will only be through the balance of power of their struggles that this wall against the right to strike, erected by successive governments, both conservative and labour, will be shaken. They will have to fight against the morbid legal trap of the crumbling and scattering of their forces and against this generalisation of alibi or «synchronised» strikes that the trade union apparatuses concoct to perfection, whose function is to ensure and reinforce the anti-proletarian social corset.

**- Down with anti-strike laws!**

**- Down with repressive blackmail**

**on proletarians and their struggles!**

**- Let's revive the solidarity strikes, forbidden today!**

**- Long live class independence!**  
**- Class solidarity with the proletarians of the UK!**

January, 11th 2023

(1) See *Proletarian* n° 19, Autumn 2022

(2) The Prime Minister has not forgotten the border police sector either! Now he needs it more than ever with his policy of deporting illegal immigrants, wherever they come from, to Rwanda, which is happy to receive some £120 million for this.

(3) Kwasi Kwarteng, Chancellor of the Exchequer, puts it this way: «*We will legislate to require unions to put pay offers (those of the bosses, editor's note) to a member vote to ensure that strikes can only be called once negotiations have genuinely broken down*». The bosses will know how to drag out these preliminary stages of negotiation in order to convince as many workers as possible that it is not in their interest to refuse their proposals.

## - France -

### **Riots in the Proletarian Districts. Capitalism Is Responsible for Police Crimes, Oppression and Poverty. It Is Capitalism that Must Be Fought, It Is Capitalism That Must Be Overthrown!**

The country has just been rocked by a third night of unrest. More or less violent clashes have occurred in virtually all the administrative areas of the Paris region (and in Paris itself) and have spread to many large or medium-sized provincial towns: Lille, Roubaix, Strasbourg, Grenoble, Lyon, Saint Etienne, Marseille, Bordeaux, Toulouse, Tours, Rennes, Rouen, Nantes, Nancy, Nice, Brest, Pau, Amiens, Annecy, Macon... the list is too long to list them all. The massive mobilization of the various police forces (40,000 police and gendarmes according to official figures), the blockade of public transport or the occasional curfew have failed to maintain order in the proletarian districts. Dozens of public buildings and police stations were attacked by young people with Molotov cocktails or fire-

crackers and fireworks; shops were looted and vehicles set on fire, while the police fired tear gas grenades and rubber bullets at insurgents; nearly 900 people were arrested...

The cause of this anger is known. The young Nahel (17) was shot at point-blank range during a car check in Nanterre by a police officer who pleaded «legitimate self-defense»; however, amateur video footage showed that the officer was not put in danger and that his fellow patrolman shouted «kill him!»: it was therefore a crime. Subsequent information from police sources claimed that Nahel had a criminal record («as long as his arm» according to a far-right C. News journalist), suggesting that he was a young delinquent who had gotten only what he deserved – this «information» was false.

When the police were proven to be lying, the government, remembering the three weeks of unrest during the «suburban uprising» in 2005, tried to calm the situation. President Macron therefore described the policeman's action as «incomprehensible and unjustifiable», drawing the ire of the far right and the police union «Alliance», and organized a minute's silence in parliament. However, these antics had no effect on the anger of the population.

**«Young people are right to rebel»**

This is the reaction of many proletarians from these neighborhoods who

have testified in front of the cameras (1). After the first riots, Macron declared that they were «*characterized by scenes of violence (...) against the institutions and the Republic*» which are «*unjustifiable*». But for proletarians, young or old, what is unjustifiable and increasingly unbearable is the situation into which these institutions and this bourgeois republic are finally plunging them! Apart from police crime, it is this situation that provokes revolt.

Democrats blame the socialist government for passing a 2017 law that makes it easier for police to use guns during roadside checks and call for, don't laugh, better «*training of police officers in the defense of human rights*». While it is true that since then an average of one person a month has been killed by the police in France under these circumstances (compared to one person a decade in Germany!), police crimes did not wait for this law: the proof of this is the numerous cases of police violence that regularly make headlines and usually end in acquittals. The talk of «*police at the service of the citizens*» is a pitiful and empty platitude: the basic role of the police is to defend the bourgeois order with violence, whether potential or overt, and it is at the service of the violence of exploitative capitalist social relations.

The fight against police violence is inseparable from **the fight against capitalism**. The powerful outburst of youth revolt in proletarian neighborhoods is a



resounding distancing from the legalist and pacifist policies of reformist trade unions and political organizations that are the fulcrum of collaboration between the classes. These policies, which have been the cause of all the defeats of the workers, are responsible for the powerlessness of the proletariat in the face of the bourgeoisie and its state.

But for the revolt to be anything other than a dazzling flash, a momentary outburst of anger, it will have to find the path of **organized revolutionary struggle, of class struggle against this whole system of misery, oppression and repression**, which alone can **avenge all the victims**.

This will not happen overnight; apart from repression, there are still many obstacles to overcome, to avoid renewed efforts to channel the course in another direction, to get rid of false «leftist» or «democratic» friends; but the current spontaneous revolt, by at least temporarily disturbing the suffocating social peace, objectively contributes to moving closer to this perspective.

June, 30th 2023

(1) See for instance: <https://www.leparisien.fr/video/video-je-suis-content-que-les-jeunes-se-revoltent-a-nanterre-des-habitants-tres-en-colere-apres-la-morte-de-nahel-28-06-2023-OHMOZ7V7GFHSJONRQYYFZMOZCI.php>

\* \* \*

## The Fight against Police Violence Can only Be Waged on Anti-Capitalist Bases!

Nahel's murder sparked a revolt by young people in proletarian neighborhoods across France after a video exposed the lies of the police, and even in smaller towns. This murder is just the latest crime in an endless list (1); it is part of a general practice of bullying, repression and oppression by the bourgeois «order forces», especially against proletarian youth, and especially if they are of foreign origin: police racism no longer needs to be proven. The French imperialist bourgeoisie, which plunders the wealth of the countries under its domination, has always applied **state racism** to create divisions within the working class, which it has fed through ideological campaigns and numerous anti-immigration laws. The aim is to designate a scapegoat for the social problems of the proletariat and yet in-

crease the pressure on the working class in order to weaken its ability to resist. In reality, all proletarians are subject to intimidation by the bourgeois state and all are potential targets of repression once they oppose government initiatives and capitalist interests, as various recent struggle movements have shown: The Yellow Vests movement, the fight against pension reforms, Sainte-Soline (where the authorities mobilized thousands of police to crack down on opponents of the construction of a dam wanted by big farmers, injuring nearly 200 people, one of whom ended up in a coma), strike pickets attacked by the police, or more recently the repression of riots. If repression has intensified under the present government, it has been practiced by all previous governments, right or left; a law facilitating the use of weapons at road checks was passed by the socialist Hollander Val's government (under the pretext of fighting terrorism!). Without going too far back in time, for decades police crimes have regularly been in the news and their perpetrators have most often been acquitted by the courts.

### Police violence and repression are characteristic of capitalist regime. They will disappear with it!

Police violence is not a «blunder», a «regrettable exception», but a necessary and intended consequence of the role of the police in this society, whatever the political coloring of the government: it is the defense of the bourgeois order and the capitalist system, above all against the proletariat and all the oppressed. The struggle against police violence can therefore only be waged from an anti-capitalist and proletarian perspective. To wage it in the name of democracy and to politely ask the bourgeois government to «listen» to the demands and take «concrete steps» to reform the police is utter nonsense. Worse still, it disarms the proletarians, young and old, by making them believe that certain concessions could be gained in this way, instead of wrestling them through open struggle. The fear of unleashing proletarian anger will always be a far more powerful brake against the sorties of the lackeys of the bourgeoisie than peaceful appeals to the government!

The only non-illusory way to put an end to police violence and all bourgeois crimes is the resumption of organized revolutionary class struggle against capitalism. The first immediate steps are support for the victims of repression and solidarity with all proletarians under threat; these are necessary to close the ranks of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie and

its state. The next steps are the classist reorganization of the proletariat itself and the reconstitution of its revolutionary party, which will lead the struggle until the overthrow of murderous capitalism!

July, 15th 2023

(1) Nahel is the seventeen-year-old boy who was murdered in cold blood by a policeman in Nanterre, a suburb of Paris, on June 27. A specialized website has found that in less than four years there have been more than 5,000 cases of more or less serious police violence in France – a figure that is lower than the reality. See *violente policières.fr*.

## le prolétaire

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- Le sabotage prémédité de la lutte. Tirer le bilan du mouvement contre la réforme des retraites
- Italie. L'ancien «Cavaliere» est mort, mais pas le berlusconisme
- La lutte contre les violences policières ne peut être menée réellement que sur une base anticapitaliste !
- Méthodes, moyens, objectifs de classe: quésaco?
- Émeutes dans les quartiers prolétariens. Le capitalisme est responsable des crimes policiers, des oppressions et de la misère. C'est lui qu'il faut combattre, c'est lui qu'il faudra abattre!
- Les réactions aux émeutes : Entre condamnations brutales et «compréhensions» hypocrites
- Espagne. Grève des métallurgistes à Vigo.
- Tchèque. Face à une «semaine de protestation» impuissante, aux appels au «dialogue social» et aux atermoiements des directions syndicales, les prolétaires doivent prendre leur lutte en main!
- Les massacres en mer sont la réponse bourgeoise à l'appel au secours des masses migrantes qui fuient les guerres, la répression et la misère par la mer. Pylos, après Cutro et des centaines d'autres cimetières, le démontre
- Algérie. «Le communiste international pour le soulèvement révolutionnaire»
- Présentation de la réédition de «Dialogue avec les morts»
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## Spain Metalworkers' Strike in Vigo. To Win, Proletarians Must Learn the Lessons of their Defeats

On Tuesday June 20, metalworkers in Vigo, who had been called to a one-day strike by the CC.OO., UGT and CIG trade unions, blocked access to the city's exhibition centre, airport and technical inspection station. This blockade was followed by the usual clashes with the police, which made the front pages of the local and national press. Without resorting to violence similar to that used almost two years ago in the metalworkers' strike in Cadiz, the PSOE Unidas Podemos coalition government, with its usual «progressive» disposition, has nevertheless once again shown the workers the face it wants to hide behind election propaganda. Like a good servant to its master, the government is showing the right, its more than likely successor, the way forward.

The strike by metalworkers in Vigo was called with a set of demands that are common in the mobilizations that have taken place in the sector in recent years. Firstly, a 4% wage increase is being demanded for each year from 2023 to 2025, that is, for the period of the next collective agreement. Secondly, a reduction of the working day (by 24 hours less per month) and, finally, guarantees for subcontracted workers who demand surrogacy guarantees in the event of a change in the companies carrying out each subcontracted job.

The bosses, for their part, are offering a cumulative increase of 6% for the same period, a reduction in working hours of 8 hours a month and they don't even want to hear about surrogacy guarantees. Disagreements between the unions and the bosses have led to the announcement of a three-day strike (21, 22 and 28 June), which 33,000 workers employed in the metalworking industry are called to join.

Just as the demands are the same as in other recent strikes in the metalworking industry, what happened in those strikes should be obvious to the proletarians who are taking to the streets to demonstrate these days. The recent experience is the sum of defeats, one after the other, from Cadiz to Cantabria to Guipúzcoa or El Ferrol, which should carry some weight among the workers in Vigo. If all the strikes that have taken place in the metal industry since 2021 have been motivated by wage demands, all have been defeated on this matter. With an expected inflation of 21.5% for

the period 2021-2025, the wage increases achieved do not even come close to this figure: in Cadiz 2.5% to 3%, in La Coruña 6.5%, in Cantabria 6%... Added to this is the constant deterioration in working conditions: the increase in working hours, subcontracting, ERTE (Expediente de Regulación Temporal de Empleo – a labour procedure that allows a company to suspend or reduce, for a specific time, the contractual relationship with its workers) as a regulatory measure, etc.

How did this situation come about? What can we expect from the metalworkers in Vigo? It is possible to think that if the bosses succeeded in imposing their demands, they did so using the most harsh means of coercion, as when the police entered the proletarian quarters in Cadiz with gunfire. But in reality this was not the case. If the bosses have succeeded in imposing their measures on the workers in recent years, it has been mainly thanks to the work of the trade unions (CC.OO., UGT, etc.), which first managed to contain the strikes and then agreed to end them with agreements that were far removed from what the workers were demanding. This was the case in Cadiz, where CC.OO. and UGT, which had no representation among the subcontracted workers who were leading the struggle, aborted the strike call of their own accord. Or in the Basque Country, where they managed to keep the strikes in Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya isolated from each other. Or in Cantabria, where, after weeks of strike actions, they have «asked» for the help of the Minister of

Labour, Yolanda Díaz (the same one who is in the government that deployed tanks in Cadiz and who cracked down hard in Vigo yesterday), to put an end to them as soon as she presented a proposal completely in line with that of the bosses...

