

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.

Nr 10

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"le prolétaire" Nr. 509

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**To survive the proletarian class must fight against the bourgeoisie
and all those who live on the exploitation of wage labor.
Only the proletarian class struggle is historically able to end
the oppression of man by man and all class divisions
through revolutionizing capitalist society from top to bottom!**

PROLETARIANS! WORKERS OF ALL RACES AND NATIONALITIES!

In recent years the global economic crisis has continued to worsen the living conditions of large segments of the population, not only in poor countries but also in the richest country in the imperialist states who acquired a dominant position in the military and political economic, social violence that characterizes the frantic pace of capitalist development.

The capitalist economic crises is plunging ever greater masses of men, women and children into unemployment,

poverty, hunger and death – the atrocious demonstration that the economic system based on profit is unable to provide well-being and peace to humanity. In point of fact in addition to crises there are the wars that are their consequences and which correspond to economic and political clashes between bourgeois powers.

The future which the bourgeois classes, who dominate the economic and social life of every country, have in store for current and coming generations is a future of ever more grinding oppression, increasing misery, and aggravated exploitation for the proletariat and working people. In order to resist this future there

is no alternative but the class struggle, a struggle organized on the basis of the antagonism between classes generated by the social organization of capitalism.

Only the proletarian class struggle can resist and, in the end, defeat the bourgeois class and open to mankind the prospect of a higher social organization, without oppression, exploitation and class divisions. Why? Because the proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains with which the bourgeoisie has bound them for generations to force them to be exploited, and they have a world to win! In freeing themselves from

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Summary

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- Massacre of Muslim Brotherhood demonstrators in Egypt.
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- *A new massacre in Syria*. Only the revival of revolutionary proletarian class struggle can stop them and vanquish them!
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- Slaughter of Proletarians in Bangladesh: Capitalism is the Assassin!
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- *France Renault-Cleon*
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Democratic cybersurveillance

The Snowden affair, regarding the U.S. National Security Agency (NSA) employee, who revealed the extent of computer espionage in which the United States is engaged, is very instructive, since it shows the true totalitarian face of bourgeois democracy in the twenty-first century.

The United States claims to be the champion of «human rights» and «freedom» both within its own borders and throughout the world have undoubtedly become quite dilapidated over the decades; however high-profile cases like that of Watergate where «brave» and «independent» media outlets rang out the truth about Government manipulation, causing the downfall of the president who ordered them (1), would seem to demonstrate that, despite all its limitations, «democracy» is alive and well in the most powerful capitalist country in the world, even to the point of being an example for other countries worse

off: there the freedom of information, freedom of the press, freedom of communication etc. is fiercely respected, including against the highest authorities, in contrast to what happens elsewhere, say in China, where censors monitor the Internet and where they undertake electronic espionage all over the world.

Unfortunately for the champions of the American and Western democracy, the documents carried off by the «whistleblower», as his partisans call Snowden, show that in matters of surveillance and wiretapping, the United

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wage slavery, the proletarians will liberate all humanity from capitalist social oppression.

**PROLETARIANS!
WORKERS OF ALL RACES
AND NATIONALITIES!**

In all countries, but especially in the most developed capitalist countries, the bourgeoisie not only uses direct violence to subject the workers to exploitation, it relies on a array of collaborationist forces in order to poison the proletariat through all the various weapons of pacifism: from democracy to religion, sports, music, gambling etc. The objective of bourgeois propaganda is not only to bend the proletarians to capitalist economic and political demands, but also to convince them that the wage labor to which they are condemned from birth is a «natural» fact that they must accept and to which they must adapt; to convince them that this wage labor is their necessary contribution to social welfare, to the progress of civilization – and thus that they have to avoid social confrontation and follow the path of social collaboration between the classes inspired by values common to all: prosperity of the company and the national economy, democratic debate of citizens between various opinions, respect for constituted authorities and the law of the land, and of course defense of these values against any attack, defense more generally identified with the defense of the fatherland!

That the workers should break their backs and die, not for their own interests, but for those of the bourgeois homeland, this is the motto of all bourgeois in all countries!

However, if the proletarians thought about what they are forced to give and what they receive in return they would ascertain that in this society based on commodities, money, profit, that they are subject to the laws of capital, to bourgeois rule, to the condition of being exploited for life: their only prospect is a

life of exploitation, unemployment, misery and massacres, because even if today wars beat down the masses of proletarians and the disinherited in distant countries, in Asia, Africa or the Middle East, tomorrow they will also explode in Europe and even in America.

But now and everywhere if the proletarians do not die of hunger or fatigue, they risk death in the «industrial accidents», to diseases caused by unsafe working conditions (see the example of asbestos or dioxin), by negligent health-care, by «police brutality», or the repression of strikes and movements against their deplorable living conditions.

**FOR THE OVERWHELMING
MAJORITY OF THE WORKERS
OF THE WORLD, THE FUTURE
PROMISED BY BOURGEOIS
SOCIETY IS WORSE THAN
THE PRESENT!**

But the bourgeoisie is astute; The richer and more powerful it is, the more it divides the proletarians into different layers according to trade, according to factory, according to nationality, age, sex, level of education, etc. This division not only serves to differentiate (and lower) wages, it is mainly used to increase competition between the workers themselves. It is thanks to this stratification that the bourgeoisie can ensure the support of the more specialized, better paid upper layer, which in 1845 Engels had dubbed the **labor aristocracy**. It is through this layer of labor aristocracy and through the urban and rural petty-bourgeoisie that the big industrial commercial and financial bourgeoisie succeeds in penetrating its prejudices, interests, values, into the great mass of the proletariat.

All of the opportunistic organizations, who claim to be defenders of workers' interests - from collaborationist unions to reformist parties - have the same credo: the **collaboration between classes**, which is obtained by the typical mechanism of capitalism, which is competition! The more the competition between proletarians sharpens, the more difficult

it is for them to fight together, to recognize themselves as members of the same class opposed to the bourgeois class. The more proletarians compete with each other, the more they submit to the laws of the market, to capitalism, to the exploitation of wage labor: the condition of each is not seen as the condition of all under capitalism, but as the result of the individual's ability to collaborate best with the bosses, the government, the bourgeois. **Competition between proletarians destroys the material thrust of the struggle against the capitalist system!**

Due to the ongoing work of the forces of social conservation, present generations of workers have lost any connection with the traditions of the great revolutions and struggles between classes. The parties and the Communist International, which called on the proletarians of all countries to launch an assault on capitalism were destroyed by the counter-revolutionary wave of which Stalinism was the most terrible aspect. The glorious experiences of the Paris Commune in 1871, the Russian revolution, the great struggles in Germany, Italy, Austria, Hungary and the general international revolutionary movement of the twenties which shook the bourgeois powers of Europe and America, were therefore buried under a thick shroud of falsification of Marxist communism; according to the capitalists and their supporters, they are nothing more than a «barbaric» past that has reached its completion through the progress of citizenship and bourgeois democracy ...

The defeat of the proletariat in the world and in Russia assured capitalism additional decades of life; beginning with World War II, each extra decade of life for capitalism has meant a decade more of destruction, of massacres, poverty and exploitation for most of the world's population.

Over the decades capitalism has expanded and developed in all countries, but it has not changed: a mode of production living off of the exploitation of wage labor, it can not escape its internal contradictions which continue to deepen, increasing the destructive force of its cyclical crises. These are indeed the material contradictions of capitalist society that thrust the proletariat onto the terrain of confrontation between the classes under the absolute necessity of the struggle for survival. The Asian or African proletarians who risk their lives on the seas in search of a better future demonstrate that they have the same strength and fortitude as did German Italian, Irish, Greek and Spanish proletarians in the last century who themselves embarked upon interminable and peril-

ous journey in search of a job.

Then as now, what is pushing the proletariat is not «faith», or «hope», but hunger. The vicissitudes of capitalist economic cycles plunge broad proletarian layers, including in rich countries, into the same situations of hunger and misery that the proletariat has already encountered in history.

But if the pressure of hunger may give the strength to rebel, it alone cannot suffice for the proletariat to act as a class.

The media have for a long time spoken of the growth of unemployment and misery in Europe and America; but this has only caused the mobilization of charitable and religious organizations. It is indeed not the hungry, the needy, that the society of Capital fears, but the **proletarian who acts and is organized with his class brothers** to defend themselves, especially if they are grouped around a political program aimed at the overthrow of capitalism in all countries!

PROLETARIANS, WORKERS OF ALL RACES AND NATIONALITIES!

The way to get rid of wage slavery and capitalist oppression has been traced out historically: it passes through the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat whose objective is the conquest of political power in all countries, the destruction of the bourgeois state

apparatus erected by the ruling class to defend its economic and social system.

The class struggle cannot appear unexpectedly, as proletarian class organization on the terrain of defense of its immediate interests cannot surge up unexpectedly.

Chained by the bourgeoisie and its reformist lackeys to the requirements of capital, deprived of their class organizations and their revolutionary program with which they had fought in the 1920s, the proletarians must re-emerge from the abyss into which the Stalinist counter-revolution and bourgeois democracy have plunged them. The proletariat vanguard have the task of recovering and defending the thread of class tradition that will allow the most combative sectors of the proletariat to advance towards the renaissance of the international class movement;

Indeed, history has shown that this class movement relies on the encounter between the formidable objective thrust of the struggle of the proletarians to defend their living conditions, and the program of revolutionary communism; on the meeting between the proletarian masses in struggle and the party of class, essential organ of the anti-capitalist revolution.

There is no alternative for the proletarians: either they struggle against oppression and exploitation, and in this struggle they realize that they are in possession of the force capable of overthrowing this society; or they give up and renounce this struggle and they are condemned to being docile victims of the bourgeoisie in times of peace as in times of war.

The path of proletarian emancipation is sown with obstacles and pitfalls, constructed by the bourgeoisie and its reformist lackeys who occupy themselves in guiding the workers onto the disastrous path of class collaboration.

The proletarians can avoid them in entering into struggle for the defense of their basic working and living conditions, because it's from this struggle that can develop the proletarian strength independent of the bourgeoisie and its agents.

The fundamental objectives of the struggle are those that unify the proletariat into one class army:

- 1. struggle against competition between the proletarians!**
- 2. struggle against unemployment and undeclared underpaid employment!**
- 3. union between unemployed, temporary, seasonal and full-time workers, union between the native-born, immigrants and undocumented**

workers!

4. struggle for the reduction of the working day and for higher wages!

5. struggle for full wages to the unemployed and laid-off!

6. classist reorganization into solely proletarian defensive organizations

7. demands consistent with the exclusive defense of proletarian interests, immediate and general!

Unity is strength, but to become a real force capable of resisting the enemy and counter-attacking this union must be forged on a class basis: it must overcome the division sown between the proletarians: competition, «every man for himself» attitudes and petty-bourgeois individualism and be aware of the irreconcilable antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The class union can only exist on the basis of the force necessary to reconquer the classist terrain: pacifism, legalism, genuflecting before the so-called higher interests of society – which are only the interests of the capitalist class – the willingness to compromise and sacrifice for the national or local economy, are huge obstacles to the class unification which is necessary to resist the capitalist class.

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

This is the call that the Communists always have launched, launch today and will always launch out to the proletarians of the world. This union has a fundamental goal: to pass from the struggle for the defense of living and working conditions over to the revolutionary struggle to change the world, to transform society in its entirety according to the needs of the human race. Revolutionary communists work towards the formation of the indispensable organ for the proletarian revolution which is the **class party**; but at the same time they participate in the daily struggle of resistance to the capitalists in defending the invaluable lessons of past struggles, all the while gaining an appreciation of and incorporating the material necessities expressed by workers in struggle.

**Long live the May 1 of struggle,
Long live the classist May 1!**

For the resumption of the class struggle in all countries!

For the reconstitution of classist organizations of proletarian defense!

For the reconstitution of the powerful and compact Communist Party, essential organ for the anti-capitalist revolution!

“ le prolétaire ”

**Nr. 509
(September-October-
November 2013)
Summary**

- Contre les capitalistes et un gouvernement à leur service, les prolétaires ne peuvent compter que sur leur lutte!
- Au Moyen-Orient, Un tournant dans la politique impérialiste?
- A Lampedusa, une tragédie dont le capitalisme est responsable
- Grève des travailleurs des services du nettoyage urbain de Madrid
- Nouveau massacre en Syrie
- De quelques réactions politiques à la prise du pouvoir par l'armée en Egypte
- Notes de lecture. Isaac Joshua et la révolution
- Solidarité de classe avec les prolétaires sans-papiers!
- La «Charte des Valeurs Québécoises», une charte anti-prolétarienne

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Democratic cybersurveillance

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States is, here too, a superpower without equal in the world. For example, for years the Western media have been filled with accusations of Chinese electronic espionage of the industries or government agencies of other countries.

An American professor wrote in 2012 that the Chinese authorities had established *«probably the most sophisticated control of cyberspace»*, which posed a threat to U.S. firms and caused difficulties for search engines like Google or AltaVista. Explaining that *«authoritarian regimes tend to have fewer checks and balances than democracies in order to prevent the abuse of power»*, he wrote that Chinese IT companies obey rules that are *«radically different from those of professional associations in the electronic commerce sector of the West»* where they provide *«protection of consumer rights and civil liberties»*, while in China the interest of the State is prime (2). That's a scream Professor! They must have had a good laugh at NSA Headquarters – unless that is where this article was decided upon...

In early June this year, the Chinese Government replied to these accusations, claiming to hold «mountains of data» on U.S. electronic spying in China, but nobody gave any credibility to these assertions. Yet the United States has established a massive system of espionage and surveillance of the Internet, which leaves other countries and China in particular far behind: the Snowden dossiers show that American electronic espionage in China has impacted even the most prestigious and most hermetic universities where future leaders of the country are educated. (3)

All major U.S. companies in the internet sector collaborate with monitoring services, trampling underfoot their advertising claims of preserving the privacy and confidentiality of the online traffic of their users: Google, Yahoo, Microsoft, Facebook, Paltalk, Skype, YouTube, AOL, Apple, or Cisco (world leader in telephony over Internet Protocol (IP) networks, routers, etc.) are cited by name for their collaboration on the interception of communications, including beyond US borders. The NSA uses various electronic programs to obtain a massive collection of electronic communications, what it calls *«metadata»*.

On average during the month of December last year, the American NSA, under its «Boundless Informant» program, intercepted about 15 million phone

calls and 10 million Internet communications daily in Germany (on some peak days this could reach 60 million communications)!

During the same period, the overall number of communications intercepted daily by the NSA involved around 4 million in Italy, 3 million in France, between 2 and 4 million in Poland, 2 million in Spain, etc... The particular importance of Germany is not only that it is the first ranking European power, but also that it is an important internet center from which it is possible to monitor communications in other countries, from Mali to Syria and throughout Eastern Europe.

In general this metadata does not contain content, but messages containing: IP addresses, phone numbers, links between correspondents, message language, use of any feature (e.g. Google maps), etc., which is considered sufficient by the NSA. But there is also the possibility of recording all the content of the messages for a few days, in order to then have the time to deal with them. Of course such a quantity of information cannot be fully analyzed; search engines are an automatic sorting according to criteria selected at will and from this sortation, it is possible to track individual persons worthy of interest to the police services.

European States, or some of them, are part of «targets to attack» according to NSA (a document of September 2010 listed 38 «targets» among foreign embassies in Washington and New York: not only traditional opponents of the United States, but also the embassies of France, Italy, Greece, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, etc.) and a particular system of espionage targets the European institutions in Brussels (coming from NATO facilities) and New York.

All countries are potential targets for the Americans, with the exception of a handful with whom there is a cooperation treaty called «Five Eyes»: Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Britain. Thus Snowden revealed that the British secret services have established direct links on Britain – United States transatlantic cables through which much of the email traffic between Europe and America passes, to proceed with desired interceptions without difficulty, or that at the last «G8» held in Britain they mounted a fake cyber cafe to spy on the communications of members of foreign delegations, while they intercepted the «encrypted» communications from the mobile phones of their leaders; the data were then communicated to U.S. services...

THE TOTALITARIANISM OF BOURGEOIS DOMINATION BEHIND THE DEMOCRATIC MASK

Espionage, including between «allied» States is obviously not new, the novelty lies in the enormous possibilities that computers and electronic networks give major States, and especially the largest of them, not just for spying on other countries, but also to control the activity of their own populations.

In the epoch of liberal democracy, the *«inviolability of correspondence»* was one of those principles – which were obviously regularly breached and battered by the police – but of whose existence in Western countries the above cited professor still boasted; today the non-declared but very real principle is the interception of correspondence!

While continuing to maintain a liberal façade, modern democracy has pushed control and monitoring to levels unknown by fascist totalitarianism from which it inherited the tendency to centralization.

To reassure the American people when the Snowden scandal broke, President Obama said that the NSA acted only in foreign countries and within the framework of the «fight against terrorism».

But the documents show the opposite; just for the month of March, the NSA intercepted 3 billion «pieces of intelligence» on U.S. computers and computer networks, (against, 14 billion in Iran, 13.5 billion in Pakistan, 12.7 billion in Jordan, 7.6 billion in Egypt and six billion in India, for a total of 97 billion worldwide).

Monitoring of e-mails in the United States began after the attacks of September 11. But a new much more powerful and efficient system came into service in December of last year: it was able to filter and analyze over 75% of internet traffic in near real-time. Following a secret decision taken in the month of April, Verizon, the largest US mobile phone company with more than 100 million customers, provides **all** the telephone data it carries every day to the NSA!

But the old monitoring of traditional mail services is still in force, as was recently discovered by chance (4); the program, dating back over a century, of monitoring suspected persons by postal authorities (representing tens of thousands of letters per year), has been augmented for over a decade by a more modern automatic program: photograph-

ing the envelopes of **all** letters and packages distributed by mail, some 160 million letters and packages!

It's natural that after these revelations, Obama had a bit of trouble during his press conference in early August convincing anybody that the NSA and other U.S. intelligence agencies, investigates only «terrorists» and that intelligence programs would become «**more transparent**»: Obama's Democratic administration has actually **increased** and **intensified** the scale of these practices!

European Governments have publicly expressed their outrage at the American massive espionage - especially because it is primarily economic! The French Government has requested the postponement of current transatlantic trade negotiations (since EU negotiators have been spied upon) pending «clarification» from the US authorities; the German Government said that it was «practices worthy of the Cold War» which were intolerable between allies, etc.

But they all refused to grant political asylum to the man who had revealed that they were victims of this espionage; and after a few days the trade negotiations continued as before, without any American «clarification». And when the United States warned that Snowden might be in the Bolivian presidential plane, the French authorities (followed by Spain, Italy and Portugal), in contravention of international diplomatic conventions immediately banned overflight rights to the plane, compelling it to land in Austria (where the police tried to search it).

It would be a serious mistake to explain the behavior of European Governments by their «lack of courage» or their «servility» to the United States. A U.S. newspaper wrote that «U.S. authorities have privately warned French officials to be careful about speaking with too much outrage about U.S. espionage given that major European countries like France spy, too, and not just on their enemies» (5).

