

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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Global Capitalism Heads Back Towards Crisis

INTRODUCTION

The article we publish below is the text of a report to the general meeting of the party in December 2014. More than six months later, in what situation is the global capitalist economy?

A quick overview shows that this situation has continued to deteriorate since last year.

The decline in oil prices had stopped earlier this year; but it was only a temporary respite for the oil companies and oil-producing countries. The decline of the «black gold» has flared up under the weight of overproduction and falling demand. According to the International Energy Agency, the oil price per barrel fell on average during the month of August to below \$ 50 (and sometimes 40), that is to say at its level lowest since 2009 (in the heart of the recent global economic crisis), while it was still at \$ 100 in July 2014. The prices of other raw materials, industrial or agricultural, also continued to decline. This decrease in the price of raw materials is the first sure sign of the poor health of the global economy; and it has an immediate negative effect on countries whose oil production and that of other raw materials is the most important economic activity, from Russia to Venezuela, from Nigeria to Algeria, from Brazil to South Africa.

This is confirmed by an examination of some ma-

jor capitalist countries.

The **United States** still remains the most economically «dynamic» country (the unemployment rate continued to fall, etc.); but fears concerning growth are such that the Fed (Federal Reserve, the US central bank) remains reluctant to raise interest rates, as it usually does during economic recoveries following a crisis: an increase in interest rates, that is to say an increase in the cost of money, could stifle even the current low growth, already drugged by the low cost of borrowing. Also it would increase the dollar relative to other currencies, which would disadvantage US goods on the world market. If US industrial production rebounded in July (the last figure available), this is only after several consecutive monthly declines since the beginning of the year.

Neighboring **Canada**, whose economy is highly dependent on the United States, which absorbs 70% of its exports, and which is increasingly dependent on oil prices, entered recession in the first half 2015: this is a supplementary sign of the weakness of the US economy.

In **Japan**, measures by the Abe government («Abenomics»: a 24 billion Euro fiscal stimulus, monetary easing and structural reforms) were unable to revive the economic machine: in the second quarter of 2015 the Japanese economy

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Summary

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The slaughter of the migrants drowned in the Mediterranean continues! Another terrible demonstration that bourgeois governments, whether democratic or authoritarian, can never address the causes of these tragedies. It is capitalism that we must drown!

Wars between states, conflicts between militias, armed repression, misery and destruction: some countries of Africa, the Near and Middle East are rapidly disintegrating, causing the desperate flight of millions of human beings in search of any land, any country to escape this hell on earth and to try to survive. Desperate masses trek through mountains and

deserts, whence they fall into the hands of unscrupulous traffickers ready to defraud them or to launch them onto the seas in overcrowded hulks. The testimonies of the survivors of these journeys abound in stories of people suffocated in the hold, pregnant women thrown into the sea,

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Attacks in Paris: Capitalism is responsible Class war against capitalism!

«*We are at war!*», is the leitmotif of government personalities like the politicians of various French parties after the murderous atrocities in Paris and Saint Denis.

But in fact it is not just since yesterday that French imperialism has been at war, although up until now the French people have not felt the repercussions in their flesh.

It's been a little over a year since President Hollande announced with great fanfare the decision to participate in US bombings in Iraq, a decision that was followed by fielding dozens of «Special Forces» commandos; a few weeks ago the government decided to participate in the bombing in Syria; A few days ago he announced the shipment to the Persian Gulf of a marine battle group (aircraft carrier, nuclear attack submarine, with warships for their protection) to intensify its participation in the war in Iraq and Syria. Under the so-called «left» government French imperialism has demonstrated a surge in military aggression that has not been seen since ... the governments of the socialist Mitterrand.

Let's remember however that it's an old and sinister French imperialist tradition; under Sarkozy, the imperialist circles were behind the Libyan war that plunged the country into a chaos from which it still has not recovered. There have been a countless number of military interventions in Africa since the official end of colonialism; we will only recall the French responsibility in the genocide of the Tutsis in Rwanda which left hundreds of thousands dead. As for its colonial wars, they have also caused hundreds and hundreds of thousands of victims.

French imperialism is undoubtedly one of the most rapacious and bloody representatives of imperialism, this world system of domination by a handful of major capitalist centers and the States at their service; but, like its colleagues, it is also at war against its own proletariat, not hesitating to use the most brutal violence to maintain the bourgeois order and capitalist profits.

Without going back to the terrible massacres with which it responded to workers' revolts throughout the nineteenth century, let us remember the slaughter by the police in October 1961 of hundreds of Algerian workers peacefully demonstrating in Paris. By the way, the government has declared a «state of emergency», an exceptional measure created during the war in Algeria and which was also used in 2005 during the upheavals in the banlieues...

When the decision was made to participate in the bombings in Iraq, the government called for «national unity» to support a war in which it claimed to participate to protect the French as well as the Iraqi populations against terrorist crimes; these calls for union among all citizens have been reiterated ever since as they are once again today.

These are actually appeals to the workers to show solidarity with «their» national imperialism that is to say with the capitalists who exploit them while also exploiting and oppressing the proletarians and the poor masses of the dominated countries, the capitalist who plunder the planet and conduct endless wars. The national union only serves the bourgeoisie, the workers are still victims, whether being

exploited in the workplace, or serving as cannon fodder.

All the so-called security measures which over the course of months and years have been continuously strengthened (Vigipirate – France's national security alert system, mobilization of the army, massive spying on communications, etc.) were never established to protect populations, as demonstrated once again by the most recent attacks; they serve only to protect the interests of the bourgeoisie and defend the capitalist system through intimidation of potential «troublemakers» and especially proletarians.

The bourgeois state is one hundred times more effective in stopping workers from tearing the shirt off their boss than it is in preventing attacks against the inhabitants of Paris: a perfect demonstration that civilian casualties are nothing other than «collateral damage» to the imperialists undertakings, under the bombs in Syria and Iraq just as on the streets or in concert venues in Paris.

But the bodies of the victims are cynically used to power the campaigns of national unity and support for the state and its repressive forces, and to build support for military campaigns. Already the politicians of the right and left parties are multiplying martial statements. Nothing astonishing here: being loyal supporters of imperialism, they had already approved the recent French military interventions in Libya, throughout Africa and the Middle East; they are also unanimous in supporting the government's actions and the call for interclassist unity.

The proletarians must not be misled by all such representatives or servants of the bourgeoisie; they should give no confidence to the government and the institutions of the bourgeois state, which are in the exclusive service of their class enemies. The bloody attacks in Paris and Saint Denis are the result of their criminal acts, the jihadists responding with individual terrorist acts to the large-scale terrorism of the imperialists.

Wanting to protect themselves from jihadist terrorism or to fight it by gathering behind the bourgeois state, would not only mean the proletariat allowing itself to be an accomplice of imperialist terrorism; this would also mean allowing itself to remain the eternal consenting victim of capitalism.

The bombings in Paris and Ankara, in Beirut or in Chad, like the wars in the Ukraine and the Middle East, are foreshadowing the future of poverty, widespread massacres and wars that capitalism in crisis reserves for the proletariat and the masses of the world.

To escape it, there is not one bourgeois camp to choose against another; there is no other solution than the destruction of capitalism, destruction that can only be accomplished through international communist revolution.

Because it is its exploitation which sustains capitalism, the proletariat has within itself the ability to do away with the capitalist mode of production and of the society of injustice and oppression, wars and massacres, built on its foundations: just refuse to continue to be exploited in order to bring down this colossal edifice.

It is the path of the resumption of the proletarian strug-

gle, of the revolutionary class war against all bourgeoisies and all bourgeois States; it involves breaking the bonds which have been patiently woven over the decades in order to keep the proletariat locked in interclassism, breaking from the multiple forces and institutions of class collaboration, abandoning the illusions in national unity, democracy and the State, which are sustained by a range of social measures, in order to find the forces and class weapons class and reconstitute the political organization to lead the combat.

This is not an easy, fast and safe route; but the proletariat has already historically taken it when in the past it launched the attack on the capitalist citadels. It will necessarily take it again tomorrow, armed with the Marxist political, program-

matic and theoretical positions tirelessly defended by the Communist Left, without being stopped or intimidated by the blows of the adversary. Then it will find the strength to avenge all the victims of capitalism by putting a definitive end to this infamous system.

**NO TO CAPITALIST WARS!
NO TO NATIONAL UNITY!
FOR THE RESUMPTION OF THE CLASS
STRUGGLE!
FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST
REVOLUTION!**

November, 14th 2015

Turkey: It is not elections and calls for peace, but the class war which alone can put an end to exploitation, oppression and repression!

On Saturday, October 10th, a terrible bombing attack struck the event organized by the «pro-Kurdish» HDP opposition party as a part of the election campaign, and including various formations of the left (such as the DISK trade union, the Union of Doctors, the Union of Architects, a union of civil servants etc.), for democracy, employment security and «peace» – that is to say the resumption of negotiations between the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party, a Kurdish nationalist organization engaged for years in guerrilla actions in Turkish Kurdistan), and government authorities. The outrage left about a hundred dead and over 240 injured. The organizers have denounced the government's responsibility in the attack.

And it certainly fits in a growing climate of political tension; last June there was an attack in Diyarbakir in Kudistan, against an electoral meeting of the HDP, leaving 4 dead and 400 injured; on July 20 a suicide bombing by a young Kurdish jihadist in Suruc a town on the border with Syria, killed 33 people at a rally of young Maoists who were close to the HDP. If the liability of the «Islamic State» appears proven in both cases, the long-term support of the ruling power toward this organization and its hostility to the Syrian Kurdish fighters in Kobanî, certainly leaves plenty of room for suspicions about the involvement of the authorities.

The AKP, the Islamic-conservative ruling party and President Erdogan, have repeatedly accused not only the PKK which has ended the lull in the fighting after the bombing of Suruc, but the HDP itself and its leader Demirtas of «terrorism». In recent weeks, dozens of public

meeting places of this party were attacked and sometimes even torched by thugs linked to the AKP without the police stopping them; on the contrary a criminal investigation has opened against Demirtas for *«insulting the Turkish people, institutions and organs of the State, the President»*, *«incitement to commit crimes and terrorism»* after in a press conference he had denounced the culpable passivity of the police! The government has also stepped up intimidation against the media and opposition journalists; the headquarters of the main opposition daily Hurriyet was attacked by demonstrators who were led by a member of the AKP, opposition TV stations were forced to close, etc.

On November 1 parliamentary elections will take place in Turkey, barely five months after the previous June which saw the AKP finish clearly in the lead (40.9% of votes). Although it was its fourth consecutive victory in the elections, the AKP, losing nearly 9% of the vote, missed the absolute majority that would allow it to achieve its objective of reforming the constitution to introduce a presidential system. The electoral thrust of the HDP, finishing for the first time with more than 10% of the votes at the national level is seen as the cause of the relative defeat of the AKP. In late August, following the failure of negotiations to form a coalition government, the legislative assembly was dissolved and the holding of new elections announced.

Numerous political analysts attribute the renewed clashes with PKK fighters and the «anti-terrorist» campaign to a maneuver by the government to stimulate a reflex of fear that would increase the electoral chances of the AKP. And

moreover Erdogan and other official dignitaries were not reticent in declaring that if the AKP had obtained 400 deputies (that is to say an absolute majority in Parliament), there would not have been this outbreak of violence...

However Turkish events cannot be reduced to mere electoral motifs, let alone the ambition of a man dreaming of becoming a new sultan. Turkey is facing growing problems and contradictions; and it is these that have had the effect of increasingly destabilizing the existing political equilibrium in the country since the early 2000s under the hegemony of the AKP.

CAPITALIST EXPLOITATION AND PROLETARIAN STRUGGLES IN TURKEY

Paradise for the capitalists (Istanbul has more billionaires than Paris), Turkey is a hell for the workers. It ranks second among OECD countries for income inequality, just ahead of Mexico. But there are also regional inequalities: in the Kurdish regions, which are less developed, the average family income is only 29% of family income in the capital Ankara.

Unemployment is rising, passing above 10% since the end of 2014. This figure may seem not very high, but it does not reflect reality because much of the workforce is employed in the «informal» sector; if this sector is mostly predominant in agriculture (90% of jobs are informal), it is widespread in all branches of the economy; in industry, according to official statistics (Turkstat), nearly a third of all jobs are informal, and this

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Turkey: It is not elections and calls for peace, but the class war which alone can put an end to exploitation, oppression and repression!

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percentage is much higher in the textile industry.

The proletarians who have informal jobs have virtually no social protection, they receive lower salaries and they can be laid off practically overnight. Employees usually work in small or very small firms that make up the majority of the country's businesses (55% of workers are employed in businesses with fewer than 10 employees), they bear the brunt of all of the economic uncertainties of which these companies are the first victims.

Generally Turkish salaries are low, including in the formal sector and in large companies. The average salary was estimated at 590 euros per month in 2014 (compared to 2597 in the United Kingdom, 2220 in France, 1615 in Spain, 1092 in Greece). The minimum wage has been set for 2015 at 424 euros per month (it is 1458 in France, 757 in Spain, 684 in Greece), but this is the gross salary; take-home pay is lower by about 30% due to the amount gobbled up by social charges; but on top of this a significant portion of workers are paid below the minimum wage: over 16% of men and over 25% of women putting in a normal working day (at least 8 hours) receive a salary 30% lower on average than the net minimum wage!

The working day is very long: the legal working time is 45 hours per week, but in 2011 more than 6 million people (more than 40% of the workforce) worked from 50 to 70 hours or more. Although the employment of children under 14 is prohibited, in 2012 there were almost 300 000 children 6-14 years working, particularly in agriculture where at harvest time children 10 years old work up to 11 hours a day. But even in industry those under the age of 18 are numerous: the proportion of those 14-18 years old has even increased from 16% to 28% between 1994 and 2006. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO, UN organization), the average working hours of children is among the highest in the world at 51 hours a week on average. Consequently, the number of children killed in the workplace was 38 in 2012.

Moreover, Turkey is the leading country in Europe for the number of work-place accidents, third worldwide, after Algeria and El Salvador, according to the ILO: on average three workers are

killed and 172 are injured every day. Miners are the most numerous among the victims of Turkish capitalism between 1955 and 2012, more than 3,000 miners died and over 360,000 were injured.

In May 2014 an explosion at a mine in Soma left 301 dead. Following this tragedy, clashes occurred in the city, especially when 10,000 demonstrators protesting against the lack of safety measures in the mine chanting «Erdogan resign!» clashed with police forces; the Ministry of Labor had stated that a recent inspection tour had found everything in order... A year later nine surviving children have been indicted by the court for having organized a protest and the blocking of a road in violation of the law; they face up to six years in prison...

In total in 2014 there were 1886 deaths in accidents at work, and these figures are official figures which probably leave out many of the accidents in the informal sector. They call them accidents, but it is rather a real bloody **class war** waged by the capitalists against the workers!

