

REVOLUTION or WAR

#2

Review of the International Group of the Communist Left (IGCL)

September 2014



Summary

"Democracy" is the Working Class's Main Enemy

International Situation

Ukraine, Middle East, Africa... Steps towards Generalized Imperialist War
Ukraine : A Nationalist Dead-End ! (February 2014)

The regroupment of the Revolutionaries

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Debate within the Proletarian Camp

Marxism is Proletarian and Revolutionary, Anarchism has never been...

Struggle against Opportunism

Reader's Letter on the Internal Crisis of the ICC and our Public Call

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(Our review is also available in French and Spanish)

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The development towards decisive class conflicts, as well as our organization's overall activity (intervention in the class, and regroupment...), all this demands, among other things, an important financial effort on our part. We appeal to all readers interested in our work, and the analyses that we defend, to show their support by subscribing and by getting the word out about our review which is published in full version in English and French. We also publish a Spanish version with selected articles (any help for translations is also welcome).

**Warning:
Our New Web Site : www.igcl.org**

« Democracy » is the Working Class' s Main Enemy

"The growth of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat in all countries has provoked the bourgeoisie and their agents in the workers' organizations to convulsive efforts to find theoretical arguments in defense of the rule of the exploiters. Among these, particular emphasis is placed on the rejection of dictatorship and the defense of democracy. (Lenin, 1919¹)

The use of these "theoretical arguments" is more than ever on the agenda, above all when the censorship, the "black-out", on the reality of the workers reactions through out the world, or still the distortion of these informations, does not succeed anymore to discourage the workers. "The defense of democracy" as Lenin says, i.e. the bourgeois democratic ideology, goes along with the increasing massive attacks against the conditions of life of the international proletariat and aims at leading it behind the state and the nation. In a first moment, its goal is to suffocate its struggles of resistance. Tomorrow, it will aim at directly leading it into generalized war. Today, and actually in every country, these "theoretical arguments" are developed and concretized mainly through anti-terrorist campaigns and the extreme-right wing "danger". The use of terrorist actions and threats does not only serve to provide pretexts for the reinforcement of the surveillance and the setting up of repressive laws every time harder. It justifies them, makes the population trust them, through the argument of its defense and protection that only the state, the democratic state, would be able to assume... while the very terrorist actions are whether created and manipulated, indeed organized, by the police services of the state² ; or whether the result of manipulation and provocations of the specialized secrete services of the imperialist rivals. As well, the campaign about the fascist and extreme-right danger – particularly in Europe – aims at reviving the classical democratic mystification of anti-fascism, the very one which led the proletariat into the 2nd Imperialist World War and sanctioned the darkest counter-revolutionary period for the working class. Not only one can see the racist, xenophobes and extreme-right parties, being put forwards as during the last European elections (in France, Hungary, Great-Britain, Belgium...) but we could also notice how the Greek bourgeoisie, advised and directed by its European partners of

the EU, made "inflate" the fascist group Golden Dawn and with it the false antagonism between democracy and dictatorship at the very moment the workers mobilization was running out of steam and slowing down. Thus it increased the disorientation and the powerlessness feeling of the workers by looking at making them forget the genuine classes' antagonism between capital and labor, between capitalists and workers.

However, even though the international proletariat remains globally submitted to bourgeois ideology and particularly to democratic ideology, even though the workers struggles are not at the level of the attacks and do not succeed to make capital withdraw them, far from it, even though the Left parties and above all the unions maintain their control on the workers reactions and sabotage them, significant fractions of the class attempt to resist to the democratic traps set for it. This resistance appears clearly during some open class conflicts, during some mobilizations, when the workers in struggle refuse to succumb to the different sirens calling for trusting democracy, to line up behind their (democratic) state and to give up their fight.

It was the case in Greece during the 2008-2012 mobilizations; for instance when the workers demonstrations attempted to surround, paralyze and even invade the Parliament in order to forbid it to adopt dramatic austerity measures. The democratic state even had to utilize the violence of the Greek Stalinist CP's militia (and not the extreme-right which would have been unable to do so at that time) to fill the police and avoid the workers to invade the Parliament. With less strengths and constancy, other struggles have tended to pose the question of the confrontation with the democratic bourgeois state despite the calls for national unity and for the respect of the state – nationalist and democratic mystifications reinforcing one the other³.