All major European countries engage in espionage, but also in the surveillance and control of their populations. The French daily *Le Monde* revealed the existence of a «clandestine system» similar to the U.S. in France, whereby the DGSE (the French secret services), «collect the phone records of millions of subscribers (...). Same for mail (with possibility of reading the subject of the mail), SMS, fax ... And all internet activity through Google, Facebook, Apple, Yahoo ...» (6). In Germany, the secret services work hand in hand with their American counterparts to monitor communications, according

to the revelations of Snowden. In Britain, *British Telecom*, *Vodafone*, *Verizon* and other phone companies are secretly spying on their users on behalf of the police, etc. and other countries should not be left out. All the big States are doing what the U.S. State is doing (albeit with lesser means), and all are equally hostile to the revelations bringing this reality into harsh focus, because they undermine the great democratic lie. Russia finally agreed to grant «temporary» political asylum to Snowden, but only if he stops his revelations about the actions of the NSA. The *Washington Post*, the major newspaper that had led the fight to bring the truth about the Watergate scandal, refused to publish the information which had been naively offered by the «whistleblower»: to-day it is not a question of opposing a government responsible for a major political crisis (a never-ending war with serious consequences on public order in the USA), but to shed some light on the secret workings of democracy.

Democratic or authoritarian, and even if they are rivals and competitors, all the States and the bourgeois classes are complicit and in solidarity against the population, and ultimately, against the proletariat, which they strive to keep in ignorance, to dupe by propaganda and lead by the nose.

There is no point in moaning about violations of freedoms trampled on democracy, the State interference in the lives of «citizens» - that State also called to the rescue to protect those citizens from the excesses of capitalism!

The power of the State and the social order of which it is the armed column is not eternal; the profusion of surveillance and control which it implements reflects the seriousness of the tensions that accumulate in society, making the social equilibrium increasingly precarious and causing periodic explosions. None of these means can in the long run prevent the return of the anti-capitalist class struggle.

But this class struggle will lead to the final battle only when, rejecting the reformist, legalistic and pacifist illusions of phony bourgeois democracy, the proletarians led by their class party, oppose to bourgeois centralization and totalitarianism, **revolutionary centralization** and **revolutionary totalitarianism**: the revolutionary seizure of power and the establishment of the international proletarian dictatorship to liquidate capitalism.

(1) In view of the upcoming presidential elections which he addressed in

a difficult position, then President Nixon had microphones planted in the Watergate building which was to host the Democratic Convention. After the scandal broke, Nixon was eventually forced to resign under pressure from the Democrat opposition.

(2) See <http://www.erudit.org/revue/telescope/2012/v18/n1-2/1009262ar.html>

(3) All of the following information is from articles by the British *Guardian* and Germany's *Der Spiegel*, searchable in English on their websites: www.theguardian.com and www.spiegel.de

(4) *New York Times*, 7/3/13

(5) *International Herald Tribune*, 7/5/13

(6) *Le Monde* wrote that «France has protested weakly [in relation to Snowden's revelations] for two very good reasons. Paris already knew. And does the same thing.» This information generated little echo since the Socialist-Greens government hastened to cover it up. Once again the Left government has perfectly served bourgeois interests.

« Il Comunista » Nr.133- Gennaio 2014 Nell'interno

- Il partito di classe del proletariato, indispensabile e decisivo non solo nella lotta rivoluzionaria per la conquista del potere politico e per la trasformazione economica della società, ma anche nella lotta di classe del proletariato sul terreno della difesa immediata dagli attacchi convergenti delle forze borghesi capitaliste ed opportuniste
- I proletari sudafricani non ereditano nulla da Mandela, leader antiapartheid: devono conquistare, come sempre, il terreno della lotta di classe anticapitalistica
- Sul «Movimento 9 dicembre», tra spinte individualistiche e reazionarie, spontaneità rabbiosa e illusioni democratiche e costituzionali
- La donna e il socialismo (7) di A. Bebel.
- Arduo lavoro di difesa delle linee programmatiche, politiche, tattiche e organizzative del Partito nella vitale critica marxista dell'imperialismo capitalista, nel bilancio dinamico del movimento comunista internazionale e nella prospettiva della futura ripresa della lotta di classe. Il Partito Comunista Internazionale nel solco delle battaglie di classe della Sinistra Comunista e nel tormentato cammino della formazione del partito di classe (Riunione Generale di partito, Milano 7-8 dicembre 2013).
- La teoria marxista della moneta (RG di partito, Marsiglia 1967)

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«Secularism» against the proletariat⁽¹⁾

«Roll up your sleeves and rub your forearms with 90% alcohol, as we plunge our hands into the most serious process of infection of the socialist movement: anticlericalism.» This is how, in 1949 Amadeo Bordiga began the article «Anticlericalism and socialism» in his *Filo del Tempo* series.

Some might believe that the era of anti-clericalism – under the guise of an uncompromising secularism – was completed after the «guerre scolaire» (scholar war) of 1984. Unfortunately, a large part of the reformist left and «far» left is still championing the fight against private education – especially Catholic.

In recent months, a diverse coalition uniting the worst reformists with the false «revolutionary left» was relaunched in a secular campaign for the repeal of the Debré Law (voted in 1959, this law allows the financing of private schools by the State, in particular payment of teachers' salaries, if they conform to the same official curriculums as the public schools; there was heated opposition against this law from the reformist parties which said that it was a violation of the separation of Church and State, until the Socialist President Mitterrand put an end to this «scholar's war» of the mid-'80s).

On December 7, Libre Pensée (Free Thought, an atheist association) – presided over by former Force Ouvrière (Worker's Power) union honcho, Marc Blondel – organized a rally for the repeal of the Debré Law.

Taking the podium after him were representatives of FO, the SNES-FSU Teachers union, the ultra-reformist Left Party and Left Radical Party, the POI (Lambertist Trotskyist) and the «revolutionary syndicalists» of the Intersyndicalist tendency *Emancipation*.

They communed around the cult of Holy Public Education and Our Saviour the National-Republican state.

The host power, LP, concluded the ceremony by denouncing the Debré law as «contrary to the historical development of the nation» and celebrated the «School of the Nation, future hope of our youth.» This same LP exalts in a recent press the «*Republic, One, Indivisible, Secular, Democratic and Social*» – and above all bourgeois – against fantasized threats posed not only by decentralization but also by the existence of «*different languages*» in France!

Two hundred years ago this genre of orientations had an undeniably revolutionary value, even if these orientations and demands were of a bourgeois nature: against feudal fragmentation and divisions that hampered the economic and social development, they represented an historic, fundamental breakthrough, the

victory of the capitalist mode of production, a victory dialectically necessary so that the struggle between modern classes could unfold and create the material conditions of the subsequent revolutionary transition to the classless society of communism. But since the final victory of the anti-feudal revolution, they can only serve to consolidate the bourgeois regime against its only enemy: the proletariat. The «future hope of the youth,» if we talk about the **proletarian** youth, not the bourgeois youth, in no case resides in the bourgeois institution of the school, public or private, but only in the **proletarian struggle** against capitalism and the Republic!

If the other Trotskyist currents, Worker's Struggle (LO) and the New Anticapitalist Party (NPA) do not currently participate in this «secular union» between reformist forces, they adhere to the same ideology and defend the same motto: «Public funds to the Public school».

The «anti-capitalists» of the NPA ask that «*The public authorities and local communities [the bourgeois state!] should be aimed at the development of secular public schools, from kindergarten to university. Public funds must be reserved for them*» («Philippe Poutou: *Yes to a public school at Beaupréau*» December 16, npa49.free.fr)

LO is not far behind. In Argenteuil, for example, its municipal councilors say «*For a long time, the socialist movement has fought for the defense of public school [...]. For us, it's still a current struggle. The school funded with public money, it is the public school, obligatory and open to all. If the Catholic Church wants to open a school, it has the means, it should address itself to its followers to carry this out and finance it from beginning to end*» (lo-argenteuil.blogspot.com).

This fight against the Debré law, and more generally against the private school is not only carried out under the entirely bourgeois flag of **Defense of the Republic**, but in addition this defense is a fable: for a long time now the Church is no longer, as in the nineteenth century, opposed to the Republic! Just like our secularist politicians and unionists, it is a factor of bourgeois order and its schools are as much an instrument of social conservatism as the public schools! Secular campaigns have resulted in diverting the

proletariat from the class struggle into enlisting in an artificial «scholar's war» between two bourgeois camps, but basically they are used to conceal the nature of the bourgeois class state which tries to convince the workers that they must defend it against threats of an alleged clerical, reactionary or obscurantist character. And, inevitably, they lead to the **division** of the proletariat.

«BABY LOUP» (BABY WOLF): WHEN LO SUPPORTS DISMISSALS

Another example is given us by Workers Struggle about a case that made the headlines: the Baby Wolf nursery – touted by LO, this crèche is sponsored by Elisabeth Badinter, both fierce secularist and member of the French big bourgeoisie.

Here are the facts: an employee of the nursery who had been fired because she wore an «Islamic veil», has appealed and her dismissal was annulled because according to the Labour Code religious beliefs cannot be grounds for dismissal.

Instead of being pleased that for once a proletarian has obtained a judgment in her favor, LO is outraged: «*This judgment has rightly raised a wave of protests as it gives weapons to obscurantists of all kinds, and many are those calling for a revision of existing laws, requiring the extension of the ban on conspicuous religious signs in the name of secularism*» («The Court of Cassation and the Baby-Loup nursery: an attack against the right of women» www.lutte-ouvriere-journal.org). In effect then, the veil would be the «symbol of the subjugation of women to an occult law (?) imposed by ultra-reactionary men who (...) deny all rights and all equality for women.»

LO doesn't have the courage to tell its readers that of «those» who are outraged and are calling for a revision of the laws, first is interior minister Valls, immediately approved by the most reactionary politicians ...

In common with the first cop of France who's also one of the biggest capitalists in the country, LO calls for the strengthening of the already completely public laws of the bourgeois state to force the proletarians to learn the benefits of secularism, and it justifies the firings in name of women's rights and the fight against enslavement!!! It is difficult to find words to describe such an ignominy from an organization calling itself «workers' ...

Anyways, once again, the pseudo-

revolutionary Trotskyists or the «revolutionary syndicalists» show that they are only left-wing defenders of the capitalist state and of bourgeois ideology. They are not only purveyors of reformist illusions but – on the «secular issue» – they fully adhere to the National-republican bourgeois ideology.

But the unity of the proletariat necessary for its emancipation, and its break from bourgeois and reactionary ideologies, whether religious or democratic, can only be achieved in the fight against bourgeois exploitation and oppression, in the struggle against the capitalists and the bourgeois state, and therefore also against all these false friends.

In the nineteenth century, the German Socialists supported by Engels refused to join the *Kulturkampf*, the «struggle for culture» against clericalism led by the Prussian state, because it would have meant giving up class independence.

Similarly in France, the Marxist current – despite its theoretical weaknesses and political errors – refused to fight along-

side the bourgeois fraction for secularism. Its representatives denounced «*The imaginary war-game against clericalism [which] conceals a more serious purpose which is to absorb the energy of workers and to divert them away from their class interests, for the struggle against Capital they wish to substitute the fight against God. The cult of Human Rights, of the Fatherland, freedom of trade, and all bourgeois ideology, tend to the same result*» (Paul Lafargue, *Le Socialiste*. 15-18 September 1901) and the «so-called secularists [who] produce or attempt to produce very docile fodder for exploitation» (Guesde, «*Laïcisation à faire*» «*Secularization to be made*» *Le Socialiste*, October 22, 1887).

Then as now, the workers should not let themselves be fooled by the secular crusades they must fight only on the class terrain for the defense of their interests and the communist revolution (1).

(1) This is a translation from: «*Le*

«*laïcisme*» contre le prolétariat» *Le Prolétaire* n°507.

Laïcisme is the ideology (and also the activity) of those who fight for *laïcité* (the neutrality of the bourgeois State towards religion or the separation of Church and State; it's a bourgeois ideology which was revolutionary in the epoch of feudalism, i. e. before the bourgeois revolution was accomplished, when it was necessary to fight against the power of the Church which defended the *Ancien Régime*).

Today there are reactionary bigots but we can't fight them under the catchword of *laïcité*, secularism, alongside the «enlightened» or atheist bourgeois, like the class-collaborationist secularists (or laicists) desire, just as we can't fight the fascists alongside the bourgeois democrats and under the catchword of democracy.

(2) See in this regard: «*La laïcité, un principe bourgeois*» («*Secularism, a bourgeois principle*») *Le Prolétaire* brochure n°31

The «Charter of Québécois Values», an anti-proletarian charter

In September the Parti Québécois government made public its bill for a «*Charte des Valeurs québécoises*», a «*Charter of Québécois Values*».

In the name of «secularism», it plans to ban the wearing of «ostentatious» religious symbols for public service workers: including judges, police, hospital and social services staff, school teachers, municipal employees, teachers and staff in day-care centers, etc. According to the PQ this would ensure the neutrality of the state vis-à-vis religion, but the minister who introduced the bill immediately made it clear that there was to be an exception for Catholic symbols (like the crucifix hanging front and center in Québec's parliament, the National Assembly) because «religion has played a key role in the history of Québec» and of the need «to preserve this heritage»! Here we see the reactionary character of these «québécois values» ...

Confronted with the disillusionment of their electorate since coming to government, the PQ nationalists have taken recourse in xenophobia to try to regain some popularity. The Public Service Union of Québec (the only legally recognized representative of Public Service employees) has approved the government; The charter was criticized by the petty-bourgeois Québec Solidaire and they issued an alternative plan which stipulates the prohibition of religious symbols only for «officials in au-

thority» (judges, police, etc.); but they retained the point that to qualify to receive public services – with exceptions only in emergencies – one must be «bare-headed», in other words not be wearing the Islamic veil!

The democrats opposed the bill in the name of democracy and individual freedoms. The PQ announcement was followed almost immediately by a series of attacks against women wearing veils; it is important to note that immigrants from Arab countries have become one of the most important groups of workers of foreign origin, and the Muslim religion is now second in the province. The Charter is in fact directed against women who wear the symbols of the Muslim religion.

Beyond the short-term political calculations, the initiative of the PQ has a more important goal: to paralyze the struggle against the evils of capitalism through the division of the proletarians and by hoodwinking the proletarians of Quebec into believing that they share common values with their exploiters to be defended against foreign proletarians. But proletarians have **nothing** to defend in common with the capitalists, they must struggle against them if they do not want to stay slaves eternally!

Opposition to the draft charter of the PQ is not a democratic or humanitarian requirement, it is a requirement of the proletarian struggle: proletarians from all origins and traditions, unite

against capitalism and its lackeys, secular or religious!

Since the PQ Charter is inspired by laws introduced in France, we publish above an article from *Le Prolétaire* written to combat a similar set of circumstances prevailing there.

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The removal of the Morsi government is not a victory for the proletariat and the exploited Egyptian masses. Victory can only be achieved by the proletarian class struggle against capitalism!

After massive peaceful demonstrations against the Morsi government, which gathered together millions and millions of protesters throughout Egypt, the military overthrew the government, arrested Morsi and dozens of leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood, closed their television stations and suppressed their newspapers. An interim president was appointed and it appears that negotiations

are underway to appoint a new government.

These events were greeted with enthusiasm by a large part of the population, exasperated by the government's inability to improve its situation and the reactionary authoritarian politics of the Muslim Brotherhood. Many people have seen these events as a «victory of the people» and proof that the army, in fact, obeys the wishes of the masses.

NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH!

The army intervened only to protect Egyptian capitalism, to save social peace by preventing the widespread discontent from leading to violent and uncontrollable confrontations. On several occasions in recent weeks the military leaders – appointed by the Morsi government! – called, without success, on the government to compromise with opposition elements so that the economic and social crisis in which Egypt is immersed does not transform into a political crisis.

The petty bourgeois «Tamarrud gathering which organized a petition campaign to demand the resignation of Morsi obtained nearly 20 million signatures in a few weeks, demonstrating the unpopularity of the government, but also the strength of democratic and pacifist illusions. Of course Tamarrud («Rebellion») did not call for a social revolution, but the formation of a government of apolitical technocrats who would be able to solve the economic problems of the country. It is therefore not surprising that Tamarrud welcomes the actions of the army and it is arrayed behind the candidacy of former Nobel Peace Prize winner (2005), the bourgeois Mohamed El Baradei, for the post of prime minister.

But the laws of capitalism are inflexible; regardless of the political or religious tendency of the bourgeois government which succeeds the Morsi government, in order to restore the economic health of the country, it will have no choice but to obey them, which means increasing the exploitation of the workers, reducing the already very meager social measures and strengthening repression to accomplish these anti-proletarian measures.

Since January 2011 more than 4,500 factories have closed in Egypt (1) and more than a million people have lost their jobs, and despite government dec-

larations on new job creation, unemployment has continued to rise. 78% of workers have only temporary employment and half of the 80 million Egyptians live below the official poverty level, that is to say, one US dollar a day (2). Inflation has officially reached 13% per year, but in some cases has reached 40% for basic necessities. Regular power cuts and fuel shortages due to the economic problems of the state further exacerbate the difficulties of daily life, including for large sections of the petty bourgeoisie.

To this brief outline must be added the reduction in foreign investment, the fall in tourism income (which is still one of the most important economic sectors) and even revenues from the Suez Canal, not to mention the large budget deficit; All these factors threaten the finances of Egypt, meanwhile it must import foodstuffs to feed its 80 million inhabitants (Egypt is the world's largest importer of wheat, bread is the staple food of masses), according to some economists the economic crisis in Egypt is the most serious since the thirties.

The financial support of Qatar being insufficient, the government had sought help from the IMF, but it is unwilling to grant loans at low interest rates unless the state puts its finances «in order», to be clear, reduce its expenses and increase its revenues. Concretely this means to remove or drastically reduce subsidies to basic commodities which are the largest expense of the state, in other words ... to starve the impoverished masses! Very aware that a decision of this type would almost certainly trigger violent riots (as was the case in 1977 when dozens of people were slaughtered by repression), the Morsi government hesitated until the end...

In this serious situation, it seems that beginning this spring, capitalists were pressuring for a seizure of power by the army – which the army heads then refused (3).

But if the Morsi Government had

hesitated to follow the anti-social recommendations of the IMF he had not expected to conduct a repressive anti-worker policy and lay the foundation for its worsening.

A law on trade union freedoms, written shortly after the fall of Mubarak, which accorded fairly extensive freedom of struggle and organization to the workers, was never enacted because of the opposition of the military; the new law in preparation by the Morsi government planned various measures to regiment the new unions which were recently created (prior authorization to establish a union, control of their finances, prohibition of trade union pluralism – which means recognition of the old state monopoly union, etc.). But even before this law, arrests and dismissals of proletarians trying to self-organize and fight against the capitalists, the criminalization of strikes, continual violations of internationally recognized workers rights have made Egypt a «hell for the workers» according to the very bourgeois ILO (4)!

However, if this UN organization was indignant, it was not out of solidarity with the workers, but because it feared that an overtly anti-proletarian government policy would lead to struggles, while it advocates a democratic policy of class collaboration intended to prevent them.

AND THIS IS WHAT HAPPENED!

According to the International Development Center (an independent Egyptian NGO) in the first six months of 2013 Egypt experienced the largest number of social «protests» in the world: 5544. The month of May was the hottest with nearly two «protests» breaking out an hour, moreover with increasing «violence»!

What the IDC means by «protests» is not very clear, it seems that they are not always strikes; but two-thirds of these «protests» that can be demon-

strations, marches or even attacks on official buildings were related to working conditions, social demands and deficiencies in public services, in short, they were of a proletarian nature (5).