Inherited from the military regime, anti-strike laws are still in force; they enabled the suspension for 60 days of a strike by steelworkers at the beginning of this year and a strike in the ceramics industry in June, in the name of «national security»...

But this anti-worker legislation could not prevent the wave of wildcat strikes that hit the automobile industry in May and that originated in the Bursa agglomeration. The movement was started at the Renault plant by agitation against the collective contract signed by the official union Turk Metal and for an alignment with the contract signed at Bosch (a 20% wage increase) after a few days of striking; thugs of this yellow union went so far as to attack a gathering of workers, provoking the wrath of all workers.

Starting off from Renault, the strike spread to other automotive companies and other cities; Fiat, Ford, Tofas, Valeo, etc., more than 15,000 workers came into struggle despite the opposition of Turk Metal and the agitation even won over other sectors. Despite threats and repression (47 workers arrested by police and hauled up to justice for organizing an illegal strike), the workers stood firm and finally with the threat of widespread conflict, the bosses and the government yielded. After 2 weeks of striking, Renault workers obtained wage increases, the abandonment of prosecutions, and

especially the right to join the union of their choice. A vivid demonstration that resolute workers' struggle is capable of facing down the capitalists and their State, as repressive as it might be!

The growing economic difficulties in Turkey are felt not only by the proletariat, but also by large sectors of the population, even with real estate speculation in full swing and corruption scandals spilling over on to the president's family. This is what explains the importance assumed in 2013 by the protests against the products of destruction of Gezi Park in Istanbul: this movement, of a clearly petty-bourgeois orientation has been able to garner hundreds of thousands of people throughout the country like the «outraged» movement that took place in many countries. The HDP has undoubtedly managed to capitalize electorally on some of this discontent.

THE KURDISH QUESTION

The Kurdish question is an important factor in domestic politics but also outside Turkey. Always suspected of separatism, subject to political and social discrimination reinforced by the military after the 1980 coup, according to estimates the Kurds constitute 15-20% of the population of the country. The Kurdish regions are the poorest and least economically developed in Turkey, causing a strong emigration to other regions and abroad: an important part of the Turkish proletariat, including those emigrating to Europe are Kurds. The «Kurdish question» has become a central question of the proletarian struggle: the resolute struggle against all discriminations and repressions against Kurds, for the full equality of rights, is essential to weld the ranks of the Turkish proletariat. For their part the bourgeois obviously inflame divisions, sparking and fueling nationalism and patriotism and leading repeated Turkish campaigns against «terrorism», to weaken the working class by creating a gap between Kurdish and non-Kurdish proletarians.

Based on the real national oppression of the Kurds, the PKK began a guerrilla campaign in 1984 for the independence of the region. The conflict has resulted in tens of thousands of deaths; more than 3,000 villages have been destroyed by the army, causing, according to official figures, the «displacement» of more than 375,000 people driven from their homes and reduced to the status of homeless. This brutal and constant repression by the police, military and judges against any Kurdish expression, even the most reformist, pushed many Kurds to sympathize with the PKK.

Although it calls itself a workers'

party and claims to want socialism, the PKK embodies a bourgeois nationalist response to oppression, which had been aggravated by the 1980 coup. Its «socialism» was a version of the state capitalism existing in China or the USSR, and for a time it sought support from Moscow; but after the fall of the USSR, the PKK soon abandoned its pseudo-socialist discourse to swear its respect for Islamic values.

Then it bartered the demand for independence down to that of a simple autonomy of the Kurdish regions in Turkey as part of a cantonal organization of the country: the «democratic confederalism»: a pure bourgeois perspective!

Breaking with the usual policy of Turkish governments, and despite the hostility of nationalist circles, the military and even some of his supporters, the AKP ended some discrimination against the Kurds and the police and judicial harassment which were common before; it entered into negotiations with the PKK which, despite not having reached a final agreement, had led to the end of guerrilla actions.

But in recent months the Erdogan government had again taken up the traditional anti-Kurdish rhetoric. This was not for electoral considerations, because the AKP has lost its Kurdish supporters in this affair without gaining nationalist voters.

In reality what the Turkish ruling class fears most is any creation of an autonomous Kurdish state entity on the Syrian border because it might fuel separatist outbreaks among the dispossessed Kurdish masses of Turkey. The defense not only of the unity of the country, but above all of the undisturbed rule of capitalist order not only in the poor southern peripheral regions, but in the big cities and factories of Anatolia or the Bosphorus, requires, in the Turkish bourgeois view, that Syrian Kurds fail to conquer actual or juridical independence.

That is why the Turkish government did everything it could to leave Kurdish fighters of the YPG (related PKK) in Kobanî isolated against those of the Islamic State (IS), thus bloodily repressing solidarity demonstrations in October 2014 (more than 30 dead). It has long refused to engage militarily against the IS and when it finally officially resolved to do so under US pressure and authorized the use of its airfields by the anti-IS coalition it actually directed most of its strikes against PKK positions in Iraq and Turkey, also in Syria.

According to the Turkish authorities by mid-October the balance sheet of the resumption of fighting with the PKK in July resulted in over 150 dead among the

police and military, while more than 2,000 «terrorists» were killed.

THE HDP, TURKISH SYRIZA

The HDP (People's Democratic Party) is a party of mainly Kurdish origin, close to the PKK, often described as the legal front of the party. But in fact it gathers within itself various small groups and leftist parties, environmentalists, Maoists, Trotskyists, etc. which allowed it to have a national audience and made for comparisons with the Greek Syriza party. Garnering 13% of the vote in parliamentary elections in June it for the first time crossed the 10% barrier, which allowed it to obtain parliamentary deputies (80). The European «left of the left» hailed the electoral success with almost as much enthusiasm as it had done for the electoral victories of Syriza...

The HDP practices a strict parity and quota policy: it has two «co-presidents», a man and a woman, its candidates for election are 50% male and 50% female, and it reserves 10% of its candidate positions for LGBT people (Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Trans-sexual). It does not hesitate to speak of self-management, the fight against the exploitation of workers and to sometimes make anti-capitalist speeches, etc...

But it's basically an inter-classist, reformist party. Officially associated with the «Party of European Socialists» (a grouping of Social Democratic MEPs), it wants to democratize Turkey by introducing a new constitution that would guarantee the rights of minorities. The HDP has served as an intermediary in the negotiations that took place in 2013 between the PKK and the government, and it has long believed in the possibility of resuming negotiations. Therefore, even though the government had resumed the war with the PKK, and the AKP and Erdogan has multiplied the denunciations of «Kurdish terrorism», with the Prime Minister openly accusing the HDP of complicity, and although it had denounced the «criminal actions of the AKP», the HDP did not hesitate to enter the interim government formed by the AKP to run the country until new elections!

This does not spare it from the accusations of media close to the AKP and Erdogan himself of supporting terrorism, nor has it avoided the attacks against its public meeting places; its ministers and deputies were prevented by police from visiting the town of Cizre subject to a military blockade, etc. Cornered in an increasingly untenable position, the HDP was finally forced to withdraw from the government, just weeks after its formation.

This experience speaks volumes about what can be expected from this party, not only by the workers, but the poor masses in general, including Kurds: just like Syriza and like all reformist parties, the HDP can ultimately only prostrate itself to bourgeois demands and to defend national capitalism.

The reformist, collaborationist parties, who have only the watchwords of *peace* and *democracy* on their lips, are **adversaries** of proletarian emancipation; they are not on the workers' side, but on the side of the exploiters even when they are the target of reactionary bourgeois forces as in Chile yesterday or today in Turkey. The proletarians cannot rely on these false friends who always betray to defend them. In Turkey as elsewhere, they can only rely on their own class struggle, on their independent class organization in terms of the immediate defense struggle as well as on the political level.

The situation of Turkish proletariat is not easy, they are confronted with a particularly brutal state, which to ensure the smooth functioning of capitalism, uses all means, legal and illegal, passing alternately and in parallel from the democratic method to the dictatorial method of government.

The horrible massacre of Ankara, coming after previous attacks and atrocities, again demonstrates that calls for peace are only window dressing and the electoral circus a deadly impasse. Faced with the contradictions that rend capitalist Turkey and, to an even greater degree, the neighboring Middle Eastern countries, if they do not want to remain the eternal victims of the capitalists and their State, the workers have no other choice but to fight, and on an independent class basis.

Faced with the social war carried on by the bourgeois, they will need to engage, under the leadership of their internationalist and international class party, the class war against capitalism that, overcoming all ethnic, religious and national divisions, goes beyond national borders to engulf the entire region.

The social weight that the very development of capitalism in recent years has given the proletariat of Turkey is the guarantee that it has the potential strength to accomplish this great future task, in conjunction with the proletarians of all countries.

**Down with capitalism!
Long live the class war!
Long live the international communist revolution!**

Global Capitalism Heads Back Towards Crisis

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fell back into recession (-1.6% per annum), due to the decline of the domestic market and declining exports.

European countries have benefited, as did the United States, in the fall in prices of raw materials, but also in terms of the countries of the euro area, the so-called policy of «quantitative easing» of the Bank European Central Bank. But despite this tremendous shot in the arm, the European economies remain anemic. The latest available figures (for July) show a decrease (of course «unexpected» for economists!) of industrial production in Germany, France and Great Britain.

But it is in the so-called «emerging» countries that the situation is really bad.

In **Russia**, a large oil exporter and gas, the recession that was already present at the end of last year, has accentuated in recent months: the second quarter 2015 GDP was down 4.5% (per annum). The government managed to stop the fall of the ruble, but it has not been able to contain inflation, which reached 15.8% (annually) in August.

In **Brazil**, the recession is the primary cause of the serious political crisis that has caused governmental quasi-paralysis: hundreds of thousands of people, mostly belonging to the petty-bourgeois strata threatened with poverty by the crisis, demonstrated demanding the resignation of President Dilma Rousseff. Economic experts from the Brazilian

Nearly 7 years after the economic crisis that broke out in 2008, storm clouds are gathering again in the capitalist skies. While the famous economic recovery after that crisis has been anything but flamboyant, major international economic institutions (IMF, OECD, etc.) from the end of last summer, continue to revise their «predictions» for growth for 2015 downward, even starting to talk about the risk of relapse of the global economy into crisis, but believe this an unlikely event.

Other smaller organizations not subject to the requirement of not damaging the «confidence» of the «economic operators» in the good health of the global economy or by diplomatic concerns, are more pessimistic; a certain Institute for economic forecasting has even calculated the risk of a plunge into a new global recession in 2015 at 65% (1) – while the IMF estimated the probability of a recession at only 40%, and this only in the euro zone (2).

These figures make one smile. Bourgeois economists are unable to understand and therefore to predict the functioning of the capitalist economy. Despite the continuing avalanche of figures and statistics, all the economic crises that have occurred, beginning with the last, took them by surprise... Therefore we accord no more confi-

Central Bank believe that the decline in GDP should be 2% this year and inflation at 9%. But the real figures are likely to be worse; this is what probably motivated the rating agencies that have relegated Brazilian long-term loans to the rank of «junk bonds».

And following the Brazilian giant, the whole of South America is about to enter a recession, not only Venezuela and Argentina which are already experiencing a marked economic crisis; according to a report by ECLAC (Economic Commission For Latin America and Caribbean) in July, the whole continent was struck by the economic «slow-down».

We have left **China** for the last; there the economic downturn is denied by the government which states that the economy will grow at a rate of 7% this year. Journalists who dare to say or write otherwise are dragged in front of the courts for «spreading false news» or forced into humiliating self-criticisms on public television. But the reality is there and it is this which explains the fall in the Shanghai and Shenzhen stock exchanges, as well as the surprise devaluation of the Chinese currency that caused a wave of panic this summer in global stock markets. Despite the opacity of official statistics, several clues hint that the Chinese economy is falling back: lower production of steel, cement, lower power outputs, lower imports and exports, etc.

Global capitalism is thus moving towards a new global economic crisis. This means that the proletarians will inevitably face a repetition of capitalist attacks. They will have to answer in all countries by the only means at their disposal: the generalized class struggle against capitalism!

* * *

dence to those institutions that constantly affirm that everything will improve, as we do to those much less numerous economists who have specialized in the darkest forecasts. But the institutes and other economic organizations have the capacity – this is why they were created! – to register economic evolution.

SLOWDOWN OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

And in the last months they report an international economic slowdown, although this slowdown is variable according to the country and regions. It is the sharpest in Japan, which is the second capitalist country in the world (even if only quantitatively, China, gigantic but backwards from the point of view of capitalist development, is overtaking it) entered into recession since last spring; and figures published in early December indicate that this recession is deepening: GDP (Gross Domestic Product) declined by an almost 2% annual rate in the third quarter, while the decline was only 1.8% in the second. The famous New Economic Policy of Prime Minister Abe («Abenomics»), which was supposed to lift Japan out of the doldrums (since 2008 the country has not seen any real re-

turn to growth), has clearly failed. This decline of the Japanese economy is attributed to the weakness of the internal market and, despite the decline in the yen, and to sluggish exports «because of the stagnation of world trade» (3).

DOWNTURN IN EUROPE

The second weak point in the international economy is the European Union (and in particular the euro zone), which taken alone constitutes the largest global market. The GDP in the area fell in 2012, before resuming laboriously in 2013. A slowdown became noticeable early in 2014, before growth registered a sudden halt in the second quarter. But in reality the situation in Europe is more complex, depending on the country. We have on one side Great Britain, which has not adopted the common currency, not only because its economic and financial ties with the United States are still very strong, but also for fear of diluting the financial center of London in the European ensemble with the renunciation of the *pound*. It is experiencing significant growth, parallel to that of the United States; while in the Euro area, Germany which saw a sharp slow-down (even experiencing a decline in its GDP

in the second quarter of 2014) emerged from the crisis of 2008 with renewed strength: it has practically eliminated its budget deficit, it continues to have a trade surplus, and it has significantly reduced its debt: this puts it in a strong position to demand that its partners «clean up» their economies. For now Germany has officially escaped the recession, as well as France where however GDP growth is little or none. By contrast Italy, the third-largest economy in the euro zone, experienced its third successive year of recession.

Because of divergent economic developments in the different countries that make up the euro zone, the economic crisis has led to considerable tension within it, to the point of momentarily leaving doubt as to its viability. In addition to the case of the Greece, the crisis has had the highest negative consequences on Portugal, Ireland and Spain, which have had to rely on the so-called «troika» (IMF, European Central Bank and European Commission) for «rescue» plans consisting of austerity measures, social cuts, liquidation of unprofitable sectors to restore their accounts, in return for loans with (relatively) low interest rates.