It was still the case, so much, in Brazil since 2013 in regards to the organization of the football World Cup which is a true nationalist myth in this country. There too, at the very moment the working class was submitting to a massive and permanent propaganda for the Cup organization, this one tended to resist to the calls for national unity and the competition started with great uncertainty. Helped by the whole international bourgeoisie, it suffices to recall the interventions of the International Federation of Football⁴, the

1 . Thesis on Bourgeois Democracy and Proletarian Dictatorship, 1st congress of the Communist International, March 1919.

2 . "The FBI has «encouraged, pushed, and even paid » American Muslims to commit attacks during bogus operations of infiltration. It is the conclusion of a Human Rights Watch report published July 21st (...). « Not only is the FBI targeting American Muslims in anti-terrorism stings, they are prosecuting people who had no intention of committing a terrorist attack until an FBI informant showed up and encouraged or pressured them to do so, sometimes by offering them large sums of money.» In 30 % of the cases, the infiltrated agent played an active role in the attempt of attack" (summarized and quoted by Le Monde.fr , July 21st 2014)

3 . It is not new: during the 1st World War, it is on behalf of the defense of the French Republic, of democracy, that the workers were called to go to war against the dictatorial absolutism of the German Emperor Guillaume. In Germany, it was on behalf of the war against the Russian Tsar absolutism and the defense of civilized (i.e. democratic) Germany.

4 . Platini, President of the European Football Federation : « We must absolutely say to the Brazilians that they have the World Cup and that they are there to show the beauties of their

Brazilian ruling class had to utilize the massive and violent repression to prevent, at that very moment, the development of the workers revolt; in particular when the Sao Paulo subway workers went on strike just a few days before the World Cup with, not only the possibility of paralyzing the holding of the matches, but above all with the perspective of becoming the focus and a factor of unity for a generalized movement of strikes and demonstrations.

And if in various other situations and countries, the democratic ideology succeeded to make derail the workers anger towards the defense of democracy, under a form or another, as during the "Arab Spring" for instance, it nevertheless remains that an extremely important fight with historical consequences is taking place. Even more since the democratic mystification does not limit itself to the only apparent ground of the adhesion or obedience to the bourgeois state; nor simply to make believe in pure political democracy (elections, Parliament, etc.) and to deny the reality of the classes' struggle. Bourgeois democratic ideology goes much further and tends to impregnate all the moments and all the spaces of social life to the detriment of the collective vision and, above all, the collective class action and reflection as Marxism showed and defended relentlessly.

Besides the acceleration and the extension of the capital's and merchandises' circulation, the development of the new medias, particularly in the most developed countries, digital TV, Internet, "social networks", etc., have enabled a revival of the individualist and democratic ideologies as never before : from the bourgeois principle, "one man, one vote" for the elections and the choice of governments, the ideology proper to these technological novelties has worsen the "bourgeois democratic disease" by largely diffusing the idea that every one could now have access to information without censorship and, **above all and worse**, that every one, i.e. every individual, could express as he wants and freely thanks to this media and its "social networks". At last, thanks to the new technologies linked to Internet, pure democracy would finally be happening!

So it is also at all levels of social life that the bourgeois democratic offensive rails today; that the democratic ideology is coming in, adapted, not only to counter the development of the workers' fights back and their affirmation against the bourgeoisie and its state, i.e. at the political level (anti-fascist and anti-terrorist struggle, defense of democracy, etc.), but also on the ground of the daily practice of the workers' fight that the democratic ideology is propagated up to reach every nook and cranny of society. The danger of this ideological offensive is all the most clear when communist groups, some claiming the Communist Left legacy, also succumb to the pressure and make themselves the apologists of movements such as the "indignados" or other "Occupy" and so the relays of the democratic propaganda about the assemblies and "self-organization"⁵, about the primacy of individual expression to

country, their passion for football and that they can wait a month before realizing social feats. It would be good for Brazil and for the football planet, ok. Well, after all, we don't control. » (translated by us from French version).

5 . The International Communist Current today, it is enough to look at its apologies of the "indignados" movement and of "assembleism", is both the most caricatural expression and most

the detriment of the collective class expression and struggle.