Although there is no complete information, it seems that June saw a continuation of the wave of protests even before the gigantic anti-Muslim Brotherhood demonstrations at the end of the month in which the workers participated *en masse*, we can find a proof in the workers' agitation in the textile centers of the north, especially in the gigantic Misr Spinning in Mahalla, where thousands of workers protested against the government of the Muslim Brotherhood and for their own demands (6).

The fall of the Morsi government after the enormous demonstrations of recent days will inevitably revive illusions of a fraternal union between the classes and the goodness of the military and state apparatus, which had dissipated under the government of the Muslim Brotherhood: this is an asset that the Egyptian bourgeoisie will be quick to put to use to calm the workers. But the reality of the capitalist crisis will dispel these illusions.

The facts will demonstrate to the workers of Egypt that their real enemy is not only the **regime** of the Muslim Brotherhood, after that of Mubarak: it is the entire capitalist **system**; they will demonstrate that against this enemy it

is impossible to count on the support of other classes, the petty-bourgeois and bourgeois laity, because **they too** live off their exploitation, nor that of the army and of the bourgeois state whose ultimate function is to maintain this capitalist exploitation. The only allies of the proletarians, are the proletarians and the exploited of the entire country, and in all countries.

The facts will demonstrate that it is not possible to defend themselves and fight against this mortal enemy, against the capitalists and their state, with petitions or peaceful demonstrations: Only the proletarian class struggle, the revolutionary struggle to defeat the bourgeois state and to establish on its ruins the dictatorship of the exploited can definitively put an end to capitalism and all the bourgeois regimes that continuously succeed each other.

And to lead this fight, the necessary condition is **independent class organization**, both in terms of the «immediate» and «economic» struggle (**class union organization**) and on the broader political level (**class party**), future battles await the proletarians of Egypt as those of the whole world, it will depend on the ability of each and all of them to reconnect with the historical perspective of proletarian emancipation, the **communist program** which synthesizes the lessons of the major international battles of the working class, so that these

struggles are victorious.

July 7, 2013

(1) See: <http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/rise-factory-closures-reflects-egypt-s-compound-economic-malaises>

(2) See: <http://www.csmonitor.com/Commentary/the-monitors-view/2013/0705/Why-Egypt-now-deserves-world-s-help>

(3) Egyptian General el-Sissi said in May that a seizure of power by the army could not solve the problems. See: <http://www.isj.org.uk/index.php4?id=904&issue=139#139marfleet37>

(4) See: <http://hebdo.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/979/10/124/3002/LEgypte,-un-enfer-pour-les-ouvriers.aspx>

(5) <http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/report-egypt-averaged-two-protests-hour-may>

(6) These claims give an idea of the working conditions: immediate implementation in the minimum wage, increased food allowance, obtaining permanent worker status after 20 years of work, transport allowance, recognizing the rights of qualified women workers, etc. See: <http://menasolidaritynetwork.com/2013/06/28/egypt-mahalla-workers-join-rebellion-reject-privatisation-pl>

Massacre of Muslim Brotherhood demonstrators in Egypt The only road forward for the proletariat is the independent class struggle and no confidence in the bourgeois army!

More than 600 killed in Egypt according to official figures (over 2000 according to the Muslim Brotherhood), reestablishment of the emergency act (repealed in 2012 after being in force for 60 years), statements by the Minister of the Interior according to which «security» would be restored to what it was before the fall of Mubarak, this is the initial balance-sheet of the savage intervention of the Army on August 14. While some saw in the overthrow of the Morsi government a «new stage of the revolution», or others think that the repression would only affect the Muslim Brotherhood, by the massacre of Islamists demonstrators, the Army wanted to demonstrate to everybody that it intends at all costs to strengthen the iron heel of the bourgeois order. Since Morsi proved to be unable to do that, he was

swept out of power; and his supporters who refused to submit to the Army were crushed in blood.

This the Egyptian proletarians should make no mistake about: they are in the crosshairs of the military killers!

The removal of Egyptian President Morsi (who believed right up to the end that he was supported by the Americans) (1), ecumenically blessed by the Coptic Patriarch and the Rector of Al-Azhar Mosque, was warmly welcomed by the Cairo stock exchange which soared by 7% – its largest increase since ... Morsi's election victory! This demonstrates the disappointment of the capitalists faced with the incapacity of the government of the Muslim Brotherhood to solve the grave problems of the country. It was also loudly applauded by Saudi Arabia and the Gulf oil monar-

chies, and discreetly by Israel. The first promised financial aid of \$ 12 billion without delay to Egypt, which was desperately needed, while the Israelis rejoiced over the reestablishment of the blockade of the Gaza Strip by the Egyptian Army; and they allowed the deployment of Egyptian troops in the Sinai to «restore order.» (Since the «Camp David Accords» in '78 no deployment of Egyptian troops in this part of the country is possible without the agreement of Israel).

After lengthy negotiations, a provisional Government was formed in Cairo; the Salafist party *Al Nour* (far-right Islamist), the second-largest party in the Parliament, who some weeks ago had joined the opposition to the Muslim Brotherhood, was itself opposed to the appointment of the democrat El Baradei,

backed by the secularist parties, to the post of Prime Minister; he was deemed too «secular»: therefore an honorary position of «vice-president» was created for him (which he resigned after the massacres of 14 August).

The new government perfectly illustrates the orientation of the forces who, riding on the wave of protests, were the authors of the overthrow of Morsi. Supported by the «left» bourgeois democratic parties, it includes, in addition to traditional politicians, including those from the Mubarak period, ministers of the Morsi government, starting with the defense minister, General Al Sissi – the author of the coup – and the Minister of the Interior, although he was widely denounced for the brutality of the police he leads. The message was clear: the repression and antisocial measures demanded by the capitalists will continue and escalate. Skillfully, the Salafists turned down any participation in a government which will not be slow in disappointing the expectations of the masses; they are preparing to divert the inevitable discontent into their reactionary impasses.

Despite the bloody repression they suffered, the Muslim Brotherhood appeared to withstand the shock; they were able to mobilize tens of thousands of protesters in Cairo behind the flag of violated democracy and they displayed an unexpected resistance to the military. Therefore they appeared to the Egyptian bourgeoisie and imperialism as a possible recourse for the – predictable – failure of the new government. If the negotiations that, before the killings, took place behind the scenes between them and the Army ended without success, imperialism will push for their resumption, both the Americans and Europeans fearing that the bloody military crackdown will lead to a long period of instability (2).

But the key to the evolution of the situation is to be found in the reactions of the workers.

Since the overthrow of Morsi, the *Egyptian Federation of Independent Trade Unions* has called for an end to strikes, writing in a communiqué that «the heroes of the strikes must become the heroes of labor and production» (3)! During the formation of the government, the president of this Federation of lackeys of capitalism was appointed Minister of Labour...

EFITU was formed after the fall of Mubarak as an alternative to the former official trade unions, the Egyptian Trade Union Federation hated by workers (the ETUF still exists and it obviously also called for suspension of strikes, for one year, and called on workers to support

the new government). It is in no way an independent class organization; its staff come from the ETUF and its constitution was assisted by U.S. imperialism through the AFL-CIO (The American trade union federation regularly used by CIA for its activities abroad), the first stones were laid even before the fall of Mubarak to attempt to control workers' agitation.

But EFITU appeals have not had the expected success. A new wave of strikes has broken out, mainly in the textile industry, but also in other sectors. Most of these strikes were led outside the unions and the distrust of workers towards the existing political parties is underlined by Egyptian newspapers. For instance in July 31, workers at *Misr Spinning* the giant textile enterprise which is a kind of center of workers' struggle in Mahalla (northern Egypt) scored a victory over the management: after a few hours of striking they agreed to maintain the Eid holidays and to the payment of a premium; among the demands was also the dissolution of the union official (ETUF) in the plant, which is run by the State Security. According to press reports, before the military crackdown, workers in Mahalla were pushing for a general strike against the new government that they accuse of following the same anti-labor policy that Mubarak and Morsi.

The struggle of the Egyptian proletariat against capitalism and all the bourgeois forces who defend it, Islamists, the Army and others, is just beginning. This struggle is that of the proletarians of the whole world!

(1) *Le Monde* of 6 July published an exchange of Morsi with Al Sissi who announced his eviction to him; Morsi answered that the Americans would not tolerate his overthrow, then he told the general that since it was he who appointed him, he was able to dismiss him; Al Sissi answered that it was actually the Army that had designated him.

See http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2013/07/06/egypte-un-coup-d-etat-prepare-a-l-avance-parles-militaires_3443524_3212.html.

(2) The United States were inevitably aware of the coup in preparation and, by dropping Morsi, they gave it the green light. But they exercised pressure on the military (some suspension of arms shipments) to push them to negotiate some kind of agreement with the Muslim Brotherhood. *The Wall Street Journal*, spoke straight-faced in its No. 29/7 about a «philosophical dif-

ference» between Washington and Cairo on how to treat them; but as a matter of fact, the «philosophy» of the Americans is to keep contacts with the Brotherhood in order to play this card if necessary to defend the stability of the country along with their interests.

(3) See <http://english.alexbar.com/node/16585>

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)

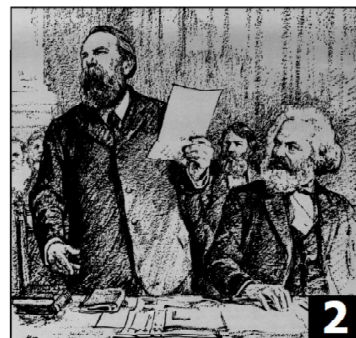
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Proletarian

International Communist Party («programme communiste»)

The Fundamentals of Revolutionary Communism



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On some political reactions to the impeachment of President Morsi by the Egyptian army

On August John Kerry, the American Secretary of State, said that by overthrowing President Morsi in early July the Egyptian military «were restoring democracy» and had acted «at the request of millions and millions of people» (after the failure of negotiations with the Muslim Brotherhood and the bloody repression of their supporters, the United States then began to criticize the new government).

But it is not just the United States or the international media which applauded the military action, lauding it as a victory of the masses against an anti-democratic government. Thus it is not only the usual intellectuals who chatter sententiously on what they know the least (the situation of the proletarian masses and their struggles), but also currents or political parties claiming to be Marxist or Communist who hailed it as a «second revolution»!

For example, we can cite the British trotskyst **Socialist Workers Party** who in their press, wrote «*Second revolution brings down Egypt's president*» (1); «*This is a contradictory situation. It is formally a military coup. The army has effectively arrested the president and 77 leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood. They intervened to save themselves from a new revolution. But at the same time it is a mass popular revolt. The people forced the army to act, and the army only did so because they were worried about their own future*» (2).

THE OPPORTUNISM OF THE WORKER-COMMUNIST PARTY OF IRAN :

But perhaps the greatest enthusiasm was shown by the Worker-communist Party of Iran. In a communiqué after the overthrow of Morsi it wrote: «*The Egyptian revolution has taken another important step forward for the people of Egypt, the Middle East and the whole world. The immense Tamarod (Rebellion) movement, which organized «the biggest ever demonstration in history», drove the government of Morsi and Muslim Brotherhood to the brink, finally forcing its downfall by the army. This is the third government, after those of Mubarak and Tantawi, which is being toppled by the power of Al Tahrir and Egyptian revolution. This was not only a decisive step towards weakening the Islamist forces in Egypt and in countries like Iran, but, more crucially, an expression of going beyond the limits of democracy and dealing a fatal blow to the myth of the rule of the ballot box, i.e. the rule of the bourgeoisie. The whole world witnessed how tens of millions of women and men came onto the streets in Egypt, directly exercised their will and toppled a government (...). This is a historic watershed which will bear the name of the Egyptian revolution.*»(3).

For the SWP as for the WCPI, the bourgeois army (which is the «backbone of the Egyptian state» as the WCPI communiqué reminds us), has therefore become the expression of the «direct control» of the masses, and thus being «forced» by the masses to overthrow the government, taking upon itself the role of protagonist of a

«second revolution» and even dealing a fatal blow to the power of the bourgeoisie!

The WCPI calls itself Marxist, but at the moment when the most popular slogan was «The Army, the People, One Hand»! They helped spread the fatal reformist lie that it is possible for the oppressed to use the bourgeois state (exerting pressure on it by peaceful demonstrations) in their favor. On the contrary the Marxists must warn the workers that the army is an even more implacable enemy than the Muslim Brotherhood because it is the ultimate defender of that capitalism which exploits and condemns them to poverty. Their duty is dispel the absurd illusions of the fatal blow that could be delivered to the power of the bourgeoisie with the removal of a government by its own armed wing.

If the WCPI release goes on to say that the revolution «has to directly confront and defeat the backbone of the Egyptian state, i.e. the army», we must immediately suspect that these are just empty words when that sentence is followed by a tribute to the «magnificent Tamarod movement» which would have «placed the Egyptian revolution in a stronger position». However, this movement, whose leaders have publicly stated that they are working for reconciliation of the revolutionaries and the *folouls* (representatives of the former regime), was financed by sectors of the Egyptian bourgeoisie and it was supported by most of the bourgeois parties, such as the party of ElBaradei or the National Salvation Front whose president is now Prime Minister. It has always been in contact with the ruling circles of the army and after the dis-

missal of Morsi by the military, it called for the creation of militias to help the army and the police!

The inconsistency of the positions of the WCPI still poke through regarding the perspectives it puts forward: «*the greatest danger threatening the Egyptian revolution is if this revolution remains merely an opposition force [that is therefore not really a revolution?], and if the gigantic Al Tahrir movement does not transform itself into state power based on the direct will of the people organised in their mass grassroots organizations*».

A State power based on the direct will of the people, may be an anarchist ideal, but for Marxism it is an absurd utopia: State power is necessarily based on organizations and structures of various types and based on **armed force**. It cannot come into existence through an indeterminate transformation of opinion and through demonstrations, but by the necessary prior dismantling of the former state power through **insurrection** and the **revolutionary seizure** of power. Furthermore, for Marxism «the people» is made of various **social classes**, with divergent social interests: to speak of *the people* is to wish to hide the existence of these divergent interests and to oppose the class struggle.

Speaking of the grassroots organizations the only ones that exist today are tied to the bourgeoisie and the State, such as the Tamarod or the unions!

«*The Al Tahrir and the immense movement of the Egyptian people should elevate the exercise of its will [the WCPI told us earlier that the instrument of this desire was the bourgeois army!] from changing governments and toppling the various representatives of the bourgeoisie to taking political power and setting up a new system based on people's undeniable freedom, prosperity and dignity*».

The WCPI is careful not to recall the fundamental teaching of Marxism that the only way to overthrow capitalism and achieve the emancipation of the proletariat and the oppressed masses is the class struggle carried through to the final goal, which involves the creation of classist organizations for the daily struggle (trade unions, etc.), the constitution of the revolutionary class party, the violent seizure of power and the establishment of the proletarian dic-

tatorship. Instead of using these lessons of Marxism to combat the inevitable confusion, of not just the masses but also but also among the elements thrust into the vanguard, the WCPI opportunistically aligns itself on this confusion; concealing the Marxist positions, it delivers these nauseating clichés on freedom, dignity, the people, denounced by Marx and Engels over a century and a half ago!

THE PETTY-BOURGEOIS ORIENTATION OF THE EGYPTIAN REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISTS

The Revolutionary Socialists is the only Egyptian far left group known abroad, and as such it enjoys a reputation internationally as a defender of Marxist positions in the social and political tempest that has shaken Egypt since the start of the «Arab spring».

Unfortunately, this reputation is falsely claimed and the SR, with ties to the British SWP which we quoted at the beginning of this article, have demonstrated their complete inability to hold to a Marxist, class political orientation: they display a congenital tailism in relation to the dominant political currents.

In their «letter to supporters» (4) in mid-August, the SR claimed not to want «to hide or delay some of our policies and principles in order to enjoy the temporary, close support of the masses behind our rhetoric and our slogans. On the contrary, concealing some of our slogans or our policies in order to achieve short-term political goals will only lead to opportunism. This is not the way that the Revolutionary Socialists work, and we have completely avoided opportunism (...)».

But in fact, it is the most unbridled opportunism that has characterized and characterizes their policies. They have supported various political forces, but always bourgeois: their only constant is their stubborn refusal to adopt class positions! We will see this through a quick review their positions in recent years.

In their statement of condemnation of the massacre of August 14, hundreds of Islamist demonstrators, they wrote: «The SR did not support for a single day the regime of Mohammed Morsi or the Muslim Brotherhood. We have always been at the forefront of opposition to this criminal regime.» The reality is somewhat different.

According to a confidential cable from the U.S. Embassy in Cairo (revealed by WikiLeaks), from 2008, after the wave of strikes in the textile industries, the SR seems to have been part of

a front comprising the Muslim Brotherhood, the Waft, Nasserite, Karama and Tagammu parties (Parliamentary opposition parties tolerated by the regime) favoring a «*transition to a parliamentary democracy*» before the presidential elections in 2011, this front hoping to have the support of the Army and the police (5).

Whatever the case may be, the SR publicly defended the direction provided by the leaders of the SWP, that alliances with Islamist parties are possible, with the slogan : «*with the Islamists , sometimes with the State, never*» (6). In fact they have been sometimes with the Islamists, sometimes with the State!

On February 25, 2011, ten days after the fall of Mubarak, the SR signed the ultra-reformist statement of the «working coalition of 25 January Revolution» consisting of «Leaders, emblematic figures and other personalities related to the Egyptian workers' movement», i.e. representatives of the Muslim Brotherhood movement, the Communist Party, trade unionists and democratic NGOs. Its first two points were: «1. *Form the civilian Presidential Council immediately, in order to direct the transition.* 2. *Bring down the government of Ahmed Chafik (although it is trying to do a quick repair job) and form another government made up of national bodies that are qualified and completely independent of the current regime, until the holding of new elections.*»

While the situation was supposedly revolutionary, obviously no even vaguely classist demand could be issued by such a gathering including declared or concealed enemies of the workers' struggle! (7). Only the seventh and eighth and final point made a timid reference to workers' interests by requiring the dissolution of the official trade union federation, the reinstating of laid-off workers and to «*Implement international agreements relating to economic and social rights so as to be able to enjoy trade-union freedoms and fair wages (...)*».

Throughout this tumultuous period, one seeks in vain for the taking up of classist positions even vaguely reminiscent of Marxist orientations on the part of the SR, only interested in «short-term results».

Thus in July 2011 they participated in the organization of a Friday of «*national unity*» against the provisional Government in Tahrir square, within the framework of a «United front» which included practically every party right up to the far-right Salafist: it undertook to send to the «*Military Council the message that the political forces in*

Egypt could not be divided», the various organizations having agreed to put aside their differences. It was of course impossible to advocate independent class struggle while participating in an inter-classist front which included bourgeois parties, secular or religious! Salafist protesters having used the demonstration to demand the application of Sharia law and the creation of an Islamist state, the secular parties declared, in a statement also signed by the SR, that they would withdraw «*in the name of their pacifist principles*» and as a sign of protest that the «divergences» between the participants had been publicly expressed (8)!

