

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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THE PROLETARIAN CLASS PARTY AND THE CURRENT ECONOMIC CRISIS OF GLOBAL CAPITALISM

The solid and monolithic perspective of the historic revolutionary struggle of the proletariat of the world under the leadership of the class party, for the conquest of political power, the destruction of the bourgeois state and the transformation of the capitalist economy into a socialist economy, is the only one which can put an end to a society entirely oriented towards the production and reproduction of capital through systematic extortion of surplus value by the ever-increasing exploitation of wage labor in every country.

1. Like all the most important financial crises of recent decades, the current financial crisis has touched the entire world: starting from the United States in July-August 2007, it then spread to Europe and Asia until violently striking the international financial system in October 2008. Its ravages have not yet finished, especially since the first serious problems in the productive economy began to appear in July (2008?). All the bourgeois experts then began to note the economic recession dreaded – by them – namely, the decline in overall production in general and industrial production in particular.

Unlike previous crises, the present crisis has been characterized so far by a

slow but inexorable evolution. To take just the last twenty years, the crash of 1987 circled the world in 24 hours, and less severe crises such as the collapse of the Tech bubble in 2001 or that caused by the collapse of the Moscow stock exchange or that of the “Asian dragons” in the late 90’s developed rapidly.

Because of the importance of Wall Street to international finance, it is understandable that a crisis which breaks out in New York will have repercussions around the world, but this is not always the case: some financial crises have remained confined to the United States, such as the Savings and Loan crisis in the Reagan years or that issuing from the bankruptcy of a hedge fund (Long

Term Capital Management) in 1998.

The slowness with which the current financial crisis developed is well described by the following series of events: the first big tremor occurred in the United States in the summer of 2007 with the famous subprime loan bubble that had been sold to the world’s banks, secondly that autumn in Great Britain with the collapse of Northern Rock bank (causing the first bank run in England for 80 years!) and in Germany, and then in early 2008 there was a collapse of stock markets at the same time as heavy losses of the French *Société Générale* as a result of speculation on the German

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AMADEO BORDIGA THE TROTSKY QUESTION

The trotskyists recently celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of the foundation of the “IVth International” by Trotsky and his comrades. We have already dealt with this topic and will examine it again in the future (1). At present we are interested in republishing an article from 1925 in which Amadeo Bordiga and Communist Left of Italy solidarized themselves with the former chief of the Red Army who was at the time exposed to violent attacks from the leadership of the Russian party and the parties affiliated to the Communist International.

In 1923 in Italy, taking advantage of the arrests of its principal leaders by the fascists, the International had replaced the old left leadership of the Communist Party; which was opposed to the ever increasing tactical

deviations in the activity of the CP; with a new more pliant leadership around Gramsci and Togliatti. But they remained a decided minority in the party, as demonstrated by the clandestine conference held in Como in the spring of 1924 (2). In order to impose themselves, it was not only necessary for them to carry out a disloyal political struggle, but to use all the administrative means allowed by the famous “bolshevization” of the CP’s in 1925; in pretending to bring it closer to the working class by basing it on factory cells, a very powerful bureaucratic apparatus was thus created under the pretext of strengthening the links between them.

The “Trotsky question” was put on

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State Terrorism and Massacres: Constant Characteristics of the Policy of the Israeli Bourgeoisie

The Israeli attack on the “Freedom Flotilla” of pacifist organizations under the guidance of the Turkish NGO *Insani Vakfi Yardim*, which wanted to break the blockade to bring medicine and food to the people of Gaza, starving and subjected to terrible imprisonment since June 16, 2007, is another demonstration of the military and repressive nature of the “only democratic country in the Middle East.”

The policy of the Israeli bourgeoisie is dictated by economic interests but also by interests of regional power, the Hebrew State maintained and protected by the United States as their outpost in the Middle East, has long since developed its own international policy not only in conflict with other regional powers or semi-powers (Egypt to Syria, Saudi Arabia to Iran and Turkey as the case may be), but sometimes it even runs up against the interests of its American imperialist sponsors. In addition to the iron heel under which it has crushed the Palestinian people for half a century, Israel has a policy of constant potential aggression against its neighbors, tempered only by the United States and other imperialist countries that support it.

In international waters, 70 miles off the coast of Gaza, Israeli special commandos intervened to block the

peace flotilla, but also and primarily to give a brutal lesson to all those who would help the Palestinians, it is a warning especially to Turkey, which although traditionally allied with Israel, is becoming one of its rivals. The media announced nine dead and dozens injured on the “Mavi Marmara”, the Turkish flagship of the expedition, while all participants were arrested, present among them were more or less well-known personalities (a Nobel Laureate, writers, journalists, survivors of the Holocaust, etc..) which helped give additional resonance to these events.

The international diplomatic crisis was not long in coming, the Israeli prime minister cancelled his planned meeting with U.S. President Obama to return to Israel, the Turkish government recalled its ambassador, the European Union has requested an investigation, the UN Security Council met, Iran has thundered for the umpteenth time against the Hebrew state, but once again the plight of the Palestinians is merely a pretext for this diplomatic game through which they assert the differences between various bourgeoisies, their states and their networks of influence in the region. For now, the Islamic fundamentalist movement Hamas, which governs the Gaza Strip will try to profit from these

events which embarrass Israeli diplomacy in order to strengthen its own control over the population, including through the blockade, which does not prevent it from leaving open the possibility of negotiations with Israel in order to allocate tasks of maintaining the submission of the Palestinian masses to national, wage and religious repression. This is not good news for the Palestinian proletariat. Despite their economic and political rivalry, the Palestinian and Israeli bourgeoisie are united to always increasingly exploit and oppress the masses of Palestine deprived of everything, even prospects

Israeli democracy has nothing to learn from other bourgeois governments. The systematic anti-Palestinian operations and perpetual military interventions, the latest dubbed “Molten Lead” which has seen the use of the white phosphorus bombs already employed by the Americans in Fallujah in Iraq, are the expression of a general trend of *post-fascist democracies*: the trend towards the militarization of society, social control through repression, an increasingly authoritarian and totalitarian government policy. This trend is much more evident in Israel for historic reasons related to the establishment of its state, while in other



On the expulsion of the Roma in France

The government is increasing repression and inciting racism. Workers must respond with solidarity and class struggle!

The repressive actions, the security obsessed and xenophobic declarations of the government this summer in no way constituted an unexpected “drift” and which moreover call into question “*republican principles*” are rather part of the policy followed by any conventional bourgeois government, right or left, where social tensions are increasing or at risk of increasing. In these moments, the designation of a class of people as **scapegoats** serves to defend the privileges of the ruling class, and more generally to protect the existing social and economic

system, by diverting the discontent on an easy target which is accused of all evils: the ‘Gypsies’ today, yesterday, the Jews (and ‘Gypsies’ too!). But the bourgeois also always seek to find scapegoats among the exploited classes to paralyze the struggles by **causing divisions between the workers**. The division maintained with full knowledge between French and foreign workers, the constant recourse to repression, sometimes open and bloody, sometimes limited to pressure and police brutality have always been and remain a **constant of**

French capitalism.

Proving they were among the most brutal exploiters, the French capitalists have built their power and wealth in the blood of French proletarians and immigrants and the disinherited populations from Africa and Asia. The Third Republic that some would propose as an antidote to Sarkozy and which erected itself on the massacre of the Communards, has not hesitated to engage in two world wars and several colonial wars to defend the interests of major and minor French capitalists. The Fourth and Fifth Repu-

democratic countries it is apparent in a more occasional manner, during the repression of demonstrations, attacks against refugees (as in the case of an Albanian refugee boat sunk with all hands in international waters by an Italian warship in 1997) or hunting down undocumented migrants.

The pacifist and legal methods of opposition to authoritarianism, to the militarization of society, the suppression of attempts at solidarity among even the most peaceful and most law-abiding, consistently demonstrate their impotence. In a society where the rule of the bourgeoisie inevitably involves the use of all means, legal, illegal, democratic, violent and deadly to maintain the capitalist order, reformist actions, peaceful and respectful of bourgeois laws will never succeed in reducing and even less in eradicating poverty, unemployment, and the very real slavery to which capitalist profit condemns whole populations.

It is demonstrated by the plight of the Palestinian masses in Gaza and the territories occupied by the Israeli army and colonists, it is demonstrated by the situation faced by the masses in many countries of the capitalist periphery, it is demonstrated by the capitalist crises that afflict the always more numerous proletarian masses in the most developed capitalist countries!

The response to the domination of

the bourgeoisie and its methods of government can be found only in reconstructing the social power of the proletariat: **proletarians have the opportunity to be a historically positive force directed towards emancipation from the capitalist economic system and bourgeois society, the pre-condition for this is in the renewed fight on the terrain of the open confrontation between the classes, the struggle for exclusively class interests, completely opposed to national and other interests allegedly common to all classes: these are really just bourgeois interests camouflaged behind national, racial, religious or democratic myths.**

The response to the domination of the bourgeoisie and its methods of government can be found in the **reprise of the class struggle, apart from all democratic and pacifist illusions**: we can only respond to iron and fire **with the same weapons**, used this time for class objectives. If the situation does not yet permit the practical realization of this perspective, it is still the one that groups of the proletarian vanguard worldwide must follow tomorrow. The capitalist system is based on private ownership by the ruling class of all social wealth, as long as this system, defended by all bourgeois States, whether they are the most liberal or the most dictatorial, remains in place, oppression, exploitation, poverty and war cannot disappear!

In order to have an opportunity to

defeat the ruling class, the proletarian class struggle in Israel as in all countries of the Middle East, Africa and Europe, America and Asia, will require the action and the **direction of the revolutionary communist party**, representing the future of the emancipation of the proletariat and of all humanity.

To work for the resumption of the proletarian class struggle and the constitution of the class party is part of the same historical struggle for the overthrow of capitalist domination, struggle outside of this perspective leads only to illusion, impotence, demoralization, continual waste of energy as the pacifists have demonstrated in permanence.

As long as this struggle is not brought to a successful conclusion, the most powerful imperialisms will continue to wage wars against the weaker countries; they will continue to engage in increasingly fierce competition in all fields until their insoluble economic problems thrust them into a new world war to repartition the planet. As long as this struggle is not victorious, humanity will be threatened by the repetition of catastrophic crises and the colossal destruction of wars in an infernal spiral where the proletarians and the majority of the world population will continue to be exploited, martyred, famished and assassinated with the sole aim of swelling the share of profits collected by the tiny minority of capitalists on the planet!

blics that followed did not deviate from this sinister tradition. Without outlining the history of all the colonial massacres, just remember the massacre of hundreds of Algerian workers in Paris in 1961, dozens of protesters in Guadeloupe in 1967 under a Gaullist government, or French responsibility in the genocide that caused hundreds of thousands of deaths in Rwanda in 1994 under a Mitterrand - Balladur coalition government. Today French soldiers participate in the Afghan war while in Africa others continue to ensure the defense of neo-colonial interests including clandestine "anti-terrorist" actions (as in Mauritania).

Those who, while affirming their respect for "public order", protest against the threats that repressive government policy would carry to "social cohesion" and "civil peace", would like to forget that this society is divided into opposing classes and that the bourgeois ruling class carries out a permanent class struggle against the working class, and that the public order is that of capitalism, robber, plunderer and murderer. The steady increase of repressive measures, to which the Left has contributed when it

was in government, ever more frequent recourse to a real "kangaroo court" style of expeditive justice against the protesters (as in the trial of the youths detained in Villiers-le-Bel), the massive deployment of heavily armed police forces (including with helicopters and armored vehicles!) to "restore order" in proletarian neighborhoods are part of the real civil strife that is inseparable from capitalism. This also includes the raids, detentions and deportations of undocumented workers and their families, and more generally all the economic and social attacks against workers, whatever their nationality.

Faced with this anti-proletarian policy, which in the final analysis is explained by the needs of capitalism, it is futile to call for respect of the misleading phrases found in Constitutions or on the front of city halls, under capitalism there can be no equality or brotherhood between the classes and the only freedom that exists is that which is reserved for the bourgeoisie: the freedom to oppress, to exploit and to crush in order to enrich itself. The soft and sweet discourses of the reformists are deceptions: in

response to xenophobia and state repression, workers have no other solution but solidarity with their class brothers and the oppressed masses and open struggle against capitalism.

• **No to repressive measures, discrimination and deportations against the Roma and all the economic Travelers!**

• **Release of youths convicted as examples after the riots in Villiers-le-Bel, Grenoble and other places! Immediate regularization of undocumented workers!**

• **No to immigration control!**

• **Withdrawal of French troops from Afghanistan and Africa!**

• **Down with racism and xenophobia, Down with imperialism, Long live the international struggle of the proletariat!**

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ITALY

The revolt of the immigrant workers in Rosarno

On January 7, two African agricultural workers who came to Calabria to harvest oranges were wounded by gunfire from a car. This umpteenth racist exaction triggered the anger of hundreds of working class immigrants, they gathered spontaneously to protest in Rosarno, a town of 15,000 inhabitants in the center of this region which produces oranges and tangerines thanks to their work. Demonstrators clashed with police, burning garbage cans, cars, smashing shop windows.

The next day, veritable witch hunts were organized by locals against immigrant workers, some were hit by cars, others beaten with sticks. A hundred people armed with sticks and iron bars surrounded the abandoned factory which housed many immigrants, some carting cans of gasoline and clubs. Meanwhile 2,000 immigrant workers protested again in the town, this time without clashes. Finally large numbers of police evacuated more than a thousand immigrant pro-

letarians, although many had not even been paid by their employers, most had agreed to leave as to remain would have meant risking their lives...

The events of Rosarno had a great impact in Italy. The government parties have complained of «illegal» immigration and they used the rebellion to justify new xenophobic laws, their goal is obviously to stir up divisions between Italian and foreign workers, accusing them of posing a threat to order, civil peace and collaboration between classes. Some media have described the events as «a confrontation between two armies of poor devils» (1), many attributed these events to the mafia organizations very active in the region.

But in fact this represents an authentic **proletarian revolt** against the bestial exploitation which is and has always been the norm in the agricultural sector, regardless of varying degrees of involvement by legal or illegal organizations to impose bourgeois capitalist exploitation .

can, which amounts to the same thing. Once again this organization which claims to be revolutionary is taking an openly **anti-proletarian** attitude (4) against an episode of violent revolt. Indeed how can we otherwise characterize, the fact of **putting on the same level** workers revolting against their superexploitation and the gangs which set out to hunt blacks (5)? We do not know if there were genuine proletarians among the hundreds of **pogromists**, but if there were, they acted only as thugs for the owners and local bourgeoisie. To refuse to see this, to hide this fact, is possible only for people who have gone over to the other side of the barricade, with the enemies of the proletariat.

Now let's see attitude of organizations who claim to be in the continuity of our party.

Without falling into an attitude as repugnant as the ICC, but instead claiming a rhetorical solidarity with the Rosarno revolt both "Il Programma Comunista" and "Il Partito" have yet seen fit to add an immediate condemnation of the principle of a strike by immigrant workers.

"Il P." writes: "But to those today who (...), claim that they wish to fight against racism outside the field of trade union struggle by organising demonstrations of inter-class opinion, or who propose that immigrant workers should strike on their own (something impossible to achieve and doomed from the start) we say to them that the only contribution they are making is to create new, and worse, disorientation and confusion.

The one way forward is to reconstruct the class's trade union organisation, and organise it on a territorial basis like the traditional Camere del Lavoro. It would be a movement, for example, which wouldn't distance itself from revolts such as those of the Rosarno labourers and their quite understandable reaction to being shot at, but which would consider them as its own; a movement which would seriously aspire to an ever broader movement culminating in the general strike as a means of obtaining the real immediate objectives of the working class: - Reduced working hours with no reduction of pay! - A guaranteed wage for unemployed workers! - Wage increases, especially in the worst paid sectors! - Rights of citizenship for immigrant workers!" (6).

The immediate demands of the immigrant workers of Rosarno and elsewhere (equal wages between Italian and immi-

THE REACTIONS OF THE SO-CALLED "LEFT COMMUNIST" GROUPS

While most far-left parties have affirmed their solidarity with the African proletariat in Rosarno, they have usually done so on a classless democratic or humanitarian basis which should not be astonishing coming from groups that have in fact dropped every classist principle to slither smoothly into bourgeois democratic life. But what were the reactions of organizations that claim to be "Left Communist"?