The political communist groups and minorities, above all those claiming the Communist Left, as highest expression of class consciousness, are nevertheless the best armed to resist to this ideology.

"Setting out from the individual-unit in order to draw social conclusions and to construct social blueprints or even in order to deny society, is setting out from an unreal supposition which, even in its most modern formulations, only amounts to refurbishing the concepts of religious revelation and creation and of a spiritual life which is not dependent upon natural and organic life. (...) Only the appearance of this religious and idealist conception is modified in the doctrine of democratic liberalism or libertarian individualism. The soul as a spark from the supreme Being, the subjective sovereignty of each elector, or the unlimited autonomy of the citizen of a society without laws - these are so many sophisms which, in the eyes of the Marxist critique, are tainted with the same infantile idealism, no matter how resolutely "materialist" the first bourgeois liberals and anarchists may have been." (The Democratic Principle, Bordiga for the CP of Italy, 1922, we underline).

The theoretical and propagandistic struggle against bourgeois democratic ideology is at the center of the lessons and experience of the workers movement, from Marx to Lenin, from this one to the Communist Left (particular the "Italian" one). This theoretical and political legacy and experience are essential for the massive historical fights between the classes which loom. Since, as far as the proletariat will remain submitted or not to this ideology, it will succeed or not to bring itself out of this capitalist ground and to clear its own revolutionary perspective.

Here is why, it belongs to it not to give in to the anti-terrorist and anti-extreme right campaigns. Certainly, terrorism as well as fascism are also enemies of the working class. But, above all, they are the children, the product, of capitalism and its "democracy". Nor terrorism, nor fascism are the main danger for the development of the defense of its class interests and of its fight against capital. Above all, they serve as foil for democracy and its ideology. Most often, they are created, even organized by the democratic state itself. Therefore, the main danger for the working class is thus the lie of bourgeois democracy and the temptation to let itself dragged in its defense in stead of fighting against capital and bourgeois state.

The IGCL, August 2014

dangerous one.

International Situation

Ukraine, Middle East, Africa... Steps towards Generalized Imperialist War

Ukraine, Israel, Syria, Afghanistan, Libya, Central African Republic, the list of the murderous local wars gets longer and inexorably intensifies itself since a few months. Capitalism – in particular the great powers, i.e. the great "democracies" – multiplies bloody wars and sows death by hundreds of thousand whose most victims are civilian, women, children, elderlies, heads of family; or young men often forced to enlist in such or such army when it is not simply in local militias manipulated and sustained by such or such imperialist power.

The language utilized by the media and above all by the states and the ruling class frees from diplomatic language and increasingly takes warlike accents. *"Experience has taught us that having talks with Putin is to waste time"* (*Le Monde*, July 26th 2014, translated by us). Or even British Prime Minister Cameron sends a letter to NATO in which he considers that *"the NATO allies (...) should agree how we can sustain a robust presence in eastern Europe (...), to make clear to Russia that neither NATO nor its members will be intimidated. (...) Equipment and supplies should be pre-positioned in key locations and called for an enhanced NATO Response Force [because] it is clear that Russia views NATO as an adversary"* (BBC, August 2nd 2014 – <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-28619188>). *"European Peace Is At Stake"* according to German Foreign Minister Steinmeier (*Der Spiegel*, July 28th). The celebrations of the June 1944 Allied Normandy landings in France and the ones for the 1914 August declaration of war have been the occasion for parallels with the situation of today, in particular between the imperialist policy led by the Nazi Germany up to 1939 with the Russian one of Putin today.

This warlike discourse comes along with ceaseless and renewed campaigns against terrorism and the lack of democracy in some countries (the acknowledged dictatorship as Syria or North Korea, either still the "tough democracies" as Putin's Russia or still China). For instance, *"British defense Minister Michael Fallon has accused Russia of sponsored terrorism"* (*Der Spiegel*, July 22nd) after the destruction of the Malaysian flight in Ukraine. Between the so-called western allies, the same accusations, softer, are regularly sowed – the anti-democratic violence of the North-American state and of its secrete services, the European "complacency" denounced by the Americans towards terrorism, anti-Semitism or still towards autocracies like Putin's: *"Anti-Semitism Rises in Europe Amid Israel-Gaza Conflict"* the *New York Times* runs as headline on August 1st.