Economists and European political leaders put forward the Spanish case as the demonstration that «austerity works»: the country has indeed resumed growth (as has Ireland), unlike Greece where particularly harsh austerity there has not produced «positive» results. But this growth is relative, Spain is still far from having recovered economically to pre-crisis levels; and above all the price paid by the masses in general and the proletarians in particular in terms of unemployment and falling wages, poverty and insecurity, is obviously not taken into account!

FRANCE AND ITALY

In addition to these countries, the economic situation in France and Italy, respectively the second and third economies in the euro zone, is raising concerns among international capitalists (which caused the lowering of their «credit rating» by international «rating» agencies carrying out analyses of the economic risk of individual economies). Despite the optimistic rhetoric of the government, the French economy is stagnant; it continues to lose market share to its competitors and it is unable to reduce its trade deficit, its budget deficit or public debt.

Despite the important pro-business steps already taken, both German offi-

cials, the European Commission and the MEDEF (the employers organization) asked the French government to implement its commitments in budget measures and engage more decisively in «reforms» (read: anti-worker attacks), savings (read: reduction in public spending, especially pensions, unemployment benefits, etc.) and austerity. The Hollande government is not opposed in principle, no doubt, but it knows that too powerful austerity measures would lead to open recession. It is also concerned that too harsh anti-worker attacks might lead to proletarian reactions which would be difficult to control.

Things are similar for Italy; but the difference is that if the «sovereign debt» is significantly higher (equivalent to 135% of GDP, against 96% for France), which imposes a heavier burden on the budget, Italian industry, more powerful and dynamic than the French, allows the country to maintain and increase its exports, producing a trade surplus and therefore budget revenues.

But given the weakness of the domestic market, the relatively strong performance of exports for the Italian economy (goods and services) is not enough to save it from recession. It's the reason why the Renzi government, while pursuing an anti-social policy, including in the labor market (the «Jobs Act»), also hesitates to reduce indebtedness; to engage in brutal austerity measures that would have a negative effect on economic activity. Like the French Government it pleads for a European economic recovery effort; of which there are many, like the latest, the so-called «Junker plan», that is, for a miraculous return of «growth»: the Junker plan is really just so much eye-wash.

SLOWDOWN OF THE «EMERGING» COUNTRIES

The so-called «emerging» countries (using today's fashionable jargon), are large formerly underdeveloped countries, which in recent years have experienced rapid development and growth. There is nothing surprising in this phenomenon that has been common to all countries, while it was once presented as a demonstration of the «socialist» nature of the USSR and other State capitalist countries: our party devoted many studies to show that these high «Stalinist» growth rates, had once characterized the economy of Japan or the United States...! Once arriving at maturity, the developed capitalist economies experience slower growth

rates, even though there are huge masses of capital that are involved in each production cycle.

At the top of the list of the emerging countries are; Brazil, Russia, India, and China (the so-called «BRIC» group), Russia, the former second world power, having been reduced to the level of the emerging countries after the disintegration of the USSR.

If the statistics indicate that India is still growing, this growth is experiencing a particularly severe downturn (growth is half of that before the crisis): around 4.5%, its lowest growth rate since the beginning of this century. The new government of the reactionary Modi, is attempting to revive growth through measures of economic liberalization (which lead to major strikes in the coal industry), while its secret services released a report that attributed the economic difficulties to environmental organizations funded from abroad (4)!

Brazil, by contrast, is clearly in recession now; it is the same with a Russia hit hard by falling prices in oil (of which in 2013 it was probably the largest global producer) and also, though

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« II Comunista »

Nr.139 - Giugno 2015

Nell'interno

- Solo la loro unione di classe darà una prospettiva di vita ai proletari migranti e ai proletari autoctoni
- Il mito della Resistenza partigiana tiene accesa la fiamma del nazionalismo, del patriottismo, del sostegno al potere della classe dominante borghese, sotto il cui giogo è prigioniera la classe del proletariato, in pace come in guerra.
- Resoconto sommario della riunione generale di Milano del 24-25 gennaio 2015:
 - La rivoluzione proletaria è internazionale e internazionale sarà la trasformazione socialista dell'economia (Resoconto sommario della riunione generale di Milano del 24-25 gennaio 2015)
 - Quadro generale delle contraddizioni interimperialistiche a seguito della crisi 2007-2008
- La grande bestemmia del «socialismo in un solo paese»
- Come ti massacrano Lenin
- Partito e «questione sindacale»
- La teoria marxista della moneta (5). Il credito bancario, o il credito alla terza potenza
- La banca centralizza il capitale denaro, depositato o circolante che sia (K. Marx, "Il Capitale")
- Per un doveroso chiarimento

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Global Capitalism Heads Back Towards Crisis

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not as severely, by Western sanctions over the Ukraine; Russia should experience a deep recession, minus 4% growth, according to official forecasts, and probably more in reality. The collapse of the ruble, parallel to that of oil, also risks serious damage to Russian financial institutions.

China is experiencing a sharp economic slowdown. Beijing authorities had predicted that the country would reach 7.5% growth in 2014 and indeed official figures released at the end of last year were almost at this level: 7.3% (which would still be the lowest figure in 24 years!). But in general China specialists are rather skeptical about the reality of official figures and if some believe there is already zero growth, more and more people are expecting a «brutal» slowdown in China's economy this year, if only because of the risk of the gigantic housing bubble bursting (5). Already the government has been forced to come to the aid of some banks, while the Shanghai stock market has plunged...

Whatever the cause, the slowing-down of the Chinese economy, the world's largest exporter, is the logical consequence of the weakness of the international market. Indeed its domestic market is still too little developed to absorb the goods that it produces and overproduction is evident in most of the industrial sectors as well as in real estate. It cannot therefore in any way serve as a locomotive for the world economy, which used to be stated repeatedly not so long ago...

DRUGGED AMERICAN GROWTH

Compared to that of the countries that we have reviewed so far, the situation of the United States seems brilliant. Bourgeois commentators continue to point towards the sound example of the homeland of economic liberalism, as against a «sclerotic» Europe where the workers stubbornly oppose «reforms» that too soft politicians lack the courage to impose: liberalize the labor market, remove the social measures that impede entrepreneurship, and the economy will recover just as in America! This refrain is sung to the proletarians in all the languages of Europe (and outside Europe).

It is undeniable that the United States is experiencing growth that is the envy of the other major countries.

The latest published statistics indicate that in third quarter of 2014, the rate of growth of the GDP had been the highest since 2003 and the unemployment rate had continued to fall (5.6% in December, the lowest level since June 2008): the United States has created nearly 3 million jobs in 2014 (6); the budget deficit fell below 3% of GDP, the trade deficit was slightly reduced (US trade has been in deficit since 1976), industrial production, uniquely among the states of the «G7» has exceeded the pre-crisis level (helped by the boom in shale gas), profits remain high. Does the United States then qualify as the much sought-after engine of the global economy?

This is not the opinion of the World Bank; in its forecasts published at the beginning of this year, while not speaking of recession, it still lowers its forecast of international growth, which, according to its report, is facing «major risks»; it estimates that the global economy is functioning on a single engine, the U.S. engine, which is fraught with dangers (7).

Some economists make a parallel with the beginning of this century, where the rest of the world was already in recession or severe slowdown while the United States, driven by the boom of «new technologies» and the internet, ignoring this situation, seemed to head towards growth records. We now know better: what occurred instead was the collapse of the stock market «bubble» in 2001 and their ensuing plunge into recession which they only came out of by widespread use of the «credit economy» and military expenditures of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The 2008 crisis broke out in full force when the most «risky» credits (the famous «subprimes») could not be repaid given the new economic slowdown in the United States, resulting in the collapse of banks and financial institutions that had issued them on a large scale.

It took massive State intervention to first stop the financial system from collapsing and then to restart the economy by increasing public debt; this debt has reached new peacetime highs, but with mixed results, including in the United States. The former head of the Fed (the Federal Reserve, the US Central Bank), Alan Greenspan, an astute observer if there is any, thinks that if *«the United States are better off than the rest of the world»*, *«our economy still idling»* (8). And in fact, US growth was directly dependent on the injection of hundreds of billions of dollars into the economy by the Fed (the policy of so-called «quantitative easing»,

which amounts to printing money and bringing down interest rates to zero or almost zero).

This liquidity would be used to stimulate economic recovery by making even more credit available – actually it is estimated for example that the recovery in the US auto market is linked to widespread loans at very low interest rates to buyers, including «risky» loans of the «subprime» style; but as the engorgement of the markets made it difficult to find profitable investment opportunities in the so-called «real economy», it was also used to power various speculations and the artificial growth of the stock market that threaten to lead one day or another to a crash. As Marx wrote, *«the credit system can figure as the main lever of over-production and commercial superspeculation»* because it tends to maximize the reproduction of capital; accelerating the material development of the productive forces, *«credit at the same time accelerates violent explosions [«of the contradictory nature of capitalist production»], crises and thus the elements that dissolve the old mode of production»* (9).

The total debt of the United States was 1.9 times GDP in 1980 (on the eve of the 1981-82 crisis) and has increased sharply since; it was 4.6 times GDP in 2007 and today it is 5.2 times greater than GDP (10): the figures show that the massive use of debt is key to the economy's growth which threatens to fall into a coma if the dose of this drug is restricted. But living on credit, it becomes more fragile and prone to crisis...

FREEFALL OF OIL PRICES

But perhaps some might object that the drop in the price of oil is very good news for real economic growth in the world! This is certainly what political leaders and all the economists tell us, even going as far as calculating the additional percentage points of growth entailed by the fall in the price of oil. Certainly a drop in the value of the raw materials it uses, allows the capitalist enterprise to reduce its production costs and therefore either increase its rate of profit, or to lower its prices in order to conquer new markets. And in one case as in the other to regain health.

But in reality this veritable collapse in oil prices (nearly a 50% decline at the end of 2014 when compared to summer of the same year) is a consequence of the global economic downturn; and therefore the short-term economic

gains will be offset by the new crisis it foretells. Indeed, contrary to some assertions, the decline in oil prices is not caused by the will of the Saudis, supposedly to fight against the new US shale gas producers or, under US pressure, to destabilize Russia, Venezuela or Iran, but by overproduction and falling demand.

And besides it is not only oil that has fallen, but a series of raw materials, iron ore having experienced the biggest drop, greater than that of oil, like coal, copper and other metals, and agricultural commodities such as rubber, cotton, sugar, cereals, etc. (11). Countries producing these commodities and especially oil-producing countries for whom it is often their main export resource end up in big trouble. Venezuela, which has the most significant proven resources in the world, is on the verge of default; its president has made, without success, a tour of the producer countries to try to cut back production until oil once again reaches the \$100 price necessary not to balance the budget (for that the price would need to reach \$160!), but to allow it to honor its financial commitments without difficulty. However, experts now believe that in 2015 the average price will remain around 50 dollars! Similarly Iran would need a \$130 price, Iraq \$114, and Russia \$110 to balance their budgets (12)...

FEAR OF DEFLATION, FEAR OF CRISIS

A new threat haunts European leaders: that of deflation, which is the lowering of prices. The drop in commodity prices strikes directly at the capitalists, while it reduces the cost of living for the workers. Any major economic crisis sees the emergence of deflation because in order to dispose of the goods they can no longer sell, capitalists are forced to lower their prices, cutting down on their profits, the indispensable factor of the capitalist cycle: fear of deflation is therefore nothing other than the fear of the crisis of overproduction. To ward this off the European Central Bank will fully embrace the road followed by the Americans, along which until now it had only taken a few steps: *quantitative easing*, the creation of cash to make even more credit accessible and to lower the value of the euro, making European goods less expensive than those of their competitors. Faced with this prospect the Swiss National Bank decided unexpectedly on Jan. 15 to abandon its policy of a rate floor for the Swiss franc against the euro, running the risk of

plunging the economy into recession and, in the meantime, risking triggering a storm in the foreign exchange markets: within moments the value of the Swiss franc rose by 30% compared to the euro. The SNB was the world's biggest buyer of euros, probably followed by the Central Bank of Japan. The Japanese, who are also facing deflation, have already taken various measures to reduce the value of their currency; this means that we are heading towards an exasperation of competition in a global market already overburdened by overproduction, of which a currency war could be one of the most spectacular manifestations. Korea thus became one of the first victims of the weaker yen, causing it to lose market share as against Japan in various sectors.

ATTACKS AGAINST THE PROLETARIAT

The 2008 crisis resulted in a sharp deterioration of the conditions of the proletariat in the developed capitalist countries. First, of course, came rising unemployment due to bankruptcies and business closures as well as of the

«restructuring» variety. The unemployment rate varies from country to country; the figures given by the *Eurostat* agency earlier this year indicated an unemployment rate of 25.7% for Greece, 23.9% in Spain, 13.9% in Portugal, 13.4% for Italy, 10.3% in France, against only 5% for Germany, 5.9% in Britain (September figures) and 5.8% for the United States.

Looking more closely, we find that much of the decline in unemployment in Britain is due to the «zero hour contracts»: under this type of contract workers are not registered as unemployed but have no guarantee of work in the month, they have no minimum wage, no sick pay or holiday pay and may not work for another employer, they are bound hand and foot to their boss! The number of workers under this type of contract has increased by 137% from 2012 to 2013, there were about 1,400,000 in early 2014; almost half the companies with more than 250 people have had recourse to these «contracts» (13).

Similar situations are to be found in other countries in (e.g. in Germany, with

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Irresistible Indebtedness

The debt of various countries in the world has increased significantly since the crisis of 2008. In relation to GDP (which is a convenient measure, but that says nothing of the real cost of the debt, that is to say, the resources required for its repayment), we had a debt equivalent to 165% of global GDP in 2001; it amounted to 195% of it in 2008 and is up to 215% today (1): the drug of credit is always necessary for the capitalist economy. That is why the bourgeois leaders strive to provide easier and cheaper credit (lower interest rates), especially when it comes to restarting the economy today, the measures called «quantitative easing» (monetary easing) mean decreasing interest rates (for banks!) to almost zero: a quasi-desperate measure to revive the economic machine...

Usually countries are ranked according to their state debt (sovereign debt), because it is this which is borne by the state budget (unfortunately the statistics on this are very hard to find for large countries) (2), which requires most of them to resort to international loans; but if we classify them according to their total debt (private debt plus state debt, households and enterpris-

es, including financial companies), the most highly **indebted** economies in 2013 were as follows (we indicate sovereign debt in parentheses) (1):

Ireland:	1026%	(124%)
Netherlands:	636%	(74%)
Japan:	562%	(243%)
Portugal:	507%	(129%)
Britain:	495%	(90%)
Belgium:	408%	(102%)
Sweden:	422%	(41%)
Spain:	394%	(94%)
France:	347%	(94%)
USA:	362%	(105%)
Italy:	352%	(133%)
Greece:	317%	(175%)
Canada:	374%	(89%)
Germany:	265%	(78%)

(1) cf: Geneva Reports on the World Economy No. 16, September 2014. www.cpr.org

(2) Although debt increased, due to lower interest rates on debt service in France, it rose only enough to comprise the second largest expenditure on the budget for 2015 (11%), it had ranked as the largest since 2011. The debt service is estimated to be equivalent to about 5% of GDP in Greece, 4.7% in Italy and 3.2% in Spain (source: *Der Spiegel*, 02/02/15 and *L'Usine Nouvelle*, 1/30/15)

Global Capitalism Heads Back Towards Crisis

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odd jobs paying only 450 euros per month, without pension contributions: 4.8 million workers have only such contracts to live on!).

