

Proletarian

Organ of the International Communist Party

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

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The Emancipation of Women Will Never Take Place in the Capitalist Society : It Will Be the Result of the Struggle of Proletarian Men and Women United in One Classist Movement and Revolutionary Movement for Communism

The most advanced democratic republics, in addition to boasting of ever-increasing progress in the economic and social spheres, as well as in the technical and scientific ones, boast also of having reached a level of civilisation which no previous society has ever reached, and of possessing the only political and social mechanism – that is, the system of democracy in general – capable of ensuring the overcoming of every contradiction, every inequality, every social confrontation, based on an ideological framework which has at its

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Today's Terrorist Acts by Hamas, Like Yesterday's Acts by Fatah or Other Palestinian Guerrilla Organisations, Will not Bring an End to Israel's Oppression of the Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank.

The Future of the Palestinian Proletariat, as well as of Proletarians Throughout the Middle East, Europe and the World, Lies in Independent Class Struggle and Proletarian Class Solidarity of all Countries!

The Palestinian bourgeoisie, today divided into two main factions – Hamas and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) – moves along three main lines: 1) to maintain the closest possible relations with the various and conflicting regional and international powers that have a vested interest in supporting them; 2) to resist economic, political, social and military oppression, especially by Israel, but also by the other Arab states in the region; and 3) to keep in subjugation the Palestinian proletariat, over which the two main factions exercise their limited power both to gain the

appropriate level of exploitation that guarantees them the privileges that stem from that power, and to use it as a bargaining chip in negotiations with the regional and international powers with which they maintain relations.

The Palestinian proletariat, used for decades as a striking force in favour of the various factions into which the Palestinian bourgeoisie has been divided and the various bourgeoisies of the other Arab states, has always been destined to be at the same time a highly

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Against the Russian-Ukrainian Imperialist War, Only the Proletariat in Russia, in Ukraine and in Europe Can Respond with Its Class Struggle, with Its Struggle Against the Warmongering Poison of the Respective Bourgeoisies and Their National Interests, and Against the Pacifist Delusion

The "special military operation" that Russian imperialism has unleashed against Ukraine to prevent it from joining NATO, joining the Western Euro-American front, as the former so-called People's Democratic Republics of Eastern Europe had already done, has turned into a war that has been going on for more than two years now, with tragic consequences for the Ukrainian population, and not least for the Russian-speaking population of Donbass and Crimea, as well as for the Russian soldiers who have been sent to the slaughter to defend the imperialist interests of the oligarchies ruling in Moscow. To

date, according to official estimates by various governments, the number of dead and wounded between Russians and Ukrainians is thought to be more than 500,000: a huge carnage, while a large part of south-eastern Ukraine has been destroyed.

All the Western media and governments claim that the causes of the conflict that has broken out in Ukraine are to be found in the will of oligarchs or potentates who want to dominate other countries or even the world and thus destroy the peaceful course of busi-

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exploited labour force by each bourgeoisie, under whose domination it has had the misfortune to find itself or to seek refuge, and cannon fodder both in the confrontations through which it has sought to defend itself against every attack – whether in Palestine or in the “refugee camps” in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria – and in the conflicts of Israel with the countries in which it has found refuge.

Palestine: a proletariat and a people condemned to be massacred. Israel: a state born out of the oppression of the Palestinian people and a Jewish proletariat as prisoner of the immediate benefits of that oppression and accomplice of it.

An oppression that would not have had such strength and would not have lasted so long if it had not been supported, sponsored and fostered by the Western imperialist powers, which have made of Israel a bastion in the Middle East according to their own vision and manner, exploiting, as hegemon, its close relations with the American and European Jewish communities in order to continue to advance imperialist interests despite the specific and “national” interests of the Israeli bourgeoisie.

An oppression that the Western democratic powers have to pass off as a “necessity for the survival” of the Jewish people, in whose extermination by the Nazi-fascists in the past they were complicit, and to which today, in the form of the State of Israel – this gendarme of Western imperialist interests – they are paying a historical debt as well for the benefit of the “national” bourgeoisie, allowing it to exploit the Palestinian proletarian masses at very low cost and to repress by violent methods, considered the most effective, any attempt at struggle, even if only in the field of economic and immediate defence.

An oppression whose impact and duration is also due to the general passivity of the European and American proletarians, who for decades have been resigned to the classist struggle and imbued, as they have been for generations, with illusions of democracy and collaboration between the classes.

However remote the class struggle of the proletariat in the Western coun-

tries may seem, it is the only way in which the proletarian class of the imperialist countries of the West and East, which support the Israeli and Palestinian bourgeoisie, can redeem itself by finally engaging in a relentless struggle against the real class enemies: the imperialists, the greatest forces of oppression of every nation, of every nationality.

The Palestinian proletariat will never succeed in ridding itself of its own bourgeoisie on its own, let alone the Israeli bourgeoisie. It has found itself in this situation several times since 1948, when the state of Israel imposed itself by force and continued to occupy the Palestinian territories by force. The struggles that the various armed Palestinian bourgeois formations have been waging since the 1960s were already then being born under the influence of a nationalism sold out to foreign powers; a nationalism which received support and instructions from those powers and which had nothing in common with the character and drive for “national-revolutionary” independence which characterised the struggles against national oppression in Algeria, the Congo and later in Angola and Mozambique, and which for a long time determined the characteristics of the spontaneous revolt of the Palestinian proletariat. In the plans of the victorious imperialists of the Second World War, especially Great Britain, the Soviet Union and later the USA, the whole region of the Middle East – brimming with oil and strategic lines of communication such as the Suez Canal, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf – inevitably assumed vital importance for world capitalism. The Arab population living in this vast area, if it had the strength to rebel against the British and French, as it did against the Ottoman Empire during the First World War, could have caused serious trouble for the interests of British and French imperialism and, prospectively, for Russian and American imperialism, which, of course, had no intention of staying out of the region.

“It was imperialism,” we wrote in 1958, “by discovering and exploiting the oil fields of Arabia and by involving the Arab states born out of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in a vast network of mercantile relations, especially with oil,

that created the “powder keg” which today [1958, ed.] here and there explodes. Imperialism, by promising independence to the Arabs in order to have them as allies against the Turks or the Germans, and a homeland in Palestine to the Jews in order to secure the support of big capital and the poor but proliferating Jewish minorities in the Western countries, created the conditions for the tension which convulses the Middle East, and which is all the more serious because meanwhile the Arab states have grown stronger economically and Israel has become a great centre of high-powered industry and agriculture” (1).

Well, that tension, which has long convulsed the Middle East, has never abated; on the contrary, it has become even more accentuated. What the imperialists feared at the time was the possibility of the Arab peoples fighting and achieving pan-Arab unification and a supranational state, which existed in the visions of Syria and Egypt; but that unification did not come about due to many historical and specific factors, including the traditional rivalry between the tribes and the sheikhs, which intensified over time and did not diminish precisely as a result of the discovery of oil, the intervention of competing imperialist powers, their knowledge of the deserts, and the exploitation of the dispossessed and proletarianised masses not only from the vast region of the Middle East but also from Central Asia and the Far East.

The struggle for the self-determination of the Palestinian people may have been part of the great cycle of anti-colonial struggles that began after the end of the Second World Imperialist War, especially in the second half of the 1960s; the gigantic class potential represented by the Palestinian proletariat and the proletarianised masses, while manifested in their indomitable and armed struggle in Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan, did not express an autonomous, *class* political programme that could guide the national movement. This revolutionary, class political programme did not exist and did not operate in the form of the proletarian and communist International, which had by then been destroyed and buried for forty years. On the other hand, the “leftist” political forces that constituted the “Palestinian resistance” and which claimed to be “Marxist” were, moreover, still so riddled with opportunism of Stalinist provenance that they could not but express the deviant political programs and directives that increasingly entangled the Palestinian “liberation movement” in the reactionary games of the Arab oligarchies and imperialist countries. Not only did the great desire for the unification of the Arab countries from the Atlantic Ocean to the Red Sea

quickly fade away, but also the illusion of the liberation of the Palestinians from oppression by Israel, the West and the Arab states, through a “resistance” struggle directed by the interests of the corrupt Palestinian bourgeoisie sold out to the highest bidder, now supported by a bloc of imperialists, now again by their rivals, the most tragic defeat was legitimately met.

The same opportunism of Stalinist provenance strongly influenced the Western proletarians, and especially the European ones, who alone could be credible allies in the struggle against the same enemy, i.e. the bourgeois ruling classes, whether Israeli, Arab, French, British, American or Russian. The passivity that the European proletarians showed towards the struggle of the Palestinian proletariat was not only manifested by abandoning it to its fate, while at the same time maintaining close relations with each of their national bourgeoisies in an attempt to protect those conditions which, compared to those in which the Palestinian proletarians survived, could be considered as economic and political gains that they had won over the years; it also manifested itself by fomenting, through many so-called “communist” political forces, the illusion that the solution to the “Palestinian question” was to enact, through the UN and various agreements between imperialist gangsters, the existence of two states on the same territory.

The “Palestinian resistance” to which the self-styled communist revolutionaries continue to refer to, currently represented mainly by Hamas in Gaza and the PNA in the West Bank, serves today more than yesterday to deceive and paralyse the proletarian and proletarianised Palestinian masses not only in Palestine, but also in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, where they have found refuge in the famous “refugee camps”, and everywhere else in the world where they are in exile, so that their reaction to the constant massacres to which they are subjected does not ultimately turn towards the *class* struggle, the only struggle that would not only place them in an independent and autonomous position vis-à-vis all other bourgeois and collaborationist forces, but which would also open up the possibility of developing class solidarity with the proletarians of the other Arab states, with the Israeli proletariat and with the proletariat of the imperialist countries, especially the European ones.

The path of the class struggle is long and remote, that is for sure, but it is the only perspective in which the material realities that are the basis of the antagonism between the proletarian masses and the bourgeoisie in all countries, historically necessarily give way to the solution of every oppression, every exploi-

tation and every war through the revolutionary class struggle.

The manifestations in various Western capitals that can be observed since Israeli troops invaded the Gaza Strip, razed cities in the north, Gaza City itself, and proceeded in the same way in the south of the Strip, where Israel itself has forced more than 1.5 million Palestinians to move from the north, have been singing the praises of “Palestinian resistance”, waving the Palestinian flag and calling for humanitarian aid and an end to the war, represent but the umpteenth demonstration of hypocritical solidarity with a people whose innumerable massacres have been permitted, organised and carried out by the only democratic country in the Middle East, protected, supported and sustained by the great Western democracies, and the American one in particular!

Between Israel and Gaza, or rather between Israel and the Palestinians, this is not the first war that has broken out. Gaza is walking in the footsteps of Tall-el-Zaatar, when the Palestinian refugee camp of that name, located in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon, and its inhabitants were massacred with unprecedented cruelty in 1976. Gaza, however, is run and controlled by Hamas and has become the centre of gravity of Iran’s influence in this enclave within Israel’s borders, which is intolerable to any government in Tel Aviv, whether it is Netanyahu’s or not. So apart from the fact that Netanyahu and his government were surprised by the deadly attack of 7 October, in which Hamas militias and their jihadist allies massacred more than 1,200 kibbutz residents, mostly Israeli proletarians and very few soldiers, and took more than 200 hostages in a single day, and leaving aside the corruption charges that Netanyahu wants to avoid, the fact remains, that the Israeli response – which the warmongers in Washington have described as “disproportionate” – by blindly bombing densely populated Palestinian towns and killing more than 25,000 civilians, mostly women, children and the elderly, corresponds to the iron logic of war, in which the “enemy” is not just the armed combatant but the entire nation that the combatant belongs to. It is the iron logic of the fascist and Nazi massacres, of the Green Beret massacres in Vietnam and Cambodia, not to mention the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which demonstrates that the war waged by the bourgeoisie against the populations it considers the enemy is a total war.

In such wars, in fact, the proletariat is the main target because every bourgeois class knows that if there is a social force that is capable of confronting it decisively and has a serious chance of defeating it, it is the class of the proletariat, especially if it is led by the class

party, as it was in Russia in 1917. And if the proletariat is not led by the class party, but by parties promoting inter-class collaboration, as is the case in Palestine, the bourgeois ruling class has largely achieved its goal of diverting the class energy of the proletariat to terrain more favourable to it, without having to suppress it systematically. In the case of the Palestinians, however, it is the indomitable drive to revolt against oppression and repression by Israel that in turn drives the Zionist state to ever more brutal and violent repression, repression that no terrorist attack can stop, for such is the appetite for land and absolute power that the Israeli bourgeoisie has demonstrated since its re-assembling in Palestine after the Second World War. The imperialist, first Franco-British, then mainly American, actions led to the establishment of the State of Israel, a devoted gendarme and executioner on Arab soil, a region strategically important for world capitalism.

However, the current Israeli war against Gaza and the Palestinians, targeting as always also Lebanon and Syria, is being unleashed in an international situation that is already extremely tense because of the Russian war in Ukraine, and in a situation where the world economy is on the verge of a major crisis linked to an economic recession. So the seemingly limited clash be-

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tween Israel and a well-organised terrorist militia supported by Israel's enemies inevitably takes on a completely different dimension, a dimension in which the big trusts not only for oil and gas, but also for armaments, come into force.

As we know as Marxists, it is not states that subjugate capital, but it is capital that subjugates states, and all the more so in the imperialist phase in which finance capitalism reigns supreme. The primary interest of finance capital is not only to take advantage of every situation in which it can speculate to increase its initial value, but also to create the most favourable situations for this speculation. What could be better than a war that has been or is about to be unleashed and unfolded in time and space so that profits spin at an ever-increasing speed, given that in war any weapon, weapons system, means, equipment and infrastructure is des-

tined to be rapidly consumed so that it can be continually replaced by other weapons, equipment, etc., for which huge investments and therefore huge capital are needed?

The intertwining of the capital interests of the world's large financial corporations, the interests of the large multinationals that are dedicated to the production of everything that is consumed quickly and in excessive quantities (e.g., drugs for epidemics and wars, armaments, raw materials for energy production, high technology, etc.), and the political interests of the large imperialist states far trump any effort by small capital and small states to escape the corrosive influence of big capital by making themselves "autonomous." Among these interests, however, we must also consider another factor, namely wage labour, which, by virtue of its exploitation, is the real source of capital valorisation. For it is in the interests of capitalism that the proletariat in all the countries of the world remain a class subject to wage labour, class *for* capital, as Marx said, and all the economic, ideological, political, social, religious and repressive means that the ruling classes deem it necessary to use to prevent the proletariat from escaping its miserable fate are justified. On the one hand, they are called upon to vote, on the other hand they are killed for rebelling, and they are killed if they dare to organise and respond to violence with violence.

History teaches us, however, that the proletariat, whatever its nationality and colour, in whatever part of the

world, can transform its social power, indispensable for capitalism in any country, from valoriser of capital – which means its eternal exploitation – into a gravedigger of capital, into a social force which will destroy the capitalist social system and with it the bourgeois class which represents its interests, and thus open to humanity at last a future of a society without classes, without exploitation of man by man, without oppression, without war.