In the context of a difficult economic recovery, with soaring inflation, with a chronic unemployment problem that ERTE cannot disguise, the bourgeoisie cannot tolerate any kind of wage concessions for the proletariat. The defeat of the metalworking proletarians was a central issue for the bourgeoisie and it used all its resources to achieve this goal, not to give in to their demands and above all to ensure that the example of the struggle did not spread to other workers. It had the government and the police, the media and the big trade unions on its side. To understand the real function of this alliance of the enemies of the workers, we need only look at the strike in Vigo these days. Declaring strikes in isolation from each other and with a duration of several days, with no more than three days, duly announced in advance so that the bosses could minimize the damage suffered...

This is the lesson that the metalworking proletarians in Vigo and the proletarians in other sectors and regions must learn. The class enemy, the bosses, has the solidarity of the entire bourgeois class, has the unconditional support of the state, no matter what the banner of the government, the press... and trade unions. Its aim is to demobilize the struggle, to prevent the spread of proletarian solidarity, the true root of working class strength, to limit strikes, to make the workers to submit themselves to only fighting by democratic and civil means, which are completely useless for winning.

The truth to be drawn from these not at all distant experiences is that only the strength of the proletarian class can tri-





umph over the bosses. And that this strength dissipates when it is not exercised, when strikes resemble acts of impotent protest rather than a genuine struggle led by the workers and aimed at inflicting the maximum damage on the bosses' economy; when the trade union leaders, who are the real guarantors of the policy of social peace which has brought the proletarians to this situation, are entrusted with initiating and ending the struggles, so as not to disturb too much the normal course of production in the factories, always with the excuse that it is better to save strength and postpone the real struggle... to indefinitely.

The proletarians only have a chance of victory if they return to the path of the class struggle, with means and methods based on direct confrontation with the enemy, on solidarity that transcends the confines of factories, sectors or regions, on class and independent organization, in the struggle for demands that unite all proletarians in a common goal.

**Wage increases for all workers, most of all for the lowest paid!**

**Drastic reduction in working hours for all workers!**

**Against harmful workplace environments!**

**For the defense of the living, working and struggling conditions of the proletariat!**

**For the class solidarity of all proletarians!**

June, 22th 2023

## El Proletario

**ÓRGANO DEL PARTIDO  
COMUNISTA INTERNACIONAL  
No 30 / Septiembre de 2023**

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- Sobre la guerra ruso-ucraniana
- De nuevo, el metal
- Sobre la guerra en Ucrania. Internacionalismo proletario y derrotismo revolucionario en la tradición marxista
- Nota de lectura: un renovado interés sobre la Fracción de izquierda del Partido Comunista de Italia (1928-1938)
- Al trabajo como a la guerra. ¡Proletarios! ¿Cuántas muertes más en el trabajo necesitamos para rebelarnos contra un sistema que produce sólo beneficios para los capitalistas y muertes para el proletariado?

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## Czechia

### **In the Face of an Impotent «Week of Protest», Appeals for «Social Dialogue» and Delays by Union Leaders, the Proletarians Must Take their Struggle directly into their own Hands! For Class Struggle against all Attacks by the Capitalists and their State!**

The largest trade union confederation in the Czech Republic, the ĚMKOS, after announcing a strike alert on 15 May 2023, a precursor to workers' protests, is launching a *week of protests* at the end of June against the government's austerity measures, which include the so-called pension reform. This is another step to «bring the government to the negotiating table on proposals for measures to get the country's public finances in shape»...; and the ĚMKOS has already drawn up its «own set of measures» for the recovery of the national economy to «mitigate» the impact of the government's austerity package on workers and their families. However, the trade unions, «instead of open dialogue, which is the only way to find a rational solution», are, in their own words, facing a government that blames everyone else for its bad decisions.

Although the leader of ĚMKOS, Støedula, has declared that «the purpose of the upcoming protests is to prevent the government from passing these legislative changes», in reality he is making it clear that this is only a means of pressuring the government to restore «social dialogue», to make the government «listen to the workers» (i.e. to their representatives – the largest trade union organizations), so that the impact of austerity measures is not only borne by the workers. The union leaders are just buttering us up – as if the government is not fully aware of what it is doing, as if it is not only serving the interests of the capitalists, and as if social dialogue, i.e. class collaboration, is not always detrimental to the working class! The ĚMKOS only wants to be a partner and mediate the attacks of the ruling class on the working and living conditions of the workers by dividing them into small and partial steps that are pushed through gradually. This is the real content of class collaboration, of that social dialogue to which the trade unions commit themselves and by which they deceive the proletariat!

Støedula has clearly indicated what the unions will resort to if the government does not listen to them – but don't expect the preparation of mass and unlimited strikes that would damage the

profits of capitalist enterprises and the smooth functioning of the state! «I hope that the voter will remember when the next elections come around – including European, Senate and regional elections – how they are behaving, and that they will give these political entities a fair count», tells us this unsuccessful presidential candidate. Is it possible that by this sentence he means that he will next try for the Senate or the European Parliament?! This would not be an exception: many of his former trade unionist colleagues have found a place in these institutions (Falbr, Štich, Zavadil...).

It is our duty to demonstrate that **only the independent proletarian class struggle is the way forward**. In France, in 1995, there were huge struggles of more than two million people who, with hard strikes on the railways and transport in Paris, which lasted three weeks with the occupation of the main stations and the blocking of rail transport, and which also involved other enterprises such as the post office, etc. forced the government to abolish the then so-called Juppé Plan (i.e. abolition of «special pension schemes» previously granted to certain strategic categories of workers of the public sector...); it did not succeed, however, in forcing the bourgeoisie to retreat from its plan to prolong the working life of the proletarians by raising their retirement age. Why? Because the proletarians placed the leadership and organization of their struggles in the hands of the official trade unions, which then, as now, proved to be the guarantors of social peace and saboteurs of the workers' struggles.

But it is also our duty to point out the myth of the general strike, which is strongly present in the working class. The success of the general strike, like any other strike, depends above all on the orientation and objectives of those who lead it: are they the real and class interests of the proletariat, or the inter-class and national, i.e. democratic, interests and objectives? The example of May and June 1968 in France: it was the most important general strike of the

( Continued on page 10)

## Czechia ...

(Continuation from page 9)

workers' movement in that country (and in Europe) – 8–10 million strikers, tens of thousands of occupied enterprises, even the smallest ones, a movement that lasted two months... yet its results were minimal, much poorer than the strike movement of May and June 1936, when there were far fewer strikes; the 40-hour work week won in 1936, abolished in the pre-war period, was not restored in 1968; the reforms of health and social security – to the workers' detriment, of course! – for which the trade unions staged two general strikes in 1967 – were not rejected; the reduction of the retirement age to 60 was not achieved; the wage increases achieved were swallowed up by inflation a few months later. The enormous force that formed against the bosses in the workplaces at that time did not translate into a force to obtain the demands, because the self-proclaimed «representatives of the workers» – the trade union leaders – are in fact, as good reformers, primarily defenders of the interests of French capitalism, not defenders of the workers. Therefore, a future general strike left in the hands of the apparatuses sabotaging the struggles can only be a stillborn child.

In the Czech Republic, too, we have an example of the fact that **struggle** – an unlimited strike – **is the lever to advance workers' interests**. As we wrote in our article *Some lessons from the Strike at Nexen Tire*: «In any case, what the largest trade union in industry, OS KOVO, has failed to achieve in four years of so-called bargaining, the workers have managed to recover (...) by finally going on an indefinite strike.» So it was only the indefinite strike, the force, that made the bosses listen; the bosses, and by extension their capitalist state, only understand force, not chatter.

However, unions like OS KOVO want the strike to be seen as «always as the ultimate tool in the enforcement of the rights of employees» because, as they themselves endlessly repeat, they are the defenders of social peace! To expect these unions to prepare massive and unlimited strikes and to be a lever of power for the workers is a great illusion! These unions – which we call class collaborationist for the reasons they themselves profess, and whose aim is to inculcate in the proletarians that they and the enterprises, the national economy, have the same goal, to tie the workers to the success of «their» enterprise in the struggle with the competition in the market – exercise their power by imposing in every agreement the maximum subordination of the workers to the demands of the enterprise, ra-

tionalizing the work operations, diverting even the smallest protest activity and reaction of the workers towards negotiations and compromises through the labyrinths of state organs, lawyers, thus rendering the workers completely defenseless and defeated from the beginning. It is therefore not surprising that OS KOVO downplayed the Nexen Tire strike as if it were merely a «*misunderstanding between the parties*», and moreover, in a joint statement with the management of Nexen Tire, committed itself to «*mutual cooperation so that the company, the workplace of all employees, becomes a stable and respected company (...), to restore the honor and name of the company*» and that «*trade union and the company will actively participate in the ongoing second phase of the expansion and will do everything possible to stabilize it*», as well as that the OS KOVO will «*encourage employees to comply with regulations and to work conscientiously without absenteeism*» because «*the company and its employees are no different and share the same goals*».

There was a time when workers in their immediate defensive organizations had to face treacherous union leadership in their struggle to defend working and living conditions; today's unions, however, have for decades fully embraced their role as managers of the workforce, guarantors of social peace, and advocates of inter-class collaboration. In fact, the ĚMKOS is the heir to the pre-November 1989 trade union regime, a regime that, while pretending to be «socialist», was no different from capitalist regimes in the West. There is not a single union organization in the Czech Republic today that can even remotely be described as combative, one that uses the methods and means of classist struggle, i.e. the struggle that exclusively promotes the immediate and economic interests of the workers.

The Czech workers' movement, which lacks historical tradition, direct experience of a real class struggle, must start from scratch; and it must overcome a certain kind of defeatism which has its roots also in the long series of defeats and unsuccessful protests through which the workers have passed under the leadership of the collaborationist trade unions. **The strike must be a weapon of the workers' struggle**, not just its last tool to be used, and moreover according to rules imposed from above!

The effective and lasting defense of proletarian interests, even on the immediate terrain, consists in recognizing the incompatibility of the interests of the proletariat, of the class without reserves, and those of the capitalists, and in mobilizing proletarian forces for exclusive-

ly proletarian objectives, which means struggling by classist means and methods (indefinite strikes in support of economic and immediate demands, bargaining under conditions of active and continuous struggle, picketing against scabs, solidarity demonstrations by workers from other enterprises, wildcat strikes without prior notice and without fixing an expiration date, etc.); by means and methods which can only be put into practice by class, i.e. non-collaborationist organisms in the preparation of the struggle, its conduct and its conclusion. The defense of this struggle, the establishment of a class pole and the attempt to influence the workers at least partially, if possible even within the framework of today's unions, in this way, has always been our position; with the perspective of uniting all the workers in a united classist defensive economic struggle – not fragmenting the working class and separating the most combative workers from those indecisive and still under the influence of inter-class collaborationism.

The strong class movement will not be able to emerge only on the basis of workers' spontaneity, but needs and will need the constant and continuous work of genuine revolutionary communists, both as bearers of class consciousness organized in the party and as defenders of the future of the class and revolutionary movement. It will also need the constant and unremitting work of the most combative and most sensitive proletarians to the goals of their class, who will have to take on the task of forming the backbone of a new independent proletarian organizational network capable of uniting in the struggle against the bosses, their state and capital in the most homogeneous way proletarians from different sectors, different categories, different ages and nationalities.

**- Against the pension «reform» and against every bourgeois attack, for the class orientation in the struggle, breaking with the defeatist orientation of the organizations of collaborationism!**

**- Unity in struggle of all proletarians, in public and private sectors, employed and unemployed, active and retired, men and women, young and old, Czechs and «immigrants»!**

**- Drastic reduction of working hours and lowering the retirement age!**

**- General increases in wages, unemployment benefits, pensions and all social minima!**

**- Against all discrimination, equal pay for equal work!**

**- For a revolutionary struggle against capitalism, against its war preparations and imperialist domination, in unity with the proletarians of the whole world!**

June, 24th 2023

## Mass Casualties at Sea Are the Bourgeois Response to the Cries for Help from the Masses of Migrants Fleeing Wars, Repression and Misery by Sea. After Cutru and Hundreds of other Cemeteries, Pylos Proves It again.