For the ICC (International Communist Current), the Rosarno events are "a product of despair" (2), according to it these events included..."violent clashes between immigrants and local workers"! After taking up again, as it ingenuously admits, this completely misleading analysis by the international bourgeois press, the ICC remains puzzled: "Poverty is very far from explaining" why a portion of the population has engaged in a racist vendetta "nor indeed why these immigrants attacked the property of nearby residents"(!). As good social pacifists, the ICC can not understand why, over-exploited, attacked, treated like dogs, continually subject to racist abuse, immigrant workers have not protested wisely, scrupulously respecting the private property of citizens and petit bourgeois racists...

There is only one explanation for this incomprehensible behavior: "despair, the

total lack of perspective" and the ICC cites as evidence the testimony published by an Italian newspaper of an African who said he "felt ashamed" by the violence that erupted during the demonstration.

But you can find other stories in the press. For example, where one the "Leaders" of the spontaneous movement leaves town with 70 cents in his pocket: "*You know how many times I was treated like shit just because I'm Moroccan? We are men and not animals, no one has the right to shoot us. Enough is enough, we demand rights*" (3).

Revolt against injustice and inhuman conditions is not a sign of desperation and lack of prospects, this revolt is instead a necessary first step to combat despair and lack of prospects. Thus a proposed national strike of immigrant workers for the first of March was born from the momentum created by of the Rosarno revolt. Whatever the limitations of this initiative and the manoeuvres of collaborationist organizations, it is a fact that immigrant workers, through their revolt, find themselves facing the perspective of the revival of the old tradition of the great struggles of farm workers in Italy .

The ICC perhaps does not openly condemn the revolt of the Rosarno immigrants, but it disparages it as much as it

grant workers, regularization of undocumented migrants, the end of police and employer harassment, decent housing, etc..) do not seem to be part of the real immediate objectives of the working class according to the *Florentines* of “Il P.,” who only entered the ambiguous “rights of citizenship” to replace the classical demand of “equal rights” for all proletarians!

Furthermore to oppose to the prospect of strikes by migrant workers alone – deemed impossible! – the prior necessity as an absolute precondition to rebuild the class union which tomorrow will be able to organize the general strike, is simply to oppose the struggles – no doubt local, partial, but real – which are carried out today. The example of France shows that immigrant workers, moreover even undocumented (and therefore illegal), are perfectly capable of conducting long and hard strikes by themselves, even in the absence of the class union or the effective solidarity of French workers.

Should we condemn these strikes and these struggles in general because they are “outside the union struggle” (?). Because they do not follow the *obligatory path* decreed by “Il P.”?

The proletarian organization for the immediate struggle – the class union – can only come into existence and build itself in the fire of the strikes and struggles that break out spontaneously against the aggravation of exploitation, not on the basis of an abstract schema that rejects anything that does not fit the mold. The schematism of “Il P.” condemns it to stand in the way of the real course of the class struggle ...

“Il Programma Comunista” took essentially the same position as “Il Partito”: opposition to a strike of immigrant workers, but in a much clearer and violent manner. “To launch the slogan of the ‘strike of immigrant workers’ means to be situated on the path of treason” (!) It wrote in a small article entitled: “Yes to a general strike by proletarians of all origins and categories everywhere! No to a strike of only the ‘immigrant workers’!” (7). And it explains that “To win a victory, even if it is only an immediate one, the reply [to the deterioration of the conditions of the proletariat] can only be to resume open and unrelenting class warfare, refusing to tolerate any separation, ghettoization, division within that enormous army that continues to swell whilst the crisis proceeds and that we call the world proletariat!”.

“Il PC” then affirms that any partial struggle, any struggle by groups of more combative workers or those simply forced to fight because of particularly intolerable circumstances, not only is use-

less if it doesn’t result in the eruption of the mythic general strike, but constitutes a betrayal of the class struggle! No particular group or sector of the working class should enter into combat to defend their living or working conditions as long as the whole proletariat of the country (or the whole world?) is not ready to fight too, under penalty of increasing “fragmentation” of the proletariat!

What we have here is a completely idealistic vision of situation of the working class, which is already prepared to pass over to general class struggle. The self-appointed professors of class struggle of “Il PC” have forgotten all the criteria of the materialist analysis of social phenomena, they have forgotten that the maturation of classist consciousness within the proletariat cannot happen all at once and for everyone. They do not understand that it is a difficult and contradictory phenomenon, which cannot fail to divide the proletariat into “advanced” and “backward” sectors on the basis of experiences of struggle, victo-

ries and defeats, the influence physical forces associated with the bourgeoisie, and, conversely, the intervention of the class party, essential to combat this influence and to move towards class unity. Intoxicated for generations by the drug of democratic interclassism, still hampered by a thousand ties of class collaboration, still unconscious of its own potential strength, how could the proletariat as a whole have suddenly converted to the need for general class struggle?

What bursts out behind the empty words of exaltation of the Rosarno proletariat is an undisguised hostility of “Il PC” to a possible struggle of a particularly exploited, abused and despised sector of the proletariat in Italy. In opposing an episode of proletarian struggle, “Il PC”, like other groups we have mentioned, yields to the pressure of chauvinist and “aristocratic” prejudices ubiquitous in bourgeois society: the sad and inevitable consequence of the abandonment of genuinely Marxist principles and orientations.



(1) *Il Corriere della Sera*, 9/1/2010. The major newspaper of the Milanese bourgeoisie described a black-hunting scene in which police officers saved a young immigrant, then gives voice to a racist thug who complains: «in the beginning the police asked for our help to quell the revolt and now they truncheon us. What should we do?»

(2) *Révolution Internationale* No. 409 (February 2010).

(3) see *Il Corriere* ... Ibid.

(4) to its article on the Rosarno events allegedly caused by «desperation», the ICC opposes a strike by construction workers in the Total Lindsey refinery (Great Britain) that was «like a ray of hope». It was in this case a real problem of competition between workers of different nationalities that had erupted in early 2009 after the owners had granted a contract for 300 jobs to a company employing Italian, Portuguese and Italian workers.

British workers started a wildcat strike, echoing the slogan of the Prime Minister:

«Jobs in Britain for British workers». The strike halted after the strikers got a hundred jobs reserved for English workers. In June a new wildcat strike, accompanied by sympathy strikes (including by Polish workers) in other refineries, forced management to cancel its decision to dismiss some of the January strikers. The chauvinistic slogans were much less present than at the beginning of the year.

The ICC comparison between these two quite dissimilar events is based on the fact that it takes the petty bourgeois racists of Rosarno for the proletariat!

(5) The racists in Rosarno call anybody from North Africa “blacks”.

(6) see *Il Partito Comunista* No. 339. This group (whose center is located in the city of Florence) came from a split of our party in the early 70s on the union question and the call to rebuild the union class is its leitmotif.

(7) see *Il Programma Comunista* No. 1 / 2010.

(April 2010)

Greece: Blood and tears for the proletariat! That's the remedy to all the bourgeoisies of the world against the crisis!

In order to resist the policy of blood and tears which the bourgeoisie inflicts on it, the proletariat has no other possibility than the resumption of the class struggle, starting with the rejection of anti-worker measures by the government and the calls for "national solidarity", and for sacrifices "to defend the fatherland and democracy".

Throughout 2009 and early 2010 the Greek working class reacted to the worsening social situation (rising unemployment – 40% unemployment among youth in the north! – Deterioration of living and working conditions, increasing insecurity) waging determined struggles, even if they remained under the influence of the collaborationist unions and parties.

The largest unions, the GSEE for the private sector MEAP and ADEDY for the public sector, linked to PASOK (the Socialist Party currently in power) and the KKE ("Communist" Party) continued to play their role as social firefighters trying to isolate the most combative sectors and to amortize the tensions that inevitably accumulate by diverting them to "defense of the country" against the bankruptcy with a lot of nationalist propaganda and rhetoric about the illustrious history of ancient Greece!

The harsh austerity measures taken by the government of Athens following the edicts of the EU (especially Germany) and the IMF in exchange for the plan to avoid the bankruptcy of the Greek state were in the air for a long time, the Greek bourgeoisie has no choice: either it applies the series of anti-worker measures demanded by European and American bankers, and accepts the high interest rates with which it will have to borrow for three years or it will be brutally marginalized and isolated from commerce on the international level.

Has anyone ever seen a bourgeoisie spontaneously choose its own ruin? But have you ever seen one bourgeoisie yield to the demands of a stronger bourgeoisie (like the German or American) without ending up making the proletariat pay for its crisis and its weakness?

We could not expect anything else from the "Socialist" government's Papandreou nor all the forces which for decades have practiced class collaboration in the name of a "national economy" and a "democracy" that are nothing other than the expression of the domination of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat and the whole society. A small minority of big capitalists have pocketed staggering profits from the exploitation of the proletariat, they have accumulated economic, political, and social privileges, from the hide of workers in Greece, be they immigrants, illegals or proletarians born and raised in Greece, as a counter-measure they have distributed positions in public administration and instituted social buffers to systematically try to bribe a proletariat from which they feared rebellion.

The international economic crisis has placed the Greek bourgeoisie in difficulty, it did not hesitate for one second to attack the workers.

And they have expressed their anger against bourgeois attacks on numerous occasions with strikes and demonstrations.

But in Greece, like everywhere else, there is no classist trade union organization, or class party, which was destroyed by Stalinism. As in other countries there are by contrast multiple forces and organizations of class collaboration, even though they are diverse, they find their common purpose in defending the economy and "homeland" in the economic crisis (before defending them some day in war) and they now constitute the

most effective weapon for the dominant class to control and deviate the proletarian reactions into dead ends.

The fake communist KKE who shout that "family needs must come before those of markets and profits" puts forward "national independence" against the big countries who speculate on the backs of Greece and a "real democracy" as the objective: there's no question of them demanding **independence of the proletarian class** as an objective, or calling for the **international solidarity of proletarians** and exposing the national interest and democracy as **instruments of the class enemy!**

Following the general strike of May 5 and the torching of a bank where three employees were killed (1), the Prime Minister, after saying he would not back off from implementing austerity measures, said "it's time to defend the country and democracy against irresponsible and uncontrolled political violence".

The death of the three employees is cynically used to make the workers accept, in the name of nationalism and "democracy", the sacrifices that Greek and international capitalism wants to impose!

Greek workers are the first in line to suffer the consequences of a crisis that has affected all countries and their struggle confronts and will continue to confront all the defenders of the capitalist order, nationally and internationally. The road they seek with great difficulty and confusion is one that the reformists and the collaborationist have so far managed to bar: The road of the classist reorganization initially on the terrain of the immediate defense of their living and working conditions, the path of proletarian struggle for the defense of only the interests of the exploited, the path of the **class struggle!**

Democratic, legalistic and pacifist propaganda administered in heavy doses and sustained by a policy of social buffers despite the country's economic weakness is particularly useful to the bourgeoisie in times of crisis, precisely because its function is to prevent the class struggle.

The proletarians have nothing to defend in bourgeois society, not the economy, nor the enterprise, nor the country!

They have no common interest with the bourgeoisie, they must prepare to fight against it and its mode of production (capitalism), its society and state!

This perspective is that of the proletarians **of all countries**, which must understand that in Greece they will wager the first skirmishes of a massive battle against capitalism that will become worldwide.

If the current struggles enable even a small proletarian vanguard to find the weapons and revolutionary traditions of the proletarian class and undermine the influence of the collaborationist parties and trade unions: that would be the means to prevent the struggle from once again being diverted from its goal!

Long live the struggles of the Greek proletarians to defend themselves against the capitalists!

Long live the struggle that does not kneel down before parliament and bourgeois democratic institutions!

Long live the proletarian struggle which does not allow itself to be diverted into the spurious defense of the fatherland, democracy, freedom!

For the resumption of class struggle, for the organization of the proletariat around exclusively classist goals, means and methods!

May, 1st 2010

Capitalism has an overwhelming responsibility in the disaster provoked by the earthquake in Haiti!

Haiti, where the overwhelming majority of people (95% black) experience heart-rending misery, is a country that is in the hands of a few wealthy capitalists who, with the support of imperialism, strangle the population and subject workers to bestial exploitation since the country is an exporter of sugar, coffee, bananas and mangoes. Unemployment is endemic, the average income per capita is only 1,300 dollars (twenty times less than for European countries) and life expectancy is just over 50 years ...

Haiti, where a few large bourgeois families have always been dominant, gouging huge profits extorted from the millions of proletarians and disinherited, has in recent decades suffered a savage deforestation to make way for plantations and residential construction, dramatically worsening the damage caused by tropical rains.

Haiti has in fact always been prone to hurricanes as to earthquakes.

But just as nothing has ever been done to prevent the consequences of hurricanes, nothing has ever been done to prevent the consequences of earthquakes!

It took the January 12 earthquake; measuring 7.3 on the Richter scale and thirty aftershocks with magnitude from 4 to 6; for the world to discover the terrible conditions of misery and poverty of the population. The capital, Port-au Prince, which includes more than two and a half million inhabitants, mostly living in slums around the residential center of the big bourgeoisie was destroyed; not only have the poor neighborhoods been devastated, but the Governmental palace, hospitals, parliament, and tourist hotels, seemingly solid buildings have collapsed and even the residences of the Haitian bourgeoisie did not meet earthquake standards: speculation respects no one!

The UN which has undertaken the task of administering the country since the forced departure of the former president, has detailed plans, prepared at great expense, on seismic risk in the country, the most serious being specifically related to the anarchic urbanization of the capital. But the capitalist world represented by the UN, has never found it necessary to take preventive actions against the devastating hurricanes that regularly hit the country or against earthquake risks. Capitalism has no other interests than the accumulation of profits, and for the defense of the bourgeois who rule over Haiti who are the real perpetrators of past massacres and the massacre today.

The extent of destruction in Port-au-

Prince and other major cities has revealed not only the importance of real estate speculation but also the lack of infrastructure to help people with water, medicines, food, machinery to clear the ruins. Residents are forced to try to save buried people with their bare hands, often to see them die of their wounds from lack of first aid. Major international media speak of 50 000 dead, others claim a figure of 100 000 or 500 000 people: the exact figure will never be known.

What about the great vaunted modern technology, the gigantic means of intervention that are used in wars? Faced with a disaster like that of Haiti, they are useless: they are very effective for wars, not for life! When it comes to saving lives, capitalist society is not only incapable of preventing the causes of death and destruction, but remains paralyzed and powerless to act when a disaster occurs! This happens every time, not only in Port-au-Prince in ultra-impooverished Haiti, but also in New Orleans in ultra-rich America ...

And when the population surviving the tragedy, searching desperately for food and water trek a few miles towards the Dominican Republic, what do they encounter? Home, Solidarity, shelter? No way! The entire border is barred by the Dominican Army which drives them back! And when hungry survivors seize food found in ruined stores, they are treated as bands of looters!

Despite all the beautiful humanitarian rhetoric spouted around the world, including by the Pope, the defence of social order and private property is the primary concern of the bourgeois ...

Haiti occupies the westernmost part of the Caribbean island of Hispaniola, where Christopher Columbus first set foot in December 1492. It is from this date that European colonization and the martyrdom of the native populations begins. After the virtual liquidation of the original inhabitants, Spanish and French colonialists, for their own benefit, imported millions of Negro slaves to do forced labor unto the death.

But Haiti also has a glorious history of revolt against slavery and, in 1802, its inhabitants founded the first republic in Latin America. However the fate of its population has hardly changed since the black slavery of previous centuries, has been succeeded by capitalist and imperialist slavery. In Haiti capitalism has brought progress and well-being to only a small minority of bourgeois vampires.

The forced proletarianization of the Haitian population is historically posi-

ve, because it is only the struggle of these proletarians, in union with their class brothers and sisters in other countries, which tomorrow will ring out the hour of revenge. Today the prospects for class struggle, proletarian organization, and the Communist revolution may seem buried forever because of the example of fake communist countries.