SR ELECTORAL SUPPORT FOR MORSI

During the presidential elections of June 2012, the first since the fall of Mubarak, the SR called for a vote in the second round for the candidate of the Muslim Brotherhood (Mohamed Morsi) against the one supported by the military (Shafiq), they wrote in their statement that it would be a serious mistake not to differentiate between the «*reformist Muslim Brotherhood and the 'fascism' of Shafiq. The Brotherhood were supported by millions in the elections who aspire (...) to a true democracy*». Calling for «*the unity of revolutionaries and reformists* [that is to say the Muslim Brotherhood]», they advocated the formation of a «*national front against the candidate of the counter-revolution*» and called on the Muslim Brotherhood form a coalition government «*across the political spectrum*»!!! (9).

Faced with the argument that there is no difference between the generals and the Muslim Brotherhood, the SR admitted: «*From a class point of view, if we look at their programs, there is no differences. But there is one very important difference. The Muslim Brotherhood has a mass base — an ability to mobilize. (...) The base of the Brotherhood, and the masses who support them, are an audience for the Left in Egypt. They are an audience for the revolution. The SR does not 'support' the Muslim Brotherhood. But in the battle between the Muslim Brotherhood and the military, we are on the barricades with Islamists*» (10).

Therefore, the Islamists are reformists that should be supported because they have millions of people with them: a nice admission of opportunism...

According to Marxism, the «reformists» are enemies of the revolution, supporters of the established order (the Bolsheviks called them agents of the

bourgeoisie), but they manage to deceive the proletarian masses by claiming to defend their demands and arguing that they can be met by legal and peaceful means, by simple reforms. You cannot rip the masses from the clutches of the reformists with the tactic of the «Political United Front» with them, but only by mobilizing the base, in a united struggle for these demands.

Moreover how can it be said that Morsi is reformist and that the «fascist» Shafiq is the candidate of the «counter-revolution», if the two candidates have the same program? And if the masses who support the Muslim Brotherhood, do so on the basis of a program that is as reactionary as that of the generals, how can you say that these masses are an audience for the revolution?

But the most important question is this: is it possible to fight fascism or the «counter-revolution» through the ballot-box and by supporting a reactionary party? Have the workers no alternative but to use the bourgeois electoral process – put in place to divert the real struggle – and is the only choice between two bourgeois alternatives? To ally with religious or secular bourgeois parties, with the aim of democratic reforms, is a complete betrayal of proletarian interests and the class struggle, since we are no longer in the era of anti-feudal and anti-colonial **revolutions** (and even then, if specific, very temporary alliances in the revolutionary struggle were possible, the condition was the class independence of the proletariat).

Millions of Egyptians understood that the elections could change nothing: refusing to support the candidate of the generals as well as of that of the Muslim Brotherhood, they abstained, giving a lesson to the so-called Socialist Revolutionaries...

A few months later, in November 2012, while the unpopularity of the Muslim Brotherhood was at its peak at the time of constitutional changes decreed by Morsi, the SR abandoned their belief in the reformist nature of the Muslim Brotherhood: «*Today all the masks fell from Mohamed Morsi and his Muslim Brotherhood organisation (...). They and the remnants of the old regime are two sides of the same coin, which is tyranny and enmity towards the people*» (11) they stated indignantly.

This does not however mean that they decided to follow a policy of proletarian class independence; irresistibly attracted by the prospect of interclassist assemblies, they called for the «*formation of a new Constituent Assembly*

representing all sectors of society» and the formation of a «*revolutionary coalition government until the adoption of a new constitution and the election of a new government*»! The use of the word «revolutionary» here to push this proposition for a government of all parties, embodying national unity which SR has regularly advocated, is monstrous to anyone who calls himself a Marxist... a:

THE TAMAROD CAMPAIGN

In the spring of 2013 the SR engaged in the Tamarod campaign, although they now say they knew that not only various bourgeois and capitalist, forces including the Mubarak regime, but even the *Mukabarat* – the secret police – participated in this campaign (12)! The Tamarod campaign had no revolutionary or proletarian contents; it was a massive collection of petitions, funded by big capitalists and relayed by the media opposed to the Muslim Brotherhood to demand the resignation of the Morsi Government; its purpose was to contain discontent caused by the policies of this Government and the social crisis within the framework of the bourgeois regime. It led to huge street demonstrations June 30. In these demonstrations the Tamarod leaders had sought and obtained the condition that there be no workers' flags and banners. Today the SR explains that it was a condition demanded by the army: «*the army did not want a clearly visible role for the working class, it wanted it to be a moment of national unity, with Egyptian flags and that's it. Everyone together – the remnants of the former regime, the revolutionaries, the left, the right, the large capitalists, all together*» (13). It is easy to understand that these events inevitably opened the way for a military coup to overthrow Morsi.

The SR approved of the action of the army by posing it as a second revolution imposed by the military revolt of the masses (the positions of the SWP mentioned at the beginning of this article were written by the SR): «*Al Sisi did on 3 July 2013 what Hussein Tantawi did before him on 11 February 2011 – he acquiesced to the will of the rebellious populace, not out of any patriotism or revolutionary fervor, but out of fear of the revolution*» (14) (!). According to their analysis, the military would now play the card of the liberal opposition forces to attempt «*to derail the revolution*».

Actually the military had so little «acquiesced» to the revolutionary will of the masses, that, reinforced by their

confidence, they immediately strengthen the repressive State power, engaging in repeated massacres of Morsi supporters, appointing representatives of the former regime for positions as Governors, sending soldiers and police to break strikes, prohibiting strikes in certain public sectors (hospitals) and organizing a large campaign of nationalist propaganda of which Syrian and Palestinian refugees were the first victims.

In this new situation, the SR stated in August that it was «*of the utmost importance to revive the project of the Revolutionary Front with principled parties which do not drift into the arms of the state and the new government, neither are they allied with the Islamists against the state and which adopt a programme of the demands of the revolution and its goals*» (15).

It should be noted here that the SR never did care to define what this revolution was and what its goals were (except in the vaguest and most vacuous terms): bourgeois revolution, socialist revolution, simple democratic reform of the State? This would have required them to analyze the role of the different social classes in this revolution, to delineate perspectives on the basis of this analysis, and so on. . . But for that they would have had to break with their **immediatism** and turn to Marxism – an impossible task for the SR which determines their activity on a day by day basis, subject to the mercy of events.

The «Revolutionary Front» began in late September. Once again, it can be seen that this is an initiative that contains absolutely nothing proletarian: redistribution of wealth, full equality between individuals, opposition to the authoritarian regime, judgment of its crimes, foreign policy guaranteeing national independence, these are its programmatic points. The Front plans to launch campaigns for a «*declaration of the right of Egyptians*» (apparently the classic – and bourgeois – ‘human rights’ do not apply to the Egyptians), for the recognition of the social and economic rights in the future Constitution, and for an ‘audit’ of the external debt of Egypt in order to pay only that part which has been «*used in the interest of the whole of the Egyptians*» (16).

This typically **petty-bourgeois** program is not surprising if you look at what groups or parties compose the front: in addition to the SR and different personalities, there is indeed the Party of Strong Egypt, splinter Islamic party from the Muslim Brotherhood, «moderate» but wholly bourgeois (who won 17% of the vote in presidential elections), the April 6 Movement (petty-bourgeois organization, patriotic and

pacifist, born on the momentum of the workers' struggles in 2007, a section of which supported the military coup after they supported Morsi in the presidential elections), etc... Authentic Revolutionary Marxists have no place in such a front whose activity, if indeed it occurs, can only be contrary to the struggle for the class independence of the proletariat.

To demonstrate the Marxist position, let us read excerpts from a text by Lenin, written to define the attitude of «Social Democrats (read: Communists or Marxists) towards the other opposition forces. It should be noted that at that time in Russia the bourgeois revolution against the old pre-capitalist regime had not occurred; several social classes were therefore interested in the overthrow of the semi-feudal Tsarist regime – while in Egypt today capitalism is the dominant mode of production and the bourgeois revolution is no longer possible; therefore while partial and limited alliances with other opposition forces representing these classes were possible in the fight against tsarism – this is no longer the case in Egypt. Note also that there was not yet a real party and Lenin set as the goal of the work of revolutionaries the formation of the revolutionary party.

Lenin wrote: *«While pointing to the solidarity of one or other of the various opposition groups with the workers, the Social-Democrats will always single out the workers from the rest, they will always point out that this solidarity is temporary and conditional, they will always emphasize the independent class identity of the proletariat, who tomorrow may find themselves in opposition to their allies of today. We shall be told that «such action will weaken all the fighters for political liberty at the present time.» We shall reply that such action will strengthen all the fighters for political liberty. Only those fighters are strong who rely on the consciously recognized real interests of certain classes, and any attempt to obscure these class interests, which already play a predominant role in contemporary society, will only weaken the fighters»*(17).

The politics of the SR could not be further away from the teachings of Lenin!

* * *

Historically, there is no possibility in Egypt of any other revolution than the proletarian revolution; and this revolution will not be confined to the borders of this country, it will be part of the global Communist revolution. The re-

gime crisis in which bourgeois power is today engulfed is not yet the prologue of the proletarian Communist revolution; but it can and should be used by the Egyptian proletariat to prepare for the future final struggle and give an example to the proletarians of the world.

The political convulsions that have shaken Egypt for two years have their roots in the economic and social crisis in which this country, even more than others, is immersed. To exit this crisis Egyptian capitalism has no alternative but to attack the proletarians and disinherited masses ever more fiercely. This is the route that the IMF indicated and that the Muslim Brotherhood were reluctant to follow through on, not because of their alleged «reformism», but for fear of unleashing the struggle of the proletarian masses. Unable to provide to the capitalists that they asked of them, the Muslim Brotherhood have been swept away with savagery by the «bodies of armed men» who are the essence of all bourgeois States. The financial assistance provided by the petro-monarchies to the new authorities can only be a temporary remedy: attacks against the proletariat are more than ever on the agenda in Egypt, especially as revenue from tourism, a particularly important economic sector, has melted away dramatically because of the recent troubles. The struggle between the classes is therefore bound to intensify; the Egyptian proletariat will have to fight tough battles to resist the capitalists who are preparing to increase by all means its exploitation and its oppression. It has already shown its capacity for struggle, from the time of the Mubarak regime, and removal of Mursi and the formation of a new Government by the military only seems to have resulted in a temporary truce in strikes.

However, to fight successfully against an ruthless class enemy that will stop at nothing, to not only resist this enemy and grasp a few concessions, but to overthrow it, the proletariat will have to establish not only class organizations to carry out the daily struggle, but the leadership organ of its generalized struggle its own revolutionary class party, communist and internationalist.

It is a goal that cannot be immediately realized, if only because it requires as a precondition the political struggle of vanguard elements, like the Social Democrats at the time of Lenin, against all the false perspectives, against overt adversaries, as well as masked adversaries, against the military and the democrats, against the Islamists and against the petty-bourgeois currents that try to

pass themselves off as revolutionaries, such as the SR.

But for the proletarians of Egypt as for those around the world, there is no other way.

(1) <http://socialistworker.co.uk/art/33814/Second+revolution+brings+down+Egypt's+president>

(2) Ibid

(3) <http://communisme-ouvrier.info/?L=avancee-historique-de-la>. As far as we know, the WPI has not released other statements on the events in Egypt.

(4) <http://socialistworker.co.uk/art/34144/Egyptian+Revolutionary+Socialists+letter+to+supporters>

(5) <http://wikileaks.ch/cable/2008/12/08CAIRO2572.html>. It was the account of discussions with a leader of the «April 6 Movement» back from the USA. The embassy added that it could not confirm the reality of the plan outlined by the latter, plan that it considered «unrealistic».

(6) http://www.sa.org.au/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=7333:egypt-sometimes-with-the-islamists-never-with-the-state&Itemid=386

(7) <http://www.internationalviewpoint.org/spip.php?article2102>. The PC under Mubarak, was part of Tagammu party, is implanted in the trade union bureaucracy, like Tagammu it was hostile to the mass movement, to the strikes and demonstrations that brought down Mubarak.

(8) <http://english.ahram.org.eg/News/17654.aspx>

(9) <http://socialistworker.co.uk/art/28103/Revolutionary+Socialists+statement+on+Egypt's+presidential+elections>

(10) http://www.sa.org.au/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=7372:the-road-to-mursis-victory&Itemid=386

(11) <http://www.socialistworker.co.uk/art/29537/No+to+dictatorship%2C+no+to+trading+on+the+revolution+and+the+martyrs>

(12) <http://socialistworker.org/2013/09/03/the-main-enemy-is-the-state>

(13) <http://opendemocracy.net/sameh-naguib-rosemary-bechler/egypt%E2%80%99s-long-revolution-knowing-your-enemy>

(14) <http://socialistworker.co.uk/art/33815/Egypt%3A+Four+days+That+shook+the+world>

(15) <http://socialistworker.co.uk/art/34144/Egyptian+Revolutionary+Socialists+letter+to+supporters>

(16) http://www.lcr-lagauche.be/cm/index.php?view=article&id=3023:egypte-declaration-constitutive-du-front-l-chemin-de-la-revolution-thuar-r-&option=com_content&Itemid=53

(17) Lenin, «The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats» (1897), (MIA)

A new massacre in Syria follows many others, whether with chemical weapons or conventional : the imperialists await the opportunity to intervene and bring peace... the peace of the cemeteries.

Only the revival of revolutionary proletarian class struggle can stop them and vanquish them!

The civil war unfolding over the last two and a half years is between bourgeois forces – on one side the regime of Bashar al-Assad backed by Russian and Chinese imperialism and Iranian capitalism, and on the other bourgeois factions more or less openly supported by American and Franco-British imperialism and wanting to take his place – who are fighting to reorganize a capitalist order able to cope with a severe economic crisis and its consequences on the relationship of forces in a region among the most troubled in the world.

Confronted with the «Arab Spring» and in particular up against the great mass movements driven to revolt by their social conditions, the Western democracies have greeted the fall of Ben Ali and Mubarak as the beginning of a new era – an era of democracy and social progress for the peasant and proletarian masses in Egypt and Tunisia. Reluctantly recognizing the new governments, they counted on being able to make them pliant towards the imperative requirements of imperialism. If, faced with the resistance of the Libyan regime to imperialist pressure from the United States, France and Britain, the Western democracies put in motion a «war of liberation» against the «Gaddafi dictatorship» in the hope of opening the opportunity to big Western capital to more easily appropriate the petroleum riches; and if, confronted with mass protests in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, the Western democracies, given the strength of those respective monarchies have been content to simply countenance the police and military repression of these countries, in the case of Syria, for a long period of time their attitude has been, much more cautious .

The ability of the Al-Assad clan to control the situation with its army and police gave the Western and Eastern imperialisms the impression that the revolt could be contained inside Syrian borders. Syria indeed constitutes a fragile equilibrium in a region that is already a hotbed of chronic instability in Iraq after the ravages of the Anglo-American war, and the risk of contagion of unrest in neighboring countries (from Lebanon to Jordan not to mention Turkey, or even Israel) was too high. In

fact, Western and Eastern imperialism **mandated** the Baathist Al-Assad regime and its generals **to restore order**, the bourgeois and imperialist order! And that concealed behind the sickening propaganda onslaught about «violated democracy», «human rights» trampled upon and the population martyred!

By crushing the rebellion in the most brutal way (according to family custom) Bashar al-Assad wants above all to defend the capitalist interests of his cronies and those of his Russian allies; but fundamentally he also defends the interests of American, French, English, German, and Italian imperialism... not to mention those of Israel who feared the emergence of a new outbreak of turmoil on one of its borders, after the uncertainties created by the fall of Mubarak .

The major Western powers (the United States in the forefront, but followed by France and Britain with their old colonial tradition in the region), which did so much to overthrow Gaddafi, have never listened to calls from the «true democrats» who asked these imperialisms, historically the most cynical and murderous, to «stop» Bashar al-Assad after the massacres of Deraa, Homs, Hama, and of many other cities.

The UN appeals to end the civil war and for those fighting to meet at the negotiating table obtained the only result that these empty phrases, issued only to feed humanitarian and pacifist propaganda, could get – precisely **nothing**. The interests at stake in Syria are more complex and vaster than the internal problems in the country: it is a strategic node of primary importance for all the actors in the war, those visible in the foreground and those who operate behind the scenes, all bourgeois bandits who couldn't care less about the plight of the people. Iran, Turkey, Israel, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Qatar are directly interested in what is happening in Syria: major regional powers, they all nurture extra-national ambitions. Behind and above them, are the leading imperialist powers: first the United States and Russia, then France and Britain, and on the second and third level, China, Germany and Italy. If you fire a cannon in Damascus, the shot is heard not only in Cairo, Tel Aviv, or Tehran; it's also heard in Washington and Moscow, Par-

is and London, Berlin and Rome. This applies today to the bourgeois confrontations, but tomorrow it will also apply to the proletarian class struggle !

The violent tremors provoked by the economic crisis in the countries of North Africa and the Middle East could not open at once a new era, as the hardened democrats believed. We can see the sad end of the «Arab Spring» in the worsening of the situation in Tunisia, where the proletariat and poor peasants derived no benefit from the new democracy; and in Egypt where in recent weeks the massacres committed by the army returning to power (had it ever left?), are a tragic confirmation of that. The **iron heel** of the bourgeoisie is not guided by «democratic rights», but by capitalist interests; the more the situation becomes «unstable», the more **certain** is the repression against those who stand in their way. The proletarians who are the only class that can threaten the power of the bourgeoisie have, in all countries, one single means to resist capitalist exploitation and to obtain more acceptable living conditions: the path of class struggle organized independently of all bourgeois forces and all bourgeois objectives.

Ghouta, Zamalka: these are the suburbs of Damascus which, according to the regime's news service, are rebel strongholds. On August 20, they were bombarded with shells containing poison gas (of which, according to the CIA, Syria has recently been officially recognized to possess more than a thousand tons) (1). There were hundreds of deaths, perhaps more than a thousand, including many children. Videos and pictures of the massacre have been shown around the world, «public opinion» worked up by television and newspapers, is horrified. Democratic propaganda takes on a rising tone, calling on Europe to stop the killings of civilians, and asking Obama to be consistent with his statement that the use of chemical weapons was a red line that, if crossed, would lead to military intervention. For its part the Syrian government claims not to have used such weapons and puts it up to rebel machinations, this being sufficient for Russia and China to oppose, in the UN Security Council, any action other than the usual ineffective

commission of inquiry to investigate what happened, while bellicose statements are increasing in Western countries.

This cynical ballet over a massacre, is yet another demonstration that what is at stake exclusively concerns sordid imperialist interests of arms dealers, rogue capitalists, leaders of big and small powers driven by the desire to protect their business affairs, their political influence and the diplomatic relations that protect them. The diplomatic ballet, the motions at the UN, the declarations from various mouthpieces are intended to deceive the masses being massacred in the countries at war and hoodwink the proletariat of the imperialist countries into believing that diplomatic activity could stop the slaughter. But since the end of the first World War an uninterrupted flow of blood has characterized imperialist «peace» (which, as Lenin said, is only a truce between wars).

For the proletariat and the poor peasants of Syria, replacing Assad by another representative of local capitalism or a puppet of imperialism, changes nothing: the relentless and cynical juggernaut of bourgeois power will continue to oppress and crush the exploited masses. Even if, as in Egypt, after years of «dictatorship»; «democratic» elections were finally held, the basic situation of the proletariat and the poor masses did not change: after putting a ballot in a box, they returned to their life as outcasts, doomed to die of starvation, overwork or from a hail of bullets.