The class struggle of the proletariat is not the struggle for democracy and inter-class collaboration between the exploited and the exploiters: it is a struggle for life against the bourgeois class in every country, against the wage oppression on which the bourgeoisie bases its power, against all forms of oppression, economic, political, national, gender, which all ruling classes – whether they appear in suit and tie, tunic and turban, crown or military uniform – inflict on the proletariat and the dispossessed and proletarianised masses in every country of the world.

The subjugation of the human masses to capital is international, the class struggle against capital and the bourgeois classes that administer its power is likewise international.

4/01/2024

(1) See "*Mondo coloniale in fermento*" (The colonial world in ferment), Il programma comunista, No. 10/1958.

Antisemitism Is Part of Bourgeois Ideology

In the last two months, there has been a wave of accusations of *antisemitism* levelled at anyone who has risen to support the cry of the slaughtered Palestinian people (we note, for example, that among the more than 10,000 victims there are more than 4,000 children, all of whom we strongly doubt could be the *infamous terrorists*). Our party, in the historical continuity and coherence that characterizes it, is compelled to emphasize the essentially bourgeois nature of these ideological attacks, and then to point out how the real movement of history has unfolded in practice *regardless* of these accusations. In fact, our position on Palestine is well known and was reiterated in the last issue of *Il Comunista* in the article « *Alcuni punti fermi sulla 'questione palestinese'* » (A few cornerstones on the « Palestine question »): the rejection of the bourgeois compromise of a « national Palestinian state » (moreover, nationalist, democratic, capitalist, etc., etc.) and the call, historically raised as early as 1848 by our masters towards the pro-

letarians, to unite throughout the world in struggle *on the classist basis above all*. No form of antisemitism can be inferred from these attitudes, nor any other form of racism.

The accusation of anti-Semitism has, in fact, its roots in the past. Ever since the publication of the party's text « *Auschwitz ou le grand alibi* » (Auschwitz, or the Great Alibi), the ideologues of the bourgeoisie and those of Stalinism, falsely espousing the interests of the proletariat, have accused us of denying the direct responsibility of Nazi fascism for the Holocaust. We have always repeatedly stressed the following: « *Refusing to see in capitalism itself the cause of the crises and social catastrophes which periodically convulse the world, bourgeois and reformist ideologues have always insisted on explaining them by the wickedness of this or that.* » (1) Even in this case, with Hamas reactionaries, backed by Hezbollah and Iran, launching rockets and the Zionist army dropping bombs indiscriminately on hospitals, schools and homes, dem-

ocrats of all nations want to see only the wickedness of this or that group, whether ethnic or political, but not the responsibility of capitalism as a social system, as a mode of production. The failure of democratic ideology to recognise real responsibility in this case also demonstrates how the accusation of antisemitism can be used as an expedient weapon against positions that challenge the established order. Just as democratic ideology (which we abhor) invokes the mystical weapon of anti-fascism at every turn to create the illusion that the solution to society's problems lies in defeating equally bourgeois fascism, it equally shields itself with grief over the extermination of the Jews (while it seems to matter little that the « democratic world » itself did nothing during the Second World War, even though it knew full well what was happening) to prevent the manifestation of classist positions around the Palestinian question.

We have direct evidence of how the empty anti-fascism of public opinion can

Antisemitism ...

be used as a weapon of repression. In fact, in *Il Manifesto*, we read that the German Federal Government, in the face of massive demonstrations supporting the Palestinian people, has responded, firstly, with batons and, secondly, by banning not only all gatherings, but also the wearing of the traditional keffiyeh (or shemagh) in schools. The *Bild* press group has reportedly begun publishing, among other things, lists of alleged *friends of Hamas* (2). Any expression of dissent against the systematic massacre of civilians, such as is taking place in Gaza, is prevented precisely under the pretext of anti-fascism: this leads to a fatal mental short-circuit for the democrats. In the name of democracy, they find themselves forced to suppress dissent. All this can only seem to be contradicted by the belief that democracy is fundamentally different from fascism in its class nature, which we resolutely deny. As we have said elsewhere, « 6. *We deny that 'democracy' and 'fascism' correspond to different types of society, linked to different modes of life and social activity. We affirm that they are merely two different forms of the bourgeois state, each ensuring, like the other, the domination of capital and its functioning, but under different social conditions.* » (3) For what is important for the bourgeoisie is the maintenance of class domination, not rights and freedoms.

But these accusations of anti-Semitism against those who, like us, are horrified by the massacre are completely misplaced. The facts prove that, far more than words. If all the demonstrators who chose to mobilise against the massacre of Palestinians (often with bourgeois nationalist positions, but sometimes with a partial understanding of the social problem of imperialism as a whole) were indeed motivated by some mysterious, secret form of anti-Semitism, how could what happened in Washington have happened? In response to the situation in Palestine, thousands of Jews mobilised to express their opposition to the criminal actions of Zionism, occupied Congress, and three hundred were arrested (4). For bourgeois democratic ideology, these must have been « anti-Semitic Jews ». The absurdity of the anti-fascist claims is once again shown, and in their own reality – even more so than in our sayings, which we have been repeating for decades. One of the representatives of the demonstration even declared, « *we will not let ourselves be manipulated by the fear of anti-Semitism* », thus decisively framing the way in which the bourgeoisie wages its campaigns against political dissent, i.e. not only by arrests, persecutions and premeditated murders, but

also by resorting to bourgeois ideological cover as part of a general attempt to manipulate public opinion.

The bourgeoisie can continue to wave its accursed banners (democracy, anti-fascism, legality, class collaborationism) and delude those who, at this stage in history, have not yet decisively understood how things stand. We, as the International Communist Party, i.e., anti-nationalist, anti-democratic, classist and proletarian, will continue our work of unmasking the bourgeois nature of the lies that the bosses' class tries to ram down the proletariat's heads today, as it did fifty years ago. And the proletariat, oppressed by two and a half centuries of bourgeois domination and a hundred years of class collaborationism, has not yet realised today how the libellous slanders of the propagandists of capitalism are uttered only to increase its distrust in its own strength, in the only struggle that will lead it to emancipation, the class struggle. And when the class struggle is resumed on a general scale, the proletariat will prove its valour not in the empty sophisms of democratic discussions, but in concrete revolutionary action, in the general in-

surrection, in the certainty of its historical objectives.

For this to happen, the role of the party, of class dictatorship, of revolutionary Marxism, which has provided and continues to provide the working class with timeless lessons precisely for the conquest of its power, remains essential. This will also wreck all the scheming that the bourgeoisie has composed to prevent its overthrow.

26/11/2023

(1) « *Auschwitz ou le grand alibi* » (Auschwitz, or the Great Alibi), published in No. 11, 1960 of our theoretical journal *Programme communiste*.

(2) « *A Berlino tira una brutta aria* », *Il Manifesto*, p. 4, October 20, 2023.

(3) « *Ciò che noi neghiamo e ciò che noi affermiamo* » (What we deny and what we affirm), *Il comunista*, No. 52, November 1996.

(4) « *USA, ebrei pacifisti invadono il Congresso, arrestati in 300* », *Il Manifesto*, p. 5, 20 October 2023.

The Emancipation of Women Will Never Take Place in the Capitalist Society : It Will Be the Result of the Struggle of Proletarian Men and Women United in One Classist Movement and Revolutionary Movement for Communism

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centre the full freedom and equality of every individual, both between men and women as well as between nations.

Every republican constitution praises ideological, political and social values that justify any struggle, any war to destroy the ideological, political and social obstacles represented by the remnants of previous societies, usually classified as totalitarian, authoritarian regimes, fascisms that past and present history has made us know and that still exist today in different parts of the world.

Today's bourgeoisie, like the bourgeoisie of the past and the bourgeoisie of the future, attaches an enormous historical value to the spasmodic pursuit of profit, the profit which is nothing other than the economic and social result of the ever more intense and bestial exploitation of wage labour, not only at workplace or national level, but worldwide. The difference between the 21st century and the 19th century lies only in the intensifying development of capitalism at the global level: a development that has not only meant economic and in-

dustrial progress, but which has inevitably brought with it the inequalities, oppression, violence and wars that have characterised that very development – and amplified its worst consequences.

The bourgeoisie glorifies the people, but the people are, in fact, made up of social classes which are in an antagonistic relationship to each other: the possessing class, which owns everything – land, industry, commerce, transport and everything that is produced – and which defends private property through the central state, and the proletarian class, the class of wage-labourers, the people without reserves, who own nothing and whose life depends exclusively on the exploitation of their labour power by the possessing class, the capitalist class. These are the main classes of modern society, the classes which have specific historical goals: the bourgeois class, once revolutionary, which has transformed feudal society into a society of a superior level through the merit of associated and wage labour

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and industrial development, and the proletarian class, that is, the class of workers and all working people who live exclusively on their wages and who, through their labour, create all the wealth of any nation. In between these two main classes are the so-called middle classes, the strata of the petty bourgeoisie, which still corresponds to small-scale production, small-scale trade, small land property, and which occupy all the functions and tasks required by corporate and public administration; the middle classes which have not entirely disappeared with the development of industrial and financial capitalism, but which, on the contrary, especially in times of economic crises, constitute an important social base for the recovery of the capitalist economy.

Thus, any reference to the people is, in fact, a camouflage of social reality, which lies precisely in the antagonism between the bourgeois ruling class and the proletarian class. This class antagonism is not an invention of Marxism; it is, on the contrary, the historical product of the division of society into classes, by virtue of which the ruling classes, just as they once oppressed all the subordinated classes (peasants, artisans, urban petty bourgeoisie), so they oppress the working class in bourgeois society today. Why does the ruling class need to oppress the working class? Because the ruling class, even though it is a minority, can only exercise its domination over the whole of society on condition that it subjugates by force to its demands those very classes from which through exploitation it extracts surplus-value, i.e. essentially profit. But the oppression which the bourgeois class exerts on the proletarian class today is not the only oppression that exists. Once the bourgeoisie has established itself as the ruling class at the national level and cleared the way for competition, it is precisely because it strives to dominate the market (which is the necessary outlet for its commodities) that it defends the regime of private property and its economic, social, and therefore political domination, and comes into clashes with the other social classes, which the bourgeoisie subjugates according to its

specific class interests. Within this pivotal regime of oppression, all other forms of oppression that are characteristic of any class-divided society, especially the oppression of women and weaker peoples, also unfold.

The progress of the bourgeoisie in the sphere of civil rights, industry and culture has by no means led to the overcoming of the oppression of the older social formations, but, on the contrary, has intensified it and spread it over the whole world. Thus, to the oppression of women and weaker peoples already known in older societies, the modern bourgeoisie has added wage oppression.

With the development of industrial technology, with the development of trade and the market, the need to produce more, to produce more things, to distribute them to more markets nationally and increasingly internationally, has grown. To the exploitation of wage labour in which proletarian men were thrown, at some point the exploitation of child and female labour was added: the whole proletarian family was thus subjected to capitalist exploitation. The inequality in wages which had already been instituted for the various industrial specialisations was extended and accentuated in the realm of child and women's labour. Thus, another oppression, that of wage labour, fell on women who were already suffering from the oppression inherited by bourgeois society from earlier societies. It is obvious that these oppressions fall most heavily on proletarian women, on women of the common masses and the poor peasantry, while they fall much less heavily on women who belong to the bourgeois ruling class.

The bourgeois society, with all its economic and social progress, with all its modern civilization, with all its values of freedom and equality, of democracy, has not been able, even two and a half centuries after the Great French Bourgeois Revolution, to overcome the oppression that was characteristic of the old feudal and patriarchal societies, which however were fought against and finally defeated.

Freedom and equality have remained words written on banners and in constitutions, but they have never found their application in the reality; and this not because of the malice of the bourgeois, who, as revolutionaries of the time, truly believed they could apply them, but for very concrete and inexorable material reasons: the capitalist mode of production, which the bourgeoisie had developed powerfully after the destruction of the rule of the old ruling classes, did not concede any other freedom than the freedom of the capitalist to exploit the wage labour force to increase his economic and social power, the freedom of

conduct of the capitalist in competition with other capitalists; it did not concede any *equality* other than an equality which would result solely from temporary economic interests shared with other capitalists. The freedom and equality which the ruling bourgeoisie has left to and reserves for the exploited and impoverished masses have always been only false attractions: verbal and even written promises which are never actually kept or applied, and with which the exploited and impoverished masses are deceived.

And even though the bourgeoisie agrees to pass certain laws (regarding marriage, family law, divorce, abortion, education of children, public health care, etc.) under the pressure of demonstrations and economic and political struggles that mobilise the great masses to democratically call for the application or recognition of at least some of the rights promised or enshrined in the constitutions that the ruling classes themselves were involved in authoring, they do so with the attempt to limit these concessions as much as possible and are always ready to revoke them in subsequent situations or simply to make them particularly unfeasible (as is the case, for example, with the freedom of abortion, etc.).

This shows that democracy, cooperation between the classes, "social dialogue", parliamentary debates, petitions, signature collections, etc., i.e., the entire endless series of forms of pressure that bourgeois democracy allows to achieve the recognition of rights considered basic for a modern civilised society, are absolutely not conducive to the real and lasting recognition of these rights. The constitutional charters enshrine the right to live with dignity in full security, freedom of speech and thought, and thousands of other "rights" that are not recognised in reality by the bourgeois justice system unless they are in favour of members of the big bourgeoisie.

And what about women's right not to be subjected to violence at home, in the workplace, on the street or in places of leisure and entertainment? What about the thousands of forms of violence to which women are exposed from an early age in the same families where they are brought up to be subordinate to men, to be dependent on men and to devote themselves fully to housework and childcare? What about women who lose their jobs because they refuse to submit to harassment and sexual violence from bosses and superiors? What about women who, in full freedom and according to their feelings, decide to leave a man with whom they have entered into a relationship and are killed by him as if they were his property, and who does not accept that they might

belong to another? What about women who are beaten and tortured because they wear the veil incorrectly or because they do not submit to an arranged marriage or to the sexual desires of their partner?

The oppression of women in modern capitalist society is masked in a thousand ways; women are pushed towards careerism in working life, to make themselves well off in the family circle, to make money no matter what, and, if left to their fate and without work, also to the “oldest craft in the world”, i.e. prostitution. Politicians of all stripes discuss “gender quotas” for those standing for election, and conversely, politically “dissident” intellectuals point out that there are very few women in corporate management, especially in the public sector, very few female chancellors and prime ministers, almost no female presidents of republics, let alone female generals or chiefs of staff... The bourgeois are unable to see the reality of their society, as they are stupefied by their own lies. This does not detract from the fact that they have a peculiar sensitivity to instinctively sense the dangers of a social movement that enters the terrain of even a fierce clash with political power, such as the recent mobilisations over pensions in France may have been. Their fears are still essentially the same: that social movements expressing a general dissatisfaction with the present conditions in which the proletarian and semi-proletarian masses survive, will surpass and break through the political and police confines built specifically to defend the established order, and go out to meet experiences of classist struggle that can lay the basis not for democratic struggle but for the resumption of the class struggle.