But bourgeois propaganda can never prevent outbreaks of rebellion caused by capitalism itself. And these revolts can only resolve themselves into the class struggle waged by the proletariat in order to survive and aiming to overthrow the bourgeois domination over the masses of the population of all countries. Then the defeat inflicted by the former Haitian slaves to Napoleon's armies in 1804, will pale before the defeat that the armed proletariat guided by the Communist Party will inflict World armies of the imperialist powers.

Illusory dream? But the independence of Haiti, very shortly after the independence of the United States, also appeared to be a fantastic illusion!

What reveals the extent of this new tragedy that the bourgeois tries to disguise as a «natural disaster»?

This tragedy demonstrates that if capitalism was able to dominate a small part of nature with its technique and its «scientific» discoveries, it still functions exclusively for profit, that is to say in opposition not only to a true scientific understanding of natural forces, but also in opposition to the vital needs of mankind. This knowledge should lead in the first and primarily instance to prevention, but each of these so-called «natural» disasters is proof that capitalism is not interested in prevention because the profits it earns from catastrophes and disasters of all kinds are much higher than those derived from productive and commercial activity in normal times, capitalism is the very economy which lives on misery!

The servitude imposed by the capitalist system on the vast majority of the world's population is actually harsher than the slavery of ancient Roman society. The obligation to comply with the law of value, exchange, profit, on pain of starvation and risking one's life in accident or war, is systematically presented as a «free choice» as a free personal activity in a world of equality and brotherhood. But in reality the proletarians are the modern slaves - treated with an even greater brutality if they have black skin!

To reject hypocritical solidarity cam-

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paigns organized by the same powers which are killing, bombing, starving and polluting the world, is the minimum for any proletarian. But this can not suffice, because real solidarity requires a rupture with class collaboration of which the capitalists are the only beneficiaries.

The class struggle will begin with the social breakdown between proletariat and bourgeoisie, primarily in the rich industrialized countries, while other earthquakes will shake capitalism's society: the social earthquake will put the proletarian revolutionary struggle on the order of the day in every country on earth to enter a system that produces only misery, hunger and death!

January 16, 2010

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RUSSIA BURNS

A long summer, torrid and incandescent, witnessed huge fires in Russia that incinerated tens of millions of acres of forests and fields, subjecting the population of large areas, including the capital Moscow, to long periods of toxic and unbreathable air, causing enormous damage to agriculture; incinerating huge quantities of wheat, barley, corn, etc. These fires cannot be explained solely by a colossal spontaneous combustion, but are certainly due to the action of arsonists in the service of specific interests.

But all commentaries have in the main blamed the exceptionally high temperatures and winds that have hit Russia this year, spreading the fires in all directions. In Moscow, according to the media, for weeks the temperatures ranged from 40 to 44 degrees Celsius, and even higher in St. Petersburg and the Urals. According to the Russian Meteorological Center, in the last thousand years Russia has never suffered a heatwave of such duration and such high temperatures.

Meteorologists contend that abnormal climatic phenomena have always existed and will always occur, but as they point out, the most worrying fact is that climate change is increasing the intensity and duration of these phenomena. Experts encourage the various governments to seriously consider these facts in order to act – at least on what relates directly to human activity in the pollution of air, water and soil – more on the level of prevention than on an emergency response at the first manifestations of these phenomena. In turn, these governments, beginning with those of most developed and most polluting countries, squabble about percentages of reduced pollution and the respective commitment to make for a given number of years for decreases in toxic emissions into the air we breathe. Solemn commitments were made by many states, except the two who have been, by all accounts, the worst polluters: the United States and China. Whatever the case may be, there has been no appreciable progress towards reducing pollution.

So we may well wonder, what does all this have to do with the fires in Russia?

Well the fact is that in every disaster: floods, fires, etc., every means of bourgeois disinformation put the blame on abnormal climatic phenomena: torrential rains, massive tornadoes, heatwaves, as the cause of the disaster, only then to be followed by what has become the usual litany, the fatalistic warning: if nothing is done in 10, 20 or 30 years to end the degradation of the atmosphere, life on

the planet and its human inhabitants, will suffer a terrible blow from which it will be hard to recover ... And the same fatalism envelopes the congenital impotence of a society where it is considered inevitable that there is crime, murder, corruption, oppression, injustice: if you stop one arsonist, tomorrow there will be another and then another ...

Of course all the well-meaning propositions of the bourgeois, enlightened by the catastrophic forecasts of scientists, are confronted with what is truly essential for the bourgeoisie of all countries: the functioning of the national capitalism; the profitability and competitiveness of domestic enterprises, the economic strength of the country through which it holds on to or loses its political clout in the world.

Capital has no heart, no brain, but it has the ability to endlessly repeat – if it not stopped once and for all – the economic mechanism established for over two centuries pushing its production to a productive hypermania to reproduce itself on an ever enlarging scale; wildly exploiting all energies, whether they are living and renewable or non-renewable as with all fossil and inorganic reserves. Even a child can understand that “natural” or social disasters, like economic crises, are part of the consequences of the capitalist mode of production and its unbridled and uncontrollable development.

It is impossible to prevent the spread of capitalism over the world and particularly concentrated in the already developed countries (Europe, America and Japan) or in the rapidly and frantically industrializing countries (like China, Brazil, India or even Russia) from following this blind course of development, and it is impossible to regulate or “plan” the capitalist development of each country to guide it towards the real basic needs of mankind, to produce in a sensible way by eliminating all that is harmful to the natural environment and human life. As long as the capitalist mode of production reigns, the society founded on the imperatives of capital valorization and the production of profit will be under the exclusive political and military rule of the bourgeois class and it will not be possible to move towards a society where it will be human needs and not the imperatives of the markets that dictate the modalities and objectives of social life.

In Russia as in all capitalist countries, lobby groups and multinationals exist in all economic and financial fields and they

carry a determinant weight on the orientations of governments.

Thus the honourable Vladimir Putin has become the principal agent of the interests of the timber lobbyists and multinationals. Thanks to the “reform” of the forestry code that was endorsed in 2006 (when he was president), the latter now have the latitude to exploit the forests that they have seized in any way they see fit. The focus of this reform was the shift from a system of centralized control and management of forest resources into a system managed by regions, a kind of forest federalism. Russia’s forests and woodlands account for 22% of the forested heritage of the planet, an area of almost exactly 2 billion acres (an area twice as large as the European Union). This reform corresponded to the interests of the wood lobbies, among which the multinational Ilim Group was the most active in having it adopted, and a consequence of this reform was to strengthen the ties of forest enterprises with local authorities. This allowed them, more easily and at a lower domestic cost, to use a tried and true method: quick cut the trees, sell the wood and leave the vicinity. The new forest code has enabled the central government to eliminate

the jobs of 70,000 forest rangers, one of whose roles was the prevention of fires.

The Ilim Group is a joint venture (50-50) between the Russian conglomerate Ilim and the American International Paper Company, the world’s largest paper and cellulose producer, the former head of the legal department of this joint venture was none other than ... Dmitry Medvedev, the current Russian president (1) ...

As a result of all the crops destroyed by the fires, the Russian government announced the cessation of wheat exports until the end of the year. This announcement immediately triggered a speculative surge in the London and Chicago commodity markets: traders, middlemen and producers began to salivate at this new catastrophe. Higher wheat prices will enrich them while it impoverishes – and even starves – the workers and poor masses of the planet. Under capitalism disasters are not such for everyone ...

Russia burns, but it is not a social conflagration which has stricken it. The proletariat has not yet again taken the path of class struggle, which is the only way to finally put an end to a mode of production that causes only disasters,

wars and misery for the majority of the population of the planet and it has not yet re-attained its historic goal of revolutionizing society as a whole – without hesitating to use revolutionary violence to end the extraordinary amount of violence and destruction caused by capitalism – until it reaches the classless society, communism.

Without doubt the forces of nature cannot be held back even by the communist society, but it will be organized to meet the needs of the present and future generations on the basis of harmonious relationships with nature. There will always be earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, floods, etc... But every precaution will be taken, starting with the location of habitations – also removing the antagonism between town and country – right up to up allocating sufficient resources to the understanding and scientific study of the problems of life on earth, since it will never again be the pursuit of profit that will determine the priorities of society. With capitalism dead and buried, humanity will finally emerge from its pre-history.

(1) see *Il Manifesto*, 08/10/2010

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market in February and March, the U.S. financial problems culminated in the collapse of Bear Sterns bank before experiencing the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers in the summer of 2008 and the rescue *in extremis* of various institutions.

The central banks and governments have intervened repeatedly at all the “stages” of this crisis to limit its severity and stop its spread. If they failed to prevent its development, however, they could delay it to cushion its most devastating effects on the productive economy (the so-called “real economy”) for a year now the recession has remained contained still.

From September to October there have been state interventions unprecedented in their importance and frequency in the United States, Great Britain, Ireland, Germany, Holland, Belgium and France. As always supporters of government intervention are countered by representatives of the international financial world who oppose it in the name of free enterprise and the market, many commentators and “experts” have gone on to speak of the end of capitalism or market economy and to call for a “refounded

capitalism”. The protagonists of the crisis are almost unanimous in their emphasis on the need for tougher and better observed rules to prevent the deregulation which they said was the cause of current problems. But such remedies were of no avail in the great crises of the past (neither 1929, 1975 nor 1987) and they will not be any more useful today because the cause of capitalist crises is not the greed of financiers or noncompliance with regulations: the cause of crises lies in capitalism itself, in its need for self-valorization by developing production for profit.

One fact demonstrates the depth of the current crisis: the banks in difficulty are too large for the various States to allow them to fail, but they are too large for these States to be able to save them! Many of the largest banking groups in fact have a turnover higher than the Gross Domestic Production of their own country...

State intervention to rescue banks by increasing its own debt, in fact mean that banks are intervening in the State and not the reverse: the networks of interests represented by the most powerful banking groups thus use their power based on the pooling of national resour-

ces to defend themselves against the crisis.

2. In fact, the most serious consequences of the crisis have not yet completely become apparent, not only because it has not rocked the productive economy (official figures today do still provide for a recession in Western countries of 0.3 to 0.5% in 2008 and from -1 to -1.5% for 2009), but because the massive injections of capital which the states have and continue to carry out to safeguard the vitality of the capitalist system, are exerted on organizations already frayed by thirty years of “the credit economy” which has enabled the production rates of the so-called “emerging markets” like China, India, Brazil or Russia to grow at full steam but inevitably exacerbated the economic conditions of the old capitalism of countries like the United States, Western Europe and Japan.

The fear of a new 1929 that assails the capitalists with every major economic crisis of their system has material causes. Do not forget that the crises in the era of imperialism, that is to say in

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the era of the domination of finance capital are all crises of overproduction.

It is overproduction which throws the market into crisis, whether it is the market for consumer goods or capital markets (stock exchanges). The financial crisis is not a bubble in itself: it is the translation in terms of credit and capital valorization, from a crisis of overproduction; and its severity depends on the degree of market saturation and the drastic reduction of production: if commodities do not sell, the capital that has been invested in them cannot be valorized. All the circulation of capital in the financial system cannot lead to its valorization without the sale of commodities.

Can capitalism grow without experiencing overproduction? No, because the capitalist anarchy that continues to push the superabundant production of goods crashes up against the limits of the market where they must be sold.

The crisis of 1929-1932 was marked by several characteristics whose severity and concomitance signalled a steep decline in industrial production (-44% over the period, -17.5% per year), huge unemployment (23.5% corresponding to an increase of 8% per year), significant deflation in the producer price (-12% per year) and for consumer prices, heavy wages decreases (-56% decrease in weekly wages in industry), falling profits (-37.5% per year). It is these factors which define the catastrophic crisis of overproduction that led to World War II in which the major powers fought for a repartition of the world (1)

The current crisis has, for now at least, very different characteristics from that of 1929-1932. If from the stock market viewpoint there is little doubt that it is more serious than that at that time, this is not true for other criteria, while industrial production has experienced only small decreases (from -1.5% United States to -4.2% in Japan in August 2008 compared to August 2007), moderate increases in unemployment (6.1% United States 7.5% in the euro area, 4.2% in Japan), declining profits in the U.S. at a 3.8% annual rate in the second quarter, average wages are only 10% lower than at the outset of the crisis. This does not mean that the general economic conditions such as those of the proletarian masses are not going to be increasingly degraded, but it means that

the combination of decisive factors of a catastrophic crisis, paving the way for a general war, have not yet formed.

3. In the age of imperialism, it is finance capital which dominates society and guides the economic activity of production and distribution in all countries. Finance capital is the supreme expression of the development of the capitalist mode of production: capital and its self-valorization are the starting point and end point, the beginning and end of production (Marx, *Capital*). Production is only production for capital, which is formed in the organic composition of fixed capital or dead labor (facilities, machinery, raw materials, etc.) and variable capital or living labor (wages plus surplus value). In capitalism dead labor suffocates living labor, capital and its valorization take precedence over everything.

During its development and the formation of the worldwide market, Capitalism regularly leads to the overproduction of goods and capital; the market can no longer absorb all the commodities produced and the available capital.

It then enters into crisis, causing destruction of capital and goods, enterprises close, workers are thrown into the street. As wealth accumulates and increases at one pole of society, the wealthy bourgeois class, poverty accumulates at the other pole, the non-propertied proletarian class. The Marxist theory of increasing poverty is historically verified with every capitalist crisis. If you look at the world, it is impossible not to note that the ruling classes of the richest countries live off the backs – not only of their own proletariat – but also the proletariats of the poorest countries.

Erupting first in the financial sphere, the crisis affects the productive economy – the so-called “real economy” – which depends more and more on the extension of credit, causing the transformation of the current crisis into a general social crisis that promises to be of long duration. The breadth and depth of this process are determined by the extent of overproduction that has been accumulating for a long time in the major imperialist world centers. Directly or indirectly, all countries in the world are affected, none can escape. Bourgeois economists themselves admit that the current crisis is the “defeat of the market”, the “implosion” of the international financial system. They are right, not from the perspective of capitalism, but from the Marxist point of view. The market has never been the regulator of capitalist contradictions, competition has never been solely the jurisdiction of capitalist progress, it has always been the vehicle of crises.

Whatever the regulations with which the bourgeois are trying to regulate market forces and competition and to prevent the congenital contradictions of the capitalist mode of production, ultimately it is the laws of the market in periods of expansion which overthrow all these attempts and impose deregulation, that is to say the absolute freedom of capital concentrations and international financiers to maximize the valorization of capital regardless of future consequences. In fact this freedom inevitably encounters obstacles inherent in the capitalist mode of production itself: the volcano of production is confronted with the limits of the market, which despite the use of credit cannot expand as rapidly and the overproduction which results provokes the arresting of the self-valorization of capital which then enters into crisis.

4. The State intervention desired by the bourgeoisies of all countries to deal with financial and economic damage, only serves the interests of the ruling class. The State resources are used primarily to save the banks, modern temples of credit and usury, large industries and finally with the means that eventually remain, medium and small businesses.

The proletariat, for whom is reserved on the contrary a steady deterioration of living and working conditions, finds itself in the last rank.

By taking over the debts of major banks and financial institutions and causing them to fall on the general population, predominantly proletarian, it thus forces it into debt in order to restart production and capital valorization.

The U.S. central government has intervened in the current crisis as it has done only rarely in its history (e.g. 1929) and now an important part of the billions of dollars allocated to avert the crisis are used for nationalization or semi-nationalization of the largest U.S. banking groups.

It began in March with the assumption of the debt of *Bear Stearns* in July and continued with the two giants of housing finance, *Fannie Mae* and *Fred-die Mac*, and then with the largest insurance company in the world, *AIG*.

But the “Black October” on the stock exchanges has forced the U.S. to follow the policy of nationalization already implemented in Great Britain and the rest of Europe, albeit with clenched teeth, to defend the national interests of the respective countries. This proves once again that the tendency towards concentration and centralization of the state economy in the early twenties by Italian fascism and developed in the thirties by

German Nazism is an irreversible historical trend of capitalist development. Stalinism and Maoism in Russia and China have also followed the same path to accelerate the development of capitalism in their two major geo-historical areas.

The Communist Left was right in the twenties and at the end of World War II, when it said that democracy no longer had anything to do with the old liberal democracy, but is increasingly marked by economic and financial totalitarianism camouflaged with democratic trappings for the sole purpose of deceiving the proletariat for the past decades. This has been successful up until now.