Today in Syria as in Europe or Amer-

ica, the proletariat is inert, still unable to organize itself on the class terrain, still unable to vigorously struggle for its own interests. If the proletarians of the imperialist countries were organized on a class basis and under the leadership of their own party, class solidarity with the people massacred in Syria would be expressed above all in the struggle against their own bourgeoisie – even if it had not yet decided to intervene militarily. This struggle would boost the confidence of the Syrian proletariat, thrusting them to organize themselves on a class basis.

The European, American, Russian or Chinese proletarians, are still far from that objective, leaving the Syrian proletariat, as the Egyptian, Kurdish and Iraqi proletariat, in the lurch – alone in front of their national executioners and their imperialist overlords. The European or American, Russian or Chinese proletariat are also alone and completely in the hands of their bourgeoisies and their collaborationist lackeys: the outcome for proletarians, if they do not struggle with the class methods and objectives, is the same everywhere.

But the terrible shocks of the crisis are beginning to have some effects: in Egypt the workers in many places had the strength to strike and to organize outside the control of the official unions. Although limited, this is a first step towards the resumption of the class struggle. It is along this path that the proletarians will realize that the struggle for economic demands is only a first step, insufficient to solve fundamental

social problems; and with the amplification of the class struggle, the reactions of the bourgeoisie and its state will make them understand that the central issue is that of political power: ***dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or dictatorship of the proletariat!*** Then the watchwords and indications of the class party, the Revolutionary Communist Party, will be understood and taken up by the large masses which now seem a far cry from even simply believing that they can challenge the capitalist system.

The bourgeoisie wages an ongoing class struggle against the proletariat; the proletariat will inevitably come to understand that in turn it needs to thrust itself into its revolutionary class struggle, the only perspective that really terrifies the bourgeoisie since it aims at the overthrow of its power and the end of its economic system.

Today it is the proletarians who tremble under the blows that the bourgeoisie hammers down on their living and working conditions, under the repression and massacres it inflicts.

Tomorrow, facing the revolutionary proletariat, organized and led by its class party, it will be the bourgeois in Damascus as in Berlin, in Cairo as in Paris or in Washington, in Tehran as in Moscow or Beijing, who will tremble as they trembled in 1917 not only in Petrograd, but in all the capitals of Europe and the world!

August 24, 2013

(1) see: *La Repubblica*, 22.08.2013

Down with the French military interventions in the Central African Republic! Down with French imperialism!

In mid-December the French government decided to send several hundred soldiers into the Central African Republic: officially 1600 (in addition to the hundreds there already) for a limited time, again officially, of 6 months. The big bourgeois daily *Le Monde* says that it's «a white lie intended to spare a public opinion which shows little concern» (1); but experience has sufficiently demonstrated that lies, «pious» or «white» or otherwise, always accompany imperialist interventions. We have yet another disgusting example in this military operation.

According to the French President Hollande, France has no interest in the Central African Republic (CAR), and it is only sending troops to save human lives. Arguing in favor of the military expedition, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Fabius invoked the imminent danger of «genocide» (socialist ministers are well placed to talk about genocide as under the «cohabitation» government of Mitterrand – Chirac (1986-1988) French imperialism

was guilty of active complicity in the Rwandan genocide), and it is under this rationale that the security Council of the United Nations passed a resolution submitted by the French Government to justify military action (2). But according to the media, French soldiers have been preparing their operation for nearly four months!

Actually French imperialism has real interests in CAR. It is not us saying this, but the Left Party: more frank than

Hollande or Fabius, the leader of this supposedly left-wing opposition party, said that military intervention is «legitimate» because «the government would not intervene if national interests were not at stake. In this case in particular it is uranium» (3)...

Almost as large as France but with less than 5 million inhabitants, the CAR is mainly an agricultural country whose population is among the poorest in the world. Yet it contains undeniable riches, even if they are not always exploited, due as much to being landlocked as by the lack of Capital. Besides diamonds (the scandal caused by «Emperor» Bokassa offering diamonds to French president Giscard d'Estaing contributed to the fall of the latter) and tropical timber exploited by French companies,

the CAR has deposits of copper and uranium which are not yet really exploited (the French company Areva postponed the opening of operations of its Bakouma mine due to lower uranium prices on the world market). It also has oil fields: the grant of an exploration license to a Chinese company by the previous government is sometimes cited as one of the causes of the breakdown of relations between French imperialism, concerned about the Chinese push in the country, with the Bozizé government.

But perhaps more important is the country's strategic location in the heart of Africa, which had been the reason for its colonization by France in the nineteenth century: bordering Congo, Chad, Sudan and Cameroon, a Central Africa plagued by serious problems posed a threat to the already weakened countries of West Africa where French imperialism had its most important economic interests.

That is why since its legal independence in 1960, the CAR has never ceased being under political and economic domination of French imperialism which was constantly involved in domestic politics.

Without telling all the story of this domination during the past half century, it should be pointed out that the French imperialists, after having supported the Bokassa regime, up to and including his megalomaniac phase, overthrew him in 1979 after he expressed some vague desires for independence; They re-installed Dacko (the first president of Central African Republic, who had been overthrown by Bokassa) in his place: he arrived in the same military plane as French troops... From that moment, during the Mitterrand period in the 1980's and until the early 1990's, the real ruler of the Central African Republic was colonel Mansion, of the French Secret Services!

At the beginning of the 90's, the French imperialists concocted the "democratic" coming to power of Patassé, including intervening militarily to defend him (1996).

In 2003 they backed the coup of general Bozizé (whose highest armed achievement was the massacre of dozens of students in 1979); French troops (including the air force and paratroopers) intervened on several occasions to maintain his power against recurrent rebellions. An African «peacekeeping» force and French soldiers settled in Bangui; obviously imperialism had no problem with a brutal and corrupt regime: brutality and corruption are necessary for imperialist plunder!

But clashes between Bozizé and French imperialist interests had occurred

lately, to the point that, shortly after his election, Hollande said, after the creation of the *Séléka* rebel force, that the French soldiers would not defend the Bozizé regime. However in December 2012, while *Séléka* forces, near the capital, were arrested by Chadian soldiers of the African «peacekeeping» force, hundreds of French soldiers landed an emergency force in Bangui, ostensibly to ensure the safety of French nationals in the area; but as a matter of fact the French imperialist wanted to increase pressure on Bozizé and his regime. An agreement was reached to form an interim government and Bozizé promised to relinquish power.

But a few weeks later, Bozizé reneged on his promises: he thought himself sufficiently strengthened by the arrival of soldiers sent by South Africa (South Africa is enticed by the mineral resources of the country and burning to take the place of the old colonial imperialisms). But rapacious French imperialism had not said its last word; *Séléka* troops resumed the offensive without being arrested by France's Chadian allies, inflicting a crushing defeat on the South African soldiers while Bozizé succeeded in escaping. Upon entering Bangui, the *Séléka* insurgents asked the French soldiers to help «secure» the capital; but it would have been a too obvious recognition of collusion with *Séléka*, and the French military were content to let things be. But in a few months the heterodox forces comprising *Séléka* seized autonomy subjecting the country to its harsh economic regimen and their exactions caused the exasperation of a growing sector of the population. The situation became more and more explosive and French imperialism finally decided to intervene...

Therefore sending soldiers is absolutely not motivated by the desire to save lives, as pretended by the French Communist Party which approved this intervention in the name of the «*protection of civilians*» (4): French imperialism has demonstrated to the blindest that its repeated interventions in Central Africa during the past half-century were motivated exclusively by sordid economic and geopolitical interests! Its domination over this African country, as elsewhere, has brought nothing but suffering, blood and misery to the populace; in marked contrast it has filled the coffers of the capitalist sharks and companies that plunder the continent. But there are none so blind as those who will not see: the left parties outside the government such as the PCF and the Left Party are equally pro-imperialist as the Socialist Party in power! Mas-

sacres in Central Africa have increased since the beginning of the French military intervention, and scenes of lynching have taken place without French soldiers intervening...

Despite the veritable *union nationale* which has formed around this intervention, the bourgeois politicians left or right can't help but see that it is unpopular among the population in general and the workers in particular: exposed to capitalist economic attacks here, they are hardly prepared to support capitalist military attacks abroad!

The proletarians of the advanced capitalist metropolises have no interest in supporting the imperialist actions of their exploiters; they have total interest in opposing it because the capitalists find in imperialist plunder the ways and means to reinforce and strengthen their exploitation: **a people which exploits another cannot free itself**, Marx said a long time ago. The solidarity with the people and the proletariat oppressed by imperialism, the struggle against all the crimes of imperialism, opposition to all military interventions – which always disguised under peaceful pretexts – is not a humanitarian or democratic duty, it is a necessity of the proletarian class struggle!

The anti-capitalist struggle here in the metropolises is the only way to bring real help to the oppressed and exploited masses of Central Africa and elsewhere in weakening, before having the strength to destroy it, the multi-tentacled imperialist monster which is strangling them.

Down with imperialist intervention in the Central African Republic! Down with French imperialism!

For the resumption of anti-capitalist struggle! For reconstitution of the international class party, leading and centralizing the proletarian struggle towards world communist revolution!

December 22th

(1) *Le Monde*, 12/19/13

(2) see: <http://www.lepartidegauche.fr/actualites/edito/la-centrafrique-l-armorique-26204>

(3) Due to economic difficulties, the government seeks help from its European, U.S. and UN imperialist «partners». But they show no enthusiasm to grant aid, financial or otherwise, to help French imperialism to maintain its turf...

(4) Statement by the PCF in parliament, December 10th see: <http://www.comunistes-republicains-partidegauche.assemblee-nationale.fr/expressions/intervention-en-centrafrique>

Slaughter of Proletarians in Bangladesh: Capitalism is the Assassin!

On April 24 «Rana Plaza» a 9-storey building in an industrial suburb of Dhaka, capital of Bangladesh (14 million), collapsed on about 3,500 workers (their number is not known precisely) working there. The building contained five textile factories, as well as a bank and many shops. The official present death toll is 1127, the number of injured is unknown. Most of the victims are women, who constitute 80 to 90% of the workforce in the Bangladeshi textile industry.

The outrage of the workers, who immediately demonstrated for the arrest and execution of those responsible for the carnage is particularly great given that on the eve of its collapse, the building was evacuated due to fissures developing in the structure; but on the following day, the bosses forced their employees to return to work, assuring them that there was no risk: the risk to their profits was more important to them than the risk of workers' lives!

The owner of the building, Mohamed Sohel Rana, is a wealthy businessman linked to the ruling party, the Awami League. Given the magnitude of the disaster, and especially the workers' fury, he was arrested and charged with having constructed his building «illegally» without permits; he defended himself by saying that hundreds of industrial buildings are in the same situation, obtaining a building permit taking «too long» – when the textile industry is booming; and secondly that it was not he, but the owners of companies that lease the building who had forced a return to work. The architectural firm that planned the building said it was not designed to house industrial facilities and that three floors were later added by the owner. Adding floors is, evidently, a common way to save on construction costs, in addition to other economies made in the construction...

The media are now reporting that Rana was known to have had links with the underworld, but in reality this massacre demonstrates once again that the mob in power, the **bourgeoisie**, is far more dangerous than those who hold sway in the shadows, and that the **entire capitalist system** is criminal.

A PARADISE FOR THE CAPITALISTS, HELL ON EARTH FOR THE WORKERS

Bangladesh is a country of over 150 million people, still largely agricultural (over 70% of the population lives in the

countryside), but which has for thirty years experienced a massive rural exodus and accelerated industrialization; while officially declared unemployment is low, it is generally believed that underemployment affects 40% of the workforce, which generates a significant migration towards mainly the Middle East and Southeast Asia, but also to Europe: on 18 April in Greece armed foremen(!) fired on a hundred Bangladeshi immigrants who had gathered to demand payment of their wages, causing thirty casualties! Child labor is widespread, including in textiles.

In recent years Bangladesh has become the second largest exporter of clothing after China; textile exports represent 80% of total exports, and the industry employs 3 to 4 million people in about 5,000 factories. The textile industry works directly for major international brands or serves as subcontractor to other manufacturers, including the Chinese! The success of the Bangladeshi textile industry in international competition is based on the **super-exploitation** of its workforce. The minimum wage there is only 38 dollars, while it amounts to \$138 in China, \$65 in India, \$67 in Vietnam, \$75 in Cambodia (1), other Asian countries with an important textile industry.

We have seen that the textile workers are overwhelmingly female; they are also young, and driven from the countryside by poverty and hunger. As a general rule they are paid 30% less than men. The legal working time is 8 hours per day, but when there are large orders, it can go up to more than 10 hours, 7 days out of 7! Of course there are regulations on the health and safety of workers, but as with social legislation, they are hardly ever respected: there are only a few dozen labor inspectors for the entire country, and each time an inspection is ordered, the factory owner is notified in advance! Also, «Export Processing Zones» are exempt from the application of social legislation, as is also the case for economic activity that takes place in the so-called «informal» sector which constitute 80% of the Bangladeshi economy.

A strict anti-worker policy rules in the country; a union can be formed only after the agreement of the employer and a strike is legal only after a long process of «conciliation» with the capitalists, then a secret ballot of at least 75% of the workers in favor. The authorities have the right to prohibit strikes and arrest strikers without trial in cases of

threats «the national interest». Strikes are banned outright in transport, banks, businesses owned by foreigners etc..

Repression against workers, including against those who seek only the limited rights granted by law, is widespread: layoffs, arrests, assassinations. The law provides for sentences of forced labor for strikes or «indiscipline at work», etc. Even when «legal» strikes occur, the bosses do not hesitate to resort to lockouts and layoffs: this is what happened in 2011 in Dhaka in three textile mills where a strike was called demanding the payment of wages: 6600 workers were laid off there (2).

The result of these poor conditions is the high number of fatal «accidents» – accidents which are actually **murders**, as they are the inevitable result of savings made by employers at the expense of anything that might make the job a little less dangerous; the protection of workers represents an intolerable burden on the «production costs» of the capitalists: to produce at low cost, it kills!

In the same industrial district of Dhaka, fire claimed the lives of more than one hundred and ten people last November: the owners had locked the exits to force the workers to continue work. The collapse of hastily constructed buildings crammed with machinery had previously killed 35 people in June 2010, 18 in February 2006, 75 in April 2005, etc., all in the city of Dhaka. Statistically, a textile worker is killed every 10 days...

In the face of the scandal of repeated accidents, various humanitarian organizations and international collaborationist unions have been working for years trying to gently convince major western distributors to encourage their suppliers and the Bangladesh government to follow a few basic social and safety rules for workers. They have just loudly proclaimed victory because many of these large companies (El Corte Inglés, Benetton, Lidl, Marks & Spencer, H & M, Carrefour, Loblaws etc..) on 15 May under the auspices of the ILO, signed an agreement on a program of social reforms and safety inspections among their suppliers (3).

To know what to really expect, we should be aware that such agreements have passed regularly since the 90s of last century, but have not translated into any improvement of the situation of the proletariat. For instance 2 companies that were in the building Rana Plaza had even recently passed

an audit of safety in the workplace (4)! «Experts» quoted by a major newspaper explained that we should not expect dramatic changes in the textile industry in Bangladesh or elsewhere because of «corruption, desperation, vested interests and Western consumers who favor better working conditions but balk at paying more for their T-shirts» (5).

So «Western consumers» – that is to say the Western proletariat – bear a share of responsibility for the savage conditions of life in Bangladesh and elsewhere which the capitalists inflict on their proletarians! But is it the Western proletarians who decided that they needed relocate to countries with lower wages, or the Western capitalists?

In fact the bourgeois not only want to hide their full responsibility for the crimes of their regime; they also seek to place the proletarians of the different countries in opposition. And as long as they remain passive, the workers are condemned to play the bourgeois game.

THE SOLUTION IS TO FIGHT

Despite their difficult circumstances, despite the pervasive repression, despite the «industrial police» put in place to control them, the workers in Bangladesh show their class brothers and sisters in the West it is possible to fight and succeed, although these successes are inevitably partial and always remain in question under capitalism.

Since the announcement of the slaughter, tens of thousands of workers in Dhaka have stopped work, blocked roads, demonstrated for the punishment of offenders and also to improve their own conditions. The textile bosses retaliated with a lockout while the authorities called in the police.

But to quell workers' anger, the government was forced to announce an increase in the minimum wage and recognition of the right of workers to organize unions. Of course, these are only promises and we will see what the reality is, but the Bangladeshi proletarians who have already demonstrated their combativity in the recent past, will not be easily fooled.

In the spring of 2006 tens of thousands of workers from nearly 4000 textile mills went into battle. Three workers were killed by the police, hundreds injured and imprisoned. In 2007 the Emergency Law was declared to secure the capitalist order. In spring 2012 thousands of textile workers went into struggle anew in Dhaka for higher wages and to protest against repression – fifty workers were arrested and there were a thousand injured. On July 16, the the bosses armed thugs opened fire against

a demonstration by workers demanding wage increases, causing 3 deaths and 35 injuries. In the same period, at a social conflict in a textile company, Aminul Islam, the head of an even more moderate union, was kidnapped and tortured to death by the security services.

Despite the repression, the Bangladeshi proletarians have had some success: in 2006 they obtained a 18% increase in the minimum wage, but high inflation quickly quashed the increase, causing a renewal of the struggle.

No doubt they will not settle for vague promises today. But no doubt also against the savagery of their exploitation, their struggle will be difficult. It is a struggle that will inevitably lead against the capitalist system as a whole and not just against some bosses more rapacious than others, a struggle that will set as its ultimate goal the **destruction of capitalism**, not its improvement or humanization as the NGOs, the pope and charitable organizations would wish.

What the workers from Bangladesh need, is not compassionate «consumers» in the West, but the entry into struggle at their side of the proletarians of the major capitalist countries against this criminal system of which, they, too, are the victims.

Exploitation is probably less brutal here, but is nevertheless very real, working conditions are not as terrifying as there, but here too the lives of workers is less important than the pursuit of profit; 6300 people in the world die every day from work accidents and occupational diseases, including in the most «developed» (6) capitalist countries. At about the same time as the slaughter of Rana Plaza, an explosion at a fertilizer plant caused 14 deaths in the United States. In the largest capitalist country in the world, 4500 workers die each year in «accidents» and 50,000 as a result of occupational diseases. These terrible figures reflect the true social war waged in all the capitalist countries against the proletariat.

If they want to end this endless war against them, the proletarians of the world have no choice but to engage in the **class war** against capitalism, putting into practice the old and still current slogan:

Workers of all countries, unite!

(1) Figures reported by the *Wall Street Journal*.

See: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324715704578479231065424630.html>

(2) See: the report on Bangladesh of

the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC / CSI), Geneva, 24-26/9/2012

(3) See: <http://www.industrialunion.org/we-made-it-global-breakthrough-as-retail-brands-sign-up-to-bangladesh-factory-safety-deal>. Bangladeshi textile manufacturers have also welcomed the agreement...

(4) *The Wall Street Journal*, 25/04/2013. The Brussels association responsible for the inspection was founded a decade ago by European companies such as Adidas, Hugo Boss, etc..