On the night of 13-14 June, yet another mass casualty of migrants occurred in the Mediterranean Sea. The fishing boat *Adriana*, with some 750 people on board, including more than a hundred children and women below deck, sank in the very deepest stretch of sea in the Mediterranean: some 47 nautical miles (60 km) south-west of the Greek town of Pylos lies the Kalypso Trench, more than 5 000 meters deep. It was here that the fishing boat sank, taking more than 600 people with it.

The *Adriana* departed from Tobruk on the east coast of Libya and was heading for Italy; the Italian Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre alerted the Greek Operations Centre on Tuesday 13 June morning to a fishing boat *«in distress»*, which was also spotted by a Frontex aircraft at 9.47am. There was talk of 750 people on board, which is too many for such a vessel. It was the Italian operations center that located the boat 60 miles off the Greek coast and 260 miles off the Italian coast, in the sea corridor used by smugglers to avoid Maltese territorial waters. During Tuesday morning, Athens was alerted and informed, without eliciting any response. At 13.50, a Greek helicopter took to the air and spotted the fishing boat at 15.35; meanwhile, a Greek coastguard ship set sail from Crete, more than 400 km as the crow flies from the *Adriana*'s location. If they wanted to stall in the hope that the vessel would continue its journey to Italy, thus getting rid of any problems and difficulties for the Greek authorities, they found a way to do so. However, at 2.17pm, a cry for help went out from the *Adriana* via satellites, and the NGO Alarm Phone warned that the fishing boat was *«reporting that they could not survive the night, that they were in serious trouble»*. Indeed, the survivors testify, they had not eaten for several days and drank only seawater.

It is only at 18.30 that Athens reports that they contacted the fishing boat, claiming that the vessel *«did not want any help other than food and water»* and that they *«wished to continue to Italy»*, whilst a Greek helicopter radioed that *«the boat was on a steady course and at an unchanged speed»*. Lies! The reality turns out to be quite different, as evidenced by the testimony of the Alarm Phone, which insists that the ship was off course for hours. *Adriana* receives food and water from the Maltese merchant ship at 18:00 and then from the Greek ship at around 21:00, then nothing. The Greek coast-

guard ship that set off from Crete arrived at the vessel at 22:40, after a seven-hour voyage! and kept a *«discreet distance, finding no problems with the navigation of the vessel»*. Lies! The ship had been drifting off course for several hours, as the captain had already left the vessel in a small boat at 5.20pm. Tragedy was inevitable: the Greek Coastguard vessel at 02:04 claimed that it *«saw the fishing boat listing to starboard, then sharply to port side and then again to starboard»*, so steeply *«that it caused the vessel to capsize»*, which then sank within the following *«10 or 15 minutes»* (1).



The sea was calm, no rough sea, the rescue could have been carried out without much difficulty and many hours earlier, only the will was needed. But the Greek authorities, as is now the custom, do not think at all of rescuing migrants in distress at sea; if they die, it is because they brought it on themselves, when it would have been enough if they had not set out in such excessive numbers... It sounds as if we heard the highest-ranking of the Italian police, Piantedosi, in the face of the mass casualty at Cutro, who found nothing better to say than that... they should not have set sail in such conditions...

Mass casualties like this one are not events due to fatality; they are the criminal result of a long series of policies that the bourgeoisies, especially if they are rich and equipped with the best technology, the best instruments and the most effective means of rescue, have long adopted to defend their interests and their borders. They are very capable of instigating wars and devastation of countries outside Europe, and they express the highest degree of cynicism and contempt for the lives of that part of the human population which they regard as of the third, fourth or fifth category, as in the days of the slave trade from Africa.

The European bourgeoisies are primarily responsible for the disastrous conditions into which entire populations in Africa, the Middle East and Asia, ar-

eas from which migrants come to Europe, have been plunged. First colonialism and then imperialism, with the consequent devastation of the *«conquered»* territories and the enslavement of hundreds of millions of Africans and Asians, have turned these continents into territories where nothing is born but poverty, hunger, slavery, plunder, oppression and wars, and where it has always been the rule to exploit as much as possible the natural and human resources for the wealth and prosperity of the capitalist metropolises.

What is left of the capitalist civilization that Europeans exported to other continents, apart from the technical industrial progress on which the local bourgeoisie grew up, yearning for power and blood more than the European bourgeoisie? The general impoverishment of the indigenous population and its transformation overwhelmingly into proletarian and enslaved masses, destined to survive in misery, hunger and oppression by local potentates supported and sponsored by the highly civilized European imperialists, joined in the last eighty years by the US imperialists.

It is from these extreme situations that migrants run away, seeking a place in rich, civilized and *«peaceful»* Europe where they will not starve to death or die in unwanted wars.

Bourgeois Europe is a fortress, but it is no longer sure of its power: it feels besieged by the masses of African migrants and those from the Orient who are pressing hard on its borders and eroding its security and the smooth running of trade and business. Europe is not a unitary state, it is a collection of states closely linked for economic, financial and political reasons, brought about by the increasingly intense competition from historic non-European imperialisms such as the United States, Japan, Russia and, more recently, China. A collection of states that have never ceased to compete and wage wars against each other because the history of their capitalist and imperialist formation inevitably leads them to clash. This does not detract from the fact that the European states associated in the European Union try to act in concert when faced with situations that they consider dangerous for the functioning and defense of their affairs and interests. This was and is the case in the Russian-Ukrainian war, in the face of which, apart from a few minor devia-

(Continued on page 12)

**Mass Casualties at Sea Are the Bourgeois Response to the Cries for Help from the Masses of Migrants Fleeing Wars, Repression and Misery by Sea.  
After Cutru and Hundreds of other Cemeteries,  
Pylos Proves It again.**

(Continuation from page 11)

tions, they acted and are acting as war-mongers in perfect concert, under the supervision of the United States, of course; and it is a case of the fight against so-called *illegal* immigration, which has been going on for several decades, in which the policy of denial, repatriation, protective barriers, military patrols in the Mediterranean Sea and imprisonment in lagers called reception centres for migrants and asylum seekers demonstrate the «high degree of civilization» of Europe.

Given the geographical location, it is inevitable that migration flows from Africa and the East are concentrated on maritime routes in the eastern and central Mediterranean, while land routes are concentrated on the Balkans. Italy and Greece are therefore the two European countries of natural disembarkation and transit for these flows, while the coasts of Libya, Tunisia, Egypt and Turkey are their gathering, starting and embarkation points. And it is natural that, in a society where money, arrogance and crime reign, in every crisis situation into which the weakest part of the population is plunged in the daily struggle for survival, organized crime systematically triumphs; whether it is organized outside the laws of the established order, or by the established order itself, the final result is unchanged: the proletariat, the poor, the dispossessed of everything, even the hope of life, are the predestined victims. The color of their skin, because they are not *white*, is another negative characteristic, but not necessarily a decisive one. Torturers, murderers, executioners almost always have the same skin color as the victims: they simply correspond to private, individual and clan interests that pursue the most bestial and violent exploitation of the defenseless masses, wherever they come from or wherever they want to go.

As long as there are bourgeois and capitals, as long as the social life of all peoples is forced to respond to the laws of capitalism and suffer all the consequences, even the most tragic ones, of the economic and social contradictions that characterize bourgeois society, there will be no peace on this earth, no equality and freedom to live, but there will be constant massacres both in work and in crossing seas and deserts; there will be repression and torture of all those who do not bow down to the god of

Capital and its earthly proxies who sit in the seats of government from which they decide the life and death of millions and millions of people.

To fight against this state of affairs seems impossible; and to escape from the most dramatic situations in any way, by taking any risk, seems to be the only thing anyone can do to escape what seems to be an already written judgement: starving to death. And so one attempts an absurd journey fraught with risks and dangers of all kinds, pits one's strength against the laws of men and nature, only to settle in a place other than the one that has turned into an abyss into which one will sooner or later fall. However, the mass casualty in Pylos, as well as those in Cutro, Lampedusa and off the coasts of Tunisia, Libya and Egypt, prove the great courage of migrants, their tenacious perseverance, with which they have tried and try again for years to land in Europe, which, in the imagination of the centuries of starving and oppressed masses, has taken on the appearance of a kind of peaceful and welcoming refuge, while in reality it turns out to be a different sort of hell, are individual qualities not only for the struggle for survival, but also for a different kind of struggle: the proletarian struggle, the struggle of the working class who create the real wealth of every country, the struggle that unites across nationalities, color, sex, age, level of education or acquired expertise all the men and women that the very development of the world economy has inexorably spawned – i.e. wage workers. The force inherent in the wage workers, created by capitalism itself, instead of being put at the exclusive service of capitalism, and therefore of the bourgeoisie that defends its mode of production and laws, can be directed to blow up from the ground up this society of massacres, of the economy of catastrophes, of destructive wars, of the endless exploitation of the vast majority of the world's population.

The fear of every bourgeoisie, especially the rich bourgeoisies of Europe, is not so much that their countries will be invaded by uncontrollable masses of migrants; if anything, it is an unpleasant problem that every bourgeoisie tries to pass on to the bourgeoisies of other countries, especially the countries of origin of the migrants, by paying for «services» in the billions, in the form of arms supplies, favorable economic-financial contracts, etc., so that these

countries themselves can keep the masses of migrants confined in their lagers.

**The real fear of every bourgeoisie, especially the rich bourgeoisie of Europe, is that the courage and willingness of the migrants to sacrifice even their own lives in order to reach a goal that no bourgeoisie guarantees them in this life-and-death struggle, will contaminate the European proletarians, will awaken them from their toxic slumber, into which they have been trapped for decades, imprisoned on a kind of happy island of consumerism, to which they have been lured despite their real conditions as wage-laborers, i.e. workers whose lives depend solely on their wages, otherwise misery and hunger will accompany their lives. The struggle to life and death is a daily necessity for European proletarians, as it is for proletarians in every other country, as it is for every migrant deprived of all his possessions. Two myths must fall: for European proletarians, the myth that they have a better life than the billions of proletarians in the poorest countries, which appears as a social status that is currently consolidated and no longer under threat; while for proletarians in countries on the imperialist periphery, the myth of Europe as a land of peace, prosperity and freedom must fall, a myth that has lasted too long and that has begun to be shattered by recent economic, financial and war crises such as the Russian-Ukrainian one.**

The life of the proletariat, under whatever sky, is either a life of struggle – primarily for survival, but also for human dignity – or it is a useless life of renunciation that society itself discards as unrecyclable waste.

And the struggle of the proletarians, if it is to have a future, must inevitably place at its centre the class interests which unite them, beyond all boundaries, in a revolutionary class union which alone can counter the social, political and military power of the bourgeoisie and its thugs. It is only by moving in this direction that the proletarians will be able to say that they have not fought in vain, that they have not died in vain, because up to now the casualties and massacres have done nothing but pile up one after the other, without changing anything, without touching their very social roots.

June, 19th 2023

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(1) News and quotes were taken from «*il fatto quotidiano*» of 16. 6. 2023, from <https://www.blitzquotidiano.it/cronaca-europa/>

## To Russian and Ukrainian Proletarians

(Continuation from page 1)

nist revolution in order to overthrow once and for all capitalism, which today in its putrid imperialist phase continues to destroy the productive forces, the lives of workers and the environment for the sole purpose of capitalist profit, for which proletarians of all ages, sexes and nationalities are systematically exploited, plunged into misery and turned into cannon fodder every time the competitive struggle between capitalists and between states reaches the level of a war conflict.

The war that has been destroying tens of thousands of lives and many Ukrainian cities for a year now, and that has been responsible for ten of millions of refugees, is the war in which each of the imperialist blocs involved directly or indirectly pursues its own interests, sacrificing in doing so the blood of proletarians thrown against each other in defense of territorial, economic, financial and political interests that have nothing to do with the living conditions of the proletarians themselves. Both the Russian and Ukrainian proletarians know that it is they who will emerge dramatically as the losers from the bourgeois-imperialist war, as from every economic and financial crisis. The bourgeois propaganda about democracy, thanks to which the living and working conditions of the proletarians should be improved, as well as the propaganda about a strong and militarized state which, by defending national interests, would also defend the interests of the proletarians, are the instruments by which the bourgeois ruling classes, fighting among themselves, want to make the respective proletariats believe that their main interest is to defend the fatherland, the nation, the sacred national sovereignty, national capitalism, endangered by the aggression of the enemy.