In fact, as long as the questions that relate specifically to the oppression of women remain in the realm of the so-called “women’s question” and are of interest only to women, any struggles that arise on these questions will remain curtailed, inevitably sterile, as has been the case until now. The oppression of women cannot be separated from the general oppression which the bourgeoisie exerts on the whole of society and especially on the proletarian class. The proletarian class is made up of proletarian men and women, it is made up of working men and women who are squeezed to the last drop of sweat and blood, by an economic and social system that cannot survive on its own except as a huge vampire, a huge cannibalistic machinery that lives not only on the exploitation of the majority of humanity, but also on the systematic deaths in workplaces, in the streets, in homes, in prisons, in wars.

The emancipation of women, Lenin emphasized, can only happen with the

emancipation of the proletariat from capitalism. It is in the joint struggle of proletarian men and women against the capitalists, against the capitalist economic and social system, against bourgeois power and its state, that the oppression of women can find the only real response to overcome it: the class response. As long as capitalism, and therefore bourgeois power, exists, no form of oppression of this society will be overcome.

The proletarian women in particular, more than women in general, are compelled to place themselves on the terrain of the classist struggle because they are the most affected in every respect and because they experience a double oppression – at home and on the wage level – from which, unless they unite with the proletarian men in a common anti-capitalist struggle, they will never be able to free themselves. Proletarian men must also *train* themselves in anti-capitalist struggle by overcoming the contrast between the two sexes which bourgeois society systematically fuels. Proletarian men do not suffer the double oppression that proletarian women are subjected to. They have become accustomed to treating women in the same way as the bourgeoisie, and are influenced by the male chauvinist and patriarchal culture that is typical of the bourgeoisie. However, in the classist struggle against wage oppression, they stand shoulder to shoulder with female workers who experience the same conditions of oppression, and it is in this *united and fraternal* class struggle that prole-

tarian men and women find the basis for the more general struggle against bourgeois and capitalist society, as happened in Russia in October 1917.

The emancipation of women at that time, under the dictatorship of the proletariat, began with the abolition of all laws that discriminated against women and, above all, with the beginning of the struggle against the *domestic women’s slavery* and *prostitution*, the creation of public canteens and public kindergartens, and the involvement of women in productive work. The humiliating and degrading petty domestic work was the first obstacle to women’s emancipation that had to be broken: this is where proletarian power began. There is still a long way to go before the proletarian communist revolution, just as there is in preparing the proletariat for the class struggle. But it is impossible to stop history, just as it was impossible to stop the bourgeois revolution which began in the middle of the seventeenth century in England and reached the end of the eighteenth century in France and from the middle of the nineteenth century in Europe and then throughout the world. It is capitalism itself, with its irresolvable contradictions, which is paving the way for the resumption of the class and revolutionary struggle. For communists, faith in history never dies, and that is why we tenaciously continue our struggle!

6/03/2024



Against the Russian-Ukrainian Imperialist War, Only the Proletariat in Russia, in Ukraine and in Europe Can Respond with Its Class Struggle, with Its Struggle Against the Warmongering Poison of the Respective Bourgeoisies and Their National Interests, and Against the Pacifist Delusion

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ness development defended by Democracy, of which the United States of America and the countries of Western Europe, starting with Great Britain, France, Germany and followed by all the others, proclaim themselves to be the absolute champions. So if war breaks out, it is because that “dictatorship”, that “autocracy”, that “totalitarianism”, in short, the new Hitler and Mussolini, wanted it so...

From Russia’s point of view, the cause of the conflict should be sought in the Nazi-like and militaristic policy of Ukraine, supported by the US and European NATO countries, which want to encircle, weaken and isolate Russia,

thus threatening its national security. Should such arguments be lacking, they are ready at any time to come up with other arguments: “international terrorism”, of course, Islamic one...

But the causes of this war, like all wars, must be sought in the development of imperialist capitalism, which is holding all the countries of the world in its death grip. Capitalism, in order to develop, needs to attack every country with all kinds of violence, both potential (political, diplomatic, cultural, religious) and “kinetic” (economic, financial, military), because it represents a potential market for its commodities and

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Against the Russian-Ukrainian Imperialist War, Only the Proletariat in Russia, in Ukraine and in Europe Can Respond with Its Class Struggle, with Its Struggle Against the Warmongering Poison of the Respective Bourgeoisies and Their National Interests, and Against the Pacifist Delusion

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capital, a strong or weak point in the conflict of interests which every bourgeois state defends by all means, and the military ones are certainly not secondary.

After the collapse of the USSR, all the satellite countries of the Soviet Union seceded to no longer depend on Moscow's military and economic power; but in the imperialist phase of capitalism, if a country secedes from a power bloc, it inevitably ends up in an opposing bloc, either because it seeks protection and support for its own national interests, or because the economic and financial interests of each national capitalism are increasingly intertwined with the economic and financial interests of the great powers that dominate the international market, or because the imperialist powers, although divided into different interest blocs, cannot leave any corner of the planet outside their control.

PHASES OF WORLD CHAOS

At the same time, the collapse of the USSR meant a general crisis of the world order constituted at the end of the Second World Imperialist War, a crisis which, especially in Europe where the Russian-American joint domination had to some extent guaranteed post-war reconstruction and the "peaceful" and accelerated development of national capitalisms, albeit in any case under the supervision of the Americans with military bases in Germany and Italy in particular undermined all the points of equilibrium that had been built up to then. And it also meant, of course, the demise of the Warsaw Pact military alliance, which at the time had formed in opposition to the North Atlantic Alliance, that is, NATO. With the disappearance of the military power represented by the Warsaw Pact, that of NATO which years ago was even considered

to be moribund remains as the sole nuclear-armed ruler in Europe and the de facto ruler of Europe. Thus, the United States, which emerged from the Second World Imperialist War as its real victors and which financially supported and directed the "post-war reconstruction" in Europe, reinforcing the leverage of its imperialism from Europe to the Far East, presented themselves to the world as the guarantors of world capitalism and its economic and political order, in which post-Stalinist Russia was also finally and undisguisedly incorporated, confessing in actual fact that it had definitively put an end to the false socialism of Stalinist stamp.

The phase of wars that had hitherto concerned other continents, in which the Russians and the Americans fought against each other via "national liberation" struggles, finally engulfed the European continent: the wars in the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s, with the direct intervention of NATO, i.e. the United States, marked the beginning of a new phase of aggression by American and European imperialism in areas where Russian imperialism had had a decisive influence. And the expansion of NATO to the countries of Eastern Europe is further proof that American and Western European imperialism had and has not the slightest interest in giving Russian imperialism the time and space to reconstitute its past power in Europe. Every imperialism craves even a single square kilometre of economic territory on which to exert its domination, and given the situation that has prevailed in the world for more than a century, any crisis that plunges the capitalist economy into recession and barbarism, pushes the strongest imperialisms to gobble up the square kilometres of economic territory taken from their weaker opponents, not necessarily with their ground troops, but in the first instance with their capital.

The attack on Ukraine's "sovereignty" was, in fact, simultaneously waged by Moscow and Washington, London, Berlin, Paris, politically, economically, financially and ultimately militarily. NATO, betraying its promises to Moscow after the collapse of the USSR not to incorporate countries neighbouring Russia, has instead thrown itself right up against its borders. To date, after incorporating almost all of Moscow's former satellites in Eastern Europe between 1999 and 2020, only Belarus and Ukraine remain outside NATO. Needless to say, Ukraine is the most important strategic morsel, and it is logical that the United States made a bet on it after the collapse of the USSR, also considering the nationalist contrasts that have characterised their common history. Could Russia whether headed by Putin or any other figure keep calm if

there were a continuous front of NATO military bases with nuclear missiles on its western border? Obviously, the answer is negative, and it is even more negative now that Finland, which borders Russia to the far north, has joined NATO and taken Sweden into along with it afterwards. Russia's European encirclement manoeuvre is thus almost complete. Ukraine presently, mainly because of the course of the war with Russia, remains at stake.

Could the course of the Russo-Ukrainian war have been different from what it has recently turned out to be, i.e. a war that paves the way for other wars in Europe and the world?

A little over a month after the military invasion of Russian troops into Ukrainian territory on February 24, 2022, Kyiv and Moscow were, according to the international media, on the verge of negotiating a treaty by which Kyiv would pledge not to join NATO, not to affiliate with the European Union, and to cease its repression of the Russian-speaking population of the Donbass by granting them genuine autonomy, as promised in the Minsk agreements. Because of these negotiations, it seemed possible that the conflict which in fact began eight years earlier with Kyiv's repression of the Russian-speaking movement in the Donbass and Moscow's annexation of Crimea would not spread as it actually did, and, above all, that the NATO powers would not become directly involved, albeit not by sending troops but by providing significant military and financial support. It was London and Washington that stopped Zelenskyy with the promise of enormous and continuous support, including from NATO countries, billions of dollars and supply of modern weapons, so much so that they launched a massive propaganda campaign about the danger that Russia, after invading Ukraine, would proceed to invade the whole of Europe; a propaganda campaign claiming the possibility of bringing the Russian economy to its knees through a series of economic and financial sanctions and, ultimately, defeating Russia militarily by reconquering all the territories it had occupied, including Crimea.

All the mouthpieces of Euro-American warmongering continued to proclaim their undying support for Ukraine's warmongering to defeat Russia's warmongering militarily and economically; all the spokesmen of the West continued to speak of a war that will last a long time as they will do everything possible to isolate and defeat Russia, push it back to the 1992 borders of the Russian Federation and destroy its economy. However, things have turned out

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Proletarian Nr. 21 — France Supplement

2023 : The Fight Against Attacks on Pensions Reveals the Absolute Need for a Classist Orientation

The Struggle Against Pension Reform in France: Lessons from a Defeat

Just recently there was a large-scale movement that lasted several months, fighting against the government's "pension reform" project (in effect an attack): hundreds of thousands or even millions of people demonstrated and tens or even hundreds of thousands of people went on strike several times. Despite its magnitude, however, this movement also ended in failure once again. It is of the utmost importance to understand the causes of this failure so that we can try to remedy them if we do not want them to lead to the same result in future struggles.

In the richer capitalist countries, a more or less significant system of "social protection" was created over the decades, essentially with the aim of maintaining social peace by partially reducing the insecurity of the conditions of the proletarians. These various social benefits are not some kind of gift from the bourgeois state; they constitute what is called "social wage" or "deferred wage": this is the fraction of the wage which the boss does not pay to his employee, but which goes into this system and is redistributed in the form of various benefits when necessary. Bosses always believe that they are paying their employees too much and are constantly trying to reduce wages; reducing deferred wage (called "social costs" in boss-speak) is a relatively simple and almost painless (in the short term) way of lowering wages. But it is a fundamentally anti-proletarian attack which must be fought as such – and not as an "anti-democratic" measure which should be fought by democratic and inter-class methods (referendum, recourse to parliamentary institutions) in the name of "social justice"; the latter is only an illusion: under capitalism, and until capitalism is overthrown, all that matters is the balance of power between the opposing classes.

The bourgeois believe that social costs are an obstacle to the successful performance of individual companies and limit their profits, and that the sums spent on them, given that they are for social purposes and not for production ("we spend an insane amount of money on minimum social benefits" – Macron, 12 June 2018), represent a handicap in international competition: by pushing down the average rate of profit of the economy, they weaken the ability to invest in other sectors. In times of crisis or economic difficulties, the bourgeois try to reduce these social costs and re-

direct them towards their target. And spending on pensions is an important part of these costs. That is why, almost everywhere, from China to Brazil, from Sweden to France, etc., various measures have been taken or are being prepared to attack pensions and reduce the burden of pensions on the economy, in particular by raising the retirement age: for example, in Sweden, where the new political leaders are working to gradually reduce the social protection system that has made the country a model example of a "welfare state", the age for entitlement to a basic pension will gradually rise to 67 from 2026.

According to the report of the Comité d'Orientation des Retraites (COR; Council on Retirement Policy), September 2022, France was behind Italy in 2017 as the OECD country with the highest share of GDP devoted to pension spending (private and public): 13.9% and 16.7% respectively; while in Germany it was 11%, in Spain 11.2%, in the US 12.4%, in the UK 10.8%, etc. Such a rate is intolerable for the French bourgeoisie!

A BIT OF HISTORY

In 1983, the left-wing government of the Socialist Party and the French Communist Party approved a pension at 60 for 37.5 years of paid contributions, whereas since 1945 the retirement age has been set at 65. This was a long-standing workers' demand, which was part of the "common government programme" in 1974; Mitterrand, in his "110 Propositions" as a socialist candidate for the 1981 presidential election, even provided for women to retire at 55, but this promise was quickly abandoned.

Since the turn to "austerity" in the same year, 1983, the administration's target will be the overall pension at age 60, and pensions will not be indexed to

inflation to reduce the burden on employers. Subsequently, we will see further attacks on pensions by governments of the left or right, in line with the "reforms" planned by the Socialist Rocard government in 1991; these have often led to large-scale combative movements; we must pause here in order to put the current movement in the right perspective.

- In the autumn of 1995, the newly elected government under Chirac's presidency announced a project (known as the "Juppé Plan") to abolish the "special pension schemes" that had hitherto been granted to certain strategic categories of workers (railways, energy, etc.), to increase the number of years of service for retirement for public sector workers (as was done for the private sector in 1993, without provoking any reaction from the unions, through the Balladur reform, which led to an average 6% reduction in pensions), in parallel with a social security reform and a "reform" of the SNCF consisting in the abolition of tens of thousands of jobs for railwaymen; this Juppé Plan was then supported by the French Democratic Confederation of Labour (CFDT) leadership and the Socialist Party. This provoked a strong response: mass demonstrations (culminating in the December demonstrations with more than 2 million participants across the country) and above all a hard strike on the railways and Parisian transports (RATP): 3 weeks of strikes with occupations of the main stations and a complete blockade of rail transport across the whole country, with massive delegations of striking railwaymen trying to involve other companies such as the Post Office, etc. The movement also affected education, energy sectors, etc. The government eventually withdrew its plan to abolish the special pension schemes and the reform of the SNCF, and the unions demanded an end to the movement, although the social security part of the plan remained intact. The striking railwaymen, who opposed the end of the movement and wanted to achieve a complete withdrawal of the "Juppé Plan", resisted for only a few days.

- In the spring of 2003, the "Inter-syndicale" (a "cartel" made up of the largest trade union federations), bringing together most of the unions, was

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The Struggle Against Pension Reform in France: Lessons from a Defeat

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formed to channel opposition to the new reform (the Fillon plan), the centrepiece of which was to increase the number of contributory years, in the form of isolated days of action (there were to be five in total), but which were attended by several hundred thousand people; during these struggles, the CFDT reached an agreement with the government and withdrew from the movement, while the General Confederation of Labour (CGT) managed to stop the strikes at the SNCF. The engine of the movement was then the public education sector, where strikes lasted several weeks, sometimes up to 3 months!!!, with many strikers calling in vain for the unions to call a general strike.