(5) *Los Angeles Times*, 25/04/2013. <http://articles.latimes.com/2013/apr/25/world/la-fg-bangladesh-collapse-2013042>

(6) See: <http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/safety-and-health-at-work/lang-fr/index.htm>

El proletario

Órgano del partido comunista internacional

No 3 - Octubre de 2013

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- ¿Dónde está Nin?
- Sobre nuestro trabajo de partido en los organismo inmediatos
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- Corrupción, desfalco, nepotismo son consecuencias del capitalismo y solo desaparecerán cuando este sea borrado de la faz de la tierra por el proletariado. Notas sobre el sindicalismo rojigualda

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el proletario

ÓRGANO DEL PARTIDO COMUNISTA INTERNACIONAL

el proletario
Nº 3
Noviembre de 2013
Precio Europa 1,5 € / 3 FS / 1,5 \$
América Latina 1,5 \$ / 1,5 \$
USA y Canadá 2 \$ / 2 \$

Del 15 de Mayo al 25 de Abril

Desde que en el año 2013 la llamada Primavera árabe prendió como la pólvora en la zona sur de África, cubre todo en los países latinos por el sur. Millones de personas en algunos países como Tailandia donde las protestas son continuas el régimen político y social hasta el punto de provocar una sucesión de golpes de estado. En los países coligados se han convertido en una guerra de guerrillas que destruyen masas de miles de personas en los días. Tailandia, Brasil y de nuevo Egipto, han visto aparecer sucesos similares de una magnitud considerable. En este caso como otros casos de donde se ha aparecido violencia España ha estado muy involucrada. Fue en Madrid donde la policía del sur de España y la policía del norte de España se enfrentaron y se enfrentaron a la policía del sur de España y la policía del norte de España. En este caso como otros casos de donde se ha aparecido violencia España ha estado muy involucrada. Fue en Madrid donde la policía del sur de España y la policía del norte de España se enfrentaron y se enfrentaron a la policía del sur de España y la policía del norte de España.

Accidente ferroviario en la línea Madrid-Ferrol
A alta velocidad hacia la muerte
El pasado 17 de mayo se produjo un accidente ferroviario en la línea Madrid-Ferrol. El tren iba a alta velocidad y chocó contra un muro de contención. El accidente causó la muerte de una persona y dejó a más de 100 heridos. El tren iba a alta velocidad y chocó contra un muro de contención. El accidente causó la muerte de una persona y dejó a más de 100 heridos. El tren iba a alta velocidad y chocó contra un muro de contención. El accidente causó la muerte de una persona y dejó a más de 100 heridos.

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THE “INVARIANCE” OF MARXISM (2)

(General Meeting of the Party, Milan, September 1952)

II- THE FALSE RESOURCE OF ACTIVISM

1. There is a current objection - by no means original, since it has already surfaced in the worst episodes of the workers' movement - that consists in underestimating the clarity and continuity of our principles and seeking to “be political”, to plunge into the activity of the movement, which would itself indicate what path to follow, and in not pausing to study our texts in order to draw the lessons of past experience before making decisions, and instead forging ahead blindly in the thick of the action.

2. This practical activism is yet another deformation of Marxism, either because it seeks to give priority to the decisiveness and vigor of leadership and vanguard groups without substantial theoretical scruples, or because it reduces everything to the decision or a consultation of “the class” and its majorities on the pretext of choosing the path most workers prefer, impelled by economic interest. These are old tricks, and no traitor who has sold out to the ruling class has ever left the party without claiming **first** that he was the best and most active “practical” defender of the workers' interests, and **second**, that his actions were sanctioned by the manifest will of the mass of his partisans - or electors!

3. The revisionist deviation (e.g. Bernstein's reformist, legalitarian evolutionism) was fundamentally activist, not ultra-determinist. It did not merely consist in replacing the revolutionary goal, deemed too high, with limited demands the situation brought within reach, but in closing one's eyes to the burning vision of the complete trajectory of history. It reasoned: the immediate result is everything, so let us set ourselves immediate, limited goals, not on the universal scale, but on the local, transitory one, and we will be able to shape the results by our will. The Sorelian syndicalists, who advocated violence, said the same thing, and came to the same end: the former concentrated on obtaining legal concessions through parliament, and the latter on winning sectorial victories in the factory. Both turned their backs on the historical tasks.

4. These forms of **eclecticism** - a deviation which consists in claiming the freedom to change the battlefield and alter the doctrine - began, like all others, with a falsification: they claimed that this continuous self-correction (or rather, changing of course) derived from the attitude and writings of Marx and Engels. In all our work, with the help of quotes and detailed studies, we have revealed

the continuity of the Marxist line, noting that their later texts are intimately connected with passages and fundamental theories in their first works, with the same expressions and the same scope.

5. Hence the emptiness of the legend that attributes two different, successive “spirits” to Marx: the young Marx was presumably idealistic, voluntaristic, Hegelian and, under the influence of the last tremors of bourgeois revolutions, insurrectionary and ready to leap on the barricades; whereas the mature Marx is alleged to have occupied himself with a cold study of contemporary economic phenomena and to have become positivist, evolutionist and legalitarian. This is just one recurring deviation in the long series that we have analyzed, and it may appear as extremist or moderate. Unable to grasp the revolutionary tension of dialectical materialism, this deviation leads to another, equally bourgeois, deviation which, idealist and individualist in nature, gives priority to the role of “consciousness”: futile and contingent practical activity in the short run; passivity, or rather irremediable revolutionary impotence on the historical scale.

6. We need only recall that the conclusion of the first volume of *Capital*, which describes the expropriation of the expropriators, is - as is indicated in a note - nothing other than a repetition of the corresponding passage in the *Manifesto*. The economic theories in the second and third volumes are only a development of the theory of value and surplus value expounded in the first. The expressions and formulations are the same, as are the symbols (Antonio Graziadei tried in vain to break apart this unity). Any attempt to separate the analytic part of the description of capitalism from the programmatic part, which defines the conquest of socialism, would be a fiction. None of the deviations has ever understood the strength of the Marxist critique of utopianism, or of the critique of democratism. It is not sufficient to imagine a goal and content oneself with dreaming about it or despairing because the pretty colors of the dream do not inspire people to make it come true. The problem is to identify a goal that can be solidly and physically achieved, and to aim straight for it, aware that people's blindness and lack of consciousness will not prevent it from being attained.

7. Marx's fundamental achievement was to establish the connection (sensed by the best of the utopians) between the distant conquest and the immediate physical movement of a class in struggle, the modern proletariat. But this is not sufficient for an understanding of the com-

plete dynamic of the class revolution. Anyone familiar with the overall construction of Marx's work, which he was not able to finish, can see that he intended to summarize the whole with a study of the problem of the impersonal character of the class and its activity, which was already explicit in his thought and writings. The only way to encapsulate the entire economic and social construction of Marxism in accordance with the method that forms its foundation is by means of discussion of this question.

8. It would be quite insufficient to say that Marxist determinism eliminates the quality and theoretical or practical activity of exceptional individuals as the motive force of history (as usual, one should not confuse motive force and direct agent), and replaces them with classes, understood as statistical collectivities of individuals, merely by shifting the factor of ideas (consciousness and will) from the individual to the mass. This would imply no more than a passage from an aristocratic philosophy to a democratic, populist philosophy, which in fact is just as alien to us as the former. Instead, Marxism inverts the cause-effect relationship completely, placing the cause not in ideas (consciousness), but in physical, material facts.

9. The Marxist thesis states in particular that it is not possible for an individual brain to encompass a consciousness of the entire course of history in advance, for two reasons. First of all, because consciousness does not precede, but follows being, i.e. the material conditions that surround the subject of this consciousness; and secondly because all forms of social consciousness emerge - with a certain lag that enables a general determination of this consciousness - from the analogous, parallel circumstances, i.e. economic relations, in which the individuals who (thereby) constitute a social class are placed. These individuals are forced to «act together» historically long before they can «think together». The theory that defines this relationship between class conditions and class action and its ultimate goal has nothing in common with a revealed doctrine proclaimed by individuals, i.e. by a specific author or leader, or by the «whole class» conceived of as the aggregate, momentary sum of a number of individuals in a given country or at a given moment: and it most definitely cannot be deduced from a very bourgeois «consultation» within the class.

10. For us, the dictatorship of the proletariat is not a consultative democracy transplanted into the proletariat; it is the organized force which, followed at

a given moment by part of the proletariat, not necessarily the majority, expresses the material pressure that overthrows the bourgeois mode of production to open the way for the new communist mode of production. One factor in this process, whose importance is not negligible, is repeatedly pointed out by Marx: the deserters of the ruling class who go over to the revolutionary camp. They counteract the action of whole masses of proletarians which, because of their material and ideological subjugation, are subservient to the bourgeoisie and almost always represent the statistical majority of the class.

11. The balance sheet drawn by our current of the revolution in Russia does not suggest that its liabilities should be attributed to a violation of internal class democracy, or that we should doubt the Marxist and Leninist theory of the dictatorship, which is judged, not according to constitutional or organizational criteria and limits, but only by the historical relationship of forces.

Rather, the complete abandonment of the terrain of class dictatorship is precisely demonstrated by Stalinism's complete inversion of the revolutionary method.

No less than all the others, the former Communists everywhere pass over into the camp of democracy, by standing on the terrain of popular and national democracy. In Russia, no less than outside it, their entire policy is one of abandoning class aims for national aims; even if we adopt the usual vulgar description of this policy as purely and simply the state's espionage network abroad. Those who attempt to take the democratic road are embarking on the road to capitalism; and that includes the waves of anti-Stalinists who clamour indignantly about the suppression of proletarian «opinion» in Russia.

12. We could cite innumerable passages from Marx which demonstrate the impersonal factor of historical events; otherwise it would be impossible to advance a materialist theory of history.

We know that only the first volume of his great work *Capital* was completely assembled and edited by Marx. In his letters and prefaces Engels would recall the difficulties he encountered in preparing the second and third volumes (not to mention the fourth, which is a history of bourgeois economic theories) for publication.

Engels even had doubts as to the order of the chapters and sections of the two books, which study the process of capitalist production as a whole, not in order to «describe» the capitalism of Marx's time, but to show that, whatever may happen, the general process advances not toward an equilibrium or a «state of normalcy» (like a river whose waters neither swell nor subside), but

toward a series of increasingly acute crises and a revolutionary collapse of the «general form» under investigation.

13. As he indicated in his 1859 preface to the *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, the first draft of *Capital*, after discussing the three fundamental classes of modern society – landowners, capitalists and proletarians – Marx intended to examine three other questions: «The state, international trade and the world market». The question of the state is dealt with in the text on the 1871 Commune, in Engels' classic chapters and, naturally, in Lenin's *State and Revolution*. The question of international trade is dealt with in Lenin's *Imperialism*... The work is that of an entire historical school, not one person's «complete works». The question of the world market is today written in letters of fire in the book of facts, that nobody is able to decipher, there is a even a brief reference to it in the stupid theory of the double market advanced by Stalin shortly before his death; it would nonetheless reveal the embers of the fire which will consume world capitalism in the second half of the century if those who study it did not concern themselves so much with Country and Nation and did not pursue the decrepit chimeras of the bourgeois epoch: Peace, Freedom, Independence, the sacredness of the individual and the constitutionality of government decisions!

14. After explaining how the social product is divided among the three basic classes to form national income as rent, profit and wages, and after showing that the transfer of rent to the state would not change the capitalist structure of the economy and that even the transfer of the total surplus-value to the state would not transcend the boundaries of the capitalist form of production (since the squandering of living labor, i.e. the intensity and length of the working day, would stay the same, while the division into enterprises and the mercantile character of the system would remain unchanged), Marx concludes the strictly economic part as follows: «The second distinctive feature of the capitalist mode of production is the production of surplus-value as the direct aim and determining motive of production. Capital produces essentially capital, and does so only to the extent that it produces surplus-value.» (Only communism will be able to produce a surplus that is not capital.)

The determining factor is thus by no means the existence of the capitalist, or the capitalist class, which are not only just effects, but unnecessary effects as well. «Whereas, on the basis of capitalist production, the mass of direct producers is confronted by the social character of their production in the form of strictly regulating authority and a social mecha-

nism of the labour process organized as a complete hierarchy (i.e. bureaucratized!) this authority reaching its bearers, however, **only** as the personification of the conditions of labour in contrast to labour, and **not as political and theocratic rulers** as under earlier modes of production – among the bearers of this authority, the capitalists themselves, who confront one another only as commodity owners, there reigns complete anarchy within which the social interrelations of production assert themselves only as an overwhelming natural law in relation to **individual free will**»

It is therefore necessary, and sufficient, to hold to the monumental invariance of the original text in order to reject all the false modernizers who have, in reality, plunged into the depths of the most vulgar bourgeois prejudice, which consists in seeking the cause of all social inferiority in «free will» or, worse yet, in the «collective responsibility of a social class». After *Capital* everything was quite clear: the capitalist, or the capitalist class, could easily cease here or there to «personify» capital, which would nonetheless remain opposed to society as a «social mechanism», an «overwhelming natural law» of the productive process.

15. Such is the monumental Chapter 51, which closes the «description» of the modern economy, and on each page evokes the spectre of the revolution. We then come to Chapter 52, which amounts to little more than a page. Under the point at which the last sentence is interrupted, Engels' tired hand wrote, in brackets: «Here the manuscript breaks off».

Its title: *Classes*. We are at the threshold of the inversion of praxis, and, having eliminated free will, we seek the agent of the revolution.

In essence, the chapter says this: we have given the laws of pure capitalist society, with its three classes. But this doesn't exist even in England (even in 1953 it doesn't exist there or elsewhere, and it will never exist, any more than the two material points endowed with mass to which Newton's laws reduce the cosmos).

«The first question to be answered is this: What constitutes a class? **At first glance** – the identity of revenues and sources of revenue. However, **from this standpoint**, physicians and officials, e.g., would also constitute two social classes, for they belong to two distinct social groups, the members of each of these groups receiving their revenue from one and the same source. The same would also be true of the infinite fragmentation of interest and rank into which the division of social labour splits laborers as well as capitalists and landlords – the latter, e.g., into owners of vineyards, farm owners, owners of forests, mine owners, and owners of fisheries...»

The sentence and the thought are interrupted here. But we have what we need.

16. Without applying for a copyright for a single sentence, we can complete this crucial chapter cut short by the author's death, an arbitrary individual incident according to Karl Marx, who liked to quote Epicurus (about whom he had written his doctoral thesis) in this connection. As Engels once said: «Every event conditioned by necessity bears its own consolation». No unnecessary regrets.

Classes are not defined, as it appears «at first glance», by the identity of sources of revenue.

This single sentence buries forever all past and future syndicalisms, laborisms, corporatisms, Mazzinisms and Christian socialisms.

The insipid ideologues of the spirit and the individual, of liberal society and the constitutional State, are content to recognize only the existence of collective sectoral interests, and that they cannot be ignored. But our theoretical conquest went far beyond this. The fact that it was not possible to make a face and close one's eyes to the «social question», even reduced to pills, was only a preliminary victory. It would gradually penetrate the modern world. But penetrating the world is one thing, smashing it into a thousand pieces is another.

There is no use building statistical tables to «qualitatively» select classes according to the source of their pecuniary income. It is even more stupid to select them quantitatively according to a

«pyramid of income». Such a pyramid was built centuries ago; the Roman state censuses were income scales. Since centuries, simple arithmetical operations made it possible to answer the philosophers of poverty that by decapitating the pyramid and reducing it to a trapezoid with the same base they would only have founded a society of beggars.

How could this predicament be avoided, both quantitatively and qualitatively? A senior official is paid a salary, thus according to time, just like a wage-earning laborer who works in, say, a nationalized industry. But the former has a higher income than many merchants and industrial capitalists who live off profits. And the latter has a higher income than many small peasant landowners as well as many small landlords who live off apartment rents...

A class is not defined only by economic criteria, but also by the historical position it occupies in the gigantic struggle through which a new general form of production transcends, defeats and replaces the old.

If it is stupid to claim that society is a mere sum of individuals in ideological terms, it is just as stupid to claim that the class is a mere sum of individuals in economic terms. Individual, class and society are not pure economic or ideological categories, but products (changing continuously according to place and period) of a general process of which the powerful Marxist construction reproduces the real laws.

The operative social mechanism de-

termines and models individuals, classes and societies without «consulting» them in any way.

A **class** is defined by its path and historical task; and our class is defined by the fact that it quantitatively and qualitatively demands its own disappearance (and **above all** its own disappearance, since the disappearance of enemy classes, a process already well underway, represents almost nothing): such is the dialectical culmination of its immense effort.

Today the class as a whole is assuming without hesitation a different meaning: for the moment it is for Stalin and a capitalist state like the Russian state, for a clique of parliamentarians and candidates who, in terms of anti-Marxism, far outdo the performances of yesterday's Turati, Bissolati, Longuet and Millerand.

17. Therefore all that remains is the **party**, as the existing organ that defines the class, struggles for it, governs for the class in the crucial moment, and prepares the end of governments and classes.

On the condition that it is not the party of Peter or Paul, that it doesn't succumb to the cult of the leader, and that it returns to defend, **with blind faith if necessary**, the invariable theory, rigid organization and method of Marxism, which is not based on sectarian a priori, but knows that in a society that has achieved its typical form (Israel in the year 0 or Europe in 1900) the battlecry «Those who are not for us are against us» applies unconditionally.

The proletarian suburbs of Stockholm explode against a society that defends only Capital, plunging the majority of proletarian youth, indigenous or immigrant, into misery and despair.

The solution is the class struggle that brings the workers together, regardless of their age, gender, race and nationality, in defense of human society against the society of money and commodities!

Just as in Paris in 2005, and London in 2011, May, 2013 saw proletarian rage against intolerable living conditions erupt in Stockholm. The economic and social violence of the ruling bourgeoisie is always accompanied by police repression. Young proletarians of the French, British or Swedish «banlieues» have unleashed their anger accumulated through years of deprivation, humiliation, discrimination and savage exploitation. The riots in Stockholm, capital of one of the richest countries in the world and one which claims to be a model of «equality» and «social justice», once again revealed the terrible

reality of such a capitalist society: only lightly touched by an economic crisis that endangers the colossal profits accumulated during the long decades of exploitation of an ever-growing proletariat, it does not hesitate to reject the proletarian masses once attracted by an expanding global market economy into poverty, marginality and forced clandestinity.

The explosion of rage as a result of the frustrations and poverty prevailing in the proletarian districts of Stockholm lasted a week, and the fear of the Swedish bourgeoisie was that this explosion would spread to the other major

cities in the country. It all started on May 13 in Husby, when a 69 year-old immigrant was killed by the police; the pretext was that, armed with a machete, he allegedly threatened the cops, which is disputed by various witnesses. At a time when the social temperature was already high, this spark ignited the gunpowder, rupturing a social equilibrium already undermined by years of policies of austerity and the reduction of the much-vaunted «social guarantees»: the anger of a proletarian youth marginalized after believing in the promise of a future of well-being and prosperity, burst out.