But above all, all states, small or big but all forced to develop imperialist policies, increasingly arm themselves. The visible reduction in the official figures of the expenses of armament for 2013 would mainly be due *"to the American withdrawals of Iraq and Afghanistan"* and would correspond not at all to a reduction in the policies of armament and militarism whose growth actually doubled since 2004! *"Peking – which could compete with Washington on the military plan by 2050,*

according to the annual report of the international Institute of strategic studies spent 7,4 % more in 2013 (that is 188 billion dollars according to the estimation of SIPRI) and the territorial disputes with China incited some of its neighbors to increase the credits granted to the militaries. 'Japan worries regarding the growing military power of China, adding to the nationalist policy of the Japanese government, brought Tokyo to terminate the long-time and progressive decline of its military expenditures', *underlined Sam Perlo-Freeman* (from the SIPRI⁶ quoted by *Les Echos*, April 14th 2014).

Capitalism's Dynamic Leading to Generalized Imperialist War

Everything indicates that the capitalist world prepares itself for the multiplication and the worsening of the imperialist rivalries both at local level as well as at global scale. Everything indicates that the bourgeoisie prepares for wars and, in the end, for generalized imperialist war. And if we doubted it, more and more ideologists and bourgeois strategists express themselves on the subject with less and less restraint up to the point that the *New York Times* did not hesitate to publish an article to be vomited on the subject :

"The continuing slowness of economic growth in high-income economies has prompted soul-searching among economists. They have looked to weak demand, rising inequality, Chinese competition, over-regulation, inadequate infrastructure and an exhaustion of new technological ideas as possible culprits. An additional explanation of slow growth is now receiving attention, however. It is the persistence and expectation of peace. The world just hasn't had that much warfare lately, at least not by historical standards. Some of the recent headlines about Iraq or South Sudan make our world sound like a very bloody place, but today's casualties pale in light of the tens of millions of people killed in the two world wars in the first half of the 20th century." (Tyler Cowen, *New York Times*, June 13th 2014, we underline).

Generalized imperialist war, the 3rd World War, is the solution for the "enlightened" capitalists. Things are clearly said. Capitalist class's cynicism has no limit.

War Accelerates the Tendency to Imperialist Bi-Polarization

Generalized war as a new journalist's fantasy ? Economists' wild imagining ? Even an abstract hypothesis among others ? Not at all ! Its process is already underway and the present wars reveal it by the clarification and the definition of the various powers' imperialist linings up it provokes. It is not these conflicts one should look at in themselves but precisely at the lines of imperialist fracture which now are appearing, here and there, at the surface of this ocean of conflicts and diplomatic events of any kind. It is the rivalries and the linings up between the greatest imperialist powers we must

6 . Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (www.sipri.org).

look at to understand to what disaster capitalism drives the world if the revolutionary proletariat lets it do.

The fulfillment and the final realization of the tendency to imperialist bi-polarization around two main poles is the indispensable condition for the start of capitalist holocaust. Yet this tendency is already at work since some time now and it expresses itself more and more clearly on the occasion of every new murderous conflict. This appeared in broad daylight during the German-French-Russian refusal to support the American-British military intervention against Saddam Hussein's Iraq in 2003. Since then, this tendency towards imperialist polarization around two big poles, United-States on one side, the European Union under Germany leadership on the other, kept up despite NATO preservation, the diplomatic declarations between the supposed "allied" which come with it, and its opposition to countries like Russia and even China. The various local wars of the last months are at the same time the product of this tendency and one of its accelerating factor. Let's see.

The various wars in Middle East, from Iraq to Israel-Gaza, through Syria, and hardly further Afghanistan, have revealed the weakening of the American imperialist strength despite its still overwhelming military superiority. Up to Israel which allowed itself military adventures without United-States' backing⁷ ! France, Russia, and, more and more now, barely tactful Germany, play their historical links and their present local allies – Qatar, Lebanon for the first one, Syria for the second, Turkey, Iran (?) for the third – to come back into the imperialist game of this region from which they had been almost excluded, and undermine even more the American influence. For instance, the German-French initiatives for holding July 26th a conference in Paris in order to obtain a ceasefire in Gaza express this new European "dynamism" even though they still remain conscious of their present means⁸. Meanwhile the populations are struck, bruised, driven into death, misery, exile, terror...