In the United States, a significant number of the so-called «discouraged» unemployed are no longer registered in unemployment statistics: this number was estimated at no less than 6 million in December! If they were included, the US unemployment rate would be above 9%...

The wages of workers who still have jobs are also targeted. A study by the International Labor Office, a UN organization (14), shows that wages in Greece have declined by almost 25% from 2007 to 2013! For other countries, taking 100 as the base for the year 2007 which preceded the crisis, wages have decreased by 7% in the UK (a 92.9 level in 2013); in Italy they rested at 94.3, in Spain 96.8, at 98.7 in Japan; there has been small increases in the United States (101.4), France (102.3) and Germany (102.7).

We should immediately clarify that this is the «average» salary. But wage disparities have increased after the crisis according to all international surveys; this is particularly the case in the United States, where the average industrial wage has lowered over a decade (a 4% decrease in average hourly earnings between 2003 and 2013). This means that even when escaping unemployment, the lowest paid part of the proletariat, (whether composed of women, minorities such as blacks in the United States, precarious workers, etc.) experienced a serious deterioration in living conditions, even in the richest capitalist countries.

This situation is not expected to change. Indeed the international economic institutions whose role is to synthesize capitalist aspirations, such as the OECD, the World Bank or the IMF call for the accentuation of measures from the private sector and «reforms» to reduce «structural constraints» and «rigidities in the labor market» which are a «brake on growth»; what this jargon of the bourgeois economists really means, is that it is necessary to make the proletariat further submit to capital's requirements, notably by attacking such «archaisms» as fixed-term contracts, «too generous» unemployment benefits, pensions which are too large and indexed to the cost of living,

early retirement, etc.

In brief: the relapse of the global economy into a new recession will inevitably mean a worsening of attacks against the proletariat. It will be up to the proletariat to take in hand the response to this uninterrupted hail of blows that have struck down upon it for years, through movements dedicated solely to defend its own interests.

As we said in the conclusion of a study done by our party after the 1958 recession:

The workers do not have to choose between a capitalism without crisis and capitalism in crisis; we have to fight – and this struggle does not come into being solely because of the crisis, but through a political force which keeps in its vision the dictatorship, the central point of Marx's discoveries – to put an end to capitalism, with or without a crisis, whether in inflation or in deflation (15)

Only a return to the independent class struggle carried out by proletarian organizations and led by the class party will be able to break the infernal cycle of capitalism which, from crisis to crisis, sows wars and destruction of all types on the planet, leading inexorably toward a third world war.

(1) <http://www.lesoir.be/712672/article/economie/2014-11-20/une-recession-mondiale-65-risque>. What's interesting about these kind of pseudo-scientific «predictions» is to show the growing concern in certain bourgeois circles.

(2) «World Economic Outlook», October 2014. <http://www.imf.org/external/french/pubs/ft/weo/2014/02/pdf/textf.pdf>

(3) *Eco Perspectives*, BNP Paribas, 4th Quarter 2014.

(4) <http://www.novethic.fr/entre-social/droits-humains/isr-rse/inde-les-ong-accusees-de-casser-la-croissance-142649.html>

(5) <http://www.boursorama.com/actualites/vers-un-ralentissement-brutal-de-l-economie-chinoise-en-2015—par-jean-luc-buchalet-cercle-des-analystes-independants>

(6) BBC, 1/11-12/2015

(7) <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2015/01/13/global-economic-prospects-improve-2015-divergent-trends-pose-downside-risks>

(8) <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-12-30/greenspan-throws-a-wet-blanket-on-hopes-for-u-s-growth-breakout.html>

(9) Marx, Capital, Book III, ch 37. *Ed. Sociales* 1976 p. 412-413.

(10) <http://criseusa.blog.lemonde.fr/2014/05/28/endettement-et-croissance->

aux-usa-les-illusions-keynesiennes-2eme-partie/

(11) *Les Echos*, 12/30/2014

(12) *Financial Times*, 11/09/2014. The extraction of oil from Canadian tar sands are profitable at \$ 100 a barrel, the deepwater well (Angola, Brazil, Norway, Great Britain) at \$ 80; regarding US oil shale gas production costs would range from 40 to 115 dollars a barrel. Consequently the oil industry has strongly decreased its investments and proceeded to thousands of layoffs.

(13) <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/lmac/contracts-with-no-guaranteed-hours/zero-hours-contracts/art-zero-hours.html#tab-4>—How-many-no-guaranteed-hours-contracts—NGHCs

(14) ILO, «Global Wage Report 2014-2105», p.7

(15) *Il Programma Comunista* No. 9/1958

Unemployment rate

(December 2014)

According to the EU statistical office Eurostat, there were, at the end of 2014, 24 million unemployed in the European Union (of which 18 million were in the euro zone proper).

Here we examine, for some of these countries and for the United States, Canada, Japan and Brazil, the unemployment rate of the active labor force in general, and for the European countries, those under the age of 25 as well:

Germany:	4.8%	7.2%
Belgium:	8.4%	21.9%
Spain:	23.7%	51.4%
France:	10.3%	25.2%
Greece:	25.8%	50.6% (October)
Ireland:	13.5%	21.6%
Italy:	12.9%	42%
Poland:	8%	22.6%
Portugal:	13.4%	34.5%
Britain:	5.9%	16.7% (October)
US:	5.6%	
Canada:	6.7%	
Japan:	3.4%	
Brazil:	4.3%	

It should be noted that the unemployment statistics in Japan are very controversial because of the method used and some experts believe it would be necessary to at least double the official figure to make a valid comparison with other countries. Similarly, in Brazil many unemployed are not counted, and the real unemployment rate is probably at least double the official rate. We have not reported the official Chinese rate which has the bureaucratic characteristic of being invariable!

The slaughter of the migrants drowned in the Mediterranean continues!

Another terrible demonstration that bourgeois governments, whether democratic or authoritarian, can never address the causes of these tragedies.

It is capitalism that we must drown!

(Continuation from page 1)

protesters beaten or killed, ships adrift with their cargo of people, most of whom are not even able to swim.

Thus, Sunday, April 9 a boat which had embarked from the Egyptian coast and containing more than 1,000 migrants sank off Libya: 28 passengers were rescued and 24 bodies were found; as to the 950 others they disappeared without a trace! A merchant ship had approached the boat to come to its aid, when migrants are said to have moved en masse to one side, causing it to capsize; in addition to those on the deck the ship consisted of two more covered decks where passengers crammed by traffickers were locked on to keep them from going up on deck: in a moment's time the boat turned into a giant coffin!

These deaths are part of a long series of thousands of deaths in the Mediterranean, transformed into a gigantic cemetery. The first mass sinking of migrants was on Christmas eve of 1996 when a boat carrying Indians, Pakistanis and Sinhalese sank in the Strait of Sicily: the death toll was estimated at 283; in 2011 between 500 and 700 Tunisians were killed according to «unofficial» estimates, but the true figure is possibly many more; on October 3, 2013 a shipwreck off Lampedusa island caused 368 deaths, etc. The UN states that more than 3,000 migrants died in the Mediterranean last year and more than 1,500 since the beginning of this year!

But the media acknowledge that these figures describe only a part of the reality, because many similar tragedies remain undiscovered: many boats embarking from Egypt, Libya or Tunisia have never arrived anywhere, sinking without leaving any trace, although the navies of any of the Mediterranean countries, thanks to modern technology, could have discovered them in time.

Faced with these «sea tragedies», the governments of the rich European

countries, starting with Italy, beat their breasts, casting forth cries to heaven against the «cynicism», the «indifference», the «speculation» the «human trafficking», the «slavery of the XXIth century»; they urge each other to do something, to act, «including by armed force» to prevent the trafficking in human flesh! They invoke the European institutions, the UN, the Security Council, as if these institutions were anything but the emanations of bourgeois governments, as if the representatives of these governments are not sitting in office to defend this or that particular interest.

And the interests to which the most powerful countries in the world can come to an agreement, but only temporarily, are certainly not those of the millions of arms and mouths reduced to hunger and despair; rather they are the interests of business, of the exploitation of natural resources through the exploitation of human labor power; and for these interests, insofar as the crisis of the capitalist mode of production has wiped out «economic prosperity», there is no war which cannot be unleashed, no abuse that cannot be committed, no repression and violence that cannot be justified, no tragedies that cannot occur. Under these conditions even the «slavery of the XXIth century» can be useful to the economic powers which have subjected entire populations, to the extent that such tragedies are kept within limits tolerable to the so-called «international community». But if those limits are exceeded and if these tragedies begin to inconvenience the leaders of «democratic» Europe, then they start screaming that «Europe cannot close its eyes» to an «invasion» of refugees and «illegal immigrants»! Due to its geographical position Italy (and especially Lampedusa and Sicily) is the country where those lucky enough to survive the journey think of landing, hoping to start a less miserable life, but the «reception» in the identification and expulsion centers is more like entering a

concentration camp.

Today, faced with the latest massacre, the Italian Government unveiled its strategy: to conduct an **international police operation** to control the beaches and the ports of Libya. Since the collapse of the Libyan government after the death of Gaddafi, the permanent conflict between militias linked to the government of Tobruk and those linked to the Tripoli government, and the rise of the «Islamic State» (ISIS), the Italian authorities, increasingly more disturbed by a flood of desperate migrants masses, figured it was best to stop them before they embarked, going to war in Libya on the «smugglers and human traffickers». This «solution», the one that has always been advocated by the right: stop the migrants on the southern coast of the Mediterranean, that is to say, the North African coast, by a stringent police control, was considered by the various center-right and center-left governments; it is now judged to be urgent. Under the pretext of «terrorism» (like previously vis-à-vis Saddam Hussein and Gaddafi and now the Islamist Caliphate), the Italian Government, with its European accomplices, is preparing for a military intervention.

Such is the bourgeois response to these tragedies: a police operation, camouflaged as humanitarian action under the flag of the UN and its High Commissioner for Refugees, as in Lebanon in 2006, mobilizing the army, navy and the air force!

The bourgeois European capitalists have no other answer to give; after being responsible for the fall of colossal masses of humanity into misery and despair, after ransacking the seas, the land and the subsoil, having lined up tribes and peoples against each other, having fanned religious conflicts (between Sunnis and Shiites, between Muslims and Christians), having destroyed countries and left their former colonies in underdevelopment and situations of

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The slaughter of the migrants drowned in the Mediterranean continues!

(Continuation from page 11)

ruin leading to the reign of armed gangs and traffickers of all kinds, having made life impossible for entire populations, the European bourgeois who have terrorized the world with their capital, their trade wars and armed conflicts, now pretend to be moved by the latest disaster; and they were not ashamed to cry out, «Enough! No more tragedies «.... until the next!

These deaths indeed will not be the last. All the international police operations will not eliminate the pressure of unbearable economic conditions for millions of human beings; this pressure has not disappeared after the «Arab spring» and the «fall of the dictators» in Tunisia and Egypt, after the US wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the war in Libya; it has continued in the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and Yemen. Capitalism not only produces development; alongside this it accumulates the contradictions and the economic and social

tensions that inevitably erupt into general crises. The means that the capitalist ruling classes have at their disposal to deal with and overcome them can only prepare increasingly serious crises, until the most powerful bourgeoisies adopt the «solution» they adopted in 1914 and in 1939: generalized war, world war.

It is in this perspective that one must see these tragedies, where thousands of migrants drown in the Mediterranean. Against the present and future of slavery, misery and death, there is no bourgeois solution, there is no prayer able to stop the endless list of tragedies. The heart of the problem is the capitalist mode of production, the society based on private property and private appropriation of the products of human labor, society divided into classes, in a word, **bourgeois** society!

It is only by a struggle against misery, against oppression and exploitation, a struggle that does not confine itself to the existing social framework nor in respecting the political and social rules proclaimed by the bourgeois ruling classes to ensure the continuity of their power; a struggle that is based on the antagonism between the class of wage workers, representing the vast majority of

human beings, and the landlord class and the capitalists, i.e. the class of the bourgeoisie; it is only through a struggle not oriented towards reforms, changes in government and political personnel, but towards the great goal of revolutionizing society from top to bottom, therefore the **class struggle** to the end, until the conquest of political power by the proletariat, the overthrow of the bourgeois dictatorship and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat; it is only by the revolutionary struggle forecast by Marxism in the mid-nineteenth century, when capitalism launched out to conquer the world, that can be found the definitive solution to all the fundamental causes of the exploitation of man by man, misery, oppression and wars.

It is with this perspective that the revolutionary communists struggle, organizing themselves into the class party which tomorrow which will have the task of directing the class struggle in all countries towards revolution, the proletarian dictatorship and the advent of a classless society without class antagonisms, without oppression: the **communist society**.

International Communist Party
April 22, 2015

Greece demonstrates once again that it is impossible to fight against capitalist attacks by the electoral and reformist path

At the end of yet another «historic» marathon session Brussels negotiations between the Greek government and its creditors, a «definitive» agreement has yet again been found to «resolve» the Greek crisis: Greek Prime Minister Tsipras and his team have come to accept as a condition for new loans to the virtually bankrupt Greek government, a plan of austerity measures significantly harsher than he had rejected a week earlier and against which he had, supposedly, held a referendum! The only point where he apparently got something concrete, is that of the reduction in military spending: the creditors have accepted that it is weaker than what they asked for...

TSIPRAS' TREASON?

Many, even among the so-called «far left» currents who claimed to have no illusions about Syriza and its government, cried out about the treason of Tsipras. But only those who took the demagogical speeches of this party and its leader at face value could feel betrayed.

Syriza which calls itself a «radical left» party, is in reality no different from a classic reformist party: it does

not want to destroy capitalism but to improve it, reform it: its dream is that of all **reformists**, the dream of a *capitalism with a human face*, that of all **collaborators**, the dream of *fraternal collaboration* among *all citizens* or at least the overwhelming majority of them. But there are dreams and there is reality; and in reality, capitalism cannot be changed, only a few minor reforms are possible and even those, provided they do not cost much – we must combat it or submit to it!