Capital is aggressive by its very nature and the first target of its aggression is precisely the proletariat, the class of wage workers, because it is from their systematic and permanent exploitation that the capitalists extract the famous surplus value, which is then transformed into profit through the mercantile system. Furthermore, it is natural for capitalists to attack competing capitalists because they seek to expand their market to the detriment of their competitors. And it is the principle of mercantile competition that the bour-

geoisie in every country transfers directly to the working masses by pitting the wage-laborers against each other, both in the economic and in the social and cultural fields. To accustom the proletarians to compete with each other is to accustom them to wage war against each other, today for the sake of higher wages, for the sake of job security, to differentiate themselves from proletarians of another sex or nationality, tomorrow for the sake of a country that has become a "victim" of foreign commercial or military aggression.

### PROLETARIANS HAVE NO COUNTRY!

This is not a mere slogan, it has been a reality for at least two hundred years. All proletarians suffer the same treatment in every company, in every industry, in every country: they are exploited by capitalists – private and state, always capitalists – because of their obligation to work for a wage. If you don't work, you don't eat, if you don't work, you don't live, but in order to work you have to submit to the existing system, the capitalist system, in which the bourgeois ruling class is the master of everything – the means of production, land, products and capital – and the wage-working class is the master of nothing, not even of its own life. The proletarians, however, can counter the capitalists with an exceptional historical weapon: their productive social power, since as wage labor they allow capitalism to exist. The historical problem, then, is this: either the capitalist mode of production, and hence the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, will hold, or the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie will be overthrown, and the mode of production will be transformed from capitalism into socialism and ultimately into communism, i.e., into a society in which classes, capital, money, the market, competition, crisis and war no longer exist.

Utopia? No, it is the objective of the communist program, for which the proletarians of Berlin, Vienna, Paris, Milan fought in 1848, the proletarians of the Paris Commune in 1871, the Russian proletarians in October 1917, the Chinese proletarians in 1925 and 1927. These were all battles which the world proletariat ultimately lost, but which left crucial historical lessons indispensable for the battles to come. The bourgeoisie also drew lessons and understood that it is the proletariat, when organ-

ized independently and directed by its class party, that is its real historical enemy. Today the Russian bourgeoisie, represented by the oligarchs around Putin, and the Ukrainian bourgeoisie, organized around the oligarchs represented by Zelensky, consider each other as enemies and send their proletarians to slaughter each other to win a war that no proletarian wanted. But history tells us that in the face of a revolutionary proletariat led by the revolutionary communist party they would be close allies, as the Prussians and the French were in 1871 when they waged war against each other, and as the Germans, the Tsarist and very democratic British and French were in 1917–1921, during and immediately after the First World Imperialist War, against the victorious Russian proletarian revolution and its class dictatorship. The proletarians have no fatherland, no borders, they have the whole world to win. In the bourgeois war, their struggle for survival must begin by fraternizing with each other and applying that revolutionary defeatism which forms the basis of a resurgent class upsurge. Their struggle must involve breaking off collaboration with their own bourgeoisie, let alone with the bourgeoisie of other countries, because the goal of the proletarian struggle is internationalist and international.

In the bourgeois imperialist warfare, immediate interests are inevitably intertwined and intermingled with the more general and historical interests of the proletariat, even if the proletarians do not realize it themselves. It is the war policy of the bourgeois state that could elevate the level of class conflict to the general political level. The proletariat is forced by the reality of war to take sides either on the side of the bourgeois front – and is driven into this by the collaborationism of the unions and politicians – or on the terrain of the class struggle, in defense of its immediate and general interests which objectively concern all proletarians directly or indirectly involved in the war – and is impelled into this struggle by the class party.

Today neither the Russian nor the Ukrainian proletarians have the strength to break with their respective bourgeoisies, and even the class party has yet to develop as real force. But the day will come when they will take the path of the class struggle.

February 17th, 2023



## « Il Comunista »

N° 178 Giugno-Agosto 2023

*Nell'interno*

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- Guerra russo-ucraina. Sono i piani di guerra, non di «pace», al centro degli interessi dell'imperialismo mondiale, sempre più immerso in contrasti irrisolvibili se non con la guerra
- Francia. La lotta contro le violenze della polizia può essere condotta realmente solo su una base anticapitalista!
- Lettori, simpatizzanti, compagni, sostenete la nostra stampa
- La Giornata mondiale della Gioventù e il materialismo storico
- La lotta per le pensioni in Francia
- Lezioni della controrivoluzione: Spagna 1936 (2)
- Nella continuità del lavoro collettivo di partito guidato dalla bussola marxista nella preparazione del partito comunista rivoluzionario di domani. (*Rapporti alla riunione generale di Milano del 10-11 giugno 2023*). Intermezzo. L'insurrezione del 1934 e l'unità operaia (3)
- L'ex "Cavaliere" è morto, ma non il berlusconismo
- Russia-Ucraina: crisi di guerra, carneficina senza fine
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## In Cuba : Poverty, Demonstrations and Repression

During the last week of September, according to various web pages and social media accounts by some Cuban journalists, several protest movements took place in Cuba, led by the poorest sectors in cities such as Los Palacios, Nuevitas and, above all, Havana, where demonstrators organized road and rail blockades, and clashed directly with the repressive regime forces.

Since July and August, in these same cities, a series of protests had already taken place due to the cost of living: the living conditions, already normally precarious for the great majority of the Cuban proletariat, suffered from the increasingly harsh economic measures of the Díaz Canel government, making the situation even worse.

This situation has become even more difficult due to two events. The first was the passage of Hurricane Ian, which caused severe damage in several parts of the country and highlighted the inability of the self-proclaimed socialist regime to guarantee the supply of materials for the reconstruction of the affected houses, forcing families to pay for the necessary repairs to be able to sleep under a roof. The second was the series of power outages that affected the main cities of the Caribbean island. These blackouts were caused by the poor state of the country's electrical network and the problems that the production of electricity faces due to its lamentable maintenance.

The news that reaches us are scarce and difficult to interpret ; but it seems that the combination of these three factors (the increasing difficulty of daily survival, the management of the Hurricane Ian crisis, and the situation created by the recurrent power cuts) are causing a situation that is, if not the same, then at least similar to that of summer last year, when thousands of Cuban proletarians took to the streets to demonstrate and ended up clashing with the police and armed forces as they demanded better living conditions.

The protests of 2021 and those of a few weeks ago are set against the backdrop of the new economic measures imposed at the beginning of last year by the government of Miguel Díaz Canel with the aim of cleaning up the island's economic and financial situation. These reforms, aimed at partially liberalizing the domestic market, seek to strengthen the position of a small national bourgeoisie created through the tourist trade, foreign currency savings, etc.,

and which is interested in the regularization of «*cuentapropismo*» (self-employment) allowing them to open their own businesses. By relying on this petty bourgeoisie and on other sectors, such as tourism, which it intends to liberalize, the government wants to create the basis for a «modernization» of the island, inspired by the Chinese model of the last 30 years, which will make it possible to maintain the political, economic and social domination of the army (the main owner of businesses in Cuba) and of the conglomerate of the bourgeoisie and foreign merchants who have made their fortunes within the framework of the economic embargo imposed by the US.

For Cuban proletarians, the consequences of these economic adjustment plans are terrible. Because of the budget cuts, the public companies that survived thanks to the capital injected directly by the State, now suffer from financing the deficit, which is immediately reflected in the wages of their employees. On the other hand, these salaries have a lower and lower value, because Díaz Canel's monetary policy, which eliminated the dual currency system, has caused an immediate increase in the price of basic products that are no longer fully subsidized.

As a result of this situation, thousands of Cubans have emigrated from the island since 2021. According to the Spanish press, the number of Cubans who have arrived in the United States during this period has been nearly 200,000, a number that is significantly higher than that of the so-called «*balseros crisis*» (1) of the 1980s and 1990s. As a result of this situation, thousands of Cubans were forced to demonstrate in the streets, build barricades, clash with the police and the army... According to media reports, even President Díaz-Canel had to flee under escort of his Praetorian Guard when he tried to address the demonstrators in Havana to calm their spirits, as his predecessor Fidel Castro had done on a few occasions.

Despite their weakness, despite the fact that they do not go beyond the level of the most immediate spontaneity, this type of direct response to the cost of living, to the redoubled pressure of the State and to its inability to guarantee acceptable living conditions, have a profound value, because they show that Cuba is a country like any other: capitalist, with an exploited class and an ex-

plotting one, with wage conflicts, with struggles for the conditions of survival... in short, with everything that characterizes a capitalist country

The myth of Cuban socialism, a direct descendant of the myth of Russian socialism, built on the basis of the falsification of the terms of Cuban reality and the very nature of socialism, is beaten back year after year by this type of mobilization, which shows that Cuban proletarians suffer conditions that are perfectly similar to those of proletarians in other countries, especially in Latin America.

Beyond the importance that this type of mobilization may have as an example, the reality for the Cuban proletarian class is awful and devastating. It is deprived of the slightest defense organization, both in the immediate field of survival and economic struggle and in the broader and more general field of political struggle, and it will only be able to rise above the level of spontaneous protest with great difficulty.

In this respect, there is no room for illusions: the work of disorganization and enslavement carried out by the so-called «Communist» Cuban Party, the People's Army and the myths of national socialism embodied in the sacrifice demanded of the whole population, the anti-imperialist nationalist mobilization, act as objective and very powerful delaying factors for the political maturation of the Cuban proletariat. Let's remember that Cuba is one of the points from which the myth of national socialism of the Stalinist type has radiated, a myth that has precisely played the role of a dead weight on the body of the world proletariat, both in the «first» and in the «third» world. If this was the case, if the example of the Cuban Revolution and its false road to socialism constituted a reinforcement of the counter-revolutionary and anti-communist tendencies that existed in the rest of the world..., how could they not still be powerful in Cuba today? From Cuba onwards, nationalist tendencies, interclassist anti-imperialism, confidence in frontism and collaboration between classes were strengthened in those countries where the proletarian class was indomitable and against which the indigenous opportunist forces had to be fully employed, as in the case of Venezuela, Chile and Argentina.

For sixty years, with even greater power, these same forces have subjugated the Cuban proletarian class, the only one in Latin America and the Caribbean able of making a decisive contribution to a national-revolutionary movement - which was also its objec-

tive limit in the absence of the leadership of a Marxist and therefore class revolutionary communist party -, the only one that lived and grew stronger through the experience of direct armed struggle against the pro-Yankee ruling class and against the very interests of the United States. The Cuban proletarian class of today finds itself having to resume the struggle on the basic economic terrain against increasingly harsh living conditions. Compared to the rest of the countries in the region, it has an objective advantage: the conditions created by the 1959 revolution, the agrarian reform, the nationalization of practically all economic activity, etc., have obviously neither created nor moved the economy toward socialism, but have given rise to a very large proletarian class, not very intertwined with the petty-bourgeois and popular sectors as in the rest of Latin America. This fact represents an objective strength for the Cuban proletarians: their demands have a distinct class character, which differentiates them from the demands that arise in the periodic «popular» uprisings that take place in the countries of their immediate environment, where the pressure of the middle, petty-bourgeois and popular classes continues to exert a very strong social influence on the proletariat.

Subjected to living conditions that continue to deteriorate like those of the proletariat in the rest of the world, without its so-called «socialism» changing anything, the Cuban proletariat must take the path of open class struggle. And while we cannot expect this to happen tomorrow, the growing tendency to do so shows that the containment force represented by Stalinist and post-Stalinist opportunism, both nationally and internationally, is cracking more and more.

From Havana to California and from Santiago de Chile to Montreal, it will be the strength of the proletarian class that will erase from the face of America both the criminal bourgeoisie that feeds on the blood and sweat of the proletariat and oppressed masses of the continent, and the forces of opportunism that collaborate in the effort to prolong bourgeois class rule.

And the American revolution, no longer popular but proletarian, will consolidate the strength of the revolution in Europe, Asia and America, which sooner or later will return to its appointment with history. (1) The «balsa» was a makeshift boat with which Cuban migrants (precisely called «balseros») crossed the sea to reach the coast of Florida.