5. The capitalist crisis pushes the world's major financial groups and therefore the States that defend them, to develop joint measures to avert the crash of the international financial system and to combat the mistrust that usually spreads among investors who speculate in the stock market, but also among savings investors who deposit in banks where fresh money is sought. Supranational institutions, meetings and summits between top leaders of finance, central bank governors, ministers and other leaders of the major imperialist countries have worked to coordinate interventions in the financial markets so that the money continues to flow in international banking networks. Although it is serious and even though they are unaware of how long it will last, for the bourgeoisie the current crisis is a "hiccup" that can be solved by large injections of capital, and the restoration of "confidence" of investors, the crisis cannot modify the functioning of capitalism, the production and reproduction of capital. The search for solutions, even when internationally coordinated at the highest level, can never lead to more than a lull before the next crisis; as shown by the history of capitalism: 1929-1932 (the Great Depression) 1939-1945 (the Second World War), 1973-75 (the so-called Great "Oil" Depression), 1981, 1987-89, 1991, 2001, etc... Beyond calls for calm and not panic, the haste of left and right-wing governments to repeat State intervention is an admission by the bourgeois themselves that this crisis will be long and it will have serious consequences on the lives of the majority of the population. Blood, tears and sacrifices are the order of the day for the bourgeois who lose their money to the profit of other bourgeois, and for the huge proletarian masses being crushed by debts they cannot repay – insufficient wages, insecurity and rising unemployment!

6. With its characteristic effrontery the ruling class demands a general increase in sacrifices of the proletariat

whenever the bourgeois financial and economic system is in crisis; and plans to obtain these sacrifices in different ways: increased cost of living, reduced purchasing power of wages and falling wages, increased working hours, increased intensity of work, increased productivity of each moment of the production process. All this leads to a growing insecurity of life and labor, competition and increased discrimination amongst the proletariat (between recent immigrants and long time residents, men and women, etc..), and increases in workplace accidents. The crisis is used to destroy the proletariat's ability to react to the deterioration of its living and working conditions and is used to justify anti-proletarian measures at all levels, both economic and social (from schools to health services and general public services, to the role of unions in methods of social negotiation, all seasoned with a weighty cultural and religious obscurantism). The future of capitalism blocks any future prospect for the proletariat!

7. However, its long experience at political domination has taught the bourgeoisie that the proletariat cannot indefinitely put up with the increasing pressure on their lives and work. It envisions a mobilization of the proletariat that could explode into episodes of open social violence and therefore, alongside the increasingly prevalent factory despotism and social despotism, the bourgeoisie will continue to maintain, even if it is in a reduced way compared to the periods of economic expansion, a series of social welfare measures to calm the needs of a part of the working class (which contribute to divide it still more); as tools of consensus and social peace it will use the reformist parties and trade unions, volunteer organizations, and the religious structures which are always ready to divert the indignation and the reactions of the proletariat towards activities conceived so as to dissipate accumulated tensions and to offer up proletarians wrapped up in their own problems and mired in petit-bourgeois prejudices to the rapacity of capital. However the ruling class will never hesitate "to change horses" if the traditional parties and trade unions are not up to the task, as they have been up until now, of bending the proletariat to the changing requirements of Its Majesty: Capital.

8. The depth of the crisis reveals a strong tendential falling rate of profit against which the bourgeoisie has only one decisive weapon: the increase in the rate of exploitation of surplus value from wage labor.

What the proletariat must expect, therefore, is an increase in the pressure of

capitalism on everyday life and at the workplace, while the living and working conditions of proletarians will deteriorate still further, the precariousness and insecurity of their lives augmenting proportionately: moonlighting, underemployment, unemployment, low wages, job harassment and abuses are becoming more and more the rule! Competition amongst proletarians will rise even more, fueled by blackmail over employment and wages, exercised by the all-powerful bourgeoisie on the weakest sectors of the proletariat, immigrants, youth, women, and unorganized proletarians. The isolation of the proletariat will increase, led by the criminal policy of opportunism which require the compatibility of any workers' demands with the requirements of the employer's enterprise or the nation. The proletarians of the rich countries have been able to benefit up until now, even if it's partly unconsciously, from the brutal exploitation inflicted by their greasy bourgeoisie on the hundreds of millions of proletarians of the so-called underdeveloped countries, looting entire continents. Thanks in part to the enormous profits earned by the exploitation of human and natural resources around the world, the bourgeoisie of the imperialist countries have managed to operate this system of social shock absorbers which formed the solid material basis of social consensus and the enslavement of proletariat to capitalism. Before any other proletariat, the proletariat of the rich countries has the task of breaking with the collaborationist practice to which the reformist parties and trade unions have been habituated, this is the precondition for finding the historical perspective that belongs to its class, the historical perspective where the class struggle is the focus of any action of immediate economic defense and independent political initiative.

9. After decades of postwar capitalist development, after other large countries like China, India, Brazil or post-'Soviet' Russia have experienced growth accelerated to the point of representing not only markets coveted by the older imperialist countries, but even a hope of financial rescue, after the old European capitalist powers have formed a close economic and political alliance (EU) to compete with what is still the world's greatest imperialist power (US) as well as the more aggressive young emerging countries (with China leading the first rank), the ruling classes face a period of crisis of at least twenty years which, in the absence of the outburst of a revolutionary social crisis, can only end in a

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third world war. Today the working class in rich countries is starting to realize that the near future will no longer be one of well-being and that the period of rising living standards will not return. They begin to realize that their destiny is looking more and more like the hundreds of millions of disinherited in the underprivileged countries of the periphery of imperialism who flee their country (ravaged by war, deprivation, poverty and hunger) to look elsewhere for opportunities for survival, even risking their lives in the journey. The proletarians of the rich countries are losing a whole series of “benefits” and “guarantees” that the democracies granted them after the victory over Nazism. These benefits, these guarantees were the price paid by the bourgeoisie to bribe the broad masses of the developed capitalist countries, but this price was paid in the blood of the workers of the world, in world wars and the imperial peace, in local wars and in ever more acute rivalries between capitalist countries: the millions of proletarians who fell during the last world slaughter, have joined the millions who died in local wars, in repressions, in famines, in exploitation.

10. The future which imperialist capitalism offers to the proletariat – the inevitable degradation of living and working conditions – will not be brief, but rather a long period of suffering and horror like entire populations in Africa, the Near, Middle and Far East or Latin America have already experienced. Until now the ruling classes of the most powerful countries have followed a method of management of the economy that gave them a huge advantage over the proletariat.

“The new method introducing planning in the management of capitalist economy – which in relation to the antiquated unlimited classical liberalism of the past constitutes a form of self-limitation of capitalism – leads to a levelling of the extortion of surplus value around an average” said our party text *“Force, violence and dictatorship in the class struggle”*, in 1946. The purpose of this form of self-limitation is not to reach a lower accumulation of capitalist profits in order to increase workers’ wages, if one side has tended to mitigate the most severe outbreaks of exploitation by employers by establishing forms of social

assistance (the famous Welfare State, the State as beneficent provider), on the other, it allowed the bourgeoisie, especially in the richest countries, to plunder all the riches possible with some of these social welfare schemes being funded by the most brutal exploitation of the proletarians of the less developed countries.

The opulence of the West has always been an illusory goal for the proletarians of the peripheral countries, which during the sixties began to move in always growing numbers to the U.S. and Europe. The social shock absorbers were not extended to those proletarians who received a salary considered impoverished by the indigenous proletariat, but which, given the misery from which they came, appeared as a “privilege”. The competition between the proletarians of rich countries and proletarians of poor countries which formerly applied at a distance, is now taking place in the same cities, in the same factories, in the same shipyards.

And with increased competition between the proletarians, the more the self-limitation of the extortion of surplus value in capitalism becomes diminished, because if the proletariat is no longer an actual danger to the power of the bourgeoisie, it removes the brakes that were imposed on it and, racked by competition, launches into the frenetic quest for profit as quickly as possible, as has been the case during the last 15 years of financial “deregulation”.

11. In the period of capitalist expansion that followed World War II, the common goal was that each national bourgeoisie, as a function of its actual forces at the end of the war, was to obtain a share of the wealth produced worldwide, thus contributing to the general development of capitalism. The two central poles of international capitalist conservation, the United States and Russia, have divided up two respective zones of influence, forming a veritable “Russo-American condominium of the world”. This helped boost the productive machine to a far higher rate than before the war, including in the countries which they had dominated, Germany and Japan (and Italy) have been the most striking example in the Western camp, as well as Poland or Czechoslovakia or China in the Soviet camp, not to mention a state like Israel implanted into a strategic region by imperialism. Throughout the postwar period which extends up until the general economic crisis of 1975, this “planned” method of management of the economy, on both sides of the iron curtain, functioned perfectly, with the differences due to the real capacities in the reproduction of the capital of the

various countries.

But the crisis of 1975 marked a turning point: the economic boom was over, giving way to a period of ever-increasing crises encompassing more and more countries. At the same time the ruling class began attacking the ameliorations of its conditions which the proletariat had obtained in the previous period, including those resulting from its struggles.

From this moment the slow but systematic erosion of the social shock absorbers which benefited the vast majority of the proletariat begins. The task of political and trade union opportunism changed its sign, but not direction, instead of being the defender of workers’ demands – within the stricture of not obstructing capital – it became the defender of the requirements of capital within which it tried to warp proletarian aspirations. A great part of the old wage and social improvements of the era of economic expansion began to be cut away, and the process is still underway in the developed capitalist countries. These are not yet on the brink, but they are close.

The current economic downturn, when added to a terrible financial crisis that has not finished producing all its effects, strikes harder and harder at the so-called emerging countries. Overproduction is beginning to emerge even in these countries, removing the oxygen mask on which the Western economies had counted over the past fifteen years.

Trade and financial wars between the world’s imperialist giants increasingly assert themselves and sooner or later will be transformed into open wars, not because the American president, the Japanese emperor, the new Russian czar or the future German Kaiser “choose” to attack this or that enemy imperialist coalition, but because there will be no other solution to escape from the engorgement of the world market which asphyxiates their economies.

To overcome its crisis of overproduction, in order to restart a new cycle of capitalist accumulation, the bourgeoisie has no other solution than the destruction of goods, capital, surplus productive forces. And among these productive forces are the proletarians who are called upon to serve as cannon fodder, and to be destroyed at the same time as the commodities and means of production that saturate the world market.

The bourgeois ruling class sends the proletarians to be massacred in order to recommence the production of profits. All ideological motivations – patriotic, racial, religious – used by the bourgeoisie during its wars are only lies thrown up to dupe the proletarian masses. The

proletarians are thus deceived twice: first on the terrain of capitalist productive relations where they appear to be free sellers of their labor power, then on the terrain of political relations between classes where they seem to be most interested in defending national interests and the homeland.

All social and political forces which contribute to the maintenance of these deceptions, especially when they pose as socialists or communists, represent a serious obstacle to the proletarian struggle for emancipation.

12. For decades the world proletariat has suffered from the ruinous impact of all the organizations which originally fought to defend its interests, but yielding to pressure from the bourgeoisie, have betrayed the proletarian cause both in the struggle for immediate defense and on the broader and decisive struggle for political power. The proletarian class struggle, which inevitably gives rise to the contradictions of bourgeois society, needs economic defense organizations comprised of the broad masses of workers, if they are influenced and directed by the class party these organizations represent a great danger to bourgeois power. That is why the ruling classes have always tried to corrupt and hamstring them, transforming them into a transmission belt of class collaboration, as opposed to their being transmission belts for revolutionary struggle directed by the class party. The biggest obstacle faced by the proletariat on the road to the reprise of the class struggle is precisely constituted by these organizations, of a political or trade union character, which act to maintain class collaboration. Political parties of the proletariat which had a broader purpose than the immediate struggle suffered the same outcome. Bowing to bourgeois corruption on the economic, political and ideological planes, they are transformed into the most insidious vehicles of the counterrevolution, helping (sometimes with the direct action of the state, as in Russia) to plunge the proletariat into total confusion, leaving it to become the helpless prey of the individualistic, nationalist, racist or religious prejudice characteristic of the bourgeois and petit-bourgeois classes.

Only on rare historic opportunities, as in Europe of 1848, 1871 in Paris or the revolutionary wave that followed Red October of 1917, was the proletariat able to raise its head and confront bourgeois power frontally. History has decreed that these opportunities would ultimately end in defeats. But the proletarian class party, even if reduced to a handful of militants, has drawn the powerful lessons from those defeats to serve as a resour-

ce for future struggles.

If the bourgeoisie seems invincible, despite the economic crises and wars that regularly ravage the entire world, if the obstacles presented by nationalist and protectionist trade unions and the bourgeois workers' parties seem insurmountable, the proletariat will find the road to recuperation of the class struggle because the contradictions, the social and political factors of the economic crisis, consequences still more disastrous to the civilization of capital can do nothing else but demonstrate the impossibility that the ruling classes will be able to solve the increasingly explosive contradictions of bourgeois society.

13. The proletariat will regain the strength to fight on the terrain of open antagonism with the bourgeoisie when it realizes it can no longer defend its immediate and future interests on the terrain of social peace, of conciliation between the classes, and when it accepts the fact that it is not enough for the bourgeoisie to exploit the power of wage labor to the maximum, but it still needs to mobilize it for its wars for global market share, and when it recognizes that organizations claiming to be workers' organizations but which profess faith in bourgeois democracy and class collaboration are saboteurs of the workers' struggles with no other purpose than to imprison outbreaks of struggle in the chains of bourgeois legality and respect for the established order.

The bourgeoisie wages its ongoing struggle against proletarian interests without being paralyzed by the laws and regulations which it itself has enacted, it wages it in legality and illegality as evidenced by workplace accidents, the use of criminal gangs (such as the mafia) to control sections of the proletariat, the dissemination of all types of drugs to young people or the corruption inherent in any type of activity, whether commercial, banking, industrial or political.

Marxists do not believe in the redemptive power of human suffering, of the "conscious realization" by the great masses of the proletariat of the correctness of the Communist perspective which convince it to enter into struggle against capitalism and the bourgeoisie which its social and political bulwark.

In fact it is class antagonisms, in the very development of capitalist society, which are destined materially, physically, to lead the massive social forces that express these differences into confrontation. In this confrontation between proletariat and bourgeoisie, in the end it is the class which carries within itself the emancipation of all oppressed classes, the class which has nothing to defend in today's society, the class that has to

lose but its chains, the proletariat, which is destined to be victorious.

The historical course of evolution of human societies shows that this trend is not linear, purely and simply progressive, but takes an uneven course, made up of advances and retreats, punctuated by great achievements and painful losses, but ultimately, the radical changing of the mode of production imposes itself objectively and dialectically. Because it is the class that produces social wealth by its work and carries within itself the prospect of a classless society where antagonisms have given way to the harmonious development of society for all mankind, the proletariat is potentially the only revolutionary class in our epoch; it is the only class able to take on the struggle for emancipation from oppression and exploitation which will release mankind from the fetters of private property, from the private appropriation of social wealth.

Not every individual proletarian can be aware of this historic task, but only the revolutionary class party, the Communist party which since its Manifesto of 1848 represents in this capitalist present, the prospect of revolutionary struggle for the future emancipation of the proletariat and with it, all of humanity, from all class oppression.

14. The proletariat has demonstrated through the course of its history that it was the only revolutionary class in modern society, the only class that expressed in the struggle against the old feudal and aristocratic classes and against the new bourgeoisie that it was the true bearer of the historical perspective of a classless society. Marxism is the revolutionary theory of the proletarian movement, the irrevocable basis of the communist party – anticapitalist, antibourgeois and therefore antidemocratic.

The proletariat has suffered, still suffers and will continue to suffer the dire consequences of the capitalist crises that erupt in the field of production, trade or finance. Insofar as it is forced to remain in the state of being a class for capital, that is to say a set of individuals totally subservient to the capitalist mode of production and the political domination of the bourgeoisie, the proletariat has no possibility of fighting for its emancipation or even to successfully wage defensive immediate struggles.