- In 2010, the Sarkozy-Fillon government launched its plan to definitively bury pensions at 60. The *"Intersyndicale"*, which brings together all the trade unions, resumed the tactic of repeated days of action: starting in March, there will be 14 of them; starting in September, well over a million people will gather several times (even according to police data); young people (especially high school students...) joined the movement en masse at that time, while the renewable strikes have spread to certain sectors (rail transport, refineries, rubbish workers, truck drivers...). However, after the vote on the law that, among other things, raised the retirement age to 62, the *"Intersyndicale"*, after having organised the last day of the action-funeral on Saturday (i.e. without strikes), let the strikes run out and thus put an end to the movement.

- In the winter of 2019–2020, a powerful movement responded to the Macron government's pension reform plan; its driving force was the "renewable strike" in the SNCF and in Paris transport, which lasted 49 days but gradually faded and became marginal because of its isolation; unlike in 1995, there were no occupations of railway stations and pickets were never effective, meaning that rail transport was never completely blocked; by contrast, there were real pickets at Parisian buses, but they were systematically dispersed by police interventions.

The *"Intersyndicale"* (of which the CFDT, which more or less agreed with the government's reform, was not a part), which allowed the strike to exhaust

itself, continued to call repeated days of action (9 in total) with a significant number of participants, but which steadily declined after the first day, when almost a million protesters gathered. The driving force of the struggle this time too was the public education sector. In the end, it was the outbreak of the pandemic that put an end to the moribund movement (as well as the reform). An interesting characteristic of this movement was the presence of numerous "interprofessional" structures (which had already appeared timidly in 2010), whose tendency was to organise the struggle from below. These structures reflected the widely felt need to go beyond the limits of trade unions' actions; we can mention the coordination between the strikers of the SNCF and the Parisian transport company RATP and the existence of "AG interpro" (General Inter-professional Assemblies) in several cities. In Toulouse, a "common AG" was set up to organise actions also on the outskirts of the city and to centralise local or sectoral AGs. However, these various structures, largely led notably by far-left groups, limited their activities to seconding the "Intersyndicale" (in Toulouse, we were told that the AG's task was not to mobilise workers, as that is up to the unions to do so!). The "national coordination" – stillborn – only thought of putting pressure on the *"Intersyndicale"* to adopt more combative tactics...

- In 2016, the same tactics were used by the trade unions during the movement against the Valls government's El Khomri law (or "loi travail", i.e. labour law), which challenged some provisions of the labour code: 10 days of action, from March to June, with renewable strikes breaking out in May by truck drivers, at the SNCF, ports and refineries. Police repression against demonstrations was particularly severe due to the state of emergency imposed after the Islamist attacks and the numerous clashes linked to the presence of the so-called Anarchist "black blocs". The headquarters of the CFDT (which did not take part in the movement) was attacked by about a hundred masked men with the slogan "enough of treason". The law will be passed thanks to Article 49.3 (the article allows the government to pass a law without the National Assembly voting on it).

- 2006: a counterexample? Contemporary protesters often refer to the example of 2006, when an already adopted law was effectively repealed under the pressure of street demonstrations. This previous phenomenon should indeed be pointed out, but it is important to remember what happened then. In response to employers' wishes, the

Villepin government set itself the goal of making workers more precarious (Pari-sot, then President of the employers' union MEDEF: "Love and life are precarious, why shouldn't work be precarious too?"). In the summer of 2005, it introduced a "new employment contract" ("contrat nouvelles embauches", CNE), which in effect aimed at abolishing open-ended contracts, to which the trade unions responded with nothing but futile legal action. In the wake of these developments, Villepin announced in February 2006 a law against young people called the "Equality of Opportunity Act", the centrepiece of which was the "First Employment Contract" ("contrat première embauche", CPE), which, among other things, provided for lower pay and precarious conditions for young people under 26. Very important was the mobilisation of students and high school students against this plan, led by the "national student coordination" (more than 80 universities went on strike), accompanied by large demonstrations. The coordination demanded the revocation not only of the CPE, but of the entire law, as well as the CNE, along with other demands directed against precarious conditions, such as the regularisation of illegal immigrants, as well as other demands that were more interest-specific. In the face of this uncontrolled movement, the big trade unions stepped in; they announced days of action accompanied by mass demonstrations and thereby took control of the movement and its direction. This allowed the government, concerned about the risks to social peace – at a time when barely a few months had elapsed since the uprisings in the suburbs and when the police agencies were warning of the risk of new disturbances in working-class neighbourhoods – to declare that the conditions for the application of the CPE had not been met. The trade unions, apparently in concert, then declared an end to the movement, even though the other demands had not been met...

We can see how during all these years, the various movements of struggle that we have just recapitulated, although they were massive, always encountered the same obstacle: the sabotage of the big trade unions organisations linked to their commitment to defend social peace, and the halfway success in 2006 can be explained by the bourgeoisie's fear of an uncontrollable escalation of social tensions. In 2023, the obstacle was the same and that fear was gone...

THE MOVEMENT OF 2023

One of the measures put forward by Macron during his election campaign was to revive the pension reform and

raise the retirement age to 65; in the end, this plan will leave the age at 64. This plan will be opposed by an “Intersyndicale” with the participation of the CFDT whose leadership wanted to profile itself as a privileged partner of the new government; during its congress in June 2022, it was ready to accept the increase in the retirement age, but had to back down in the face of strong opposition.

The *Intersyndicale* will call a “day of action” on January 19 to protest against this plan. Despite the expectations of the government and the unions, the participation was massive, immediately reaching or surpassing the record numbers of 1995 and 2010 then reached in a matter of weeks or months across the country. Moreover, opposition to the plan and support for the movement was and remained very strong throughout. This forced the “Intersyndicale” to renew its tactic of repeated days of action – there will be ten – while “radicalizing” its discourse, in particular by demanding the withdrawal of the entire plan, something it did not even demand at the beginning. Under pressure from the workers, it even called for a “blockade” of the country on 7 March, without, of course, organising anything to that effect, but leaving some sectors free to launch renewable strikes if they so wished. When the police and the judiciary attacked the strikers (ordering them to return to work and dispersing pickets at the refineries), it contented itself with empty protests and legal action; it did everything possible to ensure that the demonstrations were peaceful (for which it received government congratulations), without in any way opposing the police repression of the demonstrators when that peaceful character began to be questioned. Overall, it managed the mobilisation with a view to the course of parliamentary activity, and duped the proletarians with the vision of a favourable vote by the deputies against the bill, then by the Constitutional Council, and then by the possibility of a referendum; relying on democratic illusions, it deployed all the practices of the parliamentary circus in order to avert any prospect of a real class confrontation with the government.

THE STRIKES

These “days of action” were not days of general strike (the term was never used by the unions anyway): many workers who could, took a day or half a day’s leave; but for others (in education, various administrations, etc.) they represented a real strike; in some sectors, strikes took place for several days in a row, or were even renewable strikes of longer duration. This was particularly the case for Parisian rubbish workers, refineries, employees of the ports, Parisian transport, railway-

men – sectors that traditionally show combativeness.

A few words should be said about the strikes in the energy (EDF) and gas (Engie, formerly GDF) sectors. It is a very “aristocratic” environment: good salaries, good working conditions, various benefits; EDF’s works council is the richest in France: a large enterprise in the enterprise with 5 000 employees (there are about 160 000 employees at EDF), a real and pure hotbed of opportunism. The most difficult jobs are outsourced to subcontractors who do not have the same conditions at all, wage or otherwise. One would not expect much combativeness there; yet the unions report strikes during the days of action that have a higher participation than in 2019 (more than 40% of all workers, including managers, a fact confirmed by management in mid-March); in several cities there have been cases of “wildcat” electricity cuts, actions to which the unions (of course!) do not subscribe. “If we wanted to, we could (...) make a blackout. Obviously, this is not on the agenda. We are professionals, and we know that this would have serious consequences.” (statement by a CGT-Energie union leader to *Reporterre*, January 2020)...

As in all such struggles for decades, it was mainly public employees (with the exception of refinery workers and, to some extent, truck drivers for some large transport companies) who mobilised; in Paris, for example, the rubbish collectors of private companies did not strike like their colleagues in the municipal companies. Moreover, in sectors of the public sphere, such as the Post Office, where there was nevertheless a certain tradition of struggle, the number of strikers was very low. Employees in the largest industrial enterprises (automobile, aerospace, steel, etc.), as well as those in small enterprises, generally remained on the fringes of the movement, although local strikes took place in various places (e.g., the nearly three-month strike by female workers at the VertBaudet textile enterprise in Lille, whose picket line was broken up by the police). This is partly explained by the fact that it is more difficult to strike in factories and private enterprises, where the “despotism of the bosses” is stronger; but also and above all by the fact that the most pressing issue for proletarians in the private and public sectors is the wage.

Prior to the outbreak of the movement, several strikes related to this issue took place in the autumn and early winter of 2022; among the most important were the work stoppage of several thousand workers at Peugeot (Stellantis), strikes at refineries and oil depots, three-week strikes at 11 of the 18 nuclear power plants (for a 200 euro a month wage increase for all), and a wildcat strike

by SNCF controllers during the Christmas holidays. But the unions were, of course, careful not to put forward any blanket platform of demands in which wage increases would play a prominent role; in fact, the only demand was the repeal of the plan and then of the pensions’ law.

Another point worth mentioning: the relatively low number of “interprofessional” structures set up compared to 2019. It seems that many of these interprofessional AGs are nothing more than the mouthpiece of some unions (SUDs, teachers’ unions); even where this is not the case, these AGs “naturally” fit the “Intersyndicale” orientation. A so-called “network for a general strike” initiated by a Trotskyist group, which was supposed to bring together interprofessional structures in order to push the “Intersyndicale” to go in this direction (an absurd attempt), was a failure. A somewhat more detailed critique of some of the so-called “extreme left” groups will be made later. For the most part, these have been content to follow the orientation of the “Intersyndicale” and have made do with timid criticism at best; this manifestation of tailism can be explained by their ever greater integration into the trade union bureaucracy. Let’s focus on just two aspects that appeared frequently in their speeches during this movement.

Political crisis?

Some groups did not hesitate to talk about a political crisis (even a “pre-revolutionary” situation!) that could threaten the survival of the government or the institutions of the Fifth Republic; they pointed to the difficulties of the government in parliament, which, because it had only a relative majority, was forced to make deals with right-wing deputies (The Republicans party). It happened again this time: the bill was prepared with The Republicans in the Senate.

Some MPs of The Republicans, however, rejected the deal; in order not to risk the fiasco of a negative vote, the government decided to adopt the law without a vote (i.e., under Article 49(3) of the Constitution), to the great indignation of those who, with confidence in parliamentary institutions, had hoped for a vote against the bill and who denounced this procedure as “undemocratic”.

It must be remembered that all bourgeois constitutions are written to accommodate the executive power of the state, not to express the “sovereignty of the people”: given that “the people” is made up of several classes with different and opposing interests, this sovereignty of the people is only a fiction that serves to disguise the **sovereignty of the ruling class**: in fact, this crisis

(Continued on page 12)

The Struggle Against Pension Reform in France: Lessons from a Defeat

(Continuation from page 11)

was, in its essence, a crisis of illusions about bourgeois democracy, illusions shared and spread even by many pseudo-revolutionaries. But these illusions, always refuted and always reappearing, have a hard root, since they are constantly fed by all bourgeois forces and institutions...

The myth of the general strike

In 1995, the popular slogan of the demonstrators was "All together!"; in 2006, the student coordination launched a call for a general strike; in 2003, strikers held marches with the slogan "General Strike!" etc. It is natural that proletarians, aware of their strength in numbers and potential capacity to stop the capitalist economy, seek a general strike.

On the basis of this more than legitimate aspiration, the various political groups of the "extreme left" are making the general strike a decisive weapon to enable the workers' demands to be won. In reality, this is not the case; the success of a general strike, like any other

strike, depends above all on the orientation and objectives of those who lead it: are these the real **class** interests of the proletarians, or are these **inter-class** and **national**, i.e. democratic, interests and objectives?

The example of May-June 1968 shows that a collaborationist union leadership is synonymous with sabotaging the struggle. It was then that the biggest general strike of the workers' movement in France (and in Europe) took place: 8 to 10 million strikers, tens of thousands of occupied enterprises, even the smallest ones, a movement that lasted two months... and yet, its results were minimal, much worse than the strike movement of June 1936, when there were far fewer strikes; the 40-hour working week won in 1936 and abolished in preparation for the war was not reinstated in 1968; the health and social security reforms for which the trade unions called two general strikes in 1967 were not touched; the reduction of the retirement age to 60 was not achieved, etc. The wage increases achieved were absorbed by inflation a few months later. The tremendous force that had formed in the workplaces against the bosses did not translate into negotiations because the so-called "workers' representatives", the trade union leaders, were in fact, as good reformists, primarily **defenders of the interests of French capitalism**, not of the

interests of the workers. And when the workers of Renault Billancourt rejected the Grenelle agreements concocted by bosses, unions and government, they could not but hope for new negotiations led by the same people that would at least marginally improve these agreements. A future general strike left in the hands of organisations sabotaging the struggles can only be a stillborn child.

IN CONCLUSION

New struggles await the workers in France and elsewhere, including those over pensions. This overview makes it possible to understand that what is decisive in the struggles is not the numbers as such, but the fact that the struggle, large or small, is conducted on the class line, that is, for the exclusive defence of proletarian interests, and with classist methods and means and therefore an independent organisation, breaking with the orientation towards a policy of collaboration between the classes of political and trade union organisations which practise class collaboration with the bourgeoisie and its state.

There is no other realistic perspective in the struggle against the capitalists and their entire system of exploitation and oppression than the general resumption of the class struggle.

21/05/2023



Class Methods, Means and Objectives: What Is It Actually About?

In the present situation, after decades of counter-revolution, the classical weapons and methods of struggle are ignored by the proletariat, even when it is driven by the material force of social conflicts to take them up spontaneously. The collaborationist political and trade union organisations, including even the so-called "combative" ones, that "play at social dialogue", do everything they can to prevent this, sometimes in the name of supposed efficiency, often in the name of legality that must be respected to avoid repression, always in the name of the sacrosanct principle of democracy: demonstrations must remain peaceful in order to attract as many participants as possible, "excesses" must be avoided so as not to create the possibility of repression, strikes must not disturb users, pickets must only be a deterrent means or a kind of filter (preferably, however, if there are none), decisions at general assemblies (hereinafter referred to as GAs) must be taken by secret ballot and as fragmented as possible (it is even more "democratic" if proletarians are content to obey their un-

ion representatives!). Finally, the last weapon is the referendum, through which the "citizens", i.e. all classes thrown together, could impose their will on the "rulers" and the state on the basis of ballot papers.