“ le prolétaire” Nr. 517 (Sept. - Oct. - Nov. 2015) Summary

- Attentats de Paris: Le capitalisme est responsable. Guerre de classe contre le capitalisme!
 - Pour une position de classe dans la question des réfugiés
 - Turquie: ce ne sont pas les élections et les appels à la paix, mais la guerre de classe qui seule pourra mettre fin à l'exploitation, à l'oppression et à la répression!
 - Non à l'intervention militaire française en Syrie!
 - Le capitalisme français et la Turquie
 - A propos des luttes paysannes
 - Espagne. La police assassine à Salou un immigré. Flics catalans assassins! Municipalité, Généralité, Etat coupables!
 - Algérie. Le Parti des ennemis des Travailleurs
- Bimonthly. Price one copy: 1 €; £ 1; 3FS. Suscripción : 7,5 €; £ 10; 30FS. Subscription of solidarity : 15 €; £ 20; 60FS.

Having never had the intention to fight capitalism, Syriza could only submit to it and submit the workers who trusted it. Brought to power by claiming that it was going to end austerity and the economic crisis which battered the workers and some petty-bourgeois strata, Syriza embodied the illusion that a mere change of government, obtained quietly and peacefully by the democratic electoral process, could bring a significant improvement in the situation of the masses. The constitution of his government on the basis of an alliance with a far-right militarist and pro-religious party, (ANEL) should have been enough to dispel any doubts about the «radical» nature of Syriza. But for months, the government conducted the comedy of defending the workers against the creditors of the country, whom he claimed to be able to convince to give up part of their requirements and to grant further financial aid; while the situation of the proletarians and the working masses never ceased to deteriorate – so there has been a real social truce in part because of uninterrupted blows suffered by the proletariat in recent years, but also because of the hopes that many nurtured towards Syriza.

But in reality, the Greek negotiators were defending primarily the interests of national capitalism and not those of the proletariat or the population; evidenced by the fact that they finally accepted more readily antisocial and anti-proletarian measures than those of particular capitalist interests (e.g. they have defended tooth and nail the privileged status of shipping owners from taxes, military expenditures or the maintaining of a low rate of VAT on tourist activities); the austerity measures imposed to repay creditors have had dire consequences for the economy in general, leading to the disappearance of thousands of businesses: an economic stimulus policy, not more austerity is demanded by many capitalists.

But negotiations and agreements between bourgeois or between bourgeois states – including when the States are «partners» in a «union»! – can only be based on the **relationship of forces**. But puny Greek capitalism had little strength to resist the exigencies of the major European capitalism for long, especially when their state is on the verge of bankruptcy. At the end of June the creditors laid down a quasi-ultimatum to accept their plan, to which the Tsipras government replied by organizing a referendum on the plan, calling for a

«No» vote. While this decision was greeted with enthusiasm by a part of the European left and far left who saw the possibility of a «people» democratically refusing a Europe of austerity and finance, etc. or even getting out of the «straitjacket of the euro», Tsipras clearly stated that the referendum was organized, not to break with the creditors, but to continue negotiations with them in a position that would be strengthened by universal suffrage.

The «Yes» campaign included traditional bourgeois parties (the socialists of Pasok and the right-wing New Democracy) and new (the centrists of To Potami), employer organizations, but also the leaders of the private sector unions, the major media, etc., supported by European governments.

«No» proponents in addition to Syriza, included the neo-fascist Golden Dawn and small formations from the far left, along with some anarchists. The Greek Communist Party (KKE) refused to participate in the «No» campaign: – reasonably asserting that the government's proposals were no better than those of the creditors; it called for a null vote, spoiling the ballot (the essential thing, of course is to vote!) in this way thinking to express a «double no» to both proposals and defending its own nationalist perspective of exiting the EU.

The rest is history: the «No» supporters achieved a resounding victory (nearly 60%, with spoiled or blank ballots at 6%, «Yes» collecting only 36% of the votes; the rate of abstentions was down, being 38%); the main square of Athens, Syntagma, saw scenes of jubilation of voters believing that they had dealt a severe blow to supporters of austerity and notably to the old parties that had formed successive governments throughout the past years. The formations of the radical left of Europe also celebrated the electoral victory; one example is the statement of Rifondazione Comunista in Italy, but we could have mentioned the Front de Gauche of France, the Spanish Podemos, etc.: «*The victory of No in Greece represents the victory of democracy and dignity for the Greek people against the financial terrorism of the troika. It is a historic result for Greece and the European peoples*»(1).

Just hours after this *historic victory of democracy*, Prime Minister Tsipras, after discarding his Minister of Finance, whose tone had been too

assertive and demanding, met with all the parliamentary parties, both right and left, with the exception of Golden Dawn; and except for the KKE, they all gave him their full support to negotiate to keep Greece in the euro area ... on the basis of the plan proposed by the creditors! Trounced at the polls, the «Yes» vote had in fact triumphed! It would be difficult to imagine a more striking demonstration of the futility of electoral illusions and the role of disorientation of the electoral circus...

By garnering the consent of the old traditional bourgeois parties, Syriza becomes the representative of a true **national unity**, the defender of the interests of all the Greek bourgeoisie in front of the Europeans.

Declarations of intent being not enough, the Greek negotiators in Brussels presented a specific and detailed plan, drafted under the leadership of high French officials, who accepted all the points which a week earlier they had denounced as an ul-

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Greece demonstrates once again that it is impossible to fight against capitalist attacks by the electoral and reformist path

(Continuation from page 13)

timum. But when the negotiating sessions began, this plan was rejected by the German representatives, who presented another, based on the expulsion of Greece – for five years – from the Eurozone, because, they said, «confidence» in the Greek Government no longer existed: for the capitalists, confidence is based on submission.

It took endless and bitter negotiations for the German leaders to abandon this perspective and to accept maintaining Greece in the European currency area, inflicting in return drastic and humiliating measures for the Greek leaders who had to pay for trying to resist them.

As good reformist minions, the Greek representatives finally agreed to everything that had been demanded of them; it was not a **capitulation**, since the Tsipras government had actually **already capitulated** even before the start of negotiations, when, while electorally victorious, he received the support of all parties, particularly by those who had asked to vote yes; not a surrender in relation to a defense of the interests of the workers and the poor masses since this has never been the real intention of Syriza, but a capitulation in relation to the refusal to accept all the demands of creditors and to renounce any attempt to get relief from debt burden.

We wrote that «*The Syriza-ANEL government has no alternative: it will have to submit to the pressure of the most powerful bourgeois states so that it will not be ejected from the euro zone, or replaced by a more comprehensive government. (...) Syriza is placed in the uncomfortable position of having to choose between attacking the interests of the proletariat and the working masses, or those of capitalism; and like all reformist parties, which are inextricably linked to the defense of the capitalist mode of production, it can only attack the workers, profiting from the confidence they have in it. This is the role assigned to it by the bourgeoisie, Greek and internation-*

al, and its government will only be tolerated so long as it fulfills this role.»(2).

It did not take long to wait for the demonstration of this easy forecast. It appears, moreover, that during the last negotiations, some states and «institutions» have threatened to force the formation of a new government, perhaps a «government by technocrats» if the Greek leaders were reluctant to accept the conditions requested by creditors. But others have probably argued that Tsipras and his followers, strengthened by their «victory» election, were best able to get the proletarian masses to swallow the bitter pills: that is precisely what democracy is for.

INTER-IMPERIALIST CONTRADICTIONS

The Brussels negotiations were particularly contentious: two groups of countries showed disagreement *à propos* the fate of Greece: on one side, Germany with its allies in the North who advocated it leaving the Eurozone, on the other side France, supported by Cyprus and Italy, who were opposed. Some people explained this confrontation by the opposition of two conceptions of Europe: on one side the supporters of financial orthodoxy and respect for treaties, on the other supporters of solidarity between peoples.

The reality is quite different; in «defending Greece» against the German representatives, Paris was not defending the Greek «people» and even less Greek proletarians: the draft presented by the Greek government and developed in collaboration with French officials took up all the anti-working class and antisocial measures requested by the European creditors. During the negotiations, the French finance minister used the argument that if Greece left the euro zone, it could not repay its debt; but more worrying for Paris and Rome was that an exit from the euro would have risked causing economic problems in the zone, delivering a severe blow to hopes of restarting even meager growth in France and Italy. The alleged «defense of Greece» was nothing more than the defense of French and Italian national capitalist interests !

The position of the German leadership was different because the health of their economy would have enabled it to absorb without much trouble the shock of a «Grexit» (Greek exit from the euro); what concerned

them more, beyond the unhappy prospect of throwing new funds down a bottomless pit, was to create a precedent that could be invoked tomorrow by governments of other much larger countries, for example Spain; hence their desire, if Grexit did not take place, to impose punitive conditions on Greece so that it serves as a warning to those tempted to imitate ...

Finally the United States put pressure on Germany that Greece not be ejected from the euro zone and that its debt be reduced (3). This corresponds to their traditional position of pushing the Europeans to abandon austerity policies and to adopt economic stimulus measures, so they play the role of a locomotive of global growth to reverse the slowdown; but in this case their position is mainly explained by the desire to avoid a NATO member occupying a key strategic position, being plunged into an economic slump that would weaken its military capabilities. However the US did not want to interfere directly in the negotiations, as Tsipras, the supposed representative of the «radical left», demanded of them, hoping to find strong support in the US imperialists...

None of these states were concerned by the situation of the Greek proletarians and masses because all have the function of defending the capitalist mode of production against their own proletariat and those countries they dominate!

ALL BOURGEOIS STATES AND ALL THE POSSESSING CLASSES ARE THE ENEMIES OF THE PROLETARIANS

Greek proletarians have lived a tough experience whose lessons, consistent with Marxism, apply to the workers of the world: it is impossible to defend against capitalist attacks, whether undertaken by their own capitalist or applied on behalf of best interests of capitalism by foreign capitalists, by relying on the mechanisms of parliamentary democracy; the ballot is only a scrap of paper which cannot in any way override bourgeois interests and resolve social contradictions. A so-called «class vote» like the one in favor of the «No» vote hailed by Europe's extreme left is a sorry illusion: the class struggle does not take place within the confines of parliaments, but in work-places, in factories, in the street. We cannot soften the capitalists' demands by trying to move the bourgeois by de-

scribing the suffering of the population, as it seems did, generating nothing more than a shrug of the shoulders, the Greek negotiators in Brussels – in agreeing to make the proletarians suffer but not too much! The proletarians must not expect the pity or commiseration of the capitalists and their lackeys, but only their blows; these blows undoubtedly can be more or less brutal, but this is only a difference of degree due to a difference in method: the reformist method is kinder to avoid as far as possible the eruption of social clashes. But when the bourgeois interests are too urgent reformist method immediately follows the path of the dictates and when confrontations menace, the path of violence and repression: Tsipras is the umpteenth example.

The «bailout» finally concluded in Brussels with all the sacrifices it imposes on the proletarians and masses (increasing the retirement age to 67 years for some and reducing pensions of state employees, further cuts in social measures, rising prices and taxes etc.) but also on certain sections of the petty and middle bourgeoisie, with the restrictions on sovereignty imposed on the Greek State (to the great consternation of the nationalists of the «far left») will not solve the problems facing Greek capitalism; according to many economists, on the contrary it will aggravate the economic depression that it has undergone for several years. This is certainly the opinion of the IMF, which after bringing all its weight to impose the creditors plan on the government of Athens, estimated in a report published on 14 July, but already known to European leaders in the negotiations, that this plan was not viable if European states did not agree to reduce or cancel the debt owed by the Greeks – which they have stubbornly refused! Thus new Greek crises are inevitable, with their share of anti-labor measures...

The Greek crisis is only the extreme manifestation of the general crisis of capitalism in Europe and the world; therefore the alternative, equally bourgeois, an exit from the Eurozone and/or of the European Union, cannot be a solution for the proletariat. What is possible for a powerful imperialist country like Britain – prosperity based on an independent currency, and the possibility of leaving the EU –, is not for the weak Greek capitalism; the merciless laws of the capitalist market where, in times of crisis, only the strongest remain afloat, would apply to it with

perhaps more violence if Greece left this capitalist alliance called the European Union. Greek capitalism, private or state, would even more fiercely extort surplus value from its proletarians in the name of defense of the country, to withstand the competition on the world market.

There is no bourgeois solution to the degradation of living conditions, that in a more or less pronounced manner, the proletarians experience in all countries. Supporters of class collaboration, whether they belong to the so-called «radical left» or traditional «reformism», can only collaborate to this degradation because collaboration between classes means submission to the ruling class: it is no coincidence that Pablo Iglesias, the leader of the Spanish Podemos, has approved the course of action of Tsipras during the negotiations...

the capitalists and their state by open conflict, adopting methods, means and classist goals: uncompromising defense of proletarian interests alone, independent class organization, both in terms of the immediate struggle in defense of their lives and livelihood and in terms of the more generalized struggle against the capitalist system, constitution of the political class party, internationalist and international, in conjunction with the proletarians of all countries, to lead the revolutionary struggle until victory.

This path is not easy, but it is the only realistic one, although the facts have once again demonstrated that the reformist collaborationist and nationalist electoral route, is a fatal utopia, which serves only the bourgeoisie.

July 18, 2015

FOR THE REPRISE OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE, FOR THE CONSTITUTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CLASS PARTY!

For the proletariat there is no alternative but to break with class collaboration and all the parties and unions which support it, and to take the path of anti-capitalist class struggle. It is possible to confront and defeat

(1) <http://www.rifondazione.it/primapagina/?p=18794>

(2) Position stated: 04.27.2015, www.pcint.org

(3) The German Minister of Finance responded by referring to the situation of Puerto Rico: This small state, which has the status of «Associate State» in the United States, is also virtually bankrupt, but Washington refuses to help it.

GREECE Against reformist illusions, for independent class struggle!

The elections in Greece on 25 January saw the victory of the Syriza party (Coalition of the Radical Left), darling of the whole European «left of the Left»: the Spanish Podemos, the German Left Party, the Italian Rifondazione Comunista or the French Front de Gauche, but also most of the «far left» which, more or less, still claims to be «revolutionary». For example, a French Trotskyist paper wrote: «*The Greek people would not be bullied. By voting massively for the radical left, it rejected austerity and sacrifice. Of this it can be proud*»(1).

In fact barely a little more than a third of voters (36.3%) gave their votes to Syriza (up over 9.4% compared to the 2012 elections), as against 27.8% who voted for right party New Democracy (which declined only slightly, by -1.9%); the KKE (Greek Communist Party) rose from 4.5 to 5.5% of the vote, while the neo-fascist Golden Dawn retreated from 6.9 to 6.3% and the far-right party ANEL (Independent Greeks) dropped sharply, from 7.5 to 4.8%. Antarsya, a far left disparate collection bringing together Trotskyists, Maoists and others, obtained

0.66% of the votes, while the new centrist party Potami that did not exist in 2012, garnered 6% of the vote.