As long as the proletariat is influenced, organized, controlled and directed by the forces of conservation and bourgeois interclassist collaborationism, it has no possibility of obtaining a real and lasting improvement of living and

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THE PROLETARIAN CLASS PARTY AND THE CURRENT ECONOMIC CRISIS OF GLOBAL CAPITALISM

(Continuation from page 13)

working conditions, except in periods of economic expansion, and that only at the cost of abandoning all hope of liberation from capitalist exploitation.

15. The crises of the capitalist economy have shown a series of stages in the deterioration of the proletariat, of the abolition of concessions previously obtained from the bourgeoisie. This fact demonstrates that its most profound objective is to extract still more surplus value from the working class, to render its domination over wage labor still more oppressive, increasing insecurity and increasing competition among the proletarians. The crisis pressured and continues to pressure the bourgeoisie to not only aggravate capitalist exploitation in all countries, but also to forge international alliances to better resist these crises; commercial, industrial and financial alliances, tend to become closer at the time of crisis because the clashes between the imperialist powers are destined to increase. The bourgeoisie of various countries know that the economic and financial crises inevitably lead sooner or later to military clashes between competitors, to open warfare. And no bourgeoisie can conduct war without mobilizing the proletariat to serve its interests.

That is why, in times of peace, each national bourgeoisie will have not only its State institutions corresponding to an eventual war, but it carries a permanent and capillary ideological propaganda amongst the proletariat, notably by the intermediary of collaborationism while battering the most rebellious proletarian layers with the forces of state repression – legal or illegal.

The class struggle waged by the bourgeoisie against the proletariat is permanent, it knows no truce and will not be deterred by any scruples, it uses all possible levers of social conservatism (especially effective if they are “left” or supposedly “workers” forces) to divide, isolate, demoralize the proletariat in order to intimidate the most rebellious layers and to paralyze the masses.

At the end of the First World War the European bourgeoisie was faced with a proletariat in full revolutionary upheaval. The most threatened ruling classes reacted with the triple prongs of massive repression of the proletarian vanguard (combination of legal repression

and illegal fascist bands), use of social measures to meet the needs of the working class and to blunt the urge to struggle (the social shock absorbers), and the maximum centralization of political and economic power around the State (fascism with its single party and single union combining owners and workers). After the military victory of the “democracies” in the Second World War, they reprised the essential fascist methods of government, while hiding behind the Parliamentary screen to continue to deviate those pushed into struggle onto the democratic terrain, which is that of interclassism and collaboration with institutions of the bourgeois State. During this process of integration into the bourgeois State, social-democratic opportunism passed on to Stalinism the main hand in betraying the goals, methods and means of the international communist movement, which permitted the victory of the most ferocious counterrevolution in history.

16. The proletariat of the dominant imperialist countries like that of the peripheral countries still pays the dramatic consequences of this victory of the counterrevolution. The destruction of the revolutionary party of the proletariat, starting with that of Lenin through the annihilation of the party in Germany, Italy and finally China has shown conclusively this historical truth: without the strong and uncompromising leadership of its class party, the proletariat is doomed to defeat, regardless of its strength and heroism. And the defeat was all the more profound the closer it was to victory over the bourgeois power.

The bourgeoisie has never had any humanitarian scruples, it has never conceded military honors to the defeated proletariat. The thirty thousand Communards killed in 1871 during the bloody week by the troops of the butcher Thiers were echoed by the hundreds of thousands of proletarians who fell during the revolutionary attempts in the decades that followed, not to mention the millions killed in wars that the bourgeoisies have continued to carry out.

The revolutionary proletarian party is the only force capable of placing the lessons of its past struggles at the service of the emancipation of the proletariat, it represents the future of the proletarian class, the future of its global anticapitalist revolution, the only means to put an end to capitalism.

17. The periodic crises of capitalism anticipate the great general crisis of the system. The reaction of bourgeois forces of all countries to this crisis will inevitably lead to greater centralization of political and economic power (government intervention in the economy) and

therefore more social despotism which exacerbates the conditions of the proletariat. Intoxicated for decades by the politics and practices of political and union collaborationism, repressed in a thousand ways, massacred, the proletariat remains the only source of profit, without which the bourgeoisie cannot continue to function and without which capitalism cannot exist.

“The essential conditions for the existence and dominance of the bourgeois class is the accumulation of wealth in private hands, formation and augmentation of capital; the condition for capital is wage-labor. Wage-labor rests exclusively on competition between the laborers. The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the laborers, due to competition, by the revolutionary combination, due to association. The development of Modern Industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, are its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable” (Marx, Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*).

The analysis of the *Manifesto* has been confirmed by subsequent historical events. Precisely because the development of heavy industry tends to overcome the isolation in which competition places the workers, the bourgeoisie is always and everywhere trying to foster this competition in a thousand ways. Therefore the workers must have as their central objective the fight against competition, to create the power to unite themselves across differences of class, sector, region, age, sex or nationality, and to unite across borders and differences in economic development between countries.

18. The struggles of the proletariat in the decades that followed the defeat of the communist movement in Russia and around the world have generally been conditioned on the ideological level by the theories of socialism in one country, on the political level by the rallying of all the parties of the Third International to bourgeois preservation and on the economic and trade union level by a reinforced bondage to the requirements of the capitalist economy. But despite bourgeois rule and the overwhelming influence of opportunism, outbreaks of class struggle have continued to erupt, albeit sporadically: the struggles of the immediate postwar period in Western Europe, riots in Berlin in '53, the struggles of the sixties and seventies in Western and Eastern Europe

and the United States, in the great movement in the shipyards in Poland in the early '80s, the struggles of miners in Britain with that of miners in Russia, the first major strikes in Brazil and those in India and Bangladesh in the last period, to name just a few highlights.

In addition to these workers' struggles; throughout the period from the end of World War until the mid-70s, there were the national liberation movements in colonial countries. The absence of the Communist International because of the victory of the Stalinist counterrevolution, did not allow a combination of these struggles, which under its direction, could have developed into a powerful assault against global capitalism. Today all countries in the world are much more closely bound up than when Marx and Engels wrote the famous battle-cry in the Manifesto: "Workers of all countries, unite!" Unite for anticapitalist revolution, not to save capitalism! The current financial and economic crisis, like those that preceded it, amply demonstrates that the world is dominated by capitalism everywhere. In the China of the Chinese Communist Party, in the Great Britain of Queen Elizabeth, in Bush's America as in the UAE or Putin's Russia, despite the differences in political organization, the dominant class is the bourgeoisie.

19. Paradoxically, although the bourgeois ruling classes of various countries have tried to build their national borders by raising up barriers of all types, the development of industry and finance have knocked them down. The exportation of commodities and capital has the goal of conquering new markets by tearing away the capital already present; the emigration of proletarians, especially in less developed countries, to those which are more developed is in large part a response to the imperatives of survival; it is an expression of the weakness of the world proletariat which is not yet able to fight against the causes of its oppression and misery and which has no choice but to try to sell its labor power where there is a possibility of finding buyers, that is to say, in the capitalist metropolises. There is no other way to end this condition of modern slavery than the struggle against the bourgeois power that defends and keeps alive the capitalist system of production.

The forced migration of workers can be transformed into a force provided that immigrant and native proletarians unite in the same fight, in the same defense of their lives and work. This unitary struggle is necessary in order for the proletariat to defend itself against employer exploitation, against workplace accidents,

which strike at immigrants and natives equally. It is only by their united struggle that they can face all the problems inherent in their social condition.

As recalled by the *Manifesto*, competition between workers is the central question: where they manage to overcome it they can organize an effective defensive struggle against the capitalists; where they accept it, they are delivered bound hand and foot over to capitalist exploitation, believing that they have saved themselves, which is the best situation for bourgeois dominance not only in business but in society as a whole, since it means the dissolution of the collective strength of the proletariat.

The proletariat must draw important lessons from the current financial and economic crisis.

20. The bourgeois class has interests completely antagonistic to those of the proletariat in all countries, in all situations, in peacetime as in war. It causes all the weight of its crises whether economic, political or military to fall upon the proletariat; by intensifying exploitation, through falling wages, rising unemployment and general misery, until it is massacred in wars. The bourgeois class is permanently seeking to divide the proletarians by fueling competition between them, but this pressure grows all the more with the breadth and depth of the crisis.

In all countries the ruling class is preparing to face the most acute crises, wars between the great imperialist powers, to participate in the repartition of the global market; with this outlook it accentuates the process of centralization and concentration already underway in the most developed capitalist countries. The State becomes ever more the decisive pillar for the reinforcement of bourgeois power to face the social tensions inevitably caused by crises, as well as with a view for war alliances with competing capitalist countries, these do not necessarily correspond to business, economic or political alliances in times of peace.

The ruling class increases the despotism and social pressure on all segments of society to mobilize all resources to defend the priority of the national capitalism at the cost of crushing the interests of the petit-bourgeoisie and certain factions of the bourgeoisie. It tends to use all the means of domination at its disposal on all fronts, economic, political, social and military; at the same time it tends to intensify propaganda for the defense of the homeland, of the family, of the Church and to multiply the divisions between proletarians. It will redouble its efforts to place national proletarians in opposition to foreign prole-

tarians; young in opposition to old, men to women, permanent workers to temporary workers, between those who slavishly follow the dictates of employers and the law and those who oppose them, between the violent and the peaceful, etc..

The ruling class bourgeoisie will become increasingly reluctant to employ democratic practices that hinder repression against any potentially subversive activity, but which also interfere with its social and economic activity. The democratic veil that hides the totalitarian capitalist society will become thinner, as the Italian Communist Left had predicted in the late twenties.

The bourgeoisie will continue to maintain opportunist forces, which have shown that their action is essential to social conservation whether this is in periods of democratic government or in

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The Tragedy of the German Proletariat after the First World War

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Proletarian

International Communist Party («programme communiste»)

The Tragedy of the German Proletariat after the First World War



1

THE PROLETARIAN CLASS PARTY AND THE CURRENT ECONOMIC CRISIS OF GLOBAL CAPITALISM

(Continuation from page 15)

periods of dictatorial government. The role of opportunism cannot disappear in a capitalist society; it can experience erosion, but only to be reborn in another form. Thus Stalinism has taken the place of the old used-up social-democracy, and tomorrow there are forms of “revolutionary syndicalism” and left democratic radicalism – absolutely anti-proletarian and anticommunist– which will undertake the relief of a moribund post-Stalinist opportunism.

21. The proletarian class is still completely embedded in political and trade union democratism implemented by the forces which have long repudiated their origins to embrace the defense of capitalism. Immersed for at least eighty years in the interclassist magma, proletarians can still find the only terrain where it is possible to conduct an effective defensive struggle and lay the foundations of class solidarity. They spend their energy, social force for the exclusive benefit of capital, thus strengthening the chains that subjugate them to the exploiting class. The proletarians of the most developed capitalist countries still fall prey to all the consequences of the social shock absorbers instituted throughout the decades of economic expansion. But the succession of economic crises starts to resound more and more brutally on their conditions, tending to approach those of the poor countries, where the immigrant proletarians come from.

22. The class interests of the proletariat are irreconcilable with those of the bourgeois and petit-bourgeois because the latter can only be defended by attacking the living and working conditions of the proletarians. The defense of proletarian interests implies the recognition of this fundamental antagonism, the recognition of the war between classes. The struggle involves a combination of immediate defense of the proletariat on a platform of common struggle, including the use of force in the struggle, class solidarity between workers of different categories, sectors and nationalities above and beyond individual political and religious differences. The bourgeois also have recourse to these principles, available in private owners organizations and in the central State with its laws, its institutions, its police, its army, constitute the real supreme defense committee of

the bourgeoisie; the proletariat must apply the broadest possible workers’ associationism dedicated to the defense of proletarian class interests and theirs alone.

The first defense of the class struggle is precisely to ensure that the objectives, methods and means respond exclusively to the interests that bring the proletarians together as such, and oppose them to bourgeois interests.

As long as they have not launched themselves into the open class struggle, the proletariat will remain hostages of the bourgeois class and its political agents which thrive in its ranks. It is the economic and social contradictions of capitalism, fueled by crises, which inevitably push proletarian layers to break with the mesh of class collaboration and social peace. It is the economic and social contradictions of bourgeois society, the intolerable degradation of the living conditions of the proletariat, which will push elements and groups of workers to organize their struggle outside of the collaborationist apparatuses.

The class organization of the workers will be accompanied by painful divisions within the proletariat as it goes through the struggle against the layers and elements attached to the defense of emoluments or of privileges that set them apart from the proletarian masses they are entrusted to control.

23. In favorable objective conditions, the proletariat can become a powerful opposition force to the bourgeois power. But it is only under the direction of the revolutionary communist party that it can engage successfully in the struggle to overthrow the government. Due to the disappearance of classist tradition among the masses, classist organization of the proletariat, including the field of immediate struggles, will only be possible through the work of vanguard militants and especially of the true communist party at the same time and along with the proletarian struggle.

The current financial and economic crisis will be used as a pretext to impose new sacrifices of the proletariat in order to save the ailing national capitalism, with the promise that their sacrifices will only be temporary.

But except perhaps for the labor aristocracy, this insidious agent of bourgeois influence among the proletariat, the deterioration of the conditions of the proletariat will not cease. And it is the need to struggle in order not to die of exhaustion, poverty, repression and war, which will inevitably push the proletarian masses to smash the social peace, to tear down the barriers that paralyze them, to break with all the anesthetic forces of bourgeois democracy.

This extraordinary power still hidden in the entrails of society will then emerge with volcanic force and will spread itself over the world. The need for an organ of leadership, the necessity of the revolutionary class party, will appear more obvious than ever to conquer political power, to overthrow the bourgeois state, the proletariat as a class for capital, will constitute itself into a class for itself, conscious of its own goals and ready to constitute the ruling class after the victory of the international communist revolution.

“If the proletariat during its contest with the bourgeoisie is compelled, by the force of circumstances, to organize itself as a class, if, by means of a revolution, it makes itself the ruling class, and, as such, sweeps away by force the old conditions of production, then it will, along with these conditions, have swept away the conditions for the existence of class antagonisms and of classes generally, and will thereby have abolished its own supremacy as a class.

In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all. (*Manifesto of the Communist Party*)

Such is the perspective for which communists fight, such is the necessary outcome of the struggle between classes.

The class party, the communist party, works for this perspective, or it is not the class party of the proletariat.

November 2008

(1) The party has made a number of studies on the issue of crises. The reader can refer in particular to the series of articles on the *Course of World Imperialism*. From an article from 1958, we can mention briefly the following conclusion: “The salient phenomena of a crisis in the traditional sense, are undoubtedly first the decline in output and the unemployment of workers.

But there is also the decline in production prices (wholesale prices), even if in future there may not be a corresponding decline in consumer prices. The basic phenomena that must precede the crisis is anarchy in stock quotations (despite all the measures of state intervention), the fall of capitalist profits and bankruptcy first of small businesses, then of large. “

See “*Sfregio e bestemmia di principi comunisti nella rivelatrice diatriba tra i partiti dei rinnegati*”, «il programma comunista» No. 13/1958.

AMADEO BORDIGA THE TROTSKY QUESTION

(Continuation from page 1)

the agenda of a session of the Central Committee of the CP of Italy, on February 6, 1925, after the Russian Central Committee returned its verdict. Previously, a series of articles had been published to discredit Trotsky, in Italy and in other countries, articles to which Bordiga refers in his text. Whereas the Left demanded the opening of a real discussion in the party on this question, the CC eagerly expressed its solidarity with the decisions of the leadership of the Russian party. The motion adopted included, among other things, this warning: "Finally it is obvious that one must consider as counter-revolutionary any attitude which would tend to spread in the party a general mistrust towards the leading organizations of International and the Russian party, either by wishing to deform the Trotsky question for this objective, or by wanting to reconsider questions made definitive by the Vth Congress" (3).

Two days later, Bordiga responded by sending to the party daily newspaper, "*Unità*" (a title which well reflected the frontist orientation of the leadership), his article, which had the effect of a "bomb". So much so that it was not published until July, and then only with a text of refutation by the leadership – i.e. after several months of internal manoeuvres and bureau-

cratic measures in order to liquidate the influence of the Left (Bordiga himself was removed from the leadership of the Neapolitan Federation of the party under the pretext that he was under too heavy police surveillance!).