Husby, Kista, Hagsästra, Skogås, Ragsved are the names of some of the areas mentioned in the chronicles of the revolt that has burned through the Stockholm conurbation and which also affected Malmö. This revolt struck this peaceful, tolerant and welcoming – according to the authorities – Sweden by surprise; a revolt partially repressed and partly left to run itself out, set off alarm bells: youth unemployment, in this rich and opulent country, exceeds 20% according to official figures. According to the Economist *«only 51% of those from outside Europe have a job compared with 84% of the Swedes»* (Il Giorno, 24/5/3). Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt had this to say about the protesters who clashed with police: *«these are not victims of the system, only vandals»* (La Repubblica, 29/5/13). Most of the protesters arrested by police are minors who have not completed their studies and are unemployed. It is in the majority children of Afghan, Iranian, Somali, Syrian or Balkan refugees who for the last twenty years or so have sought refuge in the European countries, countries which are also responsible for the wars or economic dislocations that have ravaged their country of origin.

The bourgeois themselves say that situation is explosive even in the Scandinavian countries still spared from the wrath of the youth; and for decades intellectuals have warned the ruling class about the threat posed by social and racial discrimination on the social equilibrium, even when these are hidden behind veils of tolerance and promises of «integration» which are never realized.

How does the ruling class confront the problem of integration, unemployment, the alienation of the young and very young proletarian generations?

The methods used by the Swedish bourgeois to deal with social problems are oriented – as everywhere – on the basis of the defence of their class interests; during a certain period those interests could only be imposed by an open and bloody dictatorship, but they are still defended by violence, even in democratic and parliamentary States. According to its political and historical tradition, the Swedish bourgeoisie may be more inclined to use economic and social means that attenuate the contrasts of the racist type, but the fact is that capitalist profit and class interests outweigh any other consideration.

The real struggle is not carried out between «Swedes» and «non-Europeans», but between bourgeois and proletarians, even if it is more convenient to the dominant ideology to highlight ethnic or racial contrasts rather than class contrasts.

The real fear of the bourgeois was

not only that the riots would spread to other Swedish cities; the real fear is that the proletarians will finally realize that their immediate interests are part of vastly broader **class** interests, opposed to the bourgeoisie and that therefore cannot be shared with it. The bourgeoisie has repressed the rage of the young people in order to bring the society back to «normality», and it ensures that it will strive to respond to the malaise of the young immigrants or to issues of immigration.

But bourgeois *normality* is precisely the source of the social malaise that strikes the proletariat and within it, particularly immigrant workers!

For the bourgeoisie it is **normal** that the proletarians are exploited within the framework of wage labor from which it extracts surplus value and therefore its profit; for the bourgeoisie it is **normal** that the proletarians are paid differently according to category, merit, specialization, education, age, sex, nationality, etc., as it is **normal** that they are thrown out of the factories whether these are in difficulty or not, or that they find themselves unemployed because the capitalist system in crisis can no longer provide. For the bourgeoisie it is **normal** that youth who are not from that country or who belong to a different race, be discriminated against; it is normal that the young immigrant must seek an «integration» that he must earn by demonstrating his respect not only for the laws, but also the habits, customs and traditions of the country where he wishes to establish himself. For the bourgeoisie it is **normal** that police repress any act, individual or collective, which calls into question the usual process of daily life under capitalism; and it is logical not to look for the causes of acts of rebellion against a life of poverty and discrimination because these causes all reside in the capitalist economic and social system it defends by all means: political, legislative, judicial, ideological, religious, social and military. For the bourgeoisie it is **normal** that the economic crisis of its system should above all strike the proletarian classes and the most vulnerable strata of society, ruining a part of the petty bourgeoisie which constitutes a social insulator and whose reactions, including violent do not jeopardize the superstructure or infrastructure of capitalist society. For the bourgeoisie it is **normal** that in times of crisis it should rescue the major corporations, the major financial centres, the major banks – on which much of the capitalist economy and therefore the accumulation of profits – depend, even if this means, as has been demonstrated for decades, slashing public expenditure, reduction of social spending (various allowances, spending on

health, education, social housing, etc.), job cuts, tax increases, etc. For the bourgeoisie it is **normal** that in the case of conflicts between nations and blocks of nations, it will go to war, where the «defence of the homeland» justifies all the sacrifices and all anti-social political and economic measures.

In short, for the bourgeoisie it is **normal that it is always the proletariat who pays**, in time of war as in time of peace.

In a country like Sweden, an imperialist country rich from the exploitation not only of his own proletariat and of its immigrant proletariat, but, like other imperialist countries, from the exploitation of the proletarians of the poor countries, exactly what is it that the proletarians have in common with «their» bourgeoisie? **Nothing!**

However, they have **everything** in common with their class brothers of all categories, all sectors, all nationalities and all countries; the strength of the dominant class lies not only in its monopoly of political and economic power, but also in the fact that the proletarian class is divided, fragmented, and remains a gross aggregate of individuals thrown into competition with each other. The rage expressed in the week of fire in Stockholm, as has occurred already in London and Paris, is an individual rage that manifested itself in an elemental way against cars, storefronts and clashes against the police until the energy that had accumulated was exhausted. Bourgeois «normality» can then take over and the young immigrant proletarians delivered back to their existence without work and without hope, until the next revolt!

The only solution lies in the prospect of the resumption of the class struggle. The proletariat must break the bonds which shackle it to the bourgeoisie; they must reorganize themselves on the terrain of struggle for the exclusive defense of their own class interests, resume the path of the independent class organization as European proletarians already have done during the epoch of revolutions of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century; the struggle between bourgeois and proletarian was born with capitalism and it will only end when capitalism is destroyed. Then there will be no more class struggle because society will no longer be based on private property, the market, money, profit.

But to achieve this objective – which is the historic goal of the world proletariat – proletarians should rise up, enter into struggle on the class terrain and organize themselves independently of all and any bourgeois and petty bourgeois interests. On this road they will always have at their side the Revolutionary Communist Party which, because

it possesses the revolutionary anticapitalist program and it has concentrated in its theses and its historical balance sheets the lessons and experiences of class struggles of the past, victories and defeats, arises as the leader of the proletarian revolution and the struggle without truce, internationalist and international, against capitalism and bourgeois society.

With their blind and impotent rage the «vandals» of Stockholm and London like the «riff-raff» of Paris are a sign to the bourgeois of all countries that the real struggle against the effects of the capitalist crisis has not yet started because the proletarian class struggle has never been and will never be a transient explosion of social rage, though without doubt justified by the increasing

misery produced by capitalism: it is the struggle of a class that recognizes itself in radically anti-capitalist objectives and whose goal is the end of all societies divided into classes and the formation of a society where human labor serves to satisfy the needs of humanity, and not those of the market!

05/31/2013

France: The Autoworkers of Renault-Cleon caught between the employers hammer and the union anvil

For year the automotive industry has been suffering from a crisis of overproduction. Markets are clogged. The entire automotive industry is undergoing a wave of layoffs and massive attacks against the proletariat in France, Spain, Germany, Italy, Belgium and elsewhere.

EMPLOYER BLACKMAIL SUPPORTED BY THE GOVERNMENT AND SOME UNIONS

On January 15, 2013, the management of Renault announced its intention to eliminate 7,500 jobs in France by 2016, 15% of its workforce. It is «committed» to not dismiss anyone if and only if the unions sign the «Competitiveness Agreement.»

It provides for:

- questioning the Renault 35 hours agreement, which equates to an increase in annual working time of 4-21 working days per year depending on the plants and statutes);
- lowering the overtime pay to 10% instead of 25%;
- increased flexibility: management of working time according to the needs of production and more imposed holiday periods
- wage freeze

After the first signs of anger, Renault has put aside its «mobility» project imposed at two manufacturing concentrations: Northeast (Douai, Maubeuge, Lorraine) and West (Flins, Le Mans, Cleon and Sandouville), but has maintained the rest of the project.

This plan has received support from the government in the person of Minister Montebourg who called on the Renault employees to submit to blackmail employers and unions to sign the agreement. He said: «We must look at the situation in the European automotive industry, laying off people and closing plants. Renault proposes just the opposite: no layoffs, voluntary quits, and increased workload per plant. [...] While working time will increase by 6% this will be for employees who currently work under 35 hours. [...] I invite the social partners to seize all the

potentialities in this agreement to negotiate serious compensations, additional elements of protection in relation to effort required. I prefer moderate efforts, efforts certainly, rather than bankruptcies, closures and loss of industrial substance.» (La Voix du Nord, February 1)

With a straight face, the CFDT has judged that the «broadly balanced» agreement «is the gear shift lever for sustainable strategy and industrial activity for Renault in France, beyond the uncertainties of market developments in Europe» (press release of 19 February).

In early March, the CFDT, CGC and FO unions announced they signed the agreement, which will allow it to come into force soon.

This is therefore a management-government-union front which the workers will face. Nothing surprising or new about that!

One important point: unlike at PSA, there is no yellow union (the PSA «Independent Automobile Union» is the old CFT-CSL, the right-wing «union» sadly well-known for its practices of intimidation and brutality [including murder] against workers) at Renault and the CGT («left» union, lead in former times by the Communist Party) is the largest union. This is particularly the case in Cleon (Seine-Maritime).

THE CGT: CAUGHT BETWEEN DEFENSE OF THE WORKFORCE AND DEFENSE OF THE COMPANY

CGT Cleon calls for struggle against this «social regression» organizing walkouts of one or two hours and a few 24 hour strikes to «make greater still and always the relationship of forces to show management that that opposition to its project is growing». The

The PSA (Peugeot - Citroen) group made the headlines last year when it announced the closure of its plant in Aulnay-sous-Bois (in the Paris region). It is now joined by Renault which plans for thousands of jobs losses and is spearheading the «competitiveness shock» desired by capital.

objective is to build a response «with a series of work stoppages that will restore our confidence» (Leaflet, of January 15).

It may be noted, however, upon reading the leaflets of the CGT that **never is it stated that workers have no other weapon than blocking production by the indefinite strike and extension of the struggle to other plants.** After the CFDT, FO and CGC have approved the agreement, the Cleon CGT had as its only perspective «to make itself heard, when the enterprise committee is convened for the Directors to present the organization of work» (Leaflet, of March 14).

On the contrary, strikes are presented as a means of putting pressure on ... the most openly collaborationist trade unions (CFDT, FO and CGC) so that they do not sign the «agreement» with the employers, forcing it to postpone the implementation for about fifteen months (Leaflet, 7 February).

The CGT denounces the attack constituted by the «competitiveness agreement», job losses and the worsening of exploitation. But according to its old reformist habits, the CGT does not find fault with «good» industrialists but only with the shareholders who sacrifice capitalist enterprises for short-term profit: «if Renault is about to assault our lives and pick our pockets, it is exclusively to provide means to fill those of the shareholders. And not to ensure the survival of all French plants.» (Leaflet, February 19). Therefore, on behalf of «another industrial strategy» for this multinational (interview with the Secretary of the Union in *Informations Ouvrières*, 24 January 2013), with «investment [which] must bear on innovation and development» («an interview with Pascal Morel, Secretary of the CGT of the Renault-Cleón factory, www.actioncommuniste.fr, 18 Febru-

ary), it advances demands linking the fate of the workers to that of the company and its profits (Leaflet, of January 8)

- «*rebalance production volumes between Renault plants (France, Romania, Turkey, Slovenia, Spain ...) to allow full use of the capabilities of French production, and not over-using those of other countries*» «*to reduce the overall cost of manufacturing of other vehicles [as] with more volumes, fixed costs decrease,*» that is to say, cut jobs in factories outside of France!

- «*French factories must meet the customer demand by manufacturing up to date and on time vehicles sold in the major markets (France, Germany...), including the Logan, Duster, Lodgy*» because «*sales remain 'profitable'*».

- «*the organization of labor must be rethought in depth, with the employees themselves, from the difficulties that they encounter on a daily basis to do their job well*» i.e. to involve the proletarians in the organization of their own exploitation!

- «*reorganize and give the means (financial and human) to research and development by letting our researchers have full run of their imaginations*» (!)

The Union also resorts to a type of whining nationalism «*Renault sells-out its legacy and Carlos Ghosn favors Nissan*» («An interview with Pascal Morel»)

Finally, the Union complains that «*management continues to ignore the CGT proposals, although they would ensure the future of the company (and its jobs [!]) by linking together social and economic progress*» (Leaflet, of February 7). To top it all, it resorts to the magic weapon of nationalization «*with participation of workers in deliberations and decisions*!» («An interview with Pascal Morel»).

Despite its verbal radicalism, the CGT of Renault Cléon is just as reformist as its accomplices in the CGT Metallurgy Federation who demand «*the preservation and redevelopment of a strong automotive industry in France geared towards addressing needs, must be one of the priorities of our country's industrial policy*» («the future of the automobile sector in France», (www.ftm.cgt.fr): most important to the CGT is the defense of the enterprise, the defense of the workers is in parentheses...

FO: CHAMPION OF CHAUVINISM AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The FO («Workers Force») union, a

minority in the Cleon plant, plays at one-upmanship. It denounced the agreement and called for walkouts because, it said, «*The pressure of all local unions in different plants on their central trade union organization must lead to a non-signing of the agreement, a refusal to negotiate, because there is nothing to negotiate if there is only to be social decline*» (Leaflet, FO Cleon of January 28). FO pretended to ask: «*In Paris, are the union officials seeking a pretext to go against those they represent?*» (Leaflet, FO Cleon of January 28).

This false indignation at the collaborationism of the national trade union directorates is just a posture. This same union denounces the president of Renault as a bad manager: «*at no time did anyone criticize the critical choices and the incompetence of a maladroit and blind management which has caused this crisis. [...] The real culprit is Carlos Ghosn who openly talks about Renault being in the red since 2005, who has not stopped the enrichment of shareholders, who has tarnished the image of Renault through the counter-espionage case, who did not renew its product range in a timely fashion, who has relocated our production, who put Nissan at the forefront.*» (Leaflet, FO Cléon of January 28)

FO places itself completely on the employers' terrain when it writes that «*competitiveness is not a dirty word, but the question is to not change its meaning*» (Leaflet, FO Cleon of February 11). Moreover, in the same leaflet, the FO Union also champions chauvinism: for it, «*Carlos Ghosn plays the Nissan card at the expense of Renault and its employees*».

This is the same nationalist discourse as that of its federation which whines about «*The sacrifice of French expertise*» (FO Metaux, «*Competitiveness of French plants*») and the «*anti-French strategy*» of Ghosn (FO Metaux, «*This is not the right strategy*»). This is also the same collaborationism which laments that «*French workers have always played ball with Renault. Will Renault executives know enough to play ball with French workers who have been its past strength and success?*» («*Competitiveness of French sites*»).

The past strength of Renault lay in the exploitation of its workers; in the current context of increased competition among capitalists, it plays exactly the same card in wanting to strengthen this exploitation: If you want the «*success*» of Renault, you must accept this increased exploitation!

And indeed, this is what FO wishes when, with the CGC (managers union), it proposes the establishment of «*free zones, with much reduced costs and*

taxation around the French plants of the auto sector, Renault or PSA, but also of the sub-contractors» (*Les Echos*, February 25), i.e. reduced wages and degraded working conditions for the workers!

The unions pose themselves as defenders of the company faced with a bad boss. But with or without Ghosn, the crisis of overproduction of the automobile continues to exist, the capitalists will increase the exploitation of the workers to restore the rate of profit ... and the unions will collaborate!

The workers never have and never will propose to offer the bourgeoisie good management of their factories. They must defend exclusively and determinedly their interests regardless of those of the company or the country.

ACTION COMMUNISTE (AC): NATIONAL-REFORMISM «MADE IN FRANCE»

Since the late 1980s, the Trotskyists of the LCR (Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire/ Revolutionary Communist League) have been associated with the leadership of the Renault CGT union. In 1991, workers who had voted overwhelmingly to continue the strike could see the leaders of the LCR call, like the CGT, for the end of the strike...

Today, the CGT plant is – in fact – led by a coalition of «*far*» left groups. For a long time, the secretary and deputy secretary of the union were two LCR and then NPA (Nouveau Parti Anticapitaliste, New Anticapitalist Party, the successor of the LCR) activists. Since 2011, the Secretary is an activist in Action Communiste, a local split from the French CP, and the Deputy Secretary is the regional spokesperson for the Trotskyist party Lutte Ouvrière (Workers' Struggle).

Action Communiste is the spearhead of nationalist propaganda in the factory. This group puts forward that «*We must stop letting the EU and the bosses decide alone. We will re-nationalize: banks, railways, large companies which liquidates industry in France*» («Putting an end to capitalism to put an end to offshore relocation», 9 October 2012). For years, AC has put forward anti-European and protectionist rhetoric while incorporating the old reformist moonshine such as stimulus spending to get out of the crisis. It also asks that the Government and the factory directorship of Renault «*boost research and production of small cars, encourage the relocation and sale of cars produced in France*» and «*diversify its production plants*» («Renationalizing Renault» 19 November 2008). Again and again, opportunism puts forward its «*realism*» in order to resolve the crisis of capitalism!

AC is fully within the galaxy of «Orthodox» debris from the FCP and admit to being «*inspired by texts and proposals of our friends and comrades of the Rouges-Vifs, M'Pep (Mouvement Politique d'Emancipation Populaire), the PRCF (Pôle de Renaissance Communiste en France)*» («They make the profits. They destroy our jobs. They invest abroad», March 1, 2013). What a lovely bunch of people! The Popular Political Liberation Movement (M'Pep) and the Pole of Communist Revival in France (PRCF) are organizing a joint campaign because, – wait for it... «*Strengthened and deepened by the achievements of civilization of the Resistance and the Liberation, the one and indivisible Republic established by the French Revolution is in danger of death*». Due to its nationalism, M'Pep even supported the very right-wing Gaullist Nicolas Dupont-Aignan in elections to the legislature. For its part, along with Gaullist groups the PRCF constituted a «Republican Arc of Progress» for a «*union of the people around the Nation and the Republic*» ('Joint Declaration', December 2010, www.comite-valmy.org).

The «Rouges-Vifs» are members of the Rassemblement des Cercles Communistes (Assembly of Communist Circles) – fervent supporter of the Left Front (an electoral alliance around the CP – which in a recent pamphlet celebrates capitalist China which «*creates millions of jobs, raises the standard of living of workers, massively promotes education, high-quality instruction of the youth, widespread access to health care of the population through an anti-liberal policy made possible by the nationalization and state ownership of key sectors of the economy*» («No to unemployment! No to wage cuts! Nationalization of businesses which close or relocate without compensation to the owners», February 2013). The Chinese proletarian subject to bestial exploitation and who for some time have been waging increasingly massive struggles would appreciate this...

The National-reformists of AC have nothing to offer but a program to provide a 100% bourgeois defense of the national economy and French imperialism against its competitors. Communism is completely foreign to them. The defense of «national sovereignty» and «French republican culture» replaces any real reference to Marxism.

From chauvinism to racism, there is only one small step ... this AC crosses cheerfully. Like any vulgar right-wing group it stands against the «*demagoguery of the support for undocumented workers that brings grist to the mill of capitalist exploitation*» («Elevator to the fascists» November 17, 2011)

THE NPA, THE LEFT WING OF THE CGT BUREAUCRACY

For its part, the NPA doesn't advance any real perspective for struggle. It intends to build «an immense national demonstration before the vote in Parliament» on the bosses/union agreement hoping «that the unions which have refused to sign henceforth call for a mobilization up to the challenge» (Bulletin, Cleon, January 17, 2013). It calls for a rather vague «unified mobilization against the dictates of the employers and the government» (Bulletin, Cleon, January 31, 2013).