It was the collapse of the socialist party PASOK (associated with New Democracy in the previous government) down from 12.3% to 4.7% of voters, which explains the electoral breakthrough of Syriza: the «Radical Left» has become the refuge of the usual social democratic voters; analysts noted that SYRIZA had actually lost votes among the most pop-

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GREECE Against reformist illusions, for independent class struggle!

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ular sectors, mainly in favor of abstention (with a 36.1% rate of abstention), undoubtedly in connection with the increasing «moderation» of its discourse as the elections approached.

This «moderation» was manifested vividly when Syriza in order to form its government partnered with... ANEL. The «extremist» left wing of SYRIZA sucked it all up without too much difficulty: as a matter of fact Syriza had already collaborated in parliament with this party with which it shares its nationalism. Close to the Orthodox Church and the military, ANEL was given the strategic Ministry of Defense. Syriza has justified this initiative by the aegis of the need to form a stable government because it does not have an absolute majority in parliament; but in reality the alliance with ANEL means that the property of the Church, which is the largest landowner in the country, would continue to evade taxes and that the military budget would not be affected.

MILITARY EXPENDITURE: A HEAVY BURDEN FOR GREEK PROLETARIANS

Greece has the highest percentage of military expenditure of any country in Europe. In 2013, it spent the equivalent of 2.4% of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) on its armed forces. In the major European countries such military expenditures that year were equivalent to 2.2% of GDP in Britain, in France 2.2%, in Italy 1.5%, in Germany 1.3% and in Spain 0.9%. (2).

To put this into perspective, military spending in the US that year amounted to 3.8% of GDP; in Russia 4.2%, 2.1% in China, and in Japan, 1%; but relating this to the size of their economies, US military spending accounted for nearly 37% of global military spending, that is, as much as the next 9 top military spenders combined: China, Russia, Saudi Arabia, France, Great Britain, Germany, Japan, India and South Korea! (3).

Over the decade 2002 - 2011 little Greece was the largest importer of arms in Europe (and 5th in the world); its main suppliers are the United States, Germany and France. During the first «rescue» plans for the country, Germany and France insisted that Greece not undermine its military purchases from them, France also trying to close sales of \$6 billion euros for naval vessels (4)...

Financing military spending and the military in general (the bourgeois justify the particularly heavy weight of spending by the need to deal with the «hereditary» Turkish enemy) inevitably falls on the proletarians and the working masses of the country (practically the only ones paying any taxes at all!). But moreover the Greek military plays a particular anti-proletarian political role, as demonstrated by the establishment of the Dictatorship of the Colonels (1967 - 1974): the national and international bourgeoisie (commencing with the Americans with whom Greek Army still maintains close ties) feared that the political and social crisis at the time, which was not unlike the current situation, was leading to a «pre-revolutionary situation».

In November 2011 the Prime Minister (PASOK), faced with severe economic and social difficulties, spoke of a risk of a military coup. This evocation of the spectre of 1967 was obviously an argument used for negotiations with the European leaders, but it also sounds like an ominous warning to the proletariat: the bourgeoisie never hesitates to use violence, or to replace the democratic fiction by its open dictatorship, if it considers that its interests require this.

THE DEVASTATION OF THE CRISIS IN GREECE

Populated by almost 11 million people, Greece is a country where capitalist power is feeble in comparison with the major European countries. Traditionally agricultural, it really began to industrialize in the sixties, mainly due to foreign investment. Today, industry is relatively undeveloped; tourism is the fastest growing economic sector, while agriculture remains a significant resource (it is the second largest employment sector after trade), despite its fragmentation into a myriad of small farms of precarious profitability. A flourishing sector is that of maritime transport, which employs between 150,000 and 200,000 people and accounts for over 6% of GDP; the Greek merchant fleet is the largest in the world. But since the fifties the country's constitution has exempted maritime companies from all taxes on profits and three quarters of ships sail under flags of convenience (that is to say, unregulated and avoiding any taxation). When in 2013 the government tried to impose a tax on the industry, ship-owners threatened to leave the country: the tax was repealed and replaced by a «voluntary contribution»...

For many years Greece has experienced rapid economic growth (4% on average from 2000 to 2007, significantly more than other European countries),

which was spoken of as the «Greek miracle»; the economy was boosted by foreign investment (notably European) and the use of credit (sovereign debt was equivalent to 103% of GDP in 2007). Significant immigration was necessary to fill the least skilled jobs, especially in agriculture.

But the country has suffered the brunt of the impact of the global economic crisis, which has demonstrated the fragility of the Greek «model». With a chronic deficit in its foreign trade, it has been unable to cope with the sharp increase in its debt from late 2008, when the economy plunged into crisis and the budget deficit reached 15% (two to three times more than other countries of the European Union). To avoid bankruptcy, in 2010 Greece had no choice but to ask for aid from its European partners. But among the bourgeois, «aid» comes at a high price, and it mainly aims to aid the interests of those who «help». Thus the money lent to Greece at lower rates than the market (though still high enough to allow lenders to make significant profits) was primarily used to protect the interests of European banks, especially German and French, which were engaged in the country: only 11% of the money lent to Greece has served the needs of the functioning of the state (5).

At the same time the «troika» (European Central Bank, European Commission and IMF) imposed austerity measures and «reforms» to straighten the accounts of the country: privatization, cuts in state spending (in a country where state expenditure plays a central role in the economy), legislative reforms, «liberalization» of labor laws, civil service layoffs, decreases in wages and pensions, increased retirement age, etc.

So these are the results, catastrophic for the economy and even more so for the proletariat and the Greek masses, while foreign financial investors have pulled out of the game (German and French banks were able to disengage with no substantive losses):

GDP fell by over 27% between 2008 and 2014; in the same period more than 30% of companies have closed, the share of industry in the economy has declined, unemployment increased by 190.5% (1 million fewer jobs) from 9 to 26.5%, while only 10% of the unemployed receive unemployment benefits; the average wage fell by 38%, retirement pensions by 45%, average household income by 30% – rising inequality is reflected in the fact that in 2012, 25% of the poorest households had their income decreased by 86%, while the richest 25% had declined by only 20 to 17%; meanwhile these inequalities have continued to increase, if only because the taxes on the poorest

increased by 377% as against only 9% for the richest (6). More than a quarter of the population has no health insurance and 47% of Greeks do not have access to adequate care because of the collapse of the health system under the blows of austerity, etc. (7).

This **shock therapy**, similar to what the IMF has at other times once inflicted on bankrupt Third World bankrupt and which often led to «hunger riots», failed to re-route the economy or to truly «clean up» the public accounts. The economic plunge mechanically led to a fall in tax revenues and increased social costs and therefore increased difficulties in paying a debt that has been increasing at a rapid pace to reach 177% of GDP by 2014; if its «maturity», that is to say the time for repayment has increased, the Greek government is still faced with crucial deadlines for repayment in the weeks and months ahead, while the state coffers are empty. Economists are delighted by the fact that foreign trade for the first time recorded a (feeble) positive balance, but this is due to the ravages of the internal crisis: imports have declined much more sharply than exports in recent years; and concerning these exports the only one to post a real increase was in 2013 ... the sale of fuel to the cruise ships that bring tourists (8)!

THE POLITICS OF SYRIZA

Despite its name – «Coalition of the Radical Left» – and its particular formation (including groupings of elements which make reference to Marxism, Trotskyism or «Marxism-Leninism», alongside others coming from various diverse reformist groups), Syriza is a classic reformist party; its program has nothing «anti-capitalist» in it and if it demagogically claims to have «socialism» as its final goal, it adds immediately that this will be «in democracy and freedom», to reassure the petty bourgeois layers. Defining itself as a program against austerity and for meeting the needs of the masses, it includes a series of demands such as the *freezing of wages decreases* (rather than increasing them!) an increase in the minimum wage, free electricity and food subsidies to the poor, an increase of the reimbursement for medical care, etc., through the taxation of the richest, the cessation of privatizations (which were realized with very advantageous conditions for investors, domestic or foreign). It also promises to create 300,000 jobs through Keynesian type measures typical of all reformist programs.

While claiming his willingness to respect to the letter the commitments of Greece to its lenders, the new government hoped to find support among South

European countries to obtain a moratorium on its debt and for Europe to abandon its austerity policies and embark on economic stimulus initiatives.

But neither the French government nor the Italian, and even less the Spanish or Portuguese, wished to support the Greek government! All, undoubtedly to various degrees due to the diversity of the depth of the economic crisis that hit their country, impose austerity measures and cuts in social spending on their proletarians: they will not support a different policy for Greece! Anti-proletarian attacks are the rule in Europe, although the richer countries, like Germany, can afford the luxury of toning down these attacks in order to maintain social peace. Greece is a small country with limited economic weight in Europe, but to the extent that the problems it faces are only extreme examples of the difficulties of the capitalist economies of the European Union, and because of the always increasing «globalization» of capitalism, the Greek case is of international importance: a Greek exit from the euro would have consequences for the whole global economy (9)

European institutions, supported by all the States, including non-European ones such as the United States which had initially approved of Syriza's opposition to the austerity policies (the American capitalists are always looking for the Europeans to play the role of engine of the world economy during periods of crises) (10), therefore require the Greek government to continue on the path of austerity, privatization and essentially anti-proletarian «reforms» (further liberalization of the labor market, lower wages, pension reform, etc.) – the exact opposite of the election promises of Syriza!. Various coercive measures have even been decided by the European Central Bank to compel it; for its part, the European Commission, for example, sent a note to warn that the vote of a «humanitarian» law providing free electricity and food vouchers to the needy could be considered a violation of the obligations of Greece, while the president of the Eurogroup (meeting of finance ministers) stated that «any pressure [on the government - Editor's note] accelerating the reform process in Greece is welcome» (11)! European and international lenders demand specific and concrete commitments by the Greek authorities for the continuation of the previous policy, before disbursing the funds essential to the functioning of the economy (12): the state's resources are insufficient to pay both creditors and employees...

The Syriza-ANEL government has no alternative: it will have to submit to the pressure of the most powerful bourgeois

states so that it will not be ejected from the euro zone, or replaced by a more comprehensive government (13). And it has already started down this road, indefinitely postponing the increase of the minimum wage or reversing its decision to block the sale of the port of Piraeus to Chinese investors.

INDEPENDENT CLASS STRUGGLE, THE ONLY SOLUTION FOR GREEK PROLETARIANS

Since the beginning of the crisis Greek workers have not remained pas-

(Continued on page 18)

The fundamentals of Revolutionary Marxist Communism in the Doctrine and in the History of the International Proletarian Struggle

(Brochure A5, 56 pages, October 2010, Price: 2 € , 2,5 US\$; 4 FS)

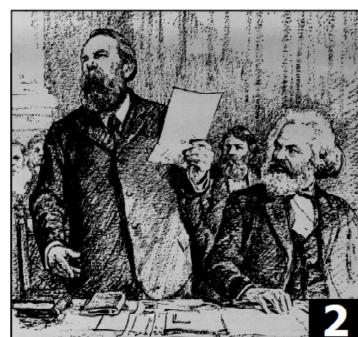
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Proletarian

International Communist Party («programme communiste»)

The Fundamentals of Revolutionary Communism



GREECE Against reformist illusions, for independent class struggle!

(Continuation from page 17)

sive in the face of the continued degradation of their conditions of life and work. Many strikes and demonstrations have taken place; but these struggles, most often oriented in an interclassist manner, nationalist and respectful of legality, by the unions, including «radical» trade unions associated with the KKE, haven't hindered the devastating bourgeois attack. So the elections were presented to the workers as offering an alternative path and without risk to the struggle: the vote to bring Syriza to power. Syriza wants the Greek proletarians and masses not to engage in a real struggle, but to trust it to protect their interests (which would be identical to those of the national economy) against the dictates from abroad. Just like all reformists, it does a great service to capitalism by diverting the workers from the only effective way to defend themselves.

All the while talking about giving the oligarchs what they deserve, its government was careful not to take any real action against the Greek capitalists (one need only think of the fabulously rich shipowners!) and capitalism as a whole. But like all reformist parties in power in a period of severe crisis, SYRIZA is placed in the uncomfortable position of having to choose between attacking the interests of the proletariat and the working masses, or those of capitalism; and like all reformist parties, which are inextricably linked to the defense of the capitalist mode of production, it can only attack the workers, profiting from the confidence they have in it. This is the role assigned to it by the bourgeoisie, Greek and international, and its government will only be tolerated so long as it fulfills this role.

Today, it seems that Syriza enjoys a record popularity, also fueled by nationalist rhetoric, among the population, including the proletariat. But illusions in Syriza are doomed to evaporate quickly; so the honeyed reformist discourses will give way to the brutality of the forces of the capitalist order if the workers try to resist – it is not by chance that Syriza's election promise to disband the anti-riot police units was quickly abandoned! The history of Greece, not to mention that of other countries, teaches proletarians that the bourgeoisie — supported and advised by its international sponsors — never

hesitates to sweep out a democratic government and establish a military dictatorship to maintain order. Blind faith in reformism always leads to defeats and catastrophes. The proletarians must therefore give no confidence to Syriza and its government; they should not believe it is possible to put pressure on them to adopt a policy, let us not say anti-capitalist (all the machinery of the bourgeois state is there in order to prevent this), but at least in favor of the workers: even if he does so mumbling and grumbling, the valet always obeys his master, and this is even more true for the reformist valet in relation to the capitalist master. But neither should they place trust in the «left» critics of Syriza such as the KKE: they have already given ample evidence of their anti-proletarian politics, spreading nationalist propaganda and practicing collaboration with bourgeois forces (14).

The workers can only rely on their own strength, their own struggles provided they are oriented and organized on authentic class positions for the exclusive defense of their class interests. There is no other way to resist capitalist attacks than the open struggle against capitalism; the repudiation of the debt or the exit from the European Union that the KKE or so-called «far left» groups present as a solution to

the crisis, are only dead ends: not departing from the bourgeois framework, they can only lead to a further worsening of the proletarian situation. The rupture with reformist, collaborationist orientations and forces, the adoption of classist methods and means and class organization are a necessity for the proletarian defense, before being able to go on the offensive.

But for the class organization in the immediate defensive struggles and the broader struggle against capitalism it is necessary to wage a political and practical struggle against political and trade union collaborationism, against all false friends of the proletariat, against all obstacles placed by bourgeoisie. It means the necessity of class **political** organization, the class party, authentically communist, internationalist and international, to avoid all the pitfalls facing the proletariat, through its Marxist program which is the synthesis of the lessons of past struggles, and to centralize and lead until the end its struggle against capitalism.

To work in conjunction with the proletarians of all countries, for the constitution of this party, that is the task which faces ever more urgently the vanguard proletarians and militants in Greece.

International Communist Party,
April 23, 2015

(1) *Workers Struggle* No. 2426, 01/28/2015. Electoral illusions are widespread among the Trotskyists as well as the interclassist vocabulary ...