In this article, Bordiga solidarized himself with Trotsky's critical statements concerning the failure of the revolution in Germany, once again accentuating criticisms on the question of frontism. In the Vth Enlarged Executive of the CI (March 21-April 6, 1925) where no member of the Left was present, Zinoviev declared that

(1) See for example: «*A propos de la fondation de la IVe Internationale: sans programme révolutionnaire, pas de parti révolutionnaire*», Le Prolétaire n°446 (September-October 1998).

(2) At this meeting in the Alps, 67 party cadres took part. 35 out of 45 Federation secretaries voted for the Left, 4 of the 5 interregional secretaries, the delegate of the Youth Federation and 1 member of the Central Committee; the leadership garnered the support of 4 federal secretaries and 4 members of the CC (3 others, absent, also being members of this tendency); while the theses of the right tendency (lead by Tasca) were approved by 5 federal secretaries, 1 interregional secretary and 4 members of the CC. After this humili-

Bordiga had made a "leap from the far left to the right", because of his "incomprehension of the role of the Communist Party during the period of the deceleration of the revolution; (...) in the refusal to connect the tactics of the United Front and partial demands with our activity directed towards the final goal". It was however the disastrous tactics of the political united front and of the workers' government which had been one of the causes of the German defeat, in making the insurrection dependant on the goodwill of «left» Social-democrats...

liating defeat, the leadership declared that the Conference had only an "advisory" value and claimed that the base of the party supported it, the old cadres acquired by the Left not having been "democratically" chosen... cf Paolo Spriano, "*Storia del partito comunista italiano*", vol 1, p. 359.

(3) Cited in: «*La sinistra comunista e il comitato d'intesa*», p. 54, Editions «Quaderni Internazionalisti», 1996.

(In the «*Lessons of October*», Trotsky had attacked the rightist tendency (Zinoviev, Kamenev) which would have allowed the revolution come to grief in 1917; according to him the same tendency was responsible for the defeat in Germany)

The discussion, which was recently concluded with the measures adopted by the EC and the Control Commission of the Communist Party of Russia against Comrade Trotsky (1), was based exclusively on the preface written by Trotsky to the third volume of his book «*Writings from 1917*» (published in Russian a few months ago), dated 15 September, 1924.

The discussion on the economic policy and the internal life of the party in Russia which had previously put Trotsky in opposition to the CC, was completed by the decisions of XIIIth Congress of the party and Vth Congress of the International; Trotsky did not reopen it. In the present polemic, other texts are referred to, like the speech to the Congress of veterinary surgeons and the brochure "*On Lenin*"; but the first dates from July 28 and had not raised any polemic at that time, when the delegations of the Vth Congress were still present in Moscow; the second, written well before, had been widely quoted in the communist press of all the countries

without meeting the least objection from any party organs.

The text of the preface around which the discussion is raging is not known to the Italian comrades. The international communist press did not receive it, and consequently, not having this text nor any other by Trotsky to support these theses, it published only articles against this preface. The article by the editorial board of Pravda which at the end of October opened the polemic against Trotsky was published in appendix by *L'Unità*. As for the preface itself, a summary of it appeared in Italian in *Critica Fascista*, n° 2 and 3 of January 15 and February 1 of this year, and the beginning was reproduced by *L'Avanti!* of January 30. The complete preface was published in French in the *Cahiers du bolchevisme*, the review of the French Communist party, n° 5 and 6 of 19 and December 26, 1924.

The preface of "*1917*" deals with the lessons of the Russian October from the point of view of the role of the revolution-

nary party relative to its historical task in the final struggle for the conquest of power. Recent events in international politics posed the following problem: objective historical conditions for the conquest of power by the proletariat being realized, namely the instability of the regime and apparatus of the bourgeois State, the *élan* of the masses towards struggle, the orientation of broad proletarian layers towards the Communist party, how can we ensure ourselves that this answers the necessities of the battle, just as the Russian party responded in October 1917, under Lenin's leadership?

Trotsky presents the question in the following manner: experience teaches us that at the moment of the supreme struggle two currents tend to be formed in the Communist party; one which understands the possibility of armed insurrection or the need for not delaying it; and another which, at the last moment, under

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the pretext that the situation is not ripe; that the relationship of forces is not favorable, propose the suspension of the action and assume a non-revolutionary and menshevik position in practice.

In 1923 the latter tendency was on top in Bulgaria at the time of Tsankov's *coup d'état*, and in October in Germany, where it determined the abandonment of the struggle which could have brought us success. In 1917, this tendency appeared within the Bolshevik party itself, and if it was beaten it was thanks to Lenin, whose formidable energy imposed on the hesitant the recognition that the situation was revolutionary; and their submission to the supreme order to start the insurrection. We should study the conduct, in 1917, of the right opposition against Lenin in the Bolshevik party and compare it with that of the adversaries of struggle which appeared in our ranks in Germany in 1923 and in other similar cases. The language of those who advocate the suspension of the struggle and their political positions are in both cases so similar that it raises the question as to measures to be taken in the International to make the truly Leninist method prevail in decisive moments, so as not to abort the historic occasions of the revolution.

The most important conclusion which arises, in our opinion, from the efficacious analysis to which Trotsky subjects the preparation and conduct of the October struggle in Russia, is that the hesitations of the right do not arise solely from an error in the evaluation of forces and in the choice of the moment for action, but especially from a true incomprehension of the principle of the revolutionary process in history: it believes that it can use another way than that of the dictatorship of the proletariat for the construction of socialism, which is contrary to the vital content of revolutionary Marxism supported and historically realized by Lenin's titanic effort.

Indeed, the group of leading comrades of the Bolshevik party which was opposed to Lenin not only sustained that it was still necessary to wait; but it opposed to the Leninist watchwords – Socialist dictatorship of the proletariat, All power to the Soviets, Dissolution of the Constituent Assembly – other formulas, such as a combination of Soviets and a democratic Parliament, a government of “all the socialist parties”, i.e. of a coalition of Communists and Social-democrats, and these, not as transitory

tactical expedients, but as the permanent forms of the Russian revolution. Thus two principle conceptions were in opposition: on the one hand, the Soviet dictatorship lead by the communist party, i.e. the proletarian revolution in all its powerful originality and which is in historical dialectical opposition to the bourgeois democratic revolution of Kerensky, which is the Leninist conception; and on the other hand to push leftwards, to deepen and defend against the foreigner the revolution of the people against tsarism, i.e. the success of the bourgeoisie and petit-bourgeoisie.

Trotsky, splendid and without equal among those alive in the synthesis of experiences and of revolutionary truths, remarks with finesse that during revolutionary periods the reformists leave the terrain of purely formal socialism, i.e. the perspective of victory for the proletarian class by bourgeois democratic and legal means, for the pure and simple ground of bourgeois democracy while becoming defenders and direct agents of capitalism. In parallel to this a right wing of the revolutionary party will take its place in the vacuum left by the reformists, limiting itself in practice to call for a “true proletarian democracy” or something similar, even though the time has come to proclaim the bankruptcy of all democracies and go over to armed struggle.

This evaluation of the attitude of those Bolsheviks who, thus, abandoned Lenin is undoubtedly very serious, but it follows from Trotsky's account through quotations, which have not been refuted, of the declarations of the rightists themselves and those of Lenin in response. It is necessary to raise this problem, since we do not have Lenin with us any longer, and since without him, we have lost our October revolution in Berlin, a fact of such international historical significance that it obviates any concern for the tranquility of internal life. Trotsky considers this problem in an identical way to that which the left of the Italian delegation maintained at the 5th Congress: one cannot liquidate the German error by allotting it to the right-wing which lead the German party; it shows us the need for revising the international tactic of the International and to re-examine its mode of internal organization, its way of working and of preparing for the tasks of the revolution.

The divergences in the Bolshevik Party on the eve of the revolution can be understood on the basis of a series of vigorous interventions of Lenin to rectify the line and to eliminate the hesitations. In his letter from Switzerland, Lenin had already undertaken this work. From the moment of his arrival he places himself resolutely against defensism, i.e.

against the attitude supported by «*Pravda*», among others, which pressed the workers to continue the war against Germany, to save the revolution. Lenin affirmed that we will only have to defend the revolution when the party of the proletariat, and not the opportunists agents of the bourgeoisie, have come to power.

It is known that the watchword of the Bolshevik party had hitherto been that of the “democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry”. Trotsky does not claim in his text that this formula is false, that it has failed historically and that Lenin substituted for it a formula equivalent to that of “Permanent revolution”, which has been argued at other times by Trotsky and his friends.

Quite to the contrary, Trotsky asserts the accuracy of this formula which the revolutionary genius of Lenin conceived and applied, i.e. as a tactical and agitational slogan to be used before the fall of tsarism. And this is what actually occurred, since after tsarism, we do not have a pure bourgeois parliamentary democracy, but a duality between a weak bourgeois parliamentary State and the Soviets, nascent organs of power of the proletariat and the peasantry.

But from the opening of this phase, where history confirmed the accuracy of the Leninist conception of the revolution, Lenin passes immediately – in the political orientation of party, if not in the external succession of propagandistic formulations – to a more advanced position in preparation for the second and veritable revolution, of the march towards the soviet and socialist dictatorship of the proletariat through armed insurrection, of course always guiding the peasant masses in their struggle for emancipation from the feudal agrarian regime.

Trotsky was insistent on the problem of the incomprehension of the true strategic genius of Lenin by even those who, like so many of our Italian maximalists, are constantly invoking his theory and his practice of the «*compromise*» and of elastic manoeuvres. Lenin manoeuvred, but the manoeuvre never lost sight of the supreme objective. For others, the operation too often becomes the aim in itself and paralyses the possibility of revolutionary action, while in Lenin we see this suppleness giving way to the most implacable rigidity in his desire for the revolution and to destroy its enemies and saboteurs..

Lenin himself, in passages quoted by Trotsky, stigmatizes this incapacity to adapt to new revolutionary situations, and the fact of taking a polemical formulation, essential to the Bolsheviks at the previous time, as the ultimate word in their later policy. It is the grand ques-

tion of the communist tactic and of its dangers, which we have discussed for years, even outside of the sphere of the conclusions necessary to draw to prevent all dangerous sleight-of-hand corruption of the real revolutionary contents of Lenin's instructions.

Trotsky explains why for Lenin it has always been clear that after having passed through the transitional stage of the democratic dictatorship, i.e. by a petit-bourgeois phase, the Russian revolution would arrive at the phase of integral communist dictatorship, even before the advent of socialism in the Occident. When they recommended a coalition workers' government and condemned the insurrectionary struggle, the rightists showed that they had adopted the menshevik position according to which, even after having been liberated from tsarism, Russia had to await the victory of the socialist revolution in other countries before going beyond the forms of bourgeois democracy. In his preface Trotsky vigorously condemns this very characteristic error of anti-Leninism.

These questions were heatedly discussed by the party at the time of the April 1917 conference. From this moment on Lenin never ceases to forcefully reaffirm the perspective of the seizure of power. He denounces parliamentary deceit, later he castigates as «shameful» the decision of the party to take part in the "pre Parliament"—the provisional democratic assembly convened while waiting for the elections to the Constituent Assembly. After July, while following the evolution of the orientation of the masses with the greatest attention, and while understanding the need for a self-imposed waiting period after the "test" and reconnaissance of the failure of the insurrection missed in the same month, he warns his comrades against the trap of Soviet legalism.

In other words, he says that one should not bind one's hands by pushing back the fight, not only to the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, but also to that of the second Congress of Soviets and to the decisions of its majority which could continue to be in opportunist hands after the hour had sounded for the armed overthrow of the democratic government. It is known that at a certain time he declared that he would lead the party to power even without the Soviets, the reason for which certain rightists accused him of being «Blanquist».

And Trotsky (upon whom the imbecilic champions of democracy would like to base themselves against the dictatorial theses of the Bolsheviks) once again instructs the European comrades not to make a fetish of majority, including wi-

thin the Soviets: our Great Elector is the rifle in the hands of the insurgent worker, who does not dream of depositing a paper ballot but of striking the enemy.

That is not opposed to the Leninist conception of the need for having the masses on our side and the impossibility of substituting their revolutionary action by that of a handful of resolute men. But, when we have the masses with us, it is necessary, and this is the argument under discussion here, that a party or a military leadership does not prevent their struggle by diversions or hesitations. We can await the masses, and this is our duty, but the party cannot make the masses wait, under penalty of causing defeat. Here is the method of formulating the terrible problem which weighs upon us, since the bourgeoisie, in full crisis, still remains untapped.

On October 10, 1917 the Central committee of the Bolshevik party decides on the insurrection. Lenin has won.

But the decision is not unanimous. The following day the dissidents send a letter to the principal party organizations on "the actual situation" which denounces the decisions of the majority, declares the insurrection impossible and defeat certain. On October 18 they write a new letter against the decision of the party. But on October 25 the insurrection is victorious and the Soviet government installed in Petrograd. On November 4, after the victory, the opponents of Lenin resign from the Central Committee to have the freedom to appeal to the party to support their theses: that one should not, as Lenin sustains, constitute a government of the party, but to make use of the power conquered to form a government of all the Soviet parties, i.e. with the right Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries represented in the Soviets. It is also necessary to convene the Constituent Assembly and to let it function; these positions are defended including in the Central Committee, until the line of Lenin prevailed which the Constituent Assembly is said to have dispersed by the red guards.

The history of these dissensions is quite short. The comrades in question "recognized their error". This is as it should be and it is not a question of cuffing these comrades around a bit. But it was inevitable that they would recognize their error, faced with the victory of the revolution and its consolidation — unless they were to pass directly into the camp of the counter-revolution. There remains the problem in all its gravity which flows from this simple observation: if Lenin had been in a minority in the Central Committee, if the insurrection had failed because mistrust towards it became widespread on account of the

initial distrust of a section of its leaders, those would have held exactly the same discourse which the comrades in charge of the leadership of the German Party had at the time of the crisis of October 1923. What Lenin managed to conjure up through entreaty in Russia, the International could not conjure in Germany. In these conditions, if the International wants to really live in the tradition of Lenin, it must make certain that it doesn't find itself in this situation again: history is not generous with revolutionary occasions, and

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The fundamentals of revolutionary marxist communism in the doctrine and in the history of the international proletarian struggle

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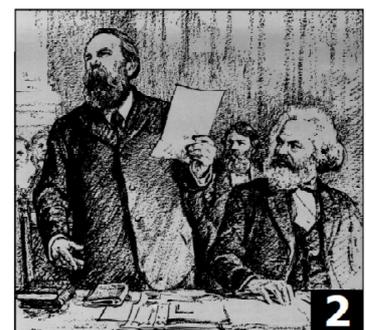
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Proletarian

International Communist Party (programme communiste)

The Fundamentals of Revolutionary Communism



AMADEO BORDIGA THE TROTSKY QUESTION

(Continuation from page 19)

to allow them to pass by involves painful consequences which we all know about and all suffer from.

The comrades should take into account that the contents of the debate are not to be found entirely in the reasons advanced in the public motion which blames Trotsky, nor in the polemical arguments repeated and summarized by the author of articles signed A.P. Concerning comrade Trotsky, the problems which were raised come back to what I have set forth; but it is true that the other side has responded by putting the political activity undertaken by the comrade Trotsky throughout his life on trial. There is talk of a "Trotskyism" which has existed continuously against Leninism from 1903 until today, and which always existed in the form of a rightist struggle against the positions of the Bolshevik party. This is how disagreements are poisoned, but worse, this diverted the discussion by eluding the vital problem posed by Trotsky in the passages on which we have reported.

I will say only a few words on the charges hurled against Trotsky coming out of the questions raised in his foreword.

There was a Trotskyism between 1903 and 1917; it was in fact an attitude of centrism halfway between the Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, rather confused and theoretically doubtful, oscillating in practice from right to left, and which was duly fought by Lenin without too much discomfiture, as was his habit vis-a-vis his opponents. In none of his writings from 1917 onwards, that is to say since his adhesion to the Bolshevik party, did Trotsky return to assert or defend his positions of that epoch. He recognizes them as erroneous: in his last letter to the Central committee he says that he "regards Trotskyism as a tendency which disappeared a long time ago". There are only accusations of him having spoken of "errors in organization".