October, 6th 2022

## Venezuela The only Way Out for the Proletarians: Class Struggle

Since January of this year (2023), strikes and street demonstrations have multiplied in Venezuela, mainly organized by education workers. The slogans of the demonstrations revolve around wages: «*The dollar rises, wages fall, hunger intensifies*»; «*And you, Maduro, workers' president, how much do you earn?*»; «*Hunger wages, pensions that kill*».

And it is no wonder: according to Bloomberg, the real minimum wage in Venezuela was \$8 in December 2022 and did not exceed \$6 (!) in January 2023, by far the lowest in Latin America. Added to this is hyperinflation, which according to government figures is 234%, incomparable to 2018 when it reached 130,000%, but still remains the highest in the world after Sudan. On the other hand, the World Bank estimates that people surviving on less than \$2.15 a day live in extreme poverty... There are no words for this.

As for the government, it promotes the idea that «Venezuela is recovering»,

but according to economist M. Sutherland, «*if Venezuela were to grow at the same rate Maduro says it did in 2021, i.e. 5%, it would take 32 years to return to the economy of 2013*». This recovery is unlikely to reach the poorer sections of Venezuelan society. According to Encovi-Venezuela (Encuesta Nacional sobre Condiciones de Vida), quoted by the *New York Times*, «*...for the first time in seven years, poverty is declining: half the country lives in poverty, down from 65% in 2021*». As the North American newspaper illustrates, «*many survive on the equivalent of a few dollars a day, and public sector workers have taken to the streets to protest low salaries*»... But the investigation, again according to the *NY Times*, also revealed that «*the richest Venezuelans are 70 times richer than the poorest, putting the country on par with some countries in Africa that have the highest levels of ine-*

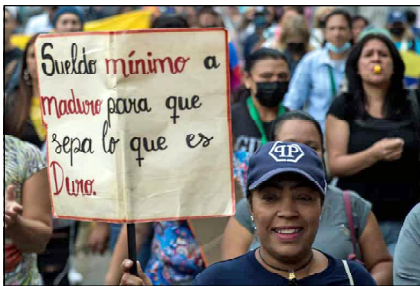
( Continued on page 16 )

## Venezuela ...

(Continuation from page 15)

*quality in the world».*

This horrendous inequality is one of the conditions demanded by the bourgeois institutions, especially the United States, for Maduro's government to remain in power, amid a tenuous social peace that cannot be compared to that of three years ago. This is the fundamental reason for the disintegration of the bourgeois opposition, which in December abandoned its puppet, the «self-proclaimed president» Guaidó, who had become more unpopular than Maduro, in particular, because of the fraudulent management of the resources provided by the European Union and the United States. It could not have been otherwise!



The protests surprised the government and the demonstrators themselves, who, having been called, did not expect so many workers on the streets. But the discontent is spreading: in the city of Ciudad Guayana, the country's main centre of heavy industry, which is now suffering from a decline in production due to a lack of resources to ensure maintenance and modernization, workers from Sidor, the main company in the hands of the Chavista state, took to the streets and, with the help of workers from other industries in the region, demanded better wages and respect for the conquests enshrined in contracts. A dozen worker militants were arrested and charged with sedition (the whole of southeast Venezuela is declared a «security zone»), but thanks to pressure from the workers they were soon released. The health sector, whose resistance has defended the honor of the proletarians of this country for several years, was also mobilized, as were oil workers, civil servants and pensioners, for the same reasons: hunger and poverty.

On January 12th, this whole mass of protesters expected to hear from President Maduro, in his annual message, a positive response to their demands. But he limited himself to stating that he could not yet raise the minimum wage because of the «blockade», that is to say, the 900 economic sanctions imposed on the Caribbean country by the US; it must be said, however, that these sanctions and the pressure on Caracas have been reduced, so that it is possible to trade in more oil, which is Venezuela's main source of foreign currency. These sanctions have undoubtedly hit Venezuela's economic capacity and potential hard, forcing the government to take measures at the expense of the vast majority of the population. «We are aware of this and we are acting,» Maduro said...

Still on 23 January, the anniversary date of the celebration of democracy in Venezuela, the aforementioned workers' sectors once again took to the streets by the thousands throughout the coun-

try. There were no injuries, deaths or arrests, but there was a large-scale mobilization of the security forces to prevent the protesters from passing through, and threats and counter-demonstrations by the chavista sectors calling for the defense of the fatherland against the imperialist yoke: Chavista demonstrations declared themselves to be an «anti-imperialist revolt», which constitutes a vulgar blackmail, as if one should suffer hunger and hardship in the name of the fatherland...

In this complex and difficult situation, where the Venezuelan bourgeoisie is enriching itself with the consent of a party that calls itself socialist, and the proletarians are extremely impoverished, demonstrations, work stoppages and strikes are a good sign that we must welcome, because they can be a step on the road to the salvation of the proletarians: **the class struggle**.

March, 24th 2023

## Brazil 100 Days of Lula Government in the Service of Capitalism

Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, known as Lula, has just celebrated his first hundred days as President of Brazil with a trip to China accompanied by a hundred or so capitalists: in renewing his ties with this country he went first and foremost to defend the interests of Brazilian capitalism, China being Brazil's leading economic partner ahead of the United States.

Lula's election to a third term in the presidency had obviously unleashed the enthusiasm of his PT (Workers' Party) supporters; it had also been hailed by left and far-left forces in Latin America and elsewhere as a great victory for Brazilian workers and the left worldwide and even an encouragement for workers in other countries.

However, it didn't take much insight to see that this «historic victory» of «democracy» over the «fascist» Bolsonaro, the incumbent president, was relative: Lula won by a narrow margin (50.9% of the vote against 49.1%), while in the parliamentary elections that took place at the same time, it was the 'Bolsonarists' who won with 16.5% of the vote (99 deputies), while the electoral coalition around the PT won just under 14% (80 deputies). The same was true for the senatorial and governors' elections.

But above all it was certain that Lula's arrival in power would not bring much to the proletarians; he had chosen Alckmin as his vice-president, a political figure from the big bourgeoisie, a reactionary Catholic, linked to the financial world.

This choice was not made by chance; Lula only succeeded in winning because he was able to convince the most influential capitalist circles, disappointed with Bolsonaro's mandate, that he was the best able to defend their interests and those of Brazilian capitalism in general, both at home and abroad. He has multiplied his gestures towards the agro-industrial sector (opposition to land occupations by landless peasants, etc.) (1), one of Bolsonaro's strongest supporters, towards religious circles (by asserting himself to be opposed in particular to abortion and to any modification of the law that prohibits it), and towards the army.

The riots of 8 January, when gangs of supporters of the former far-right president attacked various official buildings in the capital Brasília with the complicity of some police forces, demonstrated, if it were necessary, that the bourgeoisie as a whole and the state institutions did not see a threat in Lula's accession to the presidency; the Bolsonaroist elected representatives also mostly condemned these incoherent riots à la Trump.

## Brazil ...

Lula enjoyed a high level of popularity among the working classes thanks to the social measures taken during his previous terms in office, which Bolsonaro had removed or reduced because of their cost to the public purse. These measures conceded to the poor masses were in fact only crumbs from the economic boom of the time; Brazil's economic situation is very different today in a situation of international crisis and Lula committed himself to the financial world to spend as little as possible on social matters; his government undoubtedly re-established the «bolsa familia» (family benefits, especially for children under 6 years old) for almost 22 million families, and increased the minimum wage. But these measures are little more than window-dressing: the minimum wage has been increased by 1.3% while inflation is officially at 6% and the family benefits of a hundred dollars or so will not be able to respond to the poverty rate which exploded during the covid-19 epidemic (50 million people live on less than 2 dollars a day), causing the spectre of famine to reappear: more than

33 million people are said to be starving and 59% of the population is said to be eating inadequately! The Lula government responded to this situation... by re-establishing CONSEA (National Council for Food and Nutritional Sovereignty), an advisory body responsible for monitoring the issue...

Furthermore, the government has refused to reverse the anti-worker and anti-social «reforms» of the labour code and the social security system made under Bolsonaro.

### NEITHER BOLSONARO NOR LULA!

The Brazilian proletarians can therefore expect nothing from Lula and his government, which is at the service of the capitalists - the two «left» ministers of the Communist Party (PC do B) and the PSOL (Socialism and Freedom Party, where several Trotskyist currents are to be found) are only there to try to conceal its totally pro-capitalist orientation. They cannot expect anything from the collaborationist unions like the CUT, linked to the government, which has just sabotaged the wildcat strike of more

than 4000 maintenance workers at the Petrobras refinery in Canoas (Rio Grande do Sul).

In the inevitable struggles that await them, they will also have to defy all the false friends who called on them to support Lula, in the name of the struggle against Bolsonaro, and who tomorrow will still try to lead them astray.

Based on their traditions of struggle they will have to find the path of independent class struggle against the capitalists and their governments which, whatever their political colours, administer the bourgeois state to be brought down. This cannot be done overnight, there will be many difficulties to overcome in this path, but there is no alternative.

April, 20th 2023

(1) On 30 March his agriculture minister, Carlos Favaro (an agribusiness man), condemned recent land occupations by the MST («Landless Workers' Movement», linked to the PT) saying that the occupation of land was an «abominable» act.

## 50 Years ago, Reformism Led the Chilean Proletariat to the Slaughterhouse

The election in Chile in 1970 of a «Marxist» president (Salvador Allende) and the arrival in government of a left-wing coalition based around the Socialist Party and the Communist Party the UP, («Unidad Popular» Popular Unity) had an impact far beyond the country's borders.

For left-wing parties in Europe and elsewhere, the «Chilean experience» demonstrated that it was possible to achieve «socialism» by a peaceful and democratic route, thanks to reforms carried out using state institutions.

In reality, the «socialism» touted by the UP and its anything-but-Marxist president was nothing more than a slightly reformed and «improved» capitalism: there was no question of touching the capitalist mode of production and setting itself the objective of a radically new society, without exploitation, without markets or money, without social classes or State -genuine socialism.

Genuine socialism can only be achieved at international level, and only after the bourgeois state and the resistance of the property-owning classes had been broken by the establishment of the

dictatorship of the proletariat.

The UP envisaged nothing of the sort; its programme was a set of economic reforms aimed at speeding up capitalist development by liquidating the archaic sectors (large landholdings), increasing the economic role of the state to push forward industrialisation, loosening the imperialist grip (nationalisation of the big American mining companies) and at the same time granting the social measures necessary to calm the discontent of the proletarians and the poor masses.

It is therefore not surprising that the main bourgeois party, Christian Democracy, voted for Allende's nomination (as he did not have a sufficient majority to be elected directly, the nomination depended on a vote in parliament where the UP was in the minority). To be on the safe side, the DC made it a condition (in a text dated 24/9/1970) that the future president would undertake, among other things, to respect «*the organic and hierarchical structures of the Armed Forces and the Carabinieri Corps*»: «*We want the Armed Forces and the Carabinieri Corps to continue*

*to be a guarantee of our democratic system*». What follows will show once again that the democratic system defended by the army and the police is nothing more than the domination of the bourgeoisie...

The UP government had more or less virulent opponents: starting with the large landowners (the «*momios*» the mummies) who feared land occupations, sectors of the petty and middle bourgeoisie worried about the government's modernisation plans (the plan to create a national transport company led to a revolt by lorry owners) and American imperialism, obviously hostile to attempts to undermine its interests and forge closer ties with Cuba. The UP tried to appease these opponents by limiting agrarian «reform» (it had never thought of an agrarian **revolution**) and condemning the occupation of landless peasants, buying back nationalised American companies at full price (there was no question of expropriating them), etc.

This was not enough to appease the opponents, who on the contrary found ever greater energy in each step backwards for UP.

As economic hardship fuelled social tensions, driving proletarians to struggle on the one hand, and more and more petty-bourgeois and bourgeois sectors to revolt against a government incapable of maintaining social peace on the

( Continued on page 18)

## 50 Years ago ...

(Continuation from page 17)

other, the latter turned increasingly to the military.