The NPA seeks to lobby the Trade Union bureaucracies who should put «all their energy into the construction of a relationship of forces that could turn the tide», which would serve as lobbying deputies «against the ratification by Parliament of the January MEDEF-CFDT-GSC-CFTC agreement on employment» (Bulletin, NPA Cléon, February 14). The NPA is very far from the class terrain! It wants to make believe that the union leadership – traitors for all these decades – could initiate the struggle and lead the proletariat to victory.

And through its interclassism and just like the Left Front and the CGT, it hides the fact that the agreement was signed not only by the MEDEF (the biggest employer's association) comprising large enterprises but equally by the exploiters of the PME («Medium Enterprises»), the petty producers grouped in the CGPME and UPA being also signatories to the text. Evidently, for the reformists, the designated enemy is not the capitalist mode of production but only big business.

As usual these «anti-capitalists» defend the «transitional measures» of which the Trotskyists hold the secret: always and forever «*prohibition of layoffs and job cuts*» (Bulletin, Cleon, February 14) but also the «*opening of the account books, expropriation, nationalization under workers control*» («*Refuse the blackmail and layoffs at Renault*», (NPA release, January 16, 2013), clearly wishing to once again be exploited by the boss State like in the good old days of the post-WW2 Nationalization Board! All justified on behalf of a «fair» distribution of wealth under capitalism because «*the money is there, the profits of the Stock Exchange show that every day*» (Bulletin, Cleon, February 28): no need to overthrow capitalism, just a better share of the cake, thanks no doubt to good laws, and everything will be fine!

Scratch beneath the surface of the «anti-capitalism» displayed by the NPA and you will find the good old reformist who dreams of returning to the era of the welfare state.

LUTTE OUVRIÈRE AND L'ÉTINCELLE (THE SPARK) OR «POPULAR COMMON SENSE»

For its part, Lutte Ouvrière says nothing specific about Cleon. Articles in *Lutte Ouvrière* for January 25 and February 1 and 8 content themselves with reportage of the mobilization and trace out no perspective on the struggle.

It is in its «Factory Leaflets» that LO unfolds all its reformism. The one of February 4 – which serves as the weekly editorial («*When we fight, we are not sure to win, if we do not fight we are sure to lose*») – denounces the bosses attacks which «*cause incalculable damage to society as a whole*» (bourgeois society!) and pities the «*small enterprises[forced] to put the key under the door*» and the closing of «*modern factories, which could still produce useful goods for many years to come*» (useful for whom?). LO feels sorry for the workers, not as the victims of capital, but of «*the growing greed of the shareholders of Renault*» (*Lutte Ouvrière*, 14 February)

LO's response is to integrate the proletarians into the capitalist management of the enterprise with – in order to shed light on business secrets – «*control across the whole of economic life [...] exercised by the workers themselves*» which would be «*a civic duty*» because «*only the workers can assure an efficacious day by day control and pull the alarm bell before anything bad happens*» (Leaflet, Renault Cléon, February 19).

The proletarians can «control» capitalism, as the first step towards its suppression, only when they take power; but the task assigned to them by LO, is only to «warn» when things go wrong: warn who, other than the non-proletarian rulers, still in power, i.e. the bourgeois?

Ah, if the bourgeois followed the judicious advice of the LO leadership, then capitalism would be good for the proletarians!

Like the plant CGT, not a word about the urgent need for a return to classist means and methods. Not a word about the hypocrisy of non-signatory unions from which proletarians have nothing good to expect.

This is not very surprising, coming from an organization that at the head of the CGT at the Aulnay PSA plant for months built a rotten alliance with the SIA (Independent Automobile Union), the pro-management union which has, with the PSA management, signed a draft agreement on the «*accompanying social measures*» (sic) of the dismissals and which denounces the «*strike of shame*» and «*the climate of terror that reigns in Aulnay and calls*

the Government to intervene without delay». You get the allies you deserve!

L'Étincelle is the organ of the «Fraction» which was excluded from LO years ago; it has now integrated into the NPA.

In another Renault factory in the Rouen area – that of Grand-Couronne – the Fraction publishes a «Factory newsletter».

Despite the resounding subtitle of its publication «For the Construction of a Revolutionary Communist Workers Party», *L'Étincelle* defends a basically reformist line.

Their leaflet of January 28 speaks of the overcapacity of the automakers «Who is to blame?» The response of the Fraction is simple: «The wallets [of workers] emptied by austerity and layoffs everywhere in Europe»: in other words the «short-sighted cure» of the capitalists who are attacking wages and jobs to increase profits («the crisis is a pretext!») they write stupidly) prevents workers from buying cars.

For *L'Étincelle* as for all the reformists the crisis comes from the underconsumption of the masses: increase wages and multiply jobs, and the crisis will vanish!

The Marxist explanation is quite different: «In these crises, a great part not only of the existing products, but also of the previously created productive forces, are periodically destroyed. In these crises, there breaks out an epidemic that, in all earlier epochs, would have seemed an absurdity — the epidemic of over-production. Society suddenly finds itself put back into a state of momentary barbarism; it appears as if a famine, a universal war of devastation, had cut off the supply of every means of subsistence; industry and commerce seem to be destroyed; and why? Because there is too much civilization, too much means of subsistence, too much industry, too much commerce.» (Communist Manifesto). The bourgeois solution of crises is the liquidation of redundant productive forces (from plant closures, firing of workers, right up to the gigantic destruction in wars) to restore the rate of profit of surviving enterprises who can recommence a production cycle ... until the next crisis, as long as the proletariat lacks the strength to destroy this mode of production.

L'Étincelle also provides purely reformist objectives in the fight against the «competitiveness agreement» and doesn't put forward classist methods of struggle. It calls (on the workers) to «converge their struggles to oppose layoffs, to impose emergency measures that will make those who are responsible and, besides, who have the means pay for the toll of the crisis: the capital-

ist class» («the social partners have decided to tie the hands of the workers in order to pick their pockets», *Convergences révolutionnaires*, January-February 2013) and «break the isolation and attempt to finally create the conditions for a global response which would make sense to measures such as the prohibition of layoffs, the sharing of work among all, by imposing on the whole bourgeoisie the burden of paying for those of them who are failing» («Provisional or temporary Nationalizations, or guaranteed jobs and salaries for the workers?» *Convergences révolutionnaires*, January-February 2013)

In the end, *L'Étincelle* advance a reformist explanation of the crisis coupled with such «emergency measures» as the adjusted development of the capitalist system and shenanigans such as «work sharing» and «prohibition of layoffs» by the bourgeois State!

MATIÈRE ET RÉVOLUTION (MATTER AND REVOLUTION): FROM ANTI- COLLABORATION TO THE SAME OLD REFORMIST RECIPES

Matter and Revolution (M & R) derived from the *L'Étincelle* Fraction which it left rather than integrate into the NPA. The Group distributes *La Voix des travailleurs* (The Voice of the Workers) newsletter, especially at the Renault Technical Centre at Lardy.

Unlike other Trotskyist groups, M & R denounces cleanly and clearly collaborationism whether of the left or «far» left. It defends the correct idea that the union apparatuses are enemies of the proletarians in the same way as the State, the bosses and the owners. It severely criticizes unions which «negotiate» and, in particular, the LO leadership of the Aulnay PSA CGT who refused to rapidly launch a strike after the announcement of layoffs, who have formed an alliance with the company union and who imprison the struggle in the localist scenario of «No to the Closure of the Aulnay Plant» instead of extending it to other plants affected by the management plan.

However, its denunciation of collaborationism does not translate into classist demands. M & R recycles various old **purely reformist** rantings.

For M & R, capitalism isn't in crisis and the plant closures are the consequence of its «financialization»; they write: «it also suggests that the whole of industrial activity is in overcapacity and must therefore be reduced. This is also wrong. The cause of deindustrialization lies elsewhere: in the massive withdrawal of private capital from its industrial and commercial investments and its massive investment in the

banking and finance sphere» (Bulletin, November 14, 2012). It's the classical reformist lamentations made regularly by LO: «the capitalists disinvest in order to speculate» (Bulletin, January 11, 2013). In fact the more the capitalist invest the more the situation of the proletariat deteriorates!

Lenin demonstrated, already a century ago, that because of capitalist development the banks – as finance capital – become the real actors in the centralization of capital, increasing the power of giant monopolies. In the imperialist stage of capitalism, it is finance capital that dominates markets, companies, society, and this domination itself leads to financial concentration to the point where «Finance capital, concentrated in a few hands and exercising a virtual monopoly, exacts enormous and ever-increasing profits from the floating of companies, issue of stock, state loans, etc., strengthens the domination of the financial oligarchy and levies tribute upon the whole of society for the benefit of monopolists. Finance capital, concentrated in a few hands and exercising a virtual monopoly, exacts enormous and ever-increasing profits from the floating of companies, issue of stock, state loans, etc., strengthens the domination of the financial oligarchy and levies tribute upon the whole of society for the benefit of monopolists» (Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism [MIA]).

So if capitalism is not experiencing a crisis of overproduction, the situation at Renault – according to M & R – is the result of the poor strategy of its company directors: «no new model, production line not ready when customers are ready to buy new cars, no incentive to buy with customer discounts as before, no facilitation of credit. We can say that Renault has divested itself from automobiles to keep its cash and play at the casino of the stock-market and sovereign debt...» (Bulletin, February 12, 2013). Yet Marx explained extensively that the goal of any capitalist enterprise was the **production of profits** and not the production of this or that particular commodity...

But M & R lectures Renault for making poor capitalist choices: «Choosing not to lower prices, choice to not produce in advance of sales, significant delivery delays, for example for the new Clio» (Bulletin, January 11, 2013).

Just like LO, of which it is a pale copy, M & R offers its best advice to the bourgeoisie on how to better manage its business!

All the responses to capitalist attacks as proposed M & R are also reformist: «Requisition enterprises that fold, block the trust when they throw away a plant. Smash their banks since they have transformed all into banks, call on

customers to withdraw their money from these institutions, if necessary cause panics against banks that support our liquidators»: appeal to customers, to the State (to «requisition»), anything rather than class struggle!

And it cites as an example the Lip watch factory in the 1970s and its self-management utopia which «*was not afraid to seize the capital (money, watches and plans) and refuse to respect the legitimacy of the ownership, and then requisition the enterprise to run it for the sole benefit of the employees!*» (Bulletin, January 11, 2013). Do we have to, one more time, denounce the purely bourgeois nature of self-management which obliges the proletarians to auto-exploit themselves to run the company, which remains fully capitalist?

Behind a radical and combative discourse *Matter and Revolution* hides a deeply reformist nature it inherited from *Lutte Ouvrière*: same anti-Marxist analysis of the crisis, same reformist demands.

ONE ISSUE: TO STRUGGLE ON THE CLASS TERRAIN

At Cleon as well as everywhere else, it is necessary for the proletarians to take their struggles in hands, to organize independently on a class basis, to not leave the movement in the hands of Union apparatuses even if led by «revolutionaries» who do not have a word in their newspapers, leaflets or press releases to warn workers against the orientation of the trade unions, to seek solidarity not with «customers», but with their class brothers and sisters.

Decades of democratic, pacifist and inter-classist poison distilled by the reformists have crippled the proletarians. However, the role of the Communists remains to encourage any step towards the re-appropriation of classist methods and means, which requires working to break with political and trade union collaborationism.

The weaknesses of current struggles are inevitable, as they are the result of many years of class collaboration and social pacifism; the difficult and complex process of the classist reorganization of the proletariat really will be long, difficult and complex. But these weaknesses must be clearly highlighted, understood and combated, in particular demonstrating clearly what the factors of defeat in the class struggle are: corporatism, localism, legalism, divisions of all kinds,...

The criticism which must be made of the activity of the Trotskyists at Renault is not one of not engaging in struggle: they actually tried to build a strike, in an unfavorable context, faced with the bosses' blackmail.

The betrayal of the Trotskyists is that they do not allow the proletarians to avoid the pitfalls of the enemy, but contribute to imprison them in a «combative» collaborationism which ties their interests to those of the company and puts them not on the terrain of open class confrontation, but within the legalistic framework of the «negotiation» – albeit under pressure of the struggle – between «social partners». Workers and employers are not «partners», they are **class enemies!**

* * *

It is necessary for the proletarians to engage in all the immediate economic struggles – even if they do not ex-

ceed the purely defensive goal of resistance to the aggravation of their exploitation – because they can represent a step forward in the direction of the awakening of proletarian initiative and the reacquisition of the methods of the class struggle. If they are conducted with these classist means and methods, they become not only inevitable but also necessary steps towards the future resumption of the class war, the revolutionary struggle against capitalism, since, as Marx, said «*By cowardly giving way in their everyday conflict with capital, they would certainly disqualify themselves for the initiating of any larger movement*» (Wages, Price and Profit, 1865 [Progress Publishers, Moscow]).

CANADA

The Lac-Mégantic Disaster: The law of profit is the Criminal!

The aftermath of the worst rail disaster in Canada for decades leaves at least 47 dead with many of the victims still unaccounted for. On Saturday, July 6 at one o'clock in the morning a train carrying crude oil derailed in the small town of Lac-Mégantic in Quebec (6000 inhabitants), the fire and the explosion of several cars destroyed a large section of the downtown.

The train had stopped 11 km outside town at the top of a hill, for a «crew change»; actually the train, consisting of five locomotives and 72 cars each weighing well over one hundred tons, originating in Dakota and which had passed through Toronto and Montreal, was operated and conducted by a «crew» of **one engineer!** The latter, who had just finished 12 hours of consecutive work, went to rest after setting the brake system according to the usual rules. But shortly after a fire was reported on one of the engines and was extinguished by firefighters from nearby Nantes and the engine shut down. Somehow the train was set in motion and, without a driver, it accelerated downhill toward Lac-Mégantic.

The director of the Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway (MMA) has laid off the engineer, accusing him of being responsible for the accident, saying said he might have lied about having correctly applied handbrakes on 11 tanker cars (and the company took advantage of the accident to lay off 19 other employees in Quebec on July 16, 19).

But to accuse the driver actually serves to hide the direct responsibility

of the pursuit of profit which is the rule in capitalist society and which always leads to the detriment of the workers and security.

MMA (formerly Iron World Railways) was acquired in 2003 by Rail World Inc., a company owned by an American capitalist named Burkhard who built his fortune by buying and selling railway undertakings. In the 90s he participated in the privatization of railways in New Zealand, which earned him a token of appreciation from the bourgeoisie of New Zealand, the title of «honorary consul»! Also in the 90s, he took advantage of the privatization of the railways in Britain to put together its largest rail freight company (now owned by a German firm), eliminating 1,700 jobs in the process. He participated in the profitable privatization of railways in Estonia in 2001 (the local government was then forced a few years later to buy them back), he also served on the board of directors of a private Polish railway company and others in the United States.

For his success in the increase in profits of companies accomplished by reducing costs and increasing the exploitation of workers, in 1999 Burkhard was appointed «*Railroader of the Year*» by Railway Age magazine and then one of «*16 Greatest Railroaders of the Twentieth Century*». But according to statistics from the American Federal Railroad Administration, between 2003 and 2011, MMA had a double or triple the accident rate, than the average in the sector: the profit is made on the

backs of the workers and the population ...

Shortly after the acquisition of the Canadian company, Burkhard lowered wages by 40%, under the pretext of the bankruptcy of a major customer. In 2010 he announced a plan to save 4.5 million dollars Cdn. by reducing the number of workers on locomotives. In 2012, Transport Canada, the government agency regulating railways authorized MMA trains to operate with a single driver, no other crew. To top this off, this has been accomplished by the indifference or outright collusion of the unions involved.

The bourgeois State, whose role according to democrats and reformers should be to protect and defend «all citizens», is actually in the service of capitalism and the capitalists.

For many years various governments have increasingly made decisions in favor of railway companies: if today on most freight trains in the United States and Canada the norm consist is now two workers, there were five thirty years ago. The productivity race that exists in this sector too, means that increasingly fewer proletarians are obligated to produce increasingly more, and when the various regulations enacted to ensure safety become obstacles to the realization of profits, they are removed.

At the request of the capitalists, in 1999 the Liberal government decided to accelerate deregulation, pursued by every successive government policy. One of the measures obtained by the companies was «self-regulation»: it is the companies themselves who decide what safety measures to take!

The result was predictable: in 2007 the Canadian Safety Council released a report noting the deteriorating security situation on the railways. Since it was established in 1991 in the United States that the existing tank cars were not safe, eventually in 2011 the Canadian government required companies need only buy new more secure cars when renewing their fleet, all the while allowing the use of the existing unsafe ones : but as the life of these cars is from thirty to fifty years, they will still circulate for decades! Investments in rail infrastructure are insufficient, etc.. Meanwhile the boom in transporting crude oil boosts profits for the railways (oil transport by rail is less expensive than pipeline) ...

The Disaster in Lac-Mégantic is absolutely not due to chance, to fate: it is a crime committed by the MMA railway company, by capitalism, by the profit motive that drives all companies in this society with the aid of the State: the Canadian State last year broke the strike

by workers of Canadian Pacific Rail, thousands of workers were laid off, working conditions have deteriorated further, «unproductive» expenditures for security and maintenance have been reduced to the greater profits of the company. The blood-soaked capitalist Burkhard is not an exception, he is the product of the capitalist mode of production.

Against such disasters, it is silly to talk about a return to a mythical past of a «regulated» capitalism which would replace the savage «neo-liberal» varie-

ty: the capitalism of yesterday was every bit as savage as today's; it had nothing but contempt for the safety, security and the lives of the workers and the public. Today as yesterday and throughout the last century the motto of the Railway Barons remains the same: «Up-hill Slow, Downhill Fast, Tonnage first, Safety Last».

It is capitalism that is criminal; This is what we have to combat and put to death in order to live in safety!

The historical class struggle over the length and intensity of the working-day

In the history of capitalist production, the determination of what is a working-day, presents itself as the result of a struggle, a struggle between

collective capital, *i.e.*, the class of capitalists, and collective labour, *i.e.*, the working-class.

(...) Three railway men are standing before a London coroner's jury — a guard, an engine-driver, a signalman. A tremendous railway accident has hurried hundreds of passengers into another world. The negligence of the employee is the cause of the misfortune. They declare with one voice before the jury that ten or twelve years before, their labour only lasted eight hours a-day. During the last five or six years it had been screwed up to 14, 18, and 20 hours, and under a specially severe pressure of holiday-makers, at times of excursion trains, it often lasted for 40 or 50 hours without a break. They were ordinary men, not Cyclops. At a certain point their labour-power failed. Torpor seized

them. Their brain ceased to think, their eyes to see. The thoroughly «respectable» British jurymen answered by a verdict that sent them to the next assizes on a charge of manslaughter, and, in a gentle «rider» to their verdict, expressed the pious hope that the capitalistic magnates of the railways would, in future, be more extravagant in the purchase of a sufficient quantity of labour-power, and more «abstemious», more «self-denying», more «thrifty», in the draining of paid labour-power.

(...) For «protection» against «the serpent of their agonies,» the labourers must put their heads together, and, as a class, compel the passing of a law, an all-powerful social barrier that shall prevent the very workers from selling, by voluntary contract with capital, themselves and their families into slavery and death.

Karl Marx, *Capital*, (Volume 1, Chapter 10, sections 3, 7)

Proletarian

International Communist Party («programme communiste»)

The Tragedy of the German Proletariat after the First World War



The Tragedy of the German Proletariat after the First World War

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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.