The facts show that these means and methods actually weaken the struggle, and indeed sterilise it and condemn it to impotence. The impetus of the struggle is all the stronger, its vigour all the greater, its force and ability to attain solidarity and to encounter it among other proletarians all the more powerful, and consequently, its chances of success all the more serious, the more it concentrates on the defence of proletarian interests and only on them, i.e. interests common to the entire class of those "without reserve" who possess nothing but their own labour-power, which, in order to earn the wages indispensable to living, are obliged to sell it to a boss who extracts his profit from its exploitation. As an exploited class, the proletarians have interests that are distinct and opposed to those of the exploiting capitalist class and its servants, as well as to those of the middle and lower classes.

In order to defend their interests, the proletarians must not allow themselves to be stopped and diverted by so-called "superior interests" or "general interests", such as the interests of the enterprise, the local, regional or national economy: these are only the interests of capital, i.e. the interests of the enemy class, the exploiting class; they cannot be defended or taken into account except to the detriment of the exploited class, to the detriment of the proletarian interests.

Wage against profit, class against class! This must be the perspective of the proletarians if they do not want to remain eternally subjugated to the capitalists, if they want to have a chance to emancipate themselves from wage slavery. Before even beginning to think about the final objective, which implies the revolutionary overthrow of capitalist power and the establishment of the dictatorial power of the proletariat on the ruins of the bourgeois state, it necessarily implies that the daily struggles of resistance, even the elementary ones, are guided by the corresponding methods, means and objectives: so that they thus strengthen the proletarians and weaken the capitalist bosses and their state. A struggle that does not threaten profits or disrupt the smooth running of

the economy and the functioning of the state, a struggle whose aim is to appeal to “*public opinion*” or to be “*listened to*” by the government, is not a classist struggle; it is not a struggle at all, but a mere procession, like the absurd religious processions organised to intercede with a saint.

On the contrary, it is only the exercise of the class power of the proletariat that can establish a favourable balance of forces against the bosses, the bourgeois class as a whole and its state. To this end, it is essential to point out the methods and means which will enable the organisation and mobilisation of the proletariat to achieve such a favourable balance of forces:

- creation of a platform of demands as unifying as possible.
- strike without a predetermined duration, without prior notice and without observance of the so-called “minimum service”.
- direction of the strike by a strike committee elected by and responsible to a general assembly, not set up by union bureaucrats, and independent of the influence of collaborationist organisations; participation of all workers in the organisation and conduct of the strike.
- organisation of effective and massive pickets to prevent the entry of scabs and thus actually block all the activity, and to enable to resist police intervention.
- striving for the active solidarity of other proletarians (and not “the public” or “users” or all classes thrown together), particularly against police and judicial repression, and for the widest possible extension of the strike.

The general class demands must comply with the following principles:

DEFENCE OF WAGES

- General increase in wages and pensions for all workers, with the biggest for the lowest paid categories, so that they are not forced to work overtime!
- Increase of the minimum wage and all social minima! No payouts below the minimum wage!
- Full wages for the unemployed and laid off!
- Drastic reduction of working hours for all at the same wage regardless of category, sector or work tasks!
- Reduction of the retirement age, the lower one for the arduous workers and for the proletarian women!
- Against precarious work, transformation of fixed-term contracts into open-ended contracts!

AGAINST IMMIGRATION REGULATION

- No competition between domestic

proletarians and immigrants!

- For equal work, equal pay for domestic and foreign proletarians!
- Freedom of movement for all workers and their families!
- Regularization of all undocumented immigrants!
- No to criminalizing helping “illegal immigrants”!
- No to deportations!
- Closure of all detention centres, release of all migrants and the undocumented!

DEFENCE OF LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS

- No to increase in the intensity and the length of the working day!
- Against the harmful working environment, no to increase the pace of work!
- Against all discrimination based on age, gender, nationality!
- Against all forms of despotism and bullying in the workplace and in society!
- For class solidarity of all proletarians beyond the limits of categories and enterprises!
- Against all measures restricting the use of strikes!
- No to subordination of proletari-

an interests to the demands of the enterprise and the market!

- For the rebirth of proletarian organisations of struggle independent of the apparatuses and practices of inter-class collaborationism!
- Against all forms of inter-class collaboration between proletarians and bosses, between the exploited and the exploiters!
- For the reconstitution of the class union!

This is not a detailed catalogue of demands (we have not quantified the demands), but a non-exhaustive set of general points defining the line of the class struggle on which basis an overall movement of the proletariat is possible. It is clear that it is still only a **defensive struggle** against capitalist exploitation, but this defensive struggle is necessary before we can gain the strength to go on the **offensive**, i.e., the **revolutionary struggle against capitalism**: for it is in this struggle, which will become the “*war school of communism*” (Engels), that the proletariat will discover its class weapons and forge its unity of struggle for the revolution.

6/06/2023



In the Face of the Failure of Trade Union Tactics, There Is Only One Alternative: Anti-capitalist Class Struggle!

Despite millions of proletarians mobilizing, demonstrating and striking in the last three months against the pension “reform” desired by the capitalists and carried out by the government in their service, the latter has not backed down.

This failure was not due to a lack of determination on the part of the workers, which refutes the claims of those who argued that the proletarians ceased to express any kind of resistance after they were brought to their knees by the imposition of curfews and other restrictions during the Covid-19 crisis. All the responsibility lies in the line given to the movement by the organizations that make up the “Intersyndicale” (the “cartel” made up of the largest trade union federations). Fearing a “social explosion” (as it keeps repeating in its appeals to the government and Macron), the “Intersyndicale” has revived the old tactic of piecemeal mobilizations – with repeated “days of action” with greater or lesser time intervals and “renewable strikes” in a few isolated sectors – under the pretext of reducing the sacrifices made in the course of the struggle and saving the energies of strikers and demonstrators. The same tactics have

led to defeat in previous major struggles over pensions because, as everyone can see, they effectively weaken the struggle, exhaust the proletarians in futile “days of action” without any perspective and inevitably end up demoralizing them. But for the trade union leaders, the real **firemen of the social struggle**, attached without any doubt to the defense of the established order, this tactic allows them to minimize the damage done to the capitalist economy and, if possible, to avoid any “overflow” of proletarian struggle... which would threaten to turn into a real **class struggle** and unite all proletarians against the capitalists and their state.

The orientation that the “Intersyndicale” pursues inevitably stems from the nature of the organizations that make it up: those mired in the bourgeois web of class collaborationism, and proud to demonstrate their “responsible” attitude to the bourgeoisie, cannot but turn their backs on any struggle because of their respect for the principles of dialogue between “social partners” and social conciliation. That is why, after having aligned mobilizations with the shenani-

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In the Face of the Failure of Trade Union Tactics, There Is Only One Alternative: Anti-capitalist Class Struggle!

(Continuation from page 13)

gans of the parliamentary circus, they have been calling for several days now for a mere “pause” of the reform, for the appointment of a “mediator”; in the latest press statement of the “Intersyndicale” (28 March), there is no longer any mention of the withdrawal of the reform; and although the state authorities have clearly rejected their proposals, like faithful servants they have rushed to meet the Prime Minister...

FOR A CLASS ORIENTATION IN THE PROLETARIAN STRUGGLE!

There are those who imagine that it would be possible to push the trade union leaderships to call a general strike and in this way achieve victory. But if, exceptionally, they were to call a gener-

al strike, it would only be to bring the movement under control and ensure the defense of the interests of the bourgeois economy. There is no other alternative to **class orientation** in the struggle; the orientation in complete rupture with the legalist and pacifist line of the apparatuses of the trade unions, against the demagoguery of the pseudo-workers’ or “Unbowed” parties and their satellites; the orientation, therefore, in rupture with the influence of the multiple pro-bourgeois forces of collaboration between the classes.

Independent organization on class basis is the only way for the proletarians to take their struggle into their own hands, to avoid defeat and to prepare for the future general attack against capitalism!

- **Against the pension “reform” and against every bourgeois attack, for class orientation in the struggle breaking with the defeatist orientation of the collaborationist organizations!**

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

- **Drastic reduction of working hours and retirement age!**
- **General increases in wages, unemployment benefits, pensions and all social minima!**
- **Against all discrimination, equal pay for equal work!**
- **Regularization of undocumented immigrant workers!**
- **No to police repression!**
- **Dropping all charges against strikers and demonstrators!**
- **Solidarity with the strikers!**
- **For revolutionary struggle against capitalism, against its war preparations and imperialist domination, in unity with the proletarians of the world!**

5/04/2023

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No to the Mystification of “Social Dialogue”! Yes to Proletarian Class Struggle!

Laurent Berger, leader of the numerically largest trade union confederation, the CFDT, recently declared in an interview that we must not “*make the workers believe that it is the succession of mobilization days that will make the President of the Republic back down*” (1). But that is exactly what he has been doing, with all the organizations forming the “Intersyndicale” (the “cartel” made up of the largest trade union federations), for three months now!

After noting the failure of this orientation, he has the nerve to say that “*the struggle is not over*”, because there is the May Day mobilization, the possibility – very not likely – of a referendum (a first request has already been declared invalid by the Constitutional Council) and the possibility of appealing to the administrative judge to challenge the terms of application of the reform... In short, he is pulling the wool over our eyes! Previously, the “Intersyndicale” had given people the impression that Parliament could replace the fight and prevent the reform; after the its final adoption following the rejection of the censure motion, it found nothing better than to “*solemnly ask*” Macron not to promulgate the law! For these true **social firemen**, it was “*the only way to*

calm the anger”, “*the choice of wisdom and pacification*”. And they were still lamenting the lack of respect for “*social democracy*” (2)!

The facts show that this “social democracy” is an **illusion**, just like political democracy: what exists under capitalism is the **struggle between the classes**, more or less open, more or less “brutal”, but constantly waged by the bourgeoisie. The capitalists, of whom Macron is merely the agent, strive to maintain social and political peace because this is the best situation for the smooth

running of their economy.

In times of economic prosperity and growth, they willingly pay the price in the form of social reforms and various small improvements: these are mere crumbs from the profits of the capitalists. But when hard times come, when economic crises begin to hit, these concessions become unbearable for them; then it's time for the deterioration of the living and working conditions of the proletarians, lowering of wages and increase in unemployment, time for counter-reforms. As soon as the interests of the capitalist economy and capitalist enterprises are at stake, the bourgeoisie and its state never hesitate to redouble their attacks and to impose these interests by force, even at the cost of flouting democratic forms and of pushing



Police brutality against the refuse collectors' picket in Vitry

In the Face of the Failure of the Pacifist and Legalist Orientation of the Collaborationist Organizations, the Solution is not Isolated Strikes or Occasional Blockades, but a General Anti-capitalist Class Struggle!

The organizations of the “*Intersyndicale*” (a “cartel”, made up of the largest trade union federation), boasted that they had ensured that the mobilizations did not disturb the social peace: ritual demonstrations, occasional strikes, observance of school holidays, they organized everything so as not to disturb the established order, and moreover, they adapted the mobilizations to the calendar of the parliamentary circus. They have increased their activities addressed to parliament and deputies, they have made “solemn appeals” to Macron: with this they have made it clear that for them the proletarian mobilizations are **only one of the means of pressure** to restore “social dialogue”, to make the government “listen to the workers”. As if the government were not fully aware of what it was doing, as if it did not serve only the interests of the capitalists, and as if social dialogue, i.e. class collaboration, were not always at the detriment of the proletariat!

The facts have once again demonstrated the reality of bourgeois democracy: it is a system of **deceit** serving sole-

ly the power of the ruling class, which is able through it to create the belief that the emancipation of the proletariat can be achieved through elections; parliament, the supposed place where the “sovereign will of the people” is expressed over and above conflicting class interests, is a system created exclusively for the defense of bourgeois interests and equipped with well-established mechanisms for this purpose. The famous Article 49.3 of the French Fifth Republic (Cinquième République) has been used a hundred of times to fast-track the passage of bills decided in mainstream capitalist circles, such as the anti-labor El Khomry law (or “Loi travail” of 2016) of the socialist Valls government. The stubborn advocates of class collaboration, who make the outcome of the mobilization dependent on a vote in parliament, are in fact the **adversaries** of proletarian interests: these can only be defended by **open struggle**, in the streets and workplaces, a struggle that genuinely attacks capitalist exploitation and the interests of the ruling class. However, this is not the

orientation of the trade union leadership; despite the failure of their line, they continue on the same course: in the communiqué of the *Intersyndicale* of 16 March they call for the “*continuation of the mobilization*”, but they are careful not to explain in any way how the “*calm and decisive actions*” that have failed to prevent the passage of the law in parliament could be the ones that bring victory. They are careful not to call for any generalization of the ongoing strike movements, instead letting them exhaust themselves. When the government requisitions striking garbage workers or sends the police against strike pickets, union leaders respond by “*exploring*” the eventualities of legal appeals! When some unions call for strikes during school-leaving exams, they are rebuffed by the leaders of the CGT and CFDT unions!

The attack on pensions is just one of many past and future attacks against the proletariat. In order to maintain or increase the rate of profit in times of crisis, in order to invest profitably, in order to finance the growing military expenditure, the ruling bourgeois circles are demanding constant cuts in social spending and welfare benefits, while at the same time intensifying capitalist exploitation. These attacks cannot be answered by methods of class collaboration, which on the contrary facilitate these attacks, but only by a genuine **class struggle** that unites all proletarians against the capitalists and their state.

To do this, however, it is necessary not to leave the conduct of the struggles to the pro-capitalist collaborationist organizations, which only plead “social dialogue” with the bosses and the bourgeois state: **one does not dialogue with the class enemy, one fights it!** The proletarians can win, but only if they finally wage the struggle on class terrain, with classist methods and means: unrestricted strikes with clear objectives and extended to other sectors and workplaces, and managed by strike committees elected by the strikers and coordinated among themselves, complete stoppage of production and operations with effective strike pickets and occupation of workplaces, active solidarity against police repression, rejection of the coercive decrees of official power, etc., refusal to be blackmailed by the good health of the enterprise or the national economy ... This perspective is the only solution, and it is towards it that we must step without delay!

Against the pension “reform” and against every bourgeois attack, class struggle at odds with the defeatist orientation of the trade unions and the politics of collaborationism!

(Continued on page 16)

“Social Dialogue” ...

their so useful trade union servants. If the latter are indignant (Martinez, president of the second largest trade union confederation, the CGT, has criticized the government for “*having walked over the trade unions*”), they immediately reiterate that they “*cling to quality social dialogue*” (3).

AGAINST SOCIAL DIALOGUE, FOR CLASS STRUGGLE!

It is not possible to truly defend the proletarians if dialogue with the class opponents, which are the bosses, their government and the state, is favoured, as the failure of the current and previous mobilizations shows once again: the trade union apparatuses *clinging* to social dialogue, i.e. to *class collaboration*, are in fact **bound up** by a thousand ties to the social status quo, to the maintenance and defence of the economic and social system of capitalism and the so-called “democratic” bourgeois political order. Therefore, they orient mobilizations so that they occur in a “calm” manner, so as to disturb the functioning of capitalism as little as possible;

and for fear of “radicalization” they do not react in any way to repression, they do what they can to avoid the extension of strikes and ultimately to weaken the movement.