When the «industrial cordons» appeared and began to spread as territorial organs for the centralisation of workers' resistance, they were violently denounced by the bourgeois media and openly opposed by the CP and the bureaucrats of the CUT union, while «comrade president» Allende, anxious to maintain the paralysing influence of the UP on the working class, adopted an apparently less hostile attitude towards them. At the same time, the government gave the army carte blanche against the cordons, paving the way for a military coup. In the end, the social fire-fighters proved increasingly incapable of calming the proletarians and the disinherited masses, and had exhausted their usefulness for the bourgeoisie. Christian Democracy broke off negotiations with the government: it was time to move on to brutal repression, sweeping away the reformist lackeys in the process, even if they had served the bourgeois order to the end by handing the proletarians over to their executioners with their hands tied. The victims of the coup d'état by the «democratic general» Pinochet numbered in the thousands, with thousands dead or missing, tens of thousands imprisoned, often savagely tortured, and hundreds of thousands forced to flee the country.

Unfortunately, there was no party in Chile which could warn the proletariat of the mortal danger of trusting the UP and lead it along independent class lines. The MIR (Movement of the Revolutionary Left) had acquired a certain influence among the most combative layers; born of a fusion of various Trotskyist, Castroist and other currents, claiming to be Marxist, it declared itself opposed to the reformism and pacifism of the left-wing parties, to an alliance with the «national bourgeoisie» which was part of the CP's programme, and it advocated armed struggle and insurrection.

The coming to power of UP showed the value of such rhetoric. Although the MIR went so far as to criticise certain actions or the «legalism» of the government, it immediately sided with it and stubbornly defended it to the point of opposing any struggles that risked weakening it. He adopted the UP's famous slogan: *El pueblo unido jamás será vencido!* (the united people will never be defeated), which is the formula for proletarian defeat, since in the name of this popular unity the proletariat was

called upon to set aside the defence of its own interests. It played the disastrous role of a left wing of the UP bringing back into the fold of social democratic and neo-Stalinist governmental reformism those proletarians who tended to escape from it and take the path of class independence.

In 1922 the young Communist Party of Italy wrote in its Rome Theses: «*One of the essential tasks of the Communist Party in preparing the proletariat ideologically and practically for the revolutionary seizure of power is to criticise without pity the programme of the bourgeois Left and any programme which would use bourgeois democratic and parliamentary institutions to solve social problems.*» (...) «*The Communist Party has a duty to proclaim what it knows not only from Marxist criticism, but from bloody experience: such governments might well allow the proletariat freedom of movement as long as it considered and supported them as its own representatives, but they would respond with the fiercest reaction to the first assault of the masses against the institutions of the bourgeois democratic state.*» (...) *It is obvious that the Communist Party will only be able to make effective use of this experience as long as it has denounced in advance the bankruptcy of these governments and preserved a solid independent organisation around which the proletariat can regroup when it is forced to abandon the groups and parties whose governmental experiment it had initially supported.*»

(...) *The situation we are considering may take the form of an attack by*

*the bourgeois right against a democratic or socialist government. Even in this case, the Communist Party cannot proclaim the slightest solidarity with governments of this kind: if it welcomes them as an experiment to be followed in order to hasten the moment when the proletariat will become convinced of their counter-revolutionary aims, it obviously cannot present them to it as a conquest to be defended.*»

No one was there to speak the Marxist language of classist intransigence to the Chilean proletarians who were led blindfolded to the slaughterhouse...

\* \* \*

At the end of the 1980s, after 17 years of imposing unbridled capitalist exploitation that was much admired by bourgeois economists, Pinochet's dictatorship quietly gave way to democracy. The *Concertación por la Democracia* (Concertation for Democracy) parties, led by the old adversary-partners, the Socialist Party and Christian Democracy, promised to respect the Constitution promulgated by the dictatorship, continue the same economic policy and guarantee impunity for the crimes committed: umpteenth confirmation that dictatorship and democracy are two political forms that are interchangeable according to the needs of preserving bourgeois domination...

The «thousand days» of the *Unidad Popular* represent a dramatic experience from which the proletarians of the whole world must remember the lessons written in the blood of their class brothers!

August 2023

## Marx on the Impersonality of Capital

*We reproduce here three quotations from the third volume of «Capital» to illustrate the impersonality of capital, capital as a non-human factor, the non-private nature of capital, as well as to demolish the «theories» that see in the disappearance of the individual capitalist, in state capitalism, in nationalisations, etc., an overcoming of the capitalist system.*

### ON THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE CAPITALIST AS A PERSONALITY

«Stock companies in general – developed with the credit system – have an increasing tendency to separate this work of management as a function from the ownership of capital, be it self-owned or borrowed. Just as the development of bourgeois society witnessed a separation of the functions of judges and administrators from landownership, whose attributes they were in feudal times. But since, on the one hand, the mere owner of capital, the money capitalist, has to face the

functioning capitalist, while money capital itself assumes a social character with the advance of credit, being concentrated in banks and loaned out by them instead of by its direct owners, and since, on the other hand, the mere manager who has no title whatever to the capital, whether through borrowing it or otherwise, performs all the real functions pertaining to the functioning capitalist as such, only the functionary remains and the capitalist disappears as superfluous from the production process.» (1)

### ON THE SOCIAL AND NOT PERSONAL OWNERSHIP



## OF CAPITAL

«Aside from the stock-company business, which represents the abolition of capitalist private industry on the basis of the capitalist system itself and destroys private industry as it expands and invades new spheres of production, credit offers to the individual capitalist, or to one who is regarded a capitalist, absolute control within certain limits over the capital and property of others, and thereby over the labour of others. The control over social capital, not the individual capital of *his own*, gives him control over social labour. The capital itself, which a man really owns or is supposed to own in the opinion of the public, becomes purely a basis for the superstructure of credit. This is particularly true of wholesale commerce, through which the greatest portion of the social product passes. All standards of measurement, all excuses more or less still justified under capitalist production, disappear here. What the speculating wholesale merchant risks is social property, not his own. Equally sordid becomes the phrase relating the origin of capital to savings, for what he demands is that *others* should save for him. (...) The other phrase concerning abstention is squarely refuted by his luxury, which is now itself a means of credit. Conceptions which have some meaning on a less developed stage of capitalist production, become quite meaningless here. Success and failure both lead here to a centralisation of capital, and thus to expropriation on the most enormous scale. Expropriation extends here from the direct producers to the smaller and the medium-sized capitalists themselves. It is the point of departure for the capitalist mode of production; its accomplishment is the goal of this production. In the last instance, it aims at the expropriation of the means of production from all individuals. With the development of social production the means of production cease to be means of private production and products of private production, and can thereafter be only means of production in the hands of associated producers, i. e., the latter's social property, much as they are their social products. However, this expropriation appears within the capitalist system in a contradictory form, as appropriation of social property by a few; and credit lends the latter more and more the aspect of pure adventurers. Since property here exists in the form of stock, its movement and transfer become purely a result of gambling on the stock exchange, where the little fish are swallowed by the sharks and the lambs by the stock-exchange wolves. There is antagonism against the old form in the stock companies, in which social means of production appear as individual prop-

erty; but the conversion to the form of stock still remains ensnared in the trammels of capitalism; hence, instead of overcoming the antithesis between the character of wealth as social and as private wealth, the stock companies merely develop it in a new form.» (2)

ON THE FADING OF THE  
PRIVATE CHARACTER OF  
CAPITAL

«We have seen that the average profit of the individual capitalist, or of every individual capital, is determined not by the surplus labour appropriated at first hand by each capital, but by the quantity of total surplus labour appropriated by the total capital, from which each individual capital receives its dividend only proportional to its aliquot part of the total capital. This social character of capital is first promoted and wholly realised through the full development of the credit and banking system. On the other hand this goes farther. It places all the available and even potential capital of society that is not yet actively employed at the disposal of the industrial and commercial capitalists so that neither the lenders nor users of this capital are its owners or producers. It thus does away with the private character of capital and thus contains in itself, but only in itself, the abolition of capital itself. By means of the banking system the distribution of capital as a special business, a social func-

tion, is taken out of the hands of the private capitalists and usurers. But at the same time, banking and credit thus become the most potent means of driving capitalist production beyond its own limits, and one of the most effective vehicles of crises and swindle.

The banking system shows, furthermore, by substituting various forms of circulating credit in place of money, that money is in reality nothing but a particular expression of the social character of labour and its products, which, however, as antithetical to the basis of private production, must always appear in the last analysis as a thing, a special commodity, alongside other commodities.

Finally, there is no doubt that the credit system will serve as a powerful lever during the transition from the capitalist mode of production to the mode of production of associated labour; but only as one element in connection with other great organic revolutions of the mode of production itself.» (3)

(1) Marx Karl, Capital Volume III, in Marx & Engels Collected Works, Vol. 37; ch. XXIII, p. 386

(2) Mark Karl, Capital Volume III, in Marx & Engels Collected Works, Vol. 37; ch. XXVII, p. 436–437

(3) Marx Karl, Capital Volume III, in Marx & Engels, Collected Works, Vol. 37; ch. XXXVI, p. 601–602

## March 8th, which Has Become a Bourgeois Celebration of Solidarity between Classes from a Day of Proletarian Struggle, Must once again Become a Symbol of Proletarian Struggle

On March 8, 1917 (February 23, according to the Julian calendar then in use in Russia), the proletarian women of St. Petersburg, led by workers from the textile industry, took to the streets to fight against the difficult living conditions they were suffering because of the war, low wages, lack of food, etc. This revolt, which is the real origin of the later commemoration of the **proletarian women's day**, triggered the greatest revolution that history has yet known, the one that brought the Bolshevik Party to power, the overthrow of the bourgeois state, the victory of the workers' and peasants' soviets and the most wide-spread call for worldwide proletarian insurrection.

On that 8 March, in a Russia still dominated by the tsarist monarchy that had led it to participate in the First World War alongside the French and British imperialist powers, the proletarian women set an example that in a short time caused the revolt to spread both to the factories and to the front, where thousands of soldiers played a decisive role in strengthening the workers' power that was rising through the soviets. Proletarian women suffered not only from the hardships of working-class life in peacetime, but also from the particularly difficult conditions caused by the imperialist war, the lack of food, clothing

( Continued on page 20 )

## March 8th ...

(Continuation from page 19)

and housing: while men worked to death in factories converted into production centers of the war industry, proletarian women bore on their shoulders the consequences for an unbearable life for human beings, imposed on them in the name of the country's superior interests and the exigencies of the national economy.

These proletarian women did not rise up in the name of abstract «equality»; they did not confront the tsarist police to defend the interests of all women, regardless of their social stratum. They rose up, fought and died as proletarian women and as such called upon other proletarians in Russia and throughout the world by their example to rise up and fight against imperialist war, against all bourgeois factions, against all fatherlands and states, in all corners of the world.

Their gesture was not in vain. With the February Revolution, the tsarist power fell and the first episode of the Russian Revolution began. Since then the proletarian forces have been fighting against the bourgeois parties, which have led the workers to the slaughter not in the name of the crown and Russian traditions, but in the name of democracy and liberty, with which the bourgeoisie sought to rule the country. They also opposed those alleged proletarian currents, such as the Mensheviks, who wanted to support the bourgeois class state by modernizing its social structure and sought conciliation through parliament, so that the proletarians in return would agree to continue to be exploited and used as cannon fodder on the front. Within a few months, religious, authoritarian, democratic and liberal pretexts flashed before the eyes of the Russian proletarians so that the social order could be preserved through their own efforts and blood. The lesson the proletarians acquired was that the proletarian class must fight to impose its class dictatorship, otherwise it will always be subject to the class dictatorship of the enemy; this gave them the strength to establish with the Bolshevik Party the first real proletarian state in history. From October 1917 and for several years, Petrograd and Moscow were the symbol of the revolutionary power of the proletariat, and proletarians in all countries looked to them as examples of what the working class could do.

The origin of March 8 is the celebration of the great victorious revolution of the proletariat. And it is cele-

brated in the name of the proletarian women, because it is from the strength that this section of the working class possesses, from the anger and hatred against the bourgeoisie that it harbors in its heart, that the first spark of insurrection was ignited. The proletarian woman, doubly suffering from the hardships of the capitalist world, which adds to the economic exploitation the social oppression imposed by her position, was rightly the first to revolt against the situation suffered by the entire Russian and European proletariat in 1917. And it is this day and this struggle that we communists defend today, more than a hundred years later, and it is this struggle that the proletarian class would have had to carry as its banner if the meaning of this day had not been distorted, falsified and stolen for so many years.

Today, 8 March is a holiday in the hands of bankers, businessmen and ministers. Even the Queen celebrates it. It has become a date when proletarian women are called upon to celebrate alongside their oppressors, to fight hand in hand to defend the rights that working women can never truly enjoy in bourgeois society. The freedom and equality claimed on this day are the freedom and equality of bourgeois women vis-à-vis bourgeois men: the freedom to exploit the workforce, the equality to run the state in the sole defense of their own class interests, the unity of both sexes to once again send proletarians to kill each other on the war fronts in defense of the superior exigencies of the nation.