(2) According to SIPRI data (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute), SIPRI Milex Data from 1988 to 2014.

(3)http://vadeker.net/humanite/geopolitique/world_military_spending/world_military_spending_2002-2012.html

(4) See *Le Point*, 01/27/2015

(5)<http://www.macropolis.gr/?i=portal.en.the-agora.2080>

(6) Institut für Makroökonomie und Konjunkturforschung Studies No. 38, March 2015

(7)<https://www.opendemocracy.net/ournhs/louise-irvine/what-%27austerity%27-has-done-to-greek-healthcare>

(8)http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/_w_articles_wsite2_1_25/10/2013_524920

(9) See for example the statement of the Governor of the Bank of France, «*the whole world economy would be affected*» [by a Greek exit from the euro], *Le Figaro*, 04/19/15.

(10) The Greek authorities have also stated that they were subject to a «*very strong American pressure*» that they not participate in the construction of a pipeline in the region envisioned by the Russian giant Gazprom.[cf http://www.leblogfinance.com/](http://www.leblogfinance.com/)

2015/04/la-grece-fait-etat-de-fortes-pressions-us-pour-la-dissuader-dadherer-au-projet-du-gazoduc-russie-turquie.html

(11)<http://in.reuters.com/article/2015/03/09/eurozone-greece-steps-idINL5N0WB3SX20150309>

(12) «*The fund lenders of Greece continue to demand a pension reform and further labor market liberalization*» *le monde*.fr, 03/31/2015

(13) A London financial daily has written: «*Eurozone authorities' frustration with Greece has grown so intense that a change in the current Athens government's make-up, however far-fetched, has become a frequent topic of conversation on the sidelines of bailout talks. (...) Many officials — up to and including some eurozone finance ministers — have suggested privately that only a decision by Alexis Tsipras, Greek prime minister, to jettison the far left of his governing Syriza party can make a bailout agreement possible. (...) A senior official in a eurozone finance ministry added: «This government cannot survive.» Financial Times*, 04/05/2015. It's well known that the German Finance Minister has said many times that the Greek government is irresponsible.

(14) See «*The interclassism of the KKE*» *Le Proletaire* No. 496

50 years after the wave of black revolts in the United States, the riots in Baltimore

News of the death of Freddie Gray a young black man of 25 years, beaten to death by police after being arrested without reason on April 12 (an arrest later declared to be «illegal» by the City Attorney, obviously trying to calm the anger of the protesters) resulted in violent riots in the city of Baltimore (Maryland), a coastal port of the United States. Martial law was declared in the city and several thousand soldiers of the National Guard were mobilized as reinforcements for the thousands of local policemen.

We also witnessed the instructive spectacle of the union for the defense of the established order, in addition to the media, of politicians of all parties and priests of all persuasions, of police as well as gangs. Thus the «Bloods», the «Crips» and the «Nation of Islam» who usually engage in deadly wars for control of neighborhoods where they deal, agreed among themselves (following a meeting in a Baptist church) and with the priests and the police to prevent rioting as much as possible and to protect businesses and policemen from the demonstrators!

In Baltimore, where 64% of the population is black, the roots of rebellion are social; the city has experienced a sharp industrial decline since the 70s and has been severely affected by the recent economic crisis. The mayor is black, as are the police chief and half of the police officers; this does not prevent the youth and young black proletarians in particular from harassment by the police; corruption, unpunished crimes and abuses by local police are well documented: they are at least as common as elsewhere, demonstrating that it is not the color of the skin of the cops or politicians which is at issue. The official poverty rate in Baltimore was 28% against 14.5% nationally. In the neighborhood where Freddie Gray lived, the unemployment rate is 52% of the population of working age (it is even higher in other districts!), one third of houses are abandoned. In a particularly telling reflection of social inequality, the 15 poorest districts of the city have a life expectancy comparable to that of a Third World country: between the wealthiest neighborhood (with a white population!) and the poorest in Baltimore, there is a difference in life expectancy at birth of 19 years!

The magnitude of the reaction of the Baltimore authorities and the state of

Maryland is explained by the memory of the 1968 riots that left 6 dead, 700 injured and resulted in 3,500 arrests in the city; more than 10,000 soldiers had to be deployed at the time to «maintain order.» Indeed, after those of Ferguson last year the riots in Baltimore have caused resurgent anxiety among the bourgeoisie and their lackeys at the specter of the riots that shook the United States roughly fifty years ago.

In the summer of 1964 a riot in New York occurred against a backdrop of police brutality, announcing the wave of riots labelled «racial» because blacks were the main protagonists, which would mark the second half of the sixties in United States. It was then the first cracks began to appear in the virtually continuous economic expansion in the United States since the end of the war, while the political situation became tenser due to the Vietnam War and of conscription in order to funnel cannon fodder into the US Army. The black ghetto riots of the sixties which were savagely repressed, like the growing agitation against the war, itself also

repressed including bloody episodes, had their counterpart in a revival of workers' struggles, including international.

These riots virtually disappear in the 70s, following the policy of the bourgeoisie which, besides repression that would imprison thousands of «agitators» and go on to murder others, had the possibility of dropping a few crumbs to calm the proletarians with a battery of social shock absorbers; it will also work to facilitate the formation of a black bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie to exercise influence over the proletariat or at least serve as a «buffer» between them and the bourgeois state. In a different economic situation, riots resumed in the 80s before peaking again in Los Angeles in 1992.

We publish below an article by Amadeo Bordiga, published in No. 15/1965 of *Il Programma Comunista*, the party organ at the time, on the riots in Los Angeles in the summer of 1965, in renewing the fervent hope that the current riots are the harbingers of future, and victorious struggles.

* * *

Amadeo Bordiga

«Black» anger shakes the rotten pillars of bourgeois and democratic «civilization»

(*Il Programma Comunista*, September 10, 1965)

And after all, once it got past the outburst of the «black revolt» in California, international conformism «buried» the event under a thick cloak of silence; as the «enlightened» bourgeois still anxiously sought to discover the «mysterious» causes that had hampered the operation of the «regular and peaceful» democratic mechanism, any observer on either side of the Atlantic could be consoled by recalling that after all, the explosions of collective violence by «colored people» are nothing new in America and, for example, that a serious explosion occurred in Detroit in 1943, without any serious consequences.

But something profoundly new happened deep in this burning episode of an anger, not vaguely popular but proletarian in nature, something to be followed not with a cold objectivity but with passion and hope. And it is this

that makes us say: **the black revolt was crushed; long live the black revolt!**

The novelty – for the history of the struggles for emancipation of black proletarians and sub-proletarians, and not for the history of class struggles in general – is the almost perfect coincidence between the pompous rhetoric of the presidential promulgation of political and civic rights, and the eruption of an anonymous, subversive, collective and «uncivil» fury on the part of the «beneficiaries» of the «magnanimous» gesture; between the umpteenth attempt to entice the tortured slave with a miserable carrot that costs nothing, and the instinctive and immediate refusal of this slave to remain blindfolded, bent and cowering.

Harshly, instructed by no one – not

(Continued on page 20)

Amadeo Bordiga «Black» anger shakes the rotten pillars of bourgeois and democratic «civilization»

(Continuation from page 19)

by their leaders more gandian than Gandhi; nor by a «communism» in the mode of the USSR, which, as *L'Unità* (2) hurried to say, rejects and condemns violence – but educated by the hard lessons of the facts of social life, Blacks in California have shouted out to the world, without having the theoretical consciousness, without needing to express it in a well-developed language, but by claiming it in the thick of the action, the simple and terrible truth that legal and political equality is nothing as long as there is economic inequality; and that it is possible to end it, not by laws, decrees, sermons or homilies, but only by overthrowing by force the foundations of a society divided into classes. It is this sudden tearing away of the veil of legal fictions and democratic hypocrisy, which has baffled and could only confuse the bourgeois; it is this which has focused the enthusiasm of real Marxists; and it is this which needs to capture the imaginations of the proletarians asleep in the artificial cocoons of the metropolises of a capitalism historically born under a white skin.

* * *

When the American North, already on the rails to full capitalism, launched a crusade for the abolition of slavery prevailing in the South, it did not do so for humanitarian reasons, or out of respect for the eternal principles of 1789, but because it was necessary to uproot a pre-patriarchal capitalist economy and to «liberate» the work force so that it would become a huge resource for the greedy capitalist monster. Thus, before the Civil War, the North encouraged the flight of slaves from the Southern plantations, it was enticed by a workforce which would be for sale dirt cheap in the labor market and in addition to this direct benefit would have enabled it to reduce the pay of the workforce already employed, or at least not to let it increase. During and after the war the process was rapidly accelerated, in becoming generalized.

It was an historically necessary transition to overcome the limits of an ultra-backward economy; and Marxism saluted this, but not because it did not know

that «liberated» in the South, black manpower would find in the North a mechanism of exploitation already in place, and even more ferocious in certain aspects. In the words of Capital, the «good negro» would be free to deliver his skin to the labor market for it to be tanned: freed from the chains of Southern slavery, but also the protective shield of an economy and a society based on personal and human relationships, instead of impersonal and inhuman relations; free, that is to say alone, naked and unarmed.

And actually the slave who escaped to the North would come to realize that no less than before he was in an inferior position; because he was paid less; because he was deprived of professional qualifications; because he was isolated in new ghettos as a soldier of an industrial reserve army and as a potential threat of disintegration of the connective tissue of private ownership; because discriminated against and subjected to segregation as one who does not feel a human being but a beast of burden, and as such to sell himself to the first bidder without demanding more nor better.

Today, a century after his alleged «emancipation», he is granted the «plenitude» of civil rights by the same act whereas his average income is dramatically lower than that of his white fellow citizen: his wages are half of his brother with white skin, the pay of his companion is one third of the companion of the latter; in the very act in which the golden metropoles of businesses confined him in appalling ghettos of misery, disease, insecurity, insulating him behind invisible walls of prejudices, customs and police regulations; in the very act in which unemployment which bourgeois hypocrisy calls «technological» (that is to say it is an «inevitability» of the price to advance on the path of progress, not the fault of present society), has its most numerous victims among his brothers in race, because they are the ranks of ordinary workers or sub-proletarians consigned to the most arduous and the most lowly jobs; in the very act where he is the equal on the battlefield to his white brothers to be turned into cannon fodder, it is not at all the same coming up against the policeman, the judge, the tax officer, the owner of the factory, the union honcho, the owner of his slum dwelling.

And it is also undeniable – and incomprehensible for the pedant – that his revolt broke out in California where the average salary of Blacks is higher than in the east; but it is precisely in this region of capitalist boom and so-

called «well-being» that the disparity of incomes is the greatest; This is where the ghetto, already long enclosed along the Atlantic coast, becomes quickly enclosed in the presence of the obscene display of luxury, waste, of the good life of the ruling class – which is white!

It is against this hypocrisy of egalitarianism jesuitically enshrined in law, but denied in the reality of a society with deeply dug class trenches, that black anger exploded; in the same fashion that anger explodes among white proletarians, drawn into and heaped up in the new industrial centers of advanced capitalism, crowded into shantytowns, in the monotonous slums, in the hovels of the very Christian bourgeois society where they are «free» to sell their labor power so as ... not to starve; in the same fashion always the holy fury of the dominated classes explodes and, as if that were not enough, scorned and maligned as well!

«'Premeditated Revolt' against the rule of law, the rights of our neighbors and the maintenance of order!» exclaimed Mc Intyre, the Cardinal of our Holy Mother the Church, as if the new slave-without ankle-chains had a motive to respect a law that the face pressed to the ground on bended knees maintains; or that this «neighbor» of whites, has never found himself to have «rights» or that he could see in this society based on the triple lie of liberty, equality, fraternity, something other than disorder raised to the level of a principle.

«Rights are not conquered by violence» shouted Johnson (3). Lie. Blacks remember, if only by having heard that Whites had to wage a long war to conquer the rights denied them by the English metropole; they know that Blacks and Whites, temporarily united, had to carry out an even longer war to obtain even the appearance of an «emancipation» still impalpable and remote; they see and feel every day chauvinist rhetoric exalting the extermination of the Red Indians, the march of the «founding fathers» to new lands and «rights» and the brutal violence of the western pioneers, «exalted» to civilization by the Bible and Alcohol. What is all this if not violence?

Inchoately, blacks have understood that there is no problem in American history, like that of every country, that has not been resolved by force; there is no right which is not the result of clashes, sometimes bloody, always violent, between the forces of the past and of the future.

One hundred years of peaceful waiting for magnanimous concessions from whites have brought them very little, if

we except the little which the occasional angry outburst could wrest from the avaricious and cowardly boss's hand. And how did Governor Brown respond, defender of the rights that the whites felt threatened by the «revolt», if not by the democratic violence of machine guns, truncheons, armored cars and a state of siege?

And so what is this, if not the experience of oppressed classes under every sky, whatever the color of their skin and their «racial» origin? The Black, no matter if he is a pure proletarian or sub-proletarian, who shouted in Los Angeles: «Our war is here, not in Vietnam», has expressed an idea no different than the men who «launched an assault on the heavens» during the Paris Commune and that of Petrograd gravediggers of the myths of order, the national interest, the civilizing wars, and finally herald a human civilization.

* * *

Our bourgeois cannot console themselves by thinking: these are distant episodes that do not concern us, at home there is no racial question. Race is now, in an ever more evident manner, a **social** issue.

The fact that the ragged unemployed and semi-unemployed in our South no longer find the safety valve of emigration; the fact that they cannot travel beyond the sacred frontiers of the motherland to be skinned-alive (and get slaughtered in disasters due not to fate, unexpected vagaries of the atmosphere or, who knows, the evil eye, but the thirst for profit of Capital, its frantic search for savings on the costs of materials, means of transport, safety devices, and perhaps for future gains in the reconstruction following disasters which are inevitable and anything but unpredictable even when they are hypocritically deplored); the fact that the slums of our industrial cities and our *moral* capitals (!!) are swarming, and will be even more than is the case today, with outcasts without work, without bread, without-reserves, and you will have an Italian «racism» Italian, already visible today in the recriminations of the inhabitants of Northern Italy against the «primitive» and «uncultured» Southerners.

This is the social structure in which we are called upon to live today that gives rise such infamies; it is under its ruins that they will disappear.

This is what warns and reminds those who, drugged by the democratic and reformist opium, and without memory, doze in the illusory dream of well-being, the «black revolt» in California – not distant nor exotic, but present in our

midst; immature and defeated, but a harbinger of victory!

(1) Pat Brown, Democratic governor of California from 1958 to 1966 (when he was defeated by Ronald Reagan) is the father of the current governor Jerry Brown, who had been governor of California from 1975 to 1983.

(2) *L'Unità* was the daily newspaper of the Italian Communist Party.