A real struggle, open and general, which really threatens capitalist interests and does not allow itself to be stopped by legal and peaceful constraints, is essential to defeat the attacks and to wrest concessions – before moving into the counter-offensive itself; but one cannot count on this for the collaborationist trade union apparatuses, which are fundamentally opposed to the class struggle. The proletarians, who have mobilized in their millions, possess a potentially enormous force capable of defeating all attacks if they break with the strategies of class collaboration and throw themselves into **the confrontation class against class!**

23/04/2023

- (1) Cf. *Le Monde*, 4/20/23.
- (2) Statement of the “*Intersyndicale*” of April 14.
- (3) *Ibid.*

The Government Continues Its Attacks While the Trade Unions Isolate and Sabotage the Struggles

The government finally backed away from an amendment to the law on the financing of social security, which was intended to increase the retirement age. On the advice of its allies from the centre-right party Mouvement démocrate (MoDem for short), it concluded that through sham “negotiations with the social partners” (employers’ organisations and collaborationist trade unions – including the CGT trade union confederation) it would be easier to push the reform of the welfare system through. This step was not a setback, as the government assured that a bill along these lines would be presented shortly. On 27 September, Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire called on employers to “*enthusiastically*” support this “*vital for the country*” reform. According to figures published by the official services, raising the retirement age to 64 would bring in additional revenue of €15 billion by the end of the five-year period (thanks to an increase in the number of taxpayers) and would save around €7–8 billion in the pension system (Le Maire also said). It is also claimed that a significant number of new jobs would be created by this reform, whereas in reality the desired result will be that many older working proletarians will, in fact, be forced to re-

tire before the statutory retirement age, hence with a reduced pension.

Although the government claims that this reform is necessary to “preserve our pension system”, it is in reality necessary to preserve capitalism’s average rate of profit: in France, as in other capitalist countries, the keynote is an aggressive campaign against “unproductive spending”, i.e. spending on “social welfare”, of which old-age pensions account for the largest part, about 14% of “gross domestic product” (GDP) in France, according to the latest figures. But what is particularly unacceptable to French capitalists is that this social welfare expenditure is generally lower in other European countries (36% of GDP, compared with 30.3% in Germany and 30% on average in the European Union in 2020) (1): in a situation of intensified competition, where market shares are being lost, such expenditure is an obstacle. The bourgeois governments, be they left-wing or right-wing, were therefore instructed to reduce the “social levies” on companies by cutting precisely this expenditure, be it pensions, health care costs, unemployment benefits, etc., and have not backed down; the Macron government is merely following this movement, only accentuating it because of the crisis. This “social expenditure” represents “deferred” or “indirect” wage, i.e. the part of the wage that the boss does not pay directly to the worker but is paid to him in the form of various social benefits (2). The reduction in social levies, and hence in social benefits, is therefore an attack on wages: it is a directly anti-proletarian measure aimed at increasing capitalist profits.

Failure of the Pacifist and Legalist Orientation of the Collaborationist Organizations

(Continuation from page 15)

- Unity and solidarity in the struggle of all proletarians, in the public and private sectors, employed and unemployed, workers and pensioners, men and women, young and old, French and immigrants!
- Reduction of working hours and retirement age!
- General increases in wages, unemployment benefits, pensions and all social minima!
- Against all discrimination, equal pay for equal work!
- Regularization of undocumented immigrant workers!
- Against police repression and judicial intimidation!
- For the revolutionary struggle against capitalism, against its war preparations and imperialist domination, in unity with the proletarians of the whole world!

March 22, 2023

TRADE UNIONS AND LEFT-WING PARTIES RESPOND TO THE ATTACKS WITH FAKE STRUGGLES

The unions’ leadership responded to the erosion of “purchasing power” and the threat to pensions with their old practice of repeated “days of action”: on 22 September for the health sector, an inter-professional day of action on 29 September, then on 18 October, 10 November, while the left parties organised a demonstration in Paris on 16 October (“march against the high cost of living”, etc.). Clearly, this flurry of initiatives has not weakened the government’s resolve. How could it be otherwise? The government knows from experience that it does not have to fear these “social partners” because they have once again shown that they are in control of the situation;

even the day of action of 18 October, which the media presented with pomp as a terrible general strike, while the strike in the refineries continued, did not have much impact because the unions did the minimum to mobilise the workers (3). Despite the strong speeches, the strike at the refineries remained isolated and the CGT was instrumental in ensuring that the requisitions were carried out peacefully and the refineries resumed operations one by one. Other days had even less of an echo. This does not imply that discontent is not widespread or that proletarians are resigned: the success of the movement in the RATP, the Paris transport company, proves otherwise. But they are rightly sceptical about the usefulness of these repeated “days of action”.

Confronted with this attitude, some groups on the “far” left try to radicalize their public speeches slightly; the Trotskyist Lutte Ouvrière thus calls for a “*plan of struggle*” “*to ensure that wages keep up with prices*” (sic) (4), taking up the popular line of reasoning of another Trotskyist organisation, Révolution Permanente (RP, Permanent Revolution which was born as a current within the Trotskyist New Anticapitalist Party which it left in 2021), which sees the way out for workers in drawing up a “*plan of battle*” (sic). As far as the unions are concerned, however, we find that these lofty-sounding formulations are mere show: to adopt such plans, these collaborationist organisations would first have to actually want to fight! But as supporters of class collaboration, they foremost want to negotiate, not to fight.

The way forward is to be found in the event mentioned on the website of the RP (5); it is the way of the workers of Daher (Toulouse), who, in the face of the inaction of the unions, have organised themselves at the grassroots level to strike: it is the way of independent class organisation and struggle, which breaks with class collaboration and all those who promote it.

This is the only solution for the immediate defence of proletarian interests!

(Le Prolétaire n° 546, september-october-november 2022) ●

(1) See FIPECO, June 3, 2022.

(2) In corporate accounting, social levies are included in payroll expense.

(3) In Marseilles, for example, the CGT was even absent from the demonstration to which it had called the workers!

(4) See Lutte Ouvrière, 27.10.22. <https://www.revolutionpermanente.fr/Toulouse-200-grevistes-a-Daher-suite-a-un-appel-a-la-mobilisation-des-salaries-a-la-base>

Against the Russian-Ukrainian Imperialist War, Only the Proletariat in Russia, in Ukraine and in Europe Can Respond with Its Class Struggle, with Its Struggle Against the Warmongering Poison of the Respective Bourgeoisies and Their National Interests, and Against the Pacifist Delusion

(Continuation from page 8)

differently: sanctions put the Russian economy in crisis but did not break it much, while its exports of oil, gas, grain and other raw materials – albeit in smaller quantities than before and at lower prices – to other markets (notably China and India) continued, and increased arms production was initiated not only to replenish stocks of those that have been and will be used in the war in Ukraine, but also with a view to other war fronts, as indeed all the major imperialist countries are doing, starting with the United States, which has increased the Pentagon budget to \$886 billion for 2024 alone, followed by the countries of the European Union, China, India and Japan. Thus, the future of open warfare looms on the global horizon.

Just as the pharmaceutical multinationals made billions of dollars in profits during the Sars-Cov2 pandemic, at a cost of more than 16 million deaths between 2020 and 2021, so too during the Russian-Ukrainian war and Israel's subsequent war against Hamas and the Palestinians, as well as in all other wars, are the big arms multinationals, grinding out profit after profit, while social welfare policy, which for many decades formed the backbone of the class collaboration politics of the most advanced capitalist countries and trade union and political organisations of the proletariat, with its huge systems of social shock absorbers, has increasingly begun to yield to militarist politics. War is an integral part of capitalist development and an indispensable part of the foreign policy of all imperialism. As long as capitalism exists, there will never be peace; every truce and every period of peace following a period of war is nothing but a temporary ceasefire to reorganise for the resumption of war or for the next war.

The bourgeois and imperialist war not only causes death, injury and disability among the soldiers and the civilian population purposefully targeted for demoralisation at the front, but also causes long-term consequences in the form

of misery and devastation; while in the imperialist countries, when their national territories are not directly affected by war, peace takes on the appearance of "normal" social and working life, in countries where, on the contrary, conflicts between the imperialists are constantly taking place, a situation of general insecurity, poverty and hunger emerges, and the inevitable phenomenon of forced migration from Africa, the Middle East, Central and Far Asia and Latin America itself takes on colossal proportions.

PACIFIST DELUSION

Against the carnage of civilian casualties in Ukraine and Palestine, the voice of pacifism has once again been raised, the ideology that turns to the very architects of the war and asks them to stop it, to stop the massacre of defenceless civilians, to lay down their arms and come to the table, to agree on a ceasefire and to start peace negotiations. Needless to say, the supreme spokesman for this ideology is the head of the Church of Rome, an internationally recognised financial power.

The horrors of war should compel the governments involved to suspend it and bring it to a decisive end. In fact, pacifism has never prevented or stopped war, for very specific material reasons: war is a continuation of the foreign policy of every state, carried out by military means. To what does the foreign policy of states correspond if not to the interests of the national capitalism of any country, which the national bourgeois state defends by all means, including military means? What is imperialism in the era of developed capitalism if not the policy of economic and financial power of the largest economic-financial powers and states, defending their interests throughout the world? And what is the aim of such a policy, if not the division of domination over the world market, in an ever-changing order corresponding to the changing power of individual states?

War is an integral part of this policy, it is not an option among many, it cannot be avoided, because the ruling bourgeois classes obey not the "conscience" of each of their individual members, but the material interests of the economic system of which they are the representatives and the only ones who benefit from it.

As long as the economic and financial interests of capitalism prevail, every bourgeoisie has no alternative: it must defend these interests vigorously by all means, legal and illegal, peaceful and violent because its very existence depends on it.

That is why pacifism, precisely because **it does not question the capitalist**

economic and financial system, is completely powerless against bourgeois and imperialist war. It does, however, have a **political and social role equal to that of reformism and class collaborationism**, that is, to divert the movement of resistance against the war away from the class terrain on which the struggle of the only class that has no immediate and historical interests in this society and in imperialist war, to defend the class of the wage-workers, the proletariat has the possibility of breaking the terrible cycles of imperialist wars by turning the anti-militarist, anti-bourgeois struggle onto the ground of the anti-capitalist and therefore anti-bourgeois revolution.

Pacifism, in fact, has the same function as opium: it stupefies and dulls the minds of the proletarian masses; it tells them that they can escape the horrors of the war situation by transporting themselves into an imaginary, unreal world in which each individual is virtually detached from the economic and social relations that bind him to society, and rises above them, free from the sorrows of the world; such an individual is, however, destined to fall back into the terrible reality into which capitalism plunges the whole of humanity.

THE FUTURE OF THE PROLETARIAT IS IN THE HANDS OF THE PROLETARIAT ITSELF

The world, which finds itself in the grip of the frantic pursuit of profit by ever more gigantic capitalist powers, is also affecting the daily life of the proletarians in the Western bourgeois countries with an ever stronger barrage of various restrictive measures, lay-offs, worsening working conditions and widespread impoverishment affecting ever wider layers of the proletarian class, which for many decades has completely lost its class orientation. The proletarians of the rich West can no longer recognise themselves as the antagonistic class par excellence to the ruling bourgeois classes of their own countries; they are unable to draw the first effective social lesson from the growing tragic misery that is beating and suffocating them, for resistance and reaction to the overwhelming exploitation to which they are increasingly subjected: to unite in a common struggle against the common enemy, i.e. the bourgeois class of their own country! The bourgeoisie, by privileging the upper strata of the proletariat, turns them into a veritable working aristocracy and accustoms them to live in the style of the petty and middle bourgeoisie (which rely on small and medium-sized private property and the privileges derived from the general ex-

(Continued on page 18)

Against the Russian-Ukrainian Imperialist War, Only the Proletariat in Russia, in Ukraine and in Europe Can Respond with Its Class Struggle, with Its Struggle Against the Warmongering Poison of the Respective Bourgeoisies and Their National Interests, and Against the Pacifist Delusion

(Continuation from page 17)

ploitation of wage labour) and uses them to spread among the broader proletarian masses the illusion that they can improve their living conditions by collaborating with the bosses, with the bosses' state, in short with the ruling bourgeoisie, with the class that exploits, starves, crushes with toil and massacres them in wars. And this collaboration of which the unions and parties sold out to capital are the most vicious and effective vehicles is only possible by renouncing the struggle in defence of **exclusively** proletarian class interests (which are objectively opposed and in stark contrast to the interests of the bourgeoisie), by renouncing the struggle by **classist** means and methods, i.e. methods and means which are neither compatible with class collaboration nor with social cohesion, nor have anything to do with the immediate and future objectives of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeois class thus increases its strength, also thanks to all the social forces of class collaboration that support it, and appears in this way invincible, but only because the proletarian masses, instead of recognising themselves as an opposing antagonistic class as a united force struggling in unison for objectives clearly opposed to the bourgeoisie consider themselves as part of the "people", as part of a "national community" in which they have completely lost their historical class identity.

The proletarians, under the illusion that they will gain better protection and greater strength if they place themselves in the hands of the bourgeoisie and its servants, if they "participate" in the "common welfare" by renouncing the demand for more tolerable conditions of existence for themselves despite exploitation, they will eventually find themselves as beasts of burden, "robots" in the service of capitalist profit, only to be thrown away, cornered or left to die when they are no longer useful for profit production.

And when an economic and finan-

cial crisis firmly grips the capitalist system, as it cyclically does, the bourgeoisie tries to save itself as the ruling class and individual owners of capital by turning a significant proportion of its proletarians into cannon fodder. The war of competition which the bourgeoisie wages constantly in the world thus becomes a war against countries which are at that time considered enemies to be defeated "whatever it takes". That the price of such a war will be paid above all by the proletariat and the civilian population, both of friendly and enemy countries, is already well-known.

What, then, prevents the proletariat from breaking this "social contract", signed by no one, but which has come into force thanks to the political, economic and military power of the bourgeois capitalist state, and thereby regaining its class independence and autonomy?

There is the fear of losing one's job, and thus one's wages; the fear of being left alone and without help, of having to provide subsistence for oneself and one's family without resources; the fear of losing one's life savings, one's home, one's family's favour, once one loses one's job and thus one's livelihood; the fear of being left at the mercy by social organisations and the state, which used to present themselves as guarantors of support in times of hardship in the national and corporate economy, hardship which was always declared to be temporary, surmountable, and which, as it grew, required further sacrifices. Decades of politics of class collaborationism that have characterised political and social life in every country have accustomed the broad proletarian masses to delegate the defence of their immediate interests to trade union and political bodies, which have proceeded, in effect, to completely obliterate after having transformed them the general and historical interests of the class to which the proletarians belong, replacing them with the interests of "economic growth", "competitiveness", "productivity", the defence of the "national economy" and the "fatherland". And the proletarians of the Western countries, like the proletarians of Russia or China, of the Arab countries or Latin America, of the Asian continent or Africa, hear in their own ears the **same** calls, the **same** words, the **same** "demands", with which the capitalist class and bourgeois power address them to achieve not only their spontaneous and convinced collaboration (ready to secure it by force if the proletarians prove reluctant), but also the sacrifices of their lives with the knowledge that today they may die at work and tomorrow on the war fronts.