But one should not seek the rupture of Trotsky with his anti-Leninist past in a legal act of abjuration, but in his efforts and his writings from 1917 on. In his preface, Trotsky makes a point of showing his complete agreement with Lenin before and during October; but he refers explicitly to the period which followed the February revolution, and he observes that before even returning to Russia, in articles written in America he had expressed opinions comparable with those of Lenin in his letters from Switzerland. He never thought of trying to hide

that it is he, who, faced with the lesson of history, moved on to Lenin's terrain, whereas previously he had wrongly combated him

Trotsky discusses with all the right and position as member of the Bolshevik party who reproaches the right-wing of his party for having an attitude which repeats the same Menshevik errors of the revolutionary period. The fact of having been, in the period previous to the revolution and the supreme struggle, unscathed by such errors and at Lenin's side, of his school, gave only greater responsibilities to Lenin's lieutenants to genuinely support the action and not to fall into rightist errors.

It is thus to completely reverse the terms of the debate, based on partial information, to allot to Trotsky's thesis in the foreword of "1917", the position according to which the proletarian revolution was impossible in Russia before it took place in other countries, since it is on the contrary a critique which states that this position was at the root of the errors of the right.

If we admit that there is a new Trotskyism, which is not the case, no link could attach it to old. In any event the new Trotskyism would be left, while the old one was from the right. And between the two ranges the magnificent communist activity of Trotsky against the opportunist social-democrats, besides this was recognized without hesitation as rigorously Bolshevik by all other collaborators of Lenin.

Where is the polemic of Lenin against opportunist better assisted than in the writings of Trotsky, and it is enough to cite only one of them: "*Terrorism and Communism*"? In all the congresses of the Russian party, of the Soviets, of the International, Trotsky has submitted reports and speeches which trace in a fundamental manner the policy of Communism in recent years; and they were never opposed to those of Lenin on the key questions: never, absolutely, if we speak about the International Congresses, for which Trotsky always prepared the official proclamations, in which he divided, step by step, with Lenin, the polemics and the body of work achieved to consolidate the new International in disencumbering it of opportunist residues.

During this period of time no other interpreters of Lenin have reached the surety of conception of Trotsky on the fundamental questions of doctrine and of revolutionary policy, whereas he had had risen to the level of the Master in the effectiveness, the precision of the presentation, and the explanation of these questions, in discussion and propaganda.

I do not want to even speak about the

role taken on by Trotsky as a leader in the revolutionary struggle and in political and military defence of the revolution, because I do not have either the need or the intention to make his apology; but I believe that this past must be called upon to underline the injustice that there is in exhuming the old judgement of Lenin on Trotsky's love of the "left revolutionary phrase", an insinuation that it is best to reserve for those who showed that they can only see revolutions from afar, and perhaps most Western "ultra-Bolsheviks".

It is said that Trotsky represented the petit-bourgeois elements during the preceding discussion in the party. We can't take up all the contents of this discussion, but it should not be forgotten: firstly, that with regard to the economic policy of the republic, the majority of the party and of the Central Committee took up the proposals of Trotsky and the opposition; secondly, that the opposition had a heterogeneous composition and that in the same way that one cannot allot to Trotsky the opinions of Radek on the German question, similarly it is inaccurate to allot to him those of Krassin and others in favour of more wide-ranging concessions to foreign capital; thirdly, that in the question of the internal organization of the party, Trotsky did not support systematic splitting and decentralization, but a Marxist conception of discipline, neither mechanical, nor stifling. The need for examining this important matter more clearly becomes more urgent with each passing day and besides would require a separate exposé. But the insinuation that Trotsky was made the spokesperson of petit-bourgeois tendencies is destroyed by the charge according to which he underestimated the role of peasants in the revolution compared to that industrial proletariat - another free axis of the polemic, whereas Lenin's agrarian theses found a disciple and a faithful partisan in Trotsky (on this subject Lenin wasn't at all defensive in saying that he had stolen the program of the Socialist-revolutionists). All these attempts to lend anti-Bolshevik features to Trotsky do not persuade us at all.

After the revolution Trotsky was opposed to Lenin, on the question of the of the Brest Litovsk peace and about State trade unionism. They are undoubtedly important questions, but they are not sufficient to qualify other leaders who had the same positions as Trotsky at the time as anti-Leninists. It is not on partial errors of this kind on which one can build a complex assembly to make of Trotsky our Antichrist with flurries of quotations and anecdotes where the chronology as well as the logic are upside down.

It is also said that Trotsky is in dissonance with the International on the analysis of the world situation, that he considers it with pessimism, and that the facts have contradicted his forecast of a democratico-pacifist phase. It is a fact that he was entrusted with the mandate to write the Manifesto of the Vth Congress on precisely this subject, and that this was adopted with unimportant modifications. Trotsky speaks about the pacifist phase as a "danger" against which Communists must react by underlining, during these democratic periods, the inevitability of the civil war and the alternative between two opposite dictatorships. As regards pessimism, it is precisely he who denounces and fights the pessimism in others, in affirming, as Lenin said of October, that if one lets pass the opportune moment for the insurrectionary struggle, there follows an unfavourable period: the situation in Germany has confirmed this analysis only too well.

Trotsky's schema on the world situation does not merely restrict itself to seeing the installation of left bourgeois governments everywhere; it is on the contrary a profound analysis of the forces at play in the capitalist world, which no declaration of the International currently actually calls into question, based on the fundamental thesis of the insurmountability of the current capitalist crisis.

Anti-Bolshevik elements are ready to support Trotsky. Obviously, they must be delighted at the official assertion according to which one of our major leaders is supposed to have rejected our fundamental political positions, that he is against the dictatorship and for the return to petit-bourgeois forms, etc. But already the bourgeois press have recognized that there was nothing there to hope for, that Trotsky more than any other is against democracy and for the relentless violence of the revolution against its enemies.

If bourgeois and social-traitors really hope that Trotsky undertakes a revision Leninism or Communism in their direction, it will be at their expense. Only the silence and the inaction of Trotsky could give some probability to these lies, to these speculations of our enemies. For example, the foreword which is in question was published, undoubtedly, by a fascist review; but the editors were forced of to announce at the end of the text that, unfortunately, no one on earth could think that the opinion of the review could be further away from that of Trotsky. And "Avanti!" simply makes everyone laugh when it speaks in praise of Trotsky, while at the same time it publishes the passage where, to support

his theses, it cites the Italian case as a demonstration of the failure of the revolution because of the inadequacy of the parties, while thus referring precisely to the socialist party!

The German rightists accused of Trotskyism object that this is not true, because they support exactly the opposite of what Trotsky wrote: the impossibility of revolution in Germany in October 1923. Moreover the alleged solidarity of the other side can never be used as an argument in order to establish our positions. This is what this experience has taught us.

Trotsky must be judged on what he says and what he writes. Communists should not make questions of people; if some day Trotsky betrayed, he would have to be unmasked and scorched without regard. But one should not be convinced of treason by the excesses of his contradictors or their privileged position in the debate. All the accusations about his past are bowled over by the simple observation that they have all been provoked by his forward to «1917» which does not refer to this question at all, whereas previously these attacks were not considered to be necessary.

The polemic against Trotsky left the workers with a feeling of sorrow and produced a smile of triumph on the lips of our enemies. So good, we want friends and enemies to know that even without and against Trotsky the proletarian party could live and overcome. But as long as the conclusions are those to which the debate leads today, Trotsky is not the man to have passed over to the enemy.

In his declarations he did not disavow a line of what he wrote, and that is not contrary to Bolshevik discipline; but he also declared that he had never wanted to constitute a faction on a political and personal basis and that he was more than ever disciplined to the party. One could not want anything more of a man who is among the worthiest of being the head of the revolutionary party.

But beyond the sensational question of his personality, problems that he raised remain: they should not be eluded, but faced.

February 8, 1925

(1) Plenum of the Central committee of the Russian CP, at the end of January 1925, accept the resignation of Trotsky of its function of "Commissar of War" defined the "present Trotskyism" as a "falsification of Communism" and accuses Trotsky of continuing of defending an "anti-Bolshevik platform".

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Trotskyists and the class nature of the USSR

THE CHARLATANRY OF THE SPARTACISTS

A position typical of the various Trotskyist groups was that they believed that the USSR and the so-called “socialist bloc” countries were not capitalist. They not only shared this belief with the Stalinist currents and their successors, but also with bourgeois propaganda, only too happy to find this as an opportunity to disqualify Marxism and socialism in the eyes of workers. In reality the fraudulent socialist regimes of these countries imposed an exploitation at least as intense as in the West, supporting themselves moreover on relentless **anti-proletarian** dictatorships.

The fact that the State is the owner of industrial and commercial enterprises was, according to the Trotskyists, proof of the non-capitalist economies of these countries, even while all the characteristics of capitalism were present: wage labor (existence of a class of persons possessing nothing other than their labor power and forced to sell this against a living wage), market, money, race for profit, organization of the economy by enterprises, etc..

Yet in traditional capitalist countries, nationalization of enterprises is by no means unknown and nobody has claimed that they cease to be capitalist (with the exception

of a few visionaries of the Tea Party movement who see socialism in the State bailout of General Motors or of various large financial institutions).

Today the Spartacists and their dissident splinters continue with the same perverse obstinance to pretend that China is non-capitalist although the workers there are exploited to the maximum: near-starvation wages, 10 hours a day, six days a week (minimum before “overtime”) and barracks discipline are the lot of tens of millions. After the strikes of this summer, the government raised the minimum wage in coastal regions to 150 or 175 dollars (US) *per month!*

In reality China, as well as Cuba and North Korea are, as was yesterday’s USSR, state capitalist countries, where to defend themselves against exploitation, the workers must lead the struggle against capitalism and for socialist revolution in exactly the same way as in the capitalist countries where so-called “free enterprise” reigns.

This is why the polemic which we conducted yesterday against the Spartacists about the USSR is valid today in regards to China.

The analysis made by the trotskyists of the “Spartacist” tendency (currently: Internationalist Communist League/League Communist Internationalist) of the nature of the USSR and the so-called “socialist” countries is summarized in their pamphlet *Why the USSR is Not Capitalist* (originally published in 1977 in the U.S.). It is a collection of articles written to counter various currents, in particular those connected to Maoism, which affirmed that the USSR was not socialist

Although the targets of these articles often display a theoretical weakness, this collection reveals that the theoretical weakness of the Spartacists is at least as severe. But let us start with their polemic against our current.

The Spartacists criticize the “*positions of Bordiga*” (classified in the chapter: “*The reactionary utopias of anarco-syndicalism*”) with some off-hand lines: Bordiga “*demonstrates that socialism, the first stage of Communism does not exist in the USSR (...). This mode of production is not socialist, he concludes; therefore it is capitalist*”.

(...) Bordiga who “*believed himself to be the fiercest defender of dictatorship of the proletariat*”, “*denied any economic content to this class dictatorship; it proceeded simply and exclusively from whomever had State power. Economically, there was according to him no transitional period between capitalism and socialism; the*

revolutionary party could well be in power, capitalism would persist until money, wage labor and commodity production are eliminated.

(...) *This thesis is in total opposition to the Marxist theory of the State, in that it denies that the State has economic contents and that State power is based on bodies of armed men defending certain forms of property. The collectivist economy (abolition of private property in the means of production, planification of production) counts for nothing* (1).

Of course we have never maintained that there did not exist any transition on the economic level between capitalism and socialism and that the class dictatorship had no economic contents. Quite the contrary, the dictatorship of the proletariat is necessary precisely to **carry out this transition** between capitalism and socialism on the economic and social level. The capitalist entrepreneurs are first of all quickly expropriated, then all production is entirely reorganized and directed towards social objectives, socially harmful or useless activities are suppressed, the working day is reduced to a small number of hours, but extended to all the unemployed and those without occupation, the structure of the economy into enterprises, **commodity** production and distribution are suppressed in parallel with wage-labor, money etc.

This process of radical modification of the economic and social struc-

tures, which leads to the lower stage of socialism (the collectivist economy), is far from instantaneous because it is not limited, as we have seen, to the expropriation of the large capitalists which, in itself, can be very rapid. Not only does it take time, but most importantly it cannot be achieved within the framework of one only nation because it must include at least all the principal centers of the worldwide economy, including areas producing raw materials, because of the very high degree of economic interdependence hitherto reached by capitalist economies. As long as the international victory of the revolution is not yet achieved, already established dictatorships of the proletariat will only be able to take the **first steps** in this socio-economic transformation; therefore capitalist economic forms will still exist (money circulation, wage labor, small peasant or artisanal production, etc.) which will entail the risk of undermining these steps from the inside.

The situation in Russia was much more difficult because, in the countryside where the vast majority of the population lived, the anti-tsarist revolution which had smashed the feudal structure, had at the same time opened the way to a powerful development of capitalism. Towards the end of his life, Lenin explained that on the economic level the struggle in Russia was not yet between the socialism and capitalism, but between State capitalism, tied to socialism (political power), and pet-

ty commodity production, allied with private capitalism. And Lenin warned that it was still impossible to say – in 1923 – **which** was going to win! We know today that it is State capitalism which won out – at the price of a compromise with petty production under the formula of the *kolkhoz* – but only by killing socialism, i.e. the proletarian nature of the political power. The forms of property, the plans, presented as “collective” and ritually worshipped by the Spartacists as so much evidence of the non-capitalist nature of the USSR, were in fact founded mainly by the Stalinist regime. The Soviet workers did not in any way take part in this form of property; they remained **proletarians**, with no other recourse than the obligation to sell their labor power wages **against wages** so as not to die of hunger; incurring the most severe penalties (including capital punishment for “*theft of State property*”) if they ever even imagined helping themselves to some of this property, or disturbing the workings of this economy which the Spartacists have the gall to call “collectivist”! The bodies of armed men (the State) relentlessly defended the State’s property **against** the proletariat.

MARKET «SOCIALISM»

If the Spartacists seem to recognize in the quoted passage that, on the economic level, Russia was not socialist, they claim nevertheless that it was no longer capitalist. There still remains the problem of the indubitable, non-temporary existence of the pillars of the capitalist mode of production which are the market and money and not in constant retreat as they would be in a society in transition towards socialism, but rather permanent and continually developing:

They assert that: “*The idea of an economy without money or markets, completely administrative, is, in a situation of shortage, a reactionary Utopia pure and simple. The Soviet masses, which supported the militarization of labor under Stalin and who still must line up in a queue (...), would not view with a kindly eye the programmes of sharing out work per administrative decision and the general rationing of consumer goods*” (2).

It is thus just, normal, for the Spartacists, that this sharing out work and of consumer goods, instead of being done in a rational way, planned, by central political decision, is left to the more or less free play of the market!!! And who are these masses which would

not view with a kindly eye the disappearance of money and the market, if not the layers which have more money than the remainder of the population and who can thus buy on the market all that the latter cannot afford to purchase, i.e. the layers – the classes! – of the privileged, of the **possessors**? Rationing – which, it should be said in passing, makes no sense other than in a situation of shortage – is the means by which products are distributed in a levelling way, and it is thus a **proletarian** measure, whereas to rely on the play of the market and currency means to let the rich consume more than the others, and is thus a concession to the **bourgeois** layers.

After the period known as “War Communism”, the Bolsheviks were constrained, to avoid economic catastrophe, to make these kind of concessions; it was the introduction of the NEP (New Economic Policy) which allowed the mechanisms of the market and money to function, the only means to revitalize the economy because the real level of development of Russia did not make it possible to go beyond the capitalist stage. The Spartacists, incapable of understanding this exceptionally difficult historical situation where the proletarian power is to some extent constrained to carry out the transition **towards capitalism**; raise the recourse to the market and money in a society in transition **towards socialism** to the level of a general law. Worse, they claim that it is Marx himself who established this “law”! Here is how they set forth, with a meritorious clarity, this conception which deserves to find its place among the most splendidly inane stupidities ever uttered by pseudo-Marxists:

“*Marx estimated that in a collectivized economy in a situation of shortage, consumer goods should be sold at their production costs. He thought that one of the advantages of economic planning is precisely that it eliminates the erratic fluctuations from the market and as well that it allows consumer goods to be available at their true value and with quantities in equilibrium:*

“(It is only there where production is under the **actual, predetermined control** of society that the latter establishes a relation between the volume of social labour-time applied in producing definite articles, and the volume of the social want to be satisfied by these articles.) (...)