In Africa where blood and fights spread to the bigger central part of the continent, from East to West, from Sudan to Nigeria, passing by Mali, Central African Republic, etc., France plays the role of gendarme for Europe against the Chinese presence and... the American one – despite, one more time, the common speeches against Islamic terrorism and for democracy as it could have appeared with the diplomatic and logistic US support to the French military intervention in Mali. "Europe can't leave France on its own in Africa" said German Foreign Minister Steinmeier (*Der Spiegel*, January 28th 2014) and Germany actually participates to the French military intervention in Africa.

7 . For a particular following of this conflict, we refer our readers to the Internationalist Communist Tendency (ICT) article : [The Ongoing Barbarism of Two Nationalisms: Hamas and Israel exploit their mutual weaknesses to revive their national agendas within the increasingly critical Middle East region.](#)

8 . "In the Middle East, Europeans cannot act as though we can replace the US. We can make a contribution to discussion with people there about the necessary conditions for a ceasefire and, hopefully, a return at some point to negotiations over a two-state solution. But the US and the Arab neighbors remain central actors in all peace efforts. We will support them according to our possibilities. Even if the first efforts toward a ceasefire have not yet been successful, the focus is still on breaking through the military logic" (Steinmeier, *Der Spiegel*, July 18th 2014)

In Asia, the growing tensions in the China Sea instigated at the same time by the North Korea's provocations and the China's territorial and maritime claims have provoked several military incidents with Japan and South Korea and worried the other neighbors such as Vietnam. All have launched into militarist policies which make military expenses explode. The imperialist linings up in this region of the world take shape quite clearly. The Chinese imperialist dynamism forces Japan and South Korea – without forgetting Taiwan – to respond on the military level and to gather every time more to the United-States while the "strategical triangle Russia-China-India strengthens. The rapprochement [present according to us] between Russia and China which has been confirmed during President Putin's last visit to China, consolidates an important reorientation of the international strategic landscape. (...) The growing entente between the two neighbours has been motivated in great part by the English-American policy of economical and military confrontation which become more and more aggressive (...). Moreover, the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) which took place May 21st in Shanghai, offered a counter-weight to the NATO and United-States policy which openly aims at surrounding both Russia and China" (Web Site of capitalist press of *Solidarité et progrès*⁹, May 27th 2014).

Ukraine, Epicenter of the Imperialist Rivalries and Linings up Escalation

But above all, it is in Ukraine where the fundamental stakes of the world imperialist situation crystallize. An imperialist game has been played by three main imperialist powers in Ukraine since the USSR's end: on one hand, the United-States carried on their imperialist objective in the region aiming at controlling Russia and maintaining it isolated from Europe, indeed in conflict with it. For that, they pushed the pro-western Ukrainian leaders to the overbid by promising them their entry to NATO – as they had done with Georgia for instance. On the other hand, Russia, one more time, could not accept that Ukraine at its turn become a NATO member or that it become a state associated with the European Union. This possibility was unthinkable for the Russian bourgeoisie for the fact its main maritime military base of the Black Sea – thus coming out onto the Mediterranean Sea – belonged to Ukraine (Crimea) and for the fact it can't accept even few control on its gaz exportations which a large part passes by Ukraine (the other by the Baltic Sea with to Germany)¹⁰.

For its part, the European Union under Germany leadership above all aimed at making Ukraine to be under its "economical control", thus political too, through associating it to the EU. And to oppose American policy up to the point

9 . <http://www.solidariteetprogres.org/actualites-001/le-triangle-strategique-russie.html>

10 . We refer our reader to the ICT article, *Ukraine's Crisis – Local Players and Imperialist Games*, on the Web Site of this organization for the very dynamic of the events there and for the class political statement which warns the working class against any support to the bourgeois nationalist sides present there. Only political "disagreement" of second-class but related with two distinct approaches and methods of analysis between the two historical currents linked to the ICT (ex-IBRP) and the "historical" ICC current, with the comrades on this article: it goes not as far as us on the growing affirmation of the European imperialist pole around Germany and it doesn't mention the dynamic towards generalized war.

that, even before the conflict starts, the American State Department Official, Victoria Nuland, let herself cry out "*Fuck the European Union!*" (February 7th 2014). Indeed for Germany