The bourgeois know, because they too have drawn lessons from the history of class struggles, that proletarians,

after crossing a certain threshold, can no longer materially, physically endure unbearable conditions of existence and work; they know that that powerful volcanic magma incarcerated in the productive forces represented by the wage labour force not of this or that country, but of whole continent, if not of the whole world, will erupt at a certain level of social pressure and make way even for hitherto unrecognised forms of struggle, as happened to the Parisian communards in 1871 or to the Russian proletarians in the soviets in 1905 and then in 1917. The history of the proletarian struggle in Paris or Saint Petersburg in those years seems so distant that it has fallen into oblivion, which the bourgeois propaganda has crowned with extolling its modern capitalist civilisation and democracy, based on those noble words liberty, equality, even fraternity but actually materialised in the most bestial exploitation that man has ever had to endure: even slaves have been spared life, while **modern proletarians have become so "free" that they are not even masters of their own lives.**

The horror of the world wars, the horror of all the wars that have taken place in recent decades, magnificently amplified by the ultra-modern media of bourgeois civilization, is one of the weapons of bourgeois propaganda useful for sowing fear, for spreading horrors, to subject the proletarian masses to the will of their numerous tormentors, increasingly dressed in suits and ties and incessantly spreading fine words about "freedom" while oppressing ever greater masses of human beings, of "fighting" against inequality and hunger in the world while fighting against each other to intensify inequalities and starvation of billions of human beings everywhere of "peace" while multiplying wars by making them a constant part of the daily life of entire nations and continents, of "sovereign people" and "homeland" while nations are plundered, starved and massacred, and their homelands are oppressed and torn apart as spoils of war to be pounced upon by the marauders of the world.

Capitalism, as it has developed, has led mankind to the most vast inhumanity possible; it has revolutionised previous modes of production; it has brought, yes, extraordinary progress in associated labour and social production, but at the cost of raising the exploitation of man by man to a level never achieved in previous societies, at the cost of bringing the destruction means of the very productive forces it has developed to their maximum efficiency; he has forcibly and violently "liberated" the great masses of peasants from isolation and from the meagre patch of land on which they were trying to survive, and turned them into proletarians, into

people without reserves, without property, without homes. It has transformed them, in fact, from a historical and global point of view, into people ready to revolutionise the whole of society, shackled by the capitalist laws of profit and wage labour, of money and the market, and transforming it into a society in which the productive forces will no longer be cyclically destroyed by bourgeois crises and wars because they will correspond to a rational economic planning that considers the whole human species, in harmony with itself and with nature.

But the road to this historical goal is extremely rough and seems impossible given the power that the bourgeoisie and its society still wield. The bourgeois power is largely due to the political impotence of the proletarian class, i.e., its general bowing to the existential exigencies of capitalism and the ruling bourgeoisie; even to the slaves of two thousand years ago, the future seemed destined to last forever, and even to the serfs of a thousand years ago the future seemed set for good. In both cases, however, the development of the productive forces at some point broke the apparent stillness of history; then came the bourgeois revolution, which opened the door to a society that was universally organised based on the same economic laws of capitalism; a society that could not but produce apart from industrial technology and associated labour also **proletarians**, i.e. those who produce all the wealth of society, possessing nothing but their labour power, which they are forced to sell for wages if they wish to survive. In fact, as Marx and Engels' manifesto states, *"the condition for capital is wage-labour. Wage-labour rests exclusively on competition between the labourers. The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the labourers, due to competition, by the revolutionary combination, due to association. The development of Modern Industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, are its own grave-diggers"*, which is precisely the proletariat. This historical view of the struggle between the classes indicates how materially the development of the productive forces and their revolution is the motor of the development of human societies; this was the case until the society of capital, and it will be even more so in the society of the future, the communist society, in which there will no longer be classes, but only a society capable of making free and rational use of the development of the productive forces, which

the bourgeois society, to keep itself alive, is also forced to destroy in every cycle of crisis.

The proletariat therefore has a historical task as the revolutionary class; but to become the revolutionary class, it must break the political and social ties that bind it to the fate of capitalism, to its crises and wars. This means that from being class **for capital** as the bourgeoisie wishes it to remain, and uses every means to keep it that way the proletariat must become class **for itself**, that is, precisely the revolutionary class. The road to go back on the terrain of classist struggle is long and arduous, but it is the only road indicated by the development of the productive forces and by the very history of their development. It is a path that will only open up on the condition of a break with class collaboration, that is, by fighting against competition between proletarians: without this qualitative leap, the proletarians will never find their own class direction, the path to their emancipation from the yoke of capital. The struggle will certainly be long and hard because the bourgeoisie will resist with all its strength the resumption of the proletarian class struggle: it will try in every possible way to prevent it, to divert it, to repress it because it is perfectly aware that from the development of this struggle the proletariat's confidence in its own class strength will be reborn, and that in the development of this struggle the proletariat will come into contact with its class party, its political and theoretical guide, without which as has happened in previous history the proletariat will become disoriented, will lose the meaning and the real objectives of its class struggle, will fall into confusion, and will be so demoralised by the defeats it will inevitably experience on its way that it will again postpone the historical chance of its emancipation to the distant future.

Against the present wars in Ukraine, in Palestine, or anywhere else in the world, the slogan with which communists should naturally come out towards the proletariat is this: **revolutionary defeatism**, i.e., to fight against the regimentation of the proletarian masses in the bourgeois war to unleash the **class war**, the war against the bourgeois ruling class. The problem today is that the proletariat in general, in any country, not only in Ukraine, Russia, Palestine or Israel, where it is systematically massacred, does not yet have the strength even to wage the classist struggle for its immediate interests on the ground of economic defence. If it lacks this experience of struggle, if it lacks the experience of independent classist organisation which is necessary not only to wage class struggle but also to be able to endure on this terrain in the long term and to develop class solidarity with prole-

tarians in other sectors and other countries, then it is a mere illusion that the Ukrainian or Russian, Palestinian or Israeli, British or German, Italian or French or Spanish, Chinese or American, Egyptian or Iranian, or the proletariat of any other country can directly go over to the struggle for its class war, i.e. for the proletarian revolution. For the communists, the proletarian revolution is the historical objective of the class struggle of the proletariat in any country, but the proletarians and this is true even of the communists themselves must prepare themselves, must have direct, physical experience also of all the mistakes that are inevitably made in any preparation for struggle, must test their own strength and know the strength and moves of their opponents. As Lenin said, the proletarians must engage in the classist struggle of immediate defence because it is a "school of war". This does not mean hiding the great objectives of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, much less the real difficulties of achieving them, and certainly not the objective difficulties of the struggle of immediate defence itself. The class enemy certainly cannot be overestimated, but neither can it be underestimated. Ultimately, it is the proletariat, starting with its most militant and most sensitive to the class struggle sections, which must find the strength to react independently to bourgeois pressures and repression, and in this, no party can replace it.

26/03/2024

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

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War in Gaza, War in Ukraine, « War Economy »... Capitalism is War, War on Capitalism!

5 months after it began, the war waged by the Israeli army in Gaza has claimed the lives of almost 35,000 Palestinians, mainly unarmed civilians, including, according to UNICEF, 70% women and children (almost 14,000 of them are thought to have been killed, more than in 4 years of war in the rest of the world), while all civilian infrastructures (from schools to hospitals, including the fishing fleet and agricultural facilities) have been damaged or destroyed to render the territory uninhabitable, 85% of the population (nearly two million) have been forced to leave their homes and take refuge in makeshift camps, and the population is being subjected to a veritable policy of starvation (1). Thousands of prisoners are subjected to degrading treatment and torture, and sometimes summary executions, according to the UN. The war in Gaza is also accompanied by deadly army and settler raids in the West Bank, which have left hundreds of Palestinians dead, and by bombing raids in Syria and Lebanon.

Not only has this bestial policy been implicitly approved by Western states in the name of Israel's so-called « right to defend itself », it has also been made possible by the supply of arms and munitions to the Israeli army by these same states, France included. This does not stop the French government, like its European colleagues, from denouncing Israeli crimes under the charge of « anti-Semitism », and solidarity with the plight of the Palestinian masses under that of « support for terrorism » (1)!

After two years, the war in Ukraine has left tens of thousands of soldiers dead on both sides of the front, and over 10,000 Ukrainian civilians dead; the « war crimes » perpetrated by Russian troops on civilians have been widely documented and denounced by the Western media (unlike those committed by « the only democracy in the Middle East », Israel). Over 10 million Ukrainians (out of a population of 37 million) were forced to leave their homes, with over 6 million taking refuge abroad, mainly in Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic, while on the Russian side it is estimated that over 800,000 people fled the country to avoid conscription. Russian bombardment of Ukrainian civilian power and energy installations increased, and more than 250,000 residential buildings were destroyed or damaged (8.6% of the housing stock), mainly in the east-ern combat zones.

It is thanks to the arms support of the United States and European countries that the Ukrainian army was able to defeat the Russian invasion; but with the conflict bogged down, the only prospect put forward is military escalation with the delivery of ever more lethal weapons, while Macron has repeatedly mentioned sending French soldiers to fight in Ukraine. In fact, it's an open secret that French, American, British and other « military advisors » are already working alongside Ukrainian troops...

All over Europe, military budgets are rising sharply, and governments are talking about a « war economy ». This is not just a matter of words : governments are openly preparing for the larger-scale wars towards which capitalism is inexorably heading; and war economy inevitably means **social war**, because it's always the proletarians who are the victims of wars, either as cannon fodder in the war zones or as exploitation fodder in the rear.

In Gaza, Ukraine, Africa and everywhere else, it's the capitalist system as a whole that provokes, fuels and exacerbates wars, not just a handful of rulers : until capitalist power is overthrown and the entire system destroyed, starting in the imperialist metropolises, there will always be wars, until a third world war breaks out. That's what we need to fight capitalism, by returning to the principles and orientations of **revolutionary class struggle**.

Class solidarity with the proletarians and the Palestinian masses, and with all the victims of imperialist wars!

Down with chauvinism and national union, long live the union of proletarians of all countries against all bourgeois states!

For the reconstitution of the international class party and the world communist revolution!

28/04/2024

(1) Israel's Minister of Social Equality (sic!), May Golan, told the Knesset on 21/02/24 : « *I am proud to see Gaza in ruins, and that every baby, even 80 years from now, will tell its grandchildren what the Jews did* ». To denounce such a government would be to support terrorism and anti-Semitism...

Bangladesh Against the Bestial Exploitation of Capitalism! Long Live the Struggle of the Textile Proletarians!

FROM RANA PLAZA ...

In a May 20, 2013 text (1) on the collapse of the «Rana Plaza» factory building - 9 storeys high and weakened after being raised by 3 storeys - caused by overloading and disregard for the most elementary static rules of construction, resulting in the immediate death, in a matter of seconds, of at least 1,140 workers and injuring thousands of others, all working for Western global fashion and ready-to-wear majors, we stressed that

neither the bourgeois repentances of these garment barons, nor the sham legal actions and promises of the Bangladeshi authorities to «change things», would in any way alter the bestial working and living conditions of the proletarians of Bangladesh in the future.

Since this tragedy, the state and employers have consistently practiced the worst kind of exploitation of proletarians, who are literally chained to their conditions as slaves of capital, in all sectors of activity, including the textile

industry. Among the window-dressing measures used by the government to calm tempers and display a certain facade of «dignity», was the appointment of a new «wages commission» bringing together politicians and bosses, charged with setting supposedly minimum wages for a period of 5 years, with an inflation adjustment clause attached to the wage agreement (2). This strategy was intended to enable the state and the bosses to «regulate» wage levels, to contractually sweep aside proletarians' protests about the permanent impoverishment they were suffering, and thus to hinder workers' struggles, strikes, factory sabotages and violent demonstrations.

On this subject, in 2010, the cynicism of the government and employers' wage-setting commission reveals in its

raw state what proletarian labor power is: a commodity whose value is that of its reproduction, i.e. in terms of basic vital needs, to enable proletarians at least to feed themselves. This is measured in calories, before translating it into takas (the currency of the country)! The chairman of this commission, Judge Ikteder Ahmed, declared that to calculate the worker's wage, they had to base it on the number of calories that would keep him alive: "3200 calories per day, or around 27 euros per month", for 10 hours' work a day, 6 days a week (3). The generous and scientific commission then proposed raising the salary from 1,800 takas (then 19 euros) to 3,000 takas (32.6 euros)! The problem with low wages, according to economist Mustafizur Rahman, "... is that if wages rise, factories will buy machinery and hire less" (4)! More blackmail!

It's difficult to know all the struggles and uprisings that have taken place since the Rana Plaza tragedy, but let's mention a few examples, all linked to wage levels that don't allow families to meet the minimum subsistence level, often obliging them to send their children to work in even more miserable conditions, and to work beyond the legal working hours, even if it means skipping lunch.

In January 2019, faced with the impossibility of ensuring their subsistence and rent, 52 textile factories were brought to a standstill by a strike to demand higher wages. To meet their needs, proletarians have no other resource than to borrow money from unscrupulous loan sharks who, taking advantage of their distress, charge very high rates. The average debt of a Bangladeshi proletarian is now 70,000 takas. Repression of the strike was particularly fierce, and the bosses took part with their thugs alongside the police. This repression was combined with trade union moderating action. Union secretary Babul Akhter declared: "*They [the workers] should not reject it [the wage agreement] and should calmly go back to work*" (5).

In Bangladesh, it's not just the textile industry that's on the move. In August 2022, 150,000 tea workers, whose wages are even lower than in the textile industry, went on strike, demanding a 150% pay rise, with their wages capped at \$1 a day. Tea workers are of lower-caste Hindu origin, which gives the bosses even more right to exploit them like animals.

Finally, in November 2021, a transport strike broke out in Dhaka against the staggering rise in fuel prices and the government's refusal to offset the increase with subsidies.

... TO THE STRIKES OF 2023

Turning to the textile proletarians,

in 2018, the prevailing wage was set at 8,000 takas (around €65) for the 5-year contract period, i.e. until 2023. 5 years during which inflation, rarely compensated for - but also the habitual non-compliance with wage agreements, especially and systematically among subcontractors of companies under contract with the Western garment majors - has largely amputated the already meager "purchasing power" of the proletarians, which it would be more accurate to call "survival power". For example, with rents representing between 5,000 and 6,000 takas, what was left for proletarians to feed, clothe and care for themselves? The crisis triggered by Covid, then aggravated by the Ukrainian-Russian war, has generated high inflation in Bangladesh. By 2022, the state will be unable to guarantee the supply of energy, and will be obliged to restrict the supply of electricity. It will also have to increase food aid to the population to avoid the worst. The monetary measure he will take will be to devalue the taka by 25%, which will certainly help industrial exports, making them that much cheaper - a measure in favor of the exporting bosses, but not the proletarians. During this period of wage freeze, inflation officially soared by 31.86%, which explains the seriousness of the economic condition of the Bangladeshi proletariat.