“*But if the quantity of social labour expended in the production of a certain article corresponds to the so-*

*cial demand for that article, so that the produced quantity corresponds to the usual scale of reproduction and the demand remains unchanged, then the article is sold at its market-value. The exchange or sale of goods at their value is **rational**; it is the natural law of its equilibrium”* (underlined by us). - K. Marx, *Capital*, Book III, Chap. X.

Under the dictatorship of the proletariat, the market should be the normal mechanism for the existing distribution of goods and services intended for consumption which are available only in limited quantities” (3).

If we leave side the coarse confusion between the collectivized economy, therefore **socialism**, and the dictatorship of the proletariat – the proletarian political power which has as its historical task the carrying out of this collectivization (when the economy is actually collectivized, there will be no more classes, no more State, therefore no more dictatorship of the proletariat), it still remains that Marx would have been the first, before Stalin and his Gorbachevian heirs, to theorize the socialist market economy, since in the collectivized society consumer goods are **commodities** with their price of production!

Fortunately for the reputation of Marx, there is nothing at all to this, as the reader will be able to convince himself quite easily, if he or she follows us with patience.

The quotation reproduced by the Spartacists, in two fragments, is extracted from the section of Volume III of *Capital* devoted to the *Transformation of profit into average profit*, in the chapter bearing on the *Equalization of the general rate of profit by competition; market prices and market values; surplus profit*. At no time here is it a question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, nor of “the collectivized economy in a situation of shortage”! On the page which contains the quotation, Marx examines the variations of supply and demand: they correspond to variations between the quantity of produced goods and the effective demand. The “social need” about which he speaks on this subject, he had defined as follows before:

“*Let us remark in passing that the ‘social need’, which regulates the principle of demand, is primarily conditioned by the relationship of the various classes between themselves and by their respective economic position; thus initially by the relation of the*

(Continued on page 24)

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(Continuation from page 23)

total surplus value to wages and then by the relationship between the various fractions into which the surplus value decomposes (...). We thus note again that nothing new can be explained in an absolute way by the relationship between supply and demand, if one does not show on which basis this relationship comes into play" (4).

It is incontestable that we are here in the capitalist economy!

SPARTACIST FALSIFICATION

In the parentheses, Marx states that contrary to capitalism, in a socialist economy there cannot be discordances between the quantity of the products and the needs to satisfy (first part of the quotation reproduced by the spartacists). Continuing his reasoning, he explains why when there are too many goods, they are sold below their value, the reverse being true when there are too little of them (the passage in **bold ellipses**, omitted by the Spartacists). Then Marx writes that when there is agreement, commodities are then sold at their value; "*it is the natural law of its equilibrium*" (second part of the quotation). The Spartacists then cut the end of the sentence: "*and it is starting from this law that it is necessary to explain the variations and not conversely to explain the law itself starting from these variations*", undoubtedly because the reader could then have suspected that Marx spoke about capitalism while polemicizing against the vulgar bourgeois theorists who explain value by the variations of supply and demand.

It should also be noted that Marx does not speak about goods sold at their production cost, but at their market value, i.e. which include the average rate of profit for the producers producing with average manufacturing costs, and, for certain producers who have lower production costs, a surplus profit (and conversely, a profit lower than the average profit for those who produce with higher costs) (5). If the goods were sold at their production costs (average) and not at their value (thus by removing the unpaid working time which is the source of value), as recommend by the Spartacists for their

collectivized and nevertheless mercantile economy, the consequence would be the **cessation of production**: indeed the money obtained by the sale could be used only for reimbursement of the expenditure carried out and there would remain nothing with which to begin a new productive cycle. Fundamentally it is the erroneous old demand for the integral fruit of labor, refuted a hundred times by Marxists, for example in the Critique of the Gotha Program: even in a really collectivized economy (that it is of transition towards socialism, or already Socialist or Communist), and independent of Spartacist stupidities in connection to the role of the market and of money ("*within a Communalist social order, the producers do not exchange their products*" Marx, *ibid*: thus no **selling** and no **market**), the worker will never receive the integral fruit of his work, because it will always be necessary to deduct a part for the non-workers (infirm, children, aged, etc), to improve the general terms of life including for the coming generations, to ensure the continuation of production, etc, etc (6).

One of two things is possible: either that the Spartacists did not understand Marx's explanation; or maybe, much more probably, they shamelessly **falsify** it with their only aim being to make an economy where mercantile production reigns, pass for socialism or, "post-capitalism" ...

However in another polemical article reproduced in their booklet, the Spartacists claim without batting an eyelid that the roubles of the wages paid to the workers are actually not money but "*generalized ration coupons*"; "*Under this relation, the Soviet economy is in conformity with the description which Marx gives of the financial mechanisms (sic! Ed. note) of a socialized economy subjected to scarcity*:"

"Money-capital is eliminated in the case of socialized production. Society distributes labour-power and means of production to the different branches of production. The producers may, for all it matters, receive paper vouchers entitling them to withdraw from the social supplies of consumer goods a quantity corresponding to their labour-time. These vouchers are not money. They do not circulate." (our emphasis) Capital vol 2 chap.18 (7)

Thus with the Spartacists either money is made to disappear in the USSR, falsifying Soviet reality much more than the most rabid of Stalinist propagandists; or roubles do indeed **circulate**, justifying on the contrary their existen-

ce and their use, against which they polemicize next! It is thus useless to point out to them that they sometimes claim that the USSR is not socialist, sometimes that it is in conformity with the Marxist description of a socialist economy. Useless also to weary the patience of the reader by raising the "errors" which swarm with each one of their theoretical explanations or the fantastic idealizations of Soviet reality: the demonstration of the theoretical charlatantry of the Spartacists is already made. We will be satisfied with only one gem, but a rather monumental one, in connection with the law of the value.

SPARTACIST GEM

Wanting to prove that the law of the value does not exist in the USSR, although they admit the existence of the market there (or rather of... three markets!), the Spartacists affirm that "*the law of the value does not function, for example, in a barter economy (without money). In these circumstances, the conditions of exchange are controlled either by the accidental conditions of supply and demand, or by tradition. (...)*" (!!!)

It is "*possible to have markets in which the law of the value does not function. In pre-capitalist societies, exchange was rather far removed from the conditions of reproduction so that the law of the value does not operate. (...) I do not believe that this trade (of the Roman empire with China, Ed.note) was governed by the law of the value*" !!! (8).

The ignorance of the fundamental texts of Marxism is here such as to become suspect. Not only did Marx take the trouble to explain at great length how the law of value appears at the periphery of primitive economies, where they trade with others and how once it appears it undermines these economies; how before the creation of money, values of the products which are exchanged are evaluated in comparison to other goods then via products which function as general equivalents, etc., but moreover he opens one of his fundamental economic works by quoting the Greek philosopher Aristotle who, well before the foundation of the Roman empire, had established the distinction between exchange value and use value (9)! At about the same time, while the republic of Rome was only at its beginning, the great Chinese philosopher Mencius (Meng-Tse) had already asserted that labor was the source of value... The idea that **markets can**

exist – i.e. the **exchange of products** and not plundering or the exchange of gifts – without these products being exchanged at their value is a pure imbecillity: “*the law of the value is the fundamental law of market production*, Engels recalled to Dühring, who, like the Spartacists and all false socialists, wanted to preserve production for the market in the future society, “*consequently also of its most elevated form, capitalist production*” (10). Thus the socialist society imagined by Dühring was only an idealized copy of contemporary capitalist society.

The desire to justify the Soviet regime founded on the exploitation of wage labor inevitably resulted in ignorance, concealment, falsification of Marxist positions; the Spartacists, who, on the political level, pushed the defense of this regime and its satellites to a caricature, could not avoid reappropriating Dühring’s counter-revolutionary work for their own purposes.

THE FILM OF REFORMISM RUN IN REVERSE

But, ironically, in addition to the theoretical charlatanism of which we give just the most glaring examples, the Spartacists themselves provide us with the **reduction ad absurdum proof** of the falseness of their analysis of the nature of the USSR, an analysis which is that of all trotskysts.

Today the Spartacists admit that capitalism exists in Russia, but according to them because it had been “restored” by Yeltsin following the failure of the tragi-comic attempt at a putsch in the summer of 1990. Contrary to reformism, revolutionary Marxism affirms that it is impossible to pass gradually, peacefully, from one social regime to another, from one mode of production to another: it is impossible to gradually transform capitalism into socialism, by social and political reforms. It requires a **revolution** which **smashes** the old political superstructures (the bourgeois State) built to defend bourgeois social relations, and which founds a new political structure (the proletarian State, dictatorship of the proletariat) able to act despotically to impose, in spite of the resistance of the vanquished classes, radical alteration of the social relations.

Trotsky believed he had found in this fundamental Marxist truth an argument for rejecting the idea of the capitalist nature of the State in the USSR; according to him, to admit that a *restoration* of capitalism had taken place there without there being social and

political counter-revolution, i.e. violent struggles between classes, a bitter intense civil war, etc, would have been nothing more than *running the film of reformism in reverse* that this would have been nothing other than falling into vulgar reformist ideology. The fatal error of Trotsky was to forget that the capitalist mode of production had **never** initially been abolished in Russia. Without the victory of the revolution in the fully capitalist countries which could have provided productive forces sufficient to accelerate social changes, it could not **materially** exist in a country with retarded development and where the peasantry, which constituted the great majority of the population, lived under the reign of petty market production; only the **private** capitalists had been expropriated and their enterprises put under State control. Trotsky then forgot that this State industry, based on the wage-laborers, did not represent any post-capitalist form, but a form of State capitalism, in a struggle against “*the ocean of petty market production*” (peasant) as Lenin said, and also, insidiously but powerfully, against proletarian political control.

Taking up again the line of Trotsky’s reasoning, the Spartacists rail in their brochure against the absurdity of the Maoist idea that a simple change of leaders at the top could alter the **social nature** of a country, i.e. its dominating mode of production, its social relations, the class nature of its State, etc: “*an idealistic and conspirative conception of history*”, the Spartacists affirmed with good reason for once.

They wrote: “*The restoration of capitalism cannot occur by gradual evolution or simple rearrangement at the summit; it requires a violent counter-revolution. (...) [the restoration of capitalism] would not have been a palace conspiracy as in the phantasms Maoists of ‘restoration à la Krushev’. (...) The appearance of powerful forces favorable to the restoration of capitalism would cause a reflex of ‘conservation’ on behalf of a part the Stalinist bureaucrats, anxious to preserve their social position; that would also give to birth to a directly counter-revolutionary wing of the bureaucracy (...). However, the workers would act instinctively to defend their interests against the growing reactionary danger. The restoration of capitalism could triumph only during a civil war in which the conscious elements of the proletariat would have been crushed after a relentless struggle to defend collectivized property, the economic*

basis of the transition to socialism” (their emphasis).

Nothing of the sort took place and the Spartacists as well now swear that a palace conspiracy caused the capitalist restoration! So today what they insist has occurred, they – along with Trotsky – yesterday considered impossible from the Marxist point of view! But to admit that they were mistaken, would either be admitting that Marxism is not worth anything and that it should be replaced by idealism; or admitting that this palace conspiracy did not change the social nature of the country, but had only given impetus to modifications of the political superstructure, because before as after, the dominating mode of production is capitalism, society is divided into classes and the proletariat is the exploited class – thus to recognize the falseness of a central dogma of Trotskyism used to justify a policy of **tailism** in relation to the Stalinist and post-Stalinist States and parties.

Thus it is of little importance to them that they were deluded; when peddling opportunist goods, for which theoretical argumentations are only used to justify political adaptations step-by-step, **the movement is everything, theory is nothing...**

(1) “*Original introduction to the brochure by the Spartacist Youth League*”, p.13.

(2) *Ibid*, p.15.

(3) “*The reactionary Utopias of Bettelheim and Sweezy*”, p. 27.

(4) “*Capital*”, Book III, CH. 10 (ED. Social 1976, p.183).

(5) If commodities were sold in proportion to their production costs, those produced with lower costs would be less expensive and would thus be sold to the detriment of the commodities more expensive to produce. If the producer of these commodities has sufficient production capacity, he eliminates the other producers and the “market value” becomes that of his goods; if not he is satisfied with a cut of the market share corresponding to his capacities to produce thanks to the fact that his goods are more competitive, then it is aligned with the average selling price of these goods, i.e. the “value of market”, which allows him to pocket a “*surplus profit*” in comparison to his competitors. Marx explains this mechanism in detail in order to ridicule the vulgar thesis according to which it

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(Continuation from page 25)

would be the *law of supply and demand* which would determine value: actually this only causes the appearance of the average value of commodities, corresponding to average social time necessary to produce them, to their average production costs, and which explains only the oscillations when compared to this value. All this characterizes a society of commodity production and is thus inconceivable in a socialist, non-mercantile society with production planned to meet the social needs. In another passage the Spartacists reconsider this question of production costs, only to consider it regrettable that the USSR is not mercantile enough: “My opinion, and I believe that it was the position of Marx (!), is that in a workers’ State under conditions of shortage (?), consumer goods should generally be priced at their production costs. This is not a law resulting from the autonomous operation of competition; it is a standard of planning (!). Nevertheless, in the bureaucratically degenerated Russian State this standard is violated. There is no (...) tendency for the prices of the consumer goods to correspond to the production costs (!?). If the rate of sales turnover, which is an index of the difference between supply and demand, is particularly high for a certain product, there

does not exist a mechanism (!?!) to move production towards these goods” (p.54). What would this unfortunately absent mechanism in this degenerated workers’ State be, if not this famous “invisible hand of the market” which carries out the process that we described of elimination of the insufficiently **profitable** producers (with the too high production costs)? The theoretical reflection of the Spartacists is unable to overcome the limits of the fundamental categories of bourgeois economy, in the same way that their political practice is unable to exceed the limits of tailism in relation to opportunism, the Stalinist matrix of preference.

(6) cf Marx Engels, “*Critique of the programs of Gotha and Erfurt*”, Ed. Sociale 1966, p. 27 and following.

(7) cf “*Why The USSR is not capitalist*”, p. 25.

(8) *ibidem*, p. 52.

(9) cf K. Marx, *Contribution to the critique of political economy*, first section, first chapter, first page (Ed. Sociales 1972, p.9). The reader can refer to the first chapter of the first volume of *Capital*, “*Commodities*”, to find the explanations of the exchange of goods during the era of barter, the creation of the money, etc. Various goods and especially Chinese silk arrived on the Roman markets, while passing through various intermediaries. The writer and moralist Pliny the Elder lamented about this as follows: “Every year, India, China and Arabia take from our empire a hundred million sesterces – such is what the increase of our luxury and what our wives cost us (...)” (cf “*Richness and poverty of nations*”, “*Politique International*”, summer 1997).

The historians have easily highlighted that Pliny did not take into account what the Romans sold: trade with these countries was not a simple haemorrhage of Roman values, but was probably balanced. But in any event, these complaints would be enough to establish that the law of the value fully governed trade with China and elsewhere. The texts of Marx swarm with notes indicating the role of the law of the value in Rome (including as causes of social disturbances, for example the increase in the value of copper in the first years of the Republic which caused the ruin of the plebeians). Studying the development of trade and commercial capital, he writes: “*Ancient Rome, towards the end of its republican period, already carried the development of commercial capital higher than ever before in the Old World*” *Capital*, Book III, Chap. 20 (Ed. Sociale 1976, p.314). The control of commercial routes was an important reason for the wars carried out by Rome. Our article “*Principal results of Book I of Capital*” (*Programme Communiste* n° 48-49), gives the explanations of Marx on the law of the value and the exchange of the goods, by illustrating them with examples drawn from the tablets for the setting of prices in Mesopotamia at the beginning of the 2nd millennium BC. One could also evoke work of contemporary ethnologists on the fixing of the value of goods which are exchanged between Stone Age communities in Papua-New Guinea...

(10) Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Third part, Chap.4, “*Distribution*” (Ed. Sociales 1973, p.349).

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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.