What's left for the proletarian woman? Beyond the institutionalized celebrations, beyond feminist ministries or progressive governments, working women continue to be subjected to a burdensome social condition: lower and lower wages, higher and higher prices, difficulties in finding housing, raising children, etc. On top of this is the specific pressure they face as women in countries where they are denied the most basic rights (as in Iran, where the latest wave of protests began with the murder of a young Kurdish woman... for not wearing the veil according to the imposed rules!) and in those where these rights are legally recognized but are repeatedly denied by the force of reality, in which women continue to occupy a subordinate place.

The 8th of March 1917 was a day of struggle for the proletarian class; today's bourgeois 8th of March is a celebration of the solidarity between classes and thus the subjugation of proletarian women to the demands of the bourgeois class as a whole. The triumph of movements like the feminist one, which

in a country like Spain is recognized as a source of inspiration for the state, is the triumph of the mobilization of proletarian women under the banner of national unity. At a time when the peace achieved after the Second World War, both inside and outside national borders, seems to be showing the first signs of its exhaustion, the mobilization of the proletarian class is necessary to accustom it to accept the exigencies that the bourgeois class may need to impose on it. The extolling of values supposedly above the social classes, such as equality, so-called «sisterhood», etc., serve as banners to deceive certain proletarian strata, in this case especially women, and to lead them away from the field of class struggle.

After the defeat of the proletarian revolution in 1917 at the hands of its external and internal enemies, whether openly bourgeois or disguised as communists, such as Stalinism, the following decades, up to the present day, have been marked by a permanent and preventive counter-revolution. In this counter-revolution, which the bourgeoisie wages by all means and at all times against any attempt at independent struggle by the proletariat and seeks to incapacitate it before it even arises, currents such as feminism promise proletarian women a way out of the problems their position poses, without the need to demolish the capitalist system, and acts as a very powerful paralyzer of the social struggle aimed at suppressing any response to the specific problems of women in the field of class struggle carried out through their confrontation with the bourgeois class and their implacable defense of the living conditions of the proletariat as a whole. Feminism, which is now a state ideology, responds to questions that concern the lives of proletarian women in particular by calling for «the end of discrimination», «equality», etc. When proletarian women lose their jobs because they become pregnant, the bourgeoisie invokes using the feminist doctrine of «co-responsibility for the upbringing of children». To the deafening and continuous social violence to which women suffer at home, in the workplace or on the street, the bourgeoisie responds by doubling down on ultra-repressive laws that allow the state to strengthen its police role. And so it is in all cases.

More than a hundred years have passed between 8 March 1917 and the present day. We are a long way from episodes like the one staged that day by the proletarian women of Petrograd. And this is not so much because of the time as because of the depth of the

counter-revolution which has plunged the proletarian class into the most terrible defeat and even makes it impossible to refer to the great events of its class struggle for an understanding of the world today. But sooner or later these material forces which really move society, the same forces which divide it into opposing social classes and so tend to undermine any shock absorber which might serve to relieve the tension which exists between them, will eventually break through the foundations of social peace. On the horizon,

perhaps not imminent, but looming, the clouds heralding the storm of war reappear. Everywhere, the national bourgeoisies are preparing to grease again the propaganda machine with which they intend to bombard the proletarian class. And meanwhile, the living conditions of the proletariat continue to deteriorate...

For revolutionary Marxists, the revolutionary perspective does not focus on the duration of a single human life, but on the rhythms of history, which speed up or slow down, but always

march towards the final triumph of the classless society. That is why we are absolutely certain that the proletarian March 8 will return with all the force with which the proletarian class, which today seems defeated, like the Russian workers in 1917, will rise again against war and misery and for social revolution.

**Long live the proletarian 8th of March!**

**For the resumption of the class struggle!**

March, 8th 2023

## May Day 2023

# The Struggle of the Proletariat Has only one Purpose: it Defends the Immediate and Future Interests Exclusively of the Proletarian Class!

All the trade union organizations and all the «workers» parties have been devoted for decades to collaboration between the classes.

Towards the end of the Second World Imperialist War, we called the re-organized trade unions «tricolor» (i.e. national), just as those fascist trade unions were, because their fundamental characteristic was and is to be a mouth-piece for the demands of capitalism in the ranks of the working class, and because their specific function was and is to mediate between capitalist demands (at the company and national level) and the immediate demands of the workers (the proletariat). Their policy was and is to adapt the demands of the workers to the needs of the individual companies as well as to the national demands of the bourgeois power. For the effective implementation of this policy in a democratic regime there is no other system – apart from the one applied by fascism, i.e. the violent destruction of the workers' unions and their replacement by fascist single trade union – than that of *class collaboration*, which consists in deluding the proletariat – after it was weakened by the historical defeat of its revolutionary struggle and its class character was replaced by democratism – that the way to improve its conditions of existence and work is to submit to the demands of capital at the company and national level, both in economic and political *dialogue* with the bosses and their state.

The main exigencies of capital are to make workers work as productively as possible and to pay them as little as possible. Every capitalist necessarily

acts in the market where he encounters competition from other capitalists; therefore, he pursues these goals in order to make his profits and beat his competitors; but to achieve these goals he needs to have the necessary number of workers to exploit and their willingness (convinced or forced) to meet the needs of his company. As is well known, in capitalist society the wage labourer is a **proletarian** because he only possesses his individual labour power, which he is obliged to sell to the capitalists in order to receive a wage that will support him and his family; to be proletarian does not only mean to be without reserves, but also to make your life completely dependent on the work that the capitalist does or does not give you.

The capitalists are the owners of all the means of production on which the labour power of the workers can be employed, naturally according to the most productive organization of work, and by virtue of their economic and political power they appropriate to themselves all the products of every production cycle; thus in practice they have the lives of all urban and rural proletarians in their hands. The real power of the capitalists lies precisely in this domination; power which is reinforced by that particular political organ which is the State, whose primary function is the defence of the general and individual interests of the capitalists against both foreign competition and the struggle of the proletarian class.

Every capitalist has to contend with competition from other capitalists as well as with his own proletarians insofar as the latter take up the struggle and

demand higher wages and less onerous working conditions. The workers' struggle against the capitalists runs parallel to the competitive struggle that every capitalist and every state wages against the foreign bourgeoisies. But for the workers' struggle to be a **classist struggle**, it must be conducted with class methods and means and with objectives exclusively in defence of proletarian class interests; that is, methods, means and objectives which are incompatible with social peace, with social dialogue, with collaboration between the classes.

In the historical course of the development of capitalism, the proletarian class has also developed not only as a mass of working forces, but also as class organized to defend its own interests. That is why the capitalists, apart from having the very clear protection of the state, have tried in every possible way to counter the power of the organized proletariat, both at the immediate level, that is, the unions, and at the political level, that is, its parties.

In capitalist society, the struggle between the classes never disappears; it can reach its maximum expression at certain historical junctures, as in revolutionary situations, when the proletariat unites its forces by being led by its class party; or it can persist, even for decades – as it was the case in the last century – within the domain of the social contrasts that are effectively under the control of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie exercises this control by various means: by increasing competition between proletarians, by using direct repression in the workplace, by resorting to state repression through the judiciary and the police, by bribing trade unionists and politicians, by firing the most combative workers, by relocating production, by closing down plants that are no longer sufficiently «productive» with respect to the market or simply because they have fallen into bankruptcy.

(Continued on page 22)

**May Day 2023**

## **The Struggle of the Proletariat Has only one Purpose: it Defends the Immediate and Future Interests Exclusively of the Proletarian Class!**

(Continuation from page 21)

It is a fact that since the end of the Second World War onwards, the policy of *class collaboration* of the trade unions, reconstructed after the fascist era of the single trade union, and of the so-called socialist and communist parties, was no longer an episodic thing or related to a particular sector of production; it became *institutionalized*, therefore having validity for the entire economic system, and thus ensuring the regulation of all social relations between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. And it is to fascism that post-fascist democracy owes this fine result, as it was the first to introduce class collaboration between capitalists and proletarians through the corporate system (with joint organizations of workers and bosses) as the only recognized basis for bargaining between proletarians and capitalists, both in the economic sector of private and public capital.

On the other hand, the development of capitalism in its imperialist form, with the creation of huge monopolies, trusts and multinational corporations whose interests transcend the national frameworks within which any national capitalism has developed, has necessitated the generalization of this method of bargaining between companies and the work force and its institutionalization through state laws that would facilitate and pre-emptively regulate the administration of the labour power in a prescribed manner. And indeed, institutionalized class collaboration is no longer a case of Italy or Germany, but applies to all capitalist countries.

The defeat of the goals of the proletarian cause – an historical cause that cannot be other than revolutionary and worldwide – is due above all to the degeneration of proletarian parties and working class unions that took place in the 1920s, during which there was a shift from the exclusive defence of the interests of the proletarian class on the immediate and general political terrain to the defence of bourgeois interests.

While capitalism, in its imperialist form, has moved forward by centralizing its power in a few state colossi representing the centres of world imperialism, the proletariat – in view of its class interests at the national and global level – has, on the contrary, stepped backwards: it has lost its class power because

it has embraced as its own the petty-bourgeois illusion that it could achieve a social system in which every social class, every social stratum, could satisfy its needs without having to go through the **class struggle**, i.e. without having to take the path of anti-bourgeois and therefore anti-capitalist revolution. This illusion has not fallen from the sky; it arises from the social relations that characterize this society, which are permeated by the bourgeois-democratic ideology according to which every individual is born with equal rights and equal opportunities for growth and improvement of his personal situation; according to which we are all *citizens* under a state that recognizes and represents the sovereignty of the *people*, a sovereignty protected by laws that are «equal for all». That all this is a pack of lies is demonstrated every day; if this were not so, there would not be a group of billionaires systematically seizing most of the world's wealth and billions of starving proletarians; there would be no wars between bourgeois factions and states to overwhelm each other for the purpose of securing greater power and better chances of capturing economic territory, business, and proletarian masses to be exploited.

The capitalist economy is based on a fundamental law according to which capital must exploit wage labour: the more it exploits it, the more surplus value it extracts and the more it valorises the capital invested. Without wage labour, capital would perish; without the subordination of wage labourers to the demands of its valorisation (i.e. its augmentation), it would have no reason to exist. Just as the bourgeoisie cannot escape this law, neither can the proletariat. The interest of the bourgeoisie is to keep this system alive, the interest of the proletariat is to emancipate itself from this system; these two interests permanently clash, not because of the will of one class or the other, but because they are antagonistic, and have been so ever since the capitalist mode of production historically imposed itself.

This class antagonism is always present, even when the proletariat is not fighting: in fact, it is the bourgeoisie that is in permanent struggle both against any remnants of previous modes of production, against foreign bourgeoisies and the proletariat. In the first case, it represents economic and social

progress; in the second case, it represents a competitive struggle to increase power against competitors and thus to strengthen the preservation of the capitalist economic system; in the third case, it represents social reaction, because the social wealth produced under capitalism is the result of the exploitation of wage labour, which historically tends towards emancipation from capitalism: «*The essential conditions for the existence and for the sway of the bourgeois class is the formation and augmentation of capital; the condition for capital is wage-labour. Wage-labour rests exclusively on competition between the labourers*». We have known this since 1848, since the time of Marx and Engels's «Communist Manifesto» and the bourgeoisie knows it too, since it knows – because the history of class struggles and proletarian revolutions teaches it too – that with the development of big industry, of which it is the «*involuntary promoter*» the proletarian masses develop, transcending all «national» borders, and with them the basis of the class struggle on a world scale.

Therefore, the bourgeoisie has every interest in blocking, fragmenting and diverting the workers' struggle from the terrain of antagonistic confrontation between the classes to the terrain of class collaboration. The objective of the struggle of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat is not only to keep it in the position of proletariat, whose life depends exclusively on wage labour, and therefore on capital, but to prevent it from organizing itself independently, for its own class interests and for historical objectives completely opposed to those of the bourgeoisie. And in this operation the bourgeoisie uses the contribution of all the forces which it has succeeded in corrupting and transforming into forces of social conservation: the opportunists, the collaborators who come from the ranks of the proletariat itself.