At the end of October 2023, to raise wage contracts, the BGMEA (the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association) proposed an increase of only 25%, or around 2,000 takas, taking the wage to around 10,000 takas, a real pittance. On November 7, under the pressure of demonstrations and rising worker anger, the Wage Board proposed a final offer of 12,500 takas, still well below what is needed to cover workers' basic needs. Textile workers, for their part, had been demanding a wage of 23,000 takas since the beginning of the year, to enable them to live soberly, but with greater dignity.

In response, textile workers first took to the streets at the beginning of November, then launched their strike move-

ment, blocking factories and erecting barricades, united en bloc around this demand for 23,000 takas. The strike ended on December 15 after 3 weeks of intense struggle. As usual, the workers had to face the harshest repression: 4 workers were killed, a trade unionist was lynched to death by the bosses' thugs, not to mention the large number of arrests - 140 in all - and 10,000 strikers who were prosecuted for violence and many of whom will be sentenced to prison, as has already happened in other struggles, notably in 2019. There are also employer reprisals, including numerous dismissals and the systematic hunt for the most militant workers.

The strike had quickly spread to 150 companies, but to prevent it from spreading further and to divide workers by getting non-strikers to forcefully oppose strike supporters, the bosses imposed a lockout on 600 companies.

THE QUESTION OF UNIONS

The mechanics of union integration into the democratic mechanisms of class collaboration are by no means as well-developed as in the West, so brute force remains the principal means of bending the proletarians in struggle, who are also unlikely to trust bureaucratic compromises, which are always highly unfavorable to them. But trade unions (6), when they are not "in-house unions", i.e. organized directly by the bosses in their companies, aspire to participate in maintaining and balancing the social order and engaging proletarians in social dialogue and peace. Political and bureaucratic obstacles put in place by the state and the bosses continue to make the creation of trade unions extremely difficult. For reformism and opportunism, however, this difficulty creates a fertile ground for using the proletarian struggle to gain political recognition from the state in their role as guarantors of the social order, by contrasting the disadvantages of uncontrollable strikes for capital with the advantages of statutory

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Bangladesh Against the Bestial Exploitation of Capitalism! Long Live the Struggle of the Textile Proletarians!

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collective bargaining as a necessary passage for workers' contestation.

BGWS's Talisma Akhter expressed this quest for state and employer recognition of trade unions as responsible social partners concerned with the "general interest", i.e. capitalist interest, in the following way: *"Workers' anger has been fuelled by the rising cost of living, with staple foods becoming unaffordable, but violence is expressed all the more easily because trade unions are only authorized on paper and are controlled by factory owners."* (7). From this point of view, the role of the unions is to help prevent violence in proletarian struggles, violence of which the strike, which directly attacks employers' profits, is the first stage.

PROFIT ALONE RULES!

Bangladesh survives only thanks to its textile industry, but it's a sector in which international competition is fierce, particularly in Asia, where the main manufacturers - China, Bangladesh, Vietnam, India, Hong Kong and Indonesia - are engaged in an endless, merciless price war. In this sector; organized along manufacturing lines, production costs depend mainly on wage levels, so proletarians are pressurized to the last drop of their sweat. All Western buyers remain silent in the face of the slave-like living conditions reserved for Bangladeshi textile proletarians - and those in other Asian countries - and when their lips seem to part, it's only to say a few soothing words about their great humanity and concern for workers' well-being, and to hide their greed for profit behind charters of good conduct relegated to the back of the appendices to their commercial contracts, which Bangladeshi industrialists will never respect, since their subcontractors are already not required to respect the minimum wage, and since controls are carried out in the benevolent interests of both contracting parties. On the other hand, Bangladeshi bosses are also making a virginity of themselves by complaining about these Western puppets who lecture them to raise their workers' wages, but who in any case are not prepared to pay a penny more for the goods, threatening them to go elsewhere for a better

price (as in Mongolia and even Afghanistan)! This is capitalism, this is the "morality" of capitalism!

*

Last year's strike failed to bring the bosses and the state to heel, but it was not a defeat. All proletarians have won by further strengthening their organization, their capacity for struggle, sacrifice, unity and solidarity - in other words, by reinforcing themselves on the fundamental bases of classist struggle, without deviating from its material objectives. But today, the struggle must be extended to the defense of workers who have been dismissed, imprisoned or are still awaiting trial. The proletarians of Bangladesh must also act to ensure that their unity is never broken by the ideological influence of the clan bourgeoisies of national or religious communities. In the future, they must defend their class unity beyond caste and religious denomination, so as not to fall into the arms of the latter, which in this continental area is constantly advancing and spreading its poison.

17/01/2024

Notes:

(1) https://www.pcint.org/07_TP/010/010-bangladesh.htm

(2) In 2013, the government had already introduced a 5% annual salary increase clause to compensate for inflation. In practice, however, this rule is almost always circumvented in various ways, both legal and illegal. Today, in addition to the 23,000 takas, the unions are calling for this inflation compensation to be increased to 10%. Over the last few decades, the salary has evolved as follows: 1983: 627 Tk; 1994: 940 Tk; 2006: 1662 Tk; 2010: 3000 Tk; 2013: 5300 Tk; 2018: 8000 Tk.

(3) See. « Le Monde », 18/08/2010

(4) Ibid.

(5) See. « Le Monde », 14.01.2019

(6) Among the main trade union organizations: the BGIWF (Bangladesh Garment Industrial Workers Federation); the NGWF (National Garment Workers Federation); the BGWUC (Bangladesh Garment Workers Unity Council); the BGWS (Bangladesh Garment Workers Solidarity)

(7) See. « Le Monde », 17.11.2023

(8) Ibid.

Argentina: Milei's Victory Ensures Continued Misery and Intensified Repression of Proletarians

The Argentinian elections held on Sunday, November 19 proclaimed as the winner, Javier Milei, candidate of *La Libertad Avanza*, who have presented himself as a kind of outsider to traditional politics. Both histrionic and buffoonish, Milei has turned social networks and his more than grotesque media appearances into a kind of emblem, a flag designed to show his rejection of traditional political forms. And it was largely thanks to this, thanks to an image rather than a program, thanks to permanent scandal rather than a medium-term prospect of government, that he managed to beat first Patricia Bulrich, the candidate of the traditional right united around the *Radical Civic Union*, and then the Peronist candidate Sergio Massa, former Finance Minister in the government of recent years.

In the end, the results are not as strange as the press would have us believe: Milei will only be able to count on 38 seats out of 257 in Congress, and will still depend on the formation of a bloc with the traditional right-wing of Macri and Bulrich to be able to realize its governing program. In a pattern also familiar in Spain, the "change" parties rely on the old political structures, which in reality serve to maintain their power. The

situation in which Javier Milei comes to power is critical for Argentina. After four years of a Peronist government that ensured the continuity of the Kirchner dynasty (first Néstor, president of the country from 2003 to 2007, then his wife Cristina, also president from 2007 to 2015 and vice-president of the outgoing government), and due to the socio-political structure of "left-wing" Peronism, corrupt to the core and based on vast clientelist networks established with the unions and other civil organizations, the country's reality has notably deteriorated. This is why the candidacy of Massa, identified for his action in government as one of those responsible for this situation, was able to mobilize against him both *La Libertad Avanza* and the part of the Radical Civic Union controlled by former president Macri, who provided means, money and infrastructure to the small "ultraliberal" party.

In economic terms, the situation is the worst Argentina has seen in the last forty years, and that's saying something. In December of this year and year-on-year, inflation will rise by 210%; the low value of the peso [the national currency] makes imports incredibly expensive, essential in a country that is a net importer of industrial, technological and

even agricultural products. In short, poverty has increased throughout the country, with more than 20% of the population lacking the minimum essentials to live on, and in recent years there have even been reports of children dying from hunger. The measures taken by the Peronist government have not alleviated this situation.

On the one hand, the Central Bank's action in issuing bills of exchange as compensation for commercial banks to obtain peso deposits has only increased inflationary pressures due to the expansion of its financial commitments and the interest paid on them. In addition, the country's obligations to the IMF are weighing on the economy, forcing the IMF itself to point out, in its July note, that the country is unable to meet the requirements for access to its Extended Fund Facility. Finally, the worst drought in decades has hit hardest a country whose economy is largely based on agricultural exports.

Faced with this political and economic situation, Milei's appearance as a kind of illuminated figure in national politics, as someone outside the "caste" (a professor of economics by profession, he belongs to the so-called "Austrian" current, admittedly marginal within bourgeois economic thought) seems the radical remedy that was lacking. On the one hand, because of the anti-caste rhetoric so dear to populism on the right and left, and the reference to the deep state as the true origin of social unrest, accompanied in this case by ultra-liberal rhetoric on the need to reduce the state to its simplest expression. And, on the other hand, for its economic invective, on the need to dollarize the economy, abolish the Central Bank itself, privatize all public enterprises, etc. It is precisely these outbursts, along with the buffoonery of the character, that have attracted the attention of the international press and forged the aura of the providential figure that accompanies him.

But what can we expect from Milei?

As in other countries where such a figure has triumphed (Brazil with Bolsonaro, the USA with Trump, Italy with Meloni or Wilders in the Netherlands), what comes first is authoritarianism, the promise to toughen the law, prosecute crime and subversion, etc. It's not for nothing that Milei, detractor of the state in his speeches, is full of praise for the Argentine police, who, along with the army, have a very long history of assassinations behind them. This call to order, the banner of the petty bourgeoisie's demand for peace against the social tension that recent capitalist crises have brought to the surface, is the main objective, the rest being subordinate to it. It's easy to understand why, in addition to the so-called "anarcho-capitalists", Milei has appointed Victoria Vil-

larruel, linked to the extreme national right and a defender of the Videla dictatorship, to the new government and as Vice-President of Argentina. The criticism of the "caste" that the new government brings to its own program also works in this direction: the idea of a government reform based on order and the iron fist is very dear to this petty bourgeoisie which, crushed by the big bourgeoisie and its state, fantasizes about the belief that it is black intrigues, families or political clans that will destroy it and reduce it to misery, and not the implacable economic and social course of capitalism.

Secondly, Milei's proposed economic reforms aim to liberalize the public sector - notably YPF (1), the airlines and public television - in order to contain spending. In this respect, Milei's message softened as soon as he came to power: from the verbal excesses of the campaign, he switched to "clean up first, sell later", which may well mean never selling, as the "caste" that corresponds to the national upper bourgeoisie may not want to get rid of it. Be that as it may, the long chain of privatizations we've been witnessing for the past forty years in all capitalist countries shows that transferring these profitable sectors or enterprises to national or international capital does not, in the medium term, imply a reduction in state spending in overall terms. From its inception, the bourgeois state has been capitalism's principal agent in terms of ownership, capacity to intervene in the market, and so on. The systematic increase in public spending, in the budget, is an irrevocable fact that derives from its need to intervene in every aspect of social life in the bourgeois world, and there is not and will not be any government capable of avoiding it, even if it wanted to... which it never does.

As for the financial adjustments aimed at stabilizing the peso's position against the dollar, so as to mitigate the galloping inflation affecting the country, we can only imagine a relative and temporary success. Although exchange liberalization measures (in Argentina, there are several peso-dollar exchange rates, with a difference of several thousand between the official rate and the much more realistic black-market rate), including all the necessary adjustments aimed at reducing government obligations that contribute to the peso's devaluation, may have the desired effect, the cause of Argentina's chronic inflation lies in the country's productive structure: the relative absence of a domestic industry means that almost all finished products have to be imported, which in turn forces the country to depend on agricultural exports. Fiscal and monetary adjustments will do nothing to change this situation, and the idea

that they will trigger some kind of virtuous circle that will increase the inflow of dollars into the country and apply a balm to the current situation, will at best only produce a situation of great fragility that can only be reversed at any moment.

So what can we really expect from Milei and his government?

Economic adjustments will be made against the proletariat and against the great mass of the poor people who populate the outskirts of Greater Buenos Aires and the country's major cities. In the medium term, "fiscal discipline" will mean heavy demands on the working class, who will see how the reduction in public spending will be that of the miserable subsidies thanks to which a good proportion of them survive today. In addition, financial reform will undoubtedly be aimed at containing wages, thus limiting the peso's devaluation and inflation. And if the reforms are ultimately aimed at dollarizing the economy, this wage cut will be even greater, as wages will be fixed in dollars and forced downwards.

This situation, as promised by Milei during his election campaign, will be accompanied by tougher repression against organized sectors of the proletarian class, even when they are led by collaborationist or Peronist unions. Participants in picket lines, strikers, workers organized in cooperatives... will be constantly in the crosshairs of the new government, which will intervene harshly to ensure that its measures do not meet with a strong backlash from proletarians. In the meantime, let there be no doubt, the political "caste", trade unions and co. will remain intact, ready to enter government when Milei falls. The Milei government represents a new stage on a path that began, in a way, in 2001, with the social unrest caused by the economic crisis and the "corralito" (2). These revolts were markedly interclassist in character, and therefore confused and without perspective (the image of Congress attacked by a mob wearing the national flag on its head is emblematic), but a sector of the working class was able to express itself, albeit in a very limited way, instinctively tending to break with both the democratic orientation of the revolts and the traditional organizations of Peronist trade unionism (CGT) and Peronist parties.

These tendencies were quickly stifled by both the state's repressive efforts and the policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie imposed by the official left and the Trotskyist far left. Kirchnerism, a particularly aberrant form of the 21st-century socialism that opportunism brandished in those years, was the salvation of a bourgeoisie that, until then, had failed to maintain a single one of its

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governments. Since then, both the country's structural crisis and the worsening international situation have paved the way for a solution like the one Milei is proposing today.

Argentinian proletarians, for whom a very difficult period is now beginning, because the bourgeoisie has switched from the policy of sticks (more and more) and carrots (less and less) to open threats, will only be able to learn the les-

sons of this situation if they break with the terrible influence that nationalism and democratism exert on them through opportunist political and trade union organizations; only if they fight against the bourgeois offensive, not within the framework of the organizations which still control them today and which can only guarantee defeat in the face of any enemy demand, but with their own classist means and methods, with their own independent organization on the terrain of immediate struggle, with a view to

breaking not only with the inertia which today prevents them from reacting, but also with the great force represented by the counter-revolution which has dominated for decades.

23/11/2023

(1) YPF, Yacimientos Petroliferos Fiscales, is a company specializing in the exploitation, exploration, processing, distribution and sale of oil and its derivatives, 51% of whose shares are held by the State.

(2) During the Argentine economic crisis of 2001, in order to prevent the collapse of the banking system, a restriction was imposed on the availability of cash in bank accounts and savings, known as the "corralito".

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.