(3) Democrat Lyndon Johnson was the president of the United States (he had gained this position after the Kennedy assassination, when he was the Vice President). His «Great Society» program included recognition of «civil rights» for blacks, the «war against poverty», the institution of social measures in the health sector such as Medicare and Medicaid for the poor, etc. It was under his mandates that US involvement in the Vietnam War, began under Kennedy, really intensified.

«Racial» Riots in the U.S. over the past 50 years

July 1964:

After the murder of a young black of 15, by a policeman (who was not even on duty) riots broke out in Harlem and extended for 10 days and to other neighborhoods in the metropolis of New York: Manhattan, Brooklyn, Bedford and also to the city of Rochester. Savage repression by the police left 7 dead, 800 wounded, with over 1,000 arrests.

28-31 August 1964:

A riot broke out in Philadelphia after a rumor about the murder of a woman by a policeman. There were more than 300 injured, over 700 arrests, 225 shops looted or destroyed.

11-17 August 1965:

Riots in the black neighborhood of Watts in Los Angeles (California): 34 dead, 1,032 wounded, 3,775 arrested after the intervention of the National Guard. The police chief of the city (LAPD) compared the black rioters to «monkeys in a zoo ...»

January-March 1966:

2 dead, 20 injured, 19 buildings burned in Watts.

Summer 1966:

Riots and protests in 43 cities with a total of 11 dead, over 400 injured, 3,000 arrests

12-17 July 1967:

Riots in Newark (New Jersey): 27 dead, 2,000 injured, 1,500 arrests, 300 fires.

23-28 July 1967:

Riots in Detroit: 43 dead, 2,000 injured, 7,000 arrests. The protests later spread to 128 cities. During 1967 the total number of dead amounted to 83.

4-11 April 1968:

After the assassination of black pacifist leader Martin Luther King, riots broke out in 125 cities. President Johnson used a US Army elite unit to come to the reinforcement of police and National Guard in Washington, Chicago, Baltimore, Boston, Newark, etc. The repression left 46 dead, 2600 injured, with 21 thousand arrests.

*

Riots in Miami.

Throughout the 80's riots broke out

several times in Greater Miami (Florida); the most important were:

May 17-20, 1980:

Three days of riots resulted in 18 deaths, over 400 injured and 1,100 arrests in the black neighborhood of Liberty City. The violence erupted after the acquittal of four white police officers charged with the beating death of a black motorcyclist who ran a red light the previous year.

28-30 December 1982:

2 dead, 25 injured, 38 arrests.

16-18 January 1989:

6 injured, 351 arrests, 30 buildings burned after the murder of a biker by the cops.

*

April 29 - May Day 1992:

After the acquittal of the LAPD officers who had beaten Rodney King, a Black accused of speeding, riots broke out in Los Angeles suppressed at the cost of 59 dead and more than 2,328 injured. The riots spread beyond the black neighborhood: a white protester exclaimed: «this is not blacks against whites, it is the rich against the poor.» The protests spread to other California cities including Oakland, San Francisco (where martial law is decreed for the first time since the 1906 earthquake!) and San Diego, as well as Seattle and Las Vegas. Demonstrations were also held on the East Coast: New York, Philadelphia, Atlanta etc., without resulting into riots.

*

April 9, 2001:

A young Black man of 19 years, Timothy Thomas was killed in Cincinnati by a white police officer during a pursuit. There followed four days of violence in which 70 people were injured. Calm returns after the establishment of the state of emergency and a curfew.

10 August-November 2014:

After the assassination of the young Black, Michael Brown, repeated riots take place in Ferguson (suburb of St. Louis, Missouri). A state of emergency was declared and the National Guard was called in as reinforcement. Hundreds of people were arrested, including 16 journalists.

KILLINGS OF JOURNALISTS IN FRANCE

Down With The *Union Sacrée!*

Down With The Bourgeois Republic!

No To Religious Wars, No To Imperialist Democracy,

Yes To The Class War Against Capitalism!

DOWN WITH THE UNION NATIONALE!

After the attack against *Charlie Hebdo*, all the formidable power of the media and bourgeois propaganda kicked in to use the emotion born of the bloody massacre to rouse support for «national unity» and the «values of the Republic.» the Government, parties of the left, right and far-right (excised by the organizers of the Paris march, the far-right Front National (FN) of le Pen called for demonstrations in the provinces), trade union apparatchiks and multiple associations called for large demonstrations of unity: so that rich and poor, unemployed and capitalists, workers and employers could march together for «freedom of expression» and against «terrorism», behind French political leaders and government officials and those of other countries, German, Spanish, English, etc. or even Turkish such as the Prime Minister of that government which has imprisoned dozens of journalists, which violently suppressed Kurdish demonstrators (thirty dead) and which supports the activities of jihadist groups in Syria, Israelis such as Netanyahu still dripping in blood from all its victims in Gaza, etc. a true imperialist Holy Alliance.

President Obama, who has refused, contrary to his promise to close the prison at Guantánamo where prisoners have been languishing for years without trial subjected to the most sadistically refined tortures, who authorized the assassination abroad of alleged «terrorists» (which has above all resulted in the deaths of civilians in drone bombardments), who has organized a new war in Iraq and Syria, who justified the ubiquitous surveillance by the secret services of US telephones and the internet worldwide, who remained practically silent in the face of the murder of Black youths by police in his country, etc., etc., has publicly stated his «solidarity» with the victims of the attack against *Charlie Hebdo* on behalf of the ideas of «freedom

and the ideals that we share».

But this freedom and these ideals are not those of the proletariat and the oppressed! Proletarian ideals are the fight against oppression, class independence, liberation of humanity from the capitalist yoke. The grand but empty phrases and the compassion-on-demand broadcast by the whole media machine, are in the service of a large-scale operation to make the proletariat support of the bourgeois order at the very same time when, in France and in other countries, it displays more and more openly its repressive and oppressive face.

DOWN WITH BOURGEOIS WARS, LONG LIVE THE CLASS WAR!

Politicians of all persuasions have argued that «**we are at war**». This is an undeniable truth.

But this really means much more than police operations against a handful of criminals: France is one of the imperialist states which are the real major terrorists in the world, pillaging and massacring the exploited and oppressed all over the planet, and whipping up all wars. Without even going back to the killings in colonial wars or African genocides, which display the real «values» of the French Republic, and sticking to current actuality, the Hollande government is enormously proud that in 2014 France was the second country to enlist itself behind the United States in a new war in the Middle East, and that French military interventions in Africa have succeeded each other at a rapid pace. The French defense minister boasted at the end of 2014 that in the Sahel, in one year, «nearly 200 terrorists» have been «neutralized» by French soldiers (apparently they do not take prisoners ...) and more recently it has stated that a military intervention in Libya was necessary. The traditional warlike tendencies of the French Republic have made a forceful comeback under the current «left» government. And in order to continue military operations in defense

of French imperialist interests at will, the Government recalls how helpful national unity was in 1914 where the «*Union sacrée*» had been, in all countries, the necessary condition to initiate and conduct the war in Europe...

But the war that is waged relentlessly by the capitalist and bourgeois governments of all countries, is the **internal social war against the proletarians**, although this social war – capitalist exploitation – does not usually translate into armed clashes (the bloody repression of workers' struggles is reserved for periods when the proletariat tries to break free from its bondage), but rather into accidents caused by overwork, murders by police, layoffs, job insecurity and increasing misery. While it never really experienced a clear recovery from the great recession of 2008, capitalism is menaced again today with a plunge into a new international economic crisis. This inevitably means new anti-labor measures, new anti-social «reforms», in short, a further aggravation of the social war against the proletariat, after the unprecedented attacks already carried out in the last period. So we can understand the interest of the Government and the capitalists in using the corpses of the «victims of terrorism» in the name of an alleged common interest in *«peace and tranquility»* to divert the class struggle of the proletarians and to chain them into a unity with their class enemies: but it is not peace and tranquility which is required by the workers in the face of the capitalist attacks, but a return to the real struggle, the **class war**!

REACTIONARY ISLAMIC TERRORISM

For their part, the authors of the massacre and those who inspired it are also the adversaries of the proletarian struggle of defense against the capitalists. Contrary to what the media says, they are not fighting against «freedom of expression» (which is

actually accepted by the bourgeois as long as it does not interfere with exploitation), or «democracy» (the system of class collaboration based on the lie of equality between citizens); according to the ideologues of al Qaeda whose positions were upheld by the terrorists, Muslim proletarians should not hesitate to kill and to be killed, not to defend their class interests, but to defend the Prophet! Preaching the unity of believers and religious wars in place of the class struggle, having as a target, not the exploiters, but those who oppose religion, like all clerics, in reality they defend the interests of a ruling class all too happy despite appearances to see the defensive fire-fight of religion against the proletarian struggle spreading among the proletarian youth issuing from immigration: the **opium** of religion has always been used by the exploiters to deceive the exploited! On the other hand those who perpetrated these attacks or those that inspired them, knew that the main result would be to throw suspicion on the entire Arab population, strengthening the *de facto* discrimination it faces and the police abuse it suffers, exacerbating the racism and the **divisions between proletarians** of different backgrounds which is an important factor in the current powerlessness of the proletariat.

NEITHER RELIGIOUS WAR NOR SOCIAL PEACE! CLASS STRUGGLE IS THE ONLY ROAD FORWARD FOR THE PROLETARIANS OF ALL ORIGINS!

Through the intermediary of its political representatives and with the eager help of its political and trade union lackeys, the ruling class calls for the building and strengthening of «national unity» around itself even as it sows misery and war throughout the entire planet, it continuously aggravates inequality and exploitation here and everywhere, it continuously strengthens measures of surveillance and repression against the «enemy within» which is none other than the proletariat!

The proletarians must not fall into the gross political maneuvering inflamed in the name of the fight against «terrorism»; they must reject any union with their exploiters, they must reject the defense of the imperialist Republic and bourgeois democracy –

i.e. the defense of the capitalist system that crushes down on them; it is indeed capitalism which is itself infinitely more criminal and terrorist than all the jihadists and whose victims number in the tens of millions, and which, in order to overcome its ever more serious and repeated crises, will inevitably plunge mankind into a new world war if the international communist revolution fails to bring it down in time.

The bourgeois and their lackeys hope that proletarians remain under submission to the capitalist order for as long as possible, driven in particular by the fear of the Islamist terrorist threat or by fear of the traditional extreme right; but since they understand that the material bases of this submission are continuing to weaken as economic difficulties induce capitalism to continually increase pressure on the working class, they utilize every instance, and the bloodiest are the most effective, to realize and replenish the paralyzing interclassist union.

If they want to break away from their bondage, if they do not want to serve as cannon fodder in inter-bourgeois confrontations and as flesh for exploitation in everyday life, the workers have no alternative other than to oppose themselves to this national unity, other than to break with class collaboration, other than to retrace the path of revolutionary class struggle.

The overthrow of capitalism by revolution is essential to end the countless horrors of this system, and for the birth of a new society without classes and without wars, without exploitation and discrimination, a society based on the real brotherhood among all: communism. The union of the proletarians of all backgrounds and nationalities is the preliminary condition in order to resist all capitalist attacks, and to find the strength to then go on the attack against capitalism.

The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains, they have a world to win!

Down with national unity! Long live the union of all workers in the anti-capitalist class struggle!

Down with the bourgeois Republic! Long live the world communist revolution!

International Communist Party
January 11, 2015

El proletario

Órgano del partido comunista internacional

No 7
Julio-Septiembre de 2015

- i Comienza el circo electoral ! La democracia contra el proletariado.
- La regeneración democrática y la represión... más democrática aún
- Una aclaración necesaria.
- Próxima publicación de "Razones de nuestro abstencionismo"
- Nueva edición del partido: "Terrorismo y comunismo" de L. Trotsky.
- La lucha de clase contra la explotación capitalista es vital tanto para defender las condiciones de existencia del proletariado en todos los países del mundo como para lanzar, mañana, la lucha decisiva contra el poder político de las clases dominantes burguesas y liquidar el régimen de esclavitud salarial impuesto y mantenido con la fuerza del capitalismo. ¡Este es el verdadero significado del Primer de Mayo proletario, internacionalista y de lucha!
- Grecia: ¡Contra las ilusiones reformistas! ¡Por la lucha independiente de clase!
- Continua la masacre de migrantes ahogados en el Mediterráneo. Tremenda demostración de que los gobiernos burgueses de todos los países, democráticos o autoritarios, no resolverán nunca las causas de estas tragedias. ¡Es el capitalismo el que debe ser sepultado!
- Orientaciones Prácticas de Acción Sindical (III).
- Huelga de los trabajadores de Movistar. ¡Es posible luchar contra las condiciones de explotación que impone la burguesía!
- Es posible vencer si se utilizan medios y métodos clasistas!

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el proletario

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i Comienza el circo electoral ! La democracia contra el proletariado

Siguiendo las elecciones europeas de diciembre, las principales y autoritarias fuerzas burguesas continúan su estrategia de manipulación y control (excepto hechas a las llamadas «electrónicas») para mantener el orden social y la estabilidad en el país, que necesita las elecciones al Parlamento Europeo para elegir a los diputados que representarán sus intereses en el Parlamento Europeo y en las legislaturas de los países miembros en cada uno. El «voto» votará la extinción de la clase obrera y la victoria de la burguesía, la democracia contra la «verdadera» democracia internacionalista, la «casa» contra los «baldíos», la «lucha» contra los «reformistas» y «reformantes» de izquierda... a través de todos estos dicen que democrática y «nacional» es la burguesía europea. Los ciudadanos en estos últimos meses y especialmente los jóvenes, se están dando cuenta de que el sistema que arroja el voto es el sistema que define las leyes y no la que se exige que maneje con vida. Durante los últimos años, el voto ha vivido tres baladas paralelas: una de los trabajadores y la otra de los agremiados propios de una sociedad industrializada y la tercera de los que se levantan sobre su sangre y su carne, a la que se exige que maneje con vida.

Durante los últimos años, el voto ha vivido tres baladas paralelas:

1. Una de los trabajadores y la otra de los agremiados propios de una sociedad industrializada y la tercera de los que se levantan sobre su sangre y su carne, a la que se exige que maneje con vida.

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3. Una de los trabajadores y la otra de los agremiados propios de una sociedad industrializada y la tercera de los que se levantan sobre su sangre y su carne, a la que se exige que maneje con vida.

La lucha de clase contra la explotación capitalista es vital tanto para defender las condiciones de existencia del proletariado en todos los países del mundo como para lanzar, mañana, la lucha decisiva contra el poder político de las clases dominantes burguesas y liquidar el régimen de esclavitud salarial impuesto y mantenido con la fuerza del capitalismo. ¡Este es el verdadero significado del Primer de Mayo proletario, internacionalista y de lucha!

EN ESTE NÚMERO

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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.