The objective of the proletariat's struggle against the bourgeoisie is not only the improvement of its conditions of existence and work on the immediate terrain, but its general emancipation from the yoke of wage labour: from being *class for capital*, the proletariat historically struggles to become *class for itself*, for its own emancipation.

What must it emancipate itself from? From capitalism, from the bourgeoisie that crushes it in conditions of absolute dependence on wage labour, that has made it the slave of modern times. This is that great historical goal which the proletariat announced with its revolutionary struggles in Europe in 1848, in 1871 with the Paris Commune,

throughout the first two decades of the 20th century with the struggle against war, during and after the war, and in 1917 with the victorious revolution in Russia and the revolutionary attempts of 1919–1920 in Hungary, Germany and in 1927 in China.

But those struggles have been defeated; the bourgeoisie, although perpetual wars between states, although ever more acute and devastating economic crises under its rule, has triumphed; it is still in power everywhere, in all the countries of the world, industrial and non-industrial. It would seem to be invincible.

But history does not let the timing of revolutions and counter-revolutions be dictated by the will of the most powerful bourgeoisies: neither the bourgeoisie nor the proletariat invented the class struggle. It springs from the development of the productive forces, which clash with production forms that, at a certain stage of development, can no longer contain them and limit their objective thrust. Of course, the bourgeoisie has tried, is trying, and will try to impede this development because it can do nothing to solve the crises that periodically and increasingly affect its economic and social system other than to partially destroy the productive forces that it itself has created and developed. However, it destroys them in order to renew them, because its objective is always the valorisation of capital, a principle which – if not stopped – will reintroduce the general conditions for new crises and new destruction. The modern productive forces are the capital and the proletariat, the former seeking to limit their development, the latter, representing human labour, which is the basis of social production, is pushed towards ever greater development: their clash is inevitable. The solution cannot be brought about by the bourgeois class, but only by the class of producers, the class of the proletariat, in a way that has been manifested in history since ancient times: **by revolution**. The bourgeoisie itself was driven to revolution in order to give free development to the modern productive forces it represented by overthrowing the feudal and Asiatic productive forms with all the necessary violence. And for more than a hundred and fifty years it has been fighting against the revolution which under its rule has taken the form of the proletariat.

Revolution is a historical process, not an act, however violent, lasting only one day or one year. And for such a historical process to lead to revolution, it is precisely the workers' struggle that must develop on the terrain of class con-

frontation, a terrain that is at first the terrain of struggle in defence of immediate economic interests, but which the very confrontation with the ruling bourgeoisie and its state elevates to a general political struggle.

With the degeneration of the Communist Parties and the Communist International in the 1920s, the way was opened for the general defeat of the revolutionary proletarian movement. Since then the world proletariat has been pushed back a whole century. That is why the bourgeoisie seems invincible. But the workers' struggle has not ceased to show its signs, even though it is imbued with democratic and pacifist illusions.

Without going back to the fierce struggles in the Warsaw ghetto in 1943, to the uprising in Berlin in 1953 or in Budapest in 1956, we only have to look at the very long line of workers' struggles that have erupted in different parts of the world to realize that capitalism is not the source of prosperity and peace, but of inequality, exploitation, misery, crises and wars, against which the proletarian class has no choice but to take up the struggle, a struggle which, however, finds in its path the forces of trade union and political inter-class collaborationism. And it is this collaborationism that is the cause of their powerlessness.

In those distant 1950s, and 1960s and 1970s, which shook social peace in France, Italy and again in Germany, and in the 1980s in Britain, Poland and Russia, the ruling bourgeoisies used all the means of traditional collaborationism and the new extra-parliamentary and «far left» reformism, including armed struggle groups, to contain the pressure of the working masses and sabotage their protest and strike actions in order to bring them back to the terrain of social dialogue. And so today, in the face of the possible future outbreak of war on a world scale, the first signs of which were seen at the beginning of the 1990s with the war in Yugoslavia and today, much more dangerously, with the war in Ukraine, each ruling bourgeoisie has intensified its nationalist propaganda calling on its proletariat to national cohesion, to the Sacred Union, to the defence of the values of Western civilisation. Nothing new under the sun: it is exactly the same propaganda that each bourgeoisie has used to subject its proletariat to strict discipline and to send it to the slaughter of war on both sides of the fronts. Nationalism, spiced up from time to time with all sorts of «claims», but whose aim has always been to act as a bond between bourgeois and proletarian interests, interests which in re-

ality are always antagonistic, because while the bourgeois make profits out of wars, the proletarians lose their lives in wars.

We cannot conceal the fact that nationalism, though got bitter with time, still has a decisive influence on the proletarian masses today. Every country is arming itself for upcoming and future conflicts, every parliament is giving the green light to a whole series of measures and laws to restrict as much as possible the much vaunted freedom of association, expression and strike. And each of the forces of class collaborationism, whether trade unions or parties, takes it upon itself to draw the proletarian masses aside by bringing them onto the terrain of impotent social dialogue and asking the bourgeois power to show mercy on the workers who are increasingly reduced to a life of precariousness and misery.

And when the proletarian masses, as in recent months in France, Britain, the United States, Germany, the Czech Republic, Turkey, Venezuela, China, Spain, Cuba or Sri Lanka, and in Italy or Iran, take to the streets to fight against the high cost of living, against intolerable social conditions, against worsening working conditions, against the deterioration due to pension reforms, against redundancies and unemployment, and for wage increases, at that moment the so-called «workers» trade unions will speak up loudly, demanding that no further capital be invested in the arms industry, but in the improvement of the conditions of workers, and threatening with strikes and demonstrations that no bourgeoisie today fears; whereas the so-called «workers'» parties are preoccupied with their intrigues by their seasoned political careerists, who are ready to take every opportunity to strengthen or extend their privileges. This mob is the first great obstacle that the proletarian class encounters on its path; it is the social force that every bourgeoisie unleashes against it to weaken it, to divert it, to deceive it, and to avert any action that it takes autonomously. From this fact alone it is clear that the bourgeoisie in fact fears that

(Continued on page 24)

## To our readers

Due to lack of space we are not able to publish in "Proletarian" all our English-language statements. Interested readers can find them under the "Statements" section of our website: <https://www.pcint.org>



## May Day 2023

### The Struggle of the Proletariat Has only one Purpose: it Defends the Immediate and Future Interests Exclusively of the Proletarian Class!

(Continuation from page 23)

the proletarian masses will be pushed onto the path of **classist struggle**, and fears them because it knows from historical experience that the social power of the proletariat can become a formidable striking force on the condition that it becomes completely **independent** of every bourgeois institution and apparatus, on condition that it gives its struggle the content of the **exclusive** defence of proletarian interests and of the methods and means of anti-capitalist, hence class struggle.

The proletarians have not to defend a fatherland that does not belong to them and for which the bourgeoisie sends them to slaughter in wars; they have not to defend the company in which they work as slaves, nor the national economy that exclusively feeds capitalist interests, just as they have not to fight against proletarians of other nationalities, either as immigrants or even more so as «enemies of the fatherland». Their arch enemies are their national bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisies of all other countries. And their only ally is the proletariat of other countries.

**May Day**, which the bourgeoisie and collaborationists of all colours have turned into a «Labour Day» celebration, was a **day of struggle**, of **anti-capitalist** struggle, of struggle against the bourgeoisie; it must become so again if the proletarians want to shake off the intoxicating haze of nationalism and collaborationism and take up the arms of their real class struggle, the only one that will open the way to revolution against this society of oppression, of devastating economic and social crises, of wars.

**Fight exclusively in defence of proletarian interests and for independent organization!**

**Proletarians have no country!**

**Proletarians have a world to win!**

April, 25th 2023

## PROGRAM OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST PARTY

**The International Communist Party is constituted on the basis of the following principles established at Leghorn in 1921 on the foundation of the Communist Party of Italy (Section of the Communist International):**

1. In the present capitalist social regime there develops an increasing contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production, giving rise to the antithesis of interests and to the class struggle between the proletariat and the ruling bourgeoisie.

2. The present day production relations are protected by the power of the bourgeois State, that, whatever the form of representative system and the use of elective democracy, constitutes the organ for the defense of the interests of the capitalist class.

3. The proletariat can neither crush or modify the mechanism of capitalist production relations from which its exploitation derives, without the violent destruction of the bourgeois power.

4. The indispensable organ of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat is the class party. The Communist Party consists of the most advanced and resolute part of the proletariat; it unites the efforts of the working masses transforming their struggles for group interests and contingent issues into the general struggle for the revolutionary emancipation of the proletariat. It is up to the Party to propagate revolutionary theory among the masses, to organize the material means of action, to lead the working class during its struggle, securing the historical continuity and the international unity of the movement.

5. After it has smashed the power of the capitalist State, the proletariat must completely destroy the old State apparatus in order to organize itself as the ruling class and set up its own dictatorship; meanwhile depriving the bourgeoisie and members of the bourgeois class of all political rights and functions as long as they survive socially, founding the organs of the new regime exclusively on the productive class. Such is the program that the Communist Party sets itself and which characterizes it. It is this party therefore which exclusively represents, organizes and directs the proletarian dictatorship. The requisite defence of the proletarian state against all counter-revolutionary initiatives can only be assured by depriving the bourgeoisie and parties which are enemies of the proletarian dictatorship of all means of agitation and political propaganda and by equipping the proletariat with an armed organization in order to repel all interior and exterior attacks.

6. Only the force of the proletarian State will be able to systematically put into effect the necessary measures for intervening in the relations of the social economy, by means of which the collective administration of production and distribution will take the place of the capitalist system.

7. This transformation of the economy and consequently of the whole social life will lead to the gradual elimination of the necessity for the political State, which will progressively give way to the rational administration of human activities.

\* \* \*

**Faced with the situation in the capitalist world and the workers' movement following the Second World War the position of the Party is the following :**

8. In the course of the first half of the twentieth century the capitalist social system has been developing, in the economic field, creating monopolistic trusts among the employers, and trying to

control and manage production and exchange according to central plans with State management of whole sectors of production. In the political field, there has been an increase of the police and military potential of the State, with governments adopting a more totalitarian form. All these are neither new sorts of social organizations in transition from capitalism to socialism, nor revivals of pre-bourgeois political regimes. On the contrary, they are definite forms of a more and more direct and exclusive management of power and the State by the most developed forces of capital.

This course excludes the progressive, pacifist interpretations of the evolution of the bourgeois regime, and confirms the Marxist prevision of the concentration and the antagonistic array of class forces. So that the proletariat may confront its enemies' growing potential with strengthened revolutionary energy, it must reject the illusory revival of democratic liberalism and constitutional guarantees. The Party must not even accept this as a means of agitation ; it must finish historically once and for all with the practice of alliances, even for transitory issues, with the bourgeois or petit-bourgeois parties, or with pseudo-workers' parties with a reformist program.

9. The global imperialist wars show that the crisis of disintegration of capitalism is inevitable because it has entered the phase when its expansion, instead of signifying a continual increment of the productive forces, is conditioned by repeated and ever-growing destruction. These wars have caused repeated deep crises in the global workers' organizations because the dominant classes could impose on them military and national solidarity with one or the other of the belligerents. The opposing historical solution for which we fight, is the awakening of the class struggle, leading to civil war, the destruction of all international coalitions by the reconstitution of the International Communist Party as an autonomous force independent of any existing political or military power.

10. The proletarian State, to the extent that its apparatus is an instrument and a weapon of struggle in a historical epoch of transition does not derive its organizational strength from constitutional rules nor from representative schemas whatsoever. The most complete historical example of such a State up to the present is that of the Soviets (workers' councils) which were created during the October 1917 revolution, when the working class armed itself under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party. The Constituent Assembly having been dissolved, they became the exclusive organs of power repelling the attacks by foreign bourgeois governments and, inside the country, stamping out the rebellion of the vanquished classes and of the middle and petit-bourgeois layers and of the opportunist parties which, in the decisive phases, are inevitably allied with the counter-revolution.

11. The defense of the proletarian regime against the dangers of degeneration inherent in the failures and possible retreats in the work of economic and social transformation – whose integral realization is inconceivable within the limits of only one country – can only be assured by the constant coordination between the policy the workers' State and the united international struggle, incessant in times of peace as in times of war, of the proletariat of each country against its bourgeoisie and its State and military apparatus. This co-ordination can only be secured by means of the political and programmatic control of the world communist party over the State apparatus where the working class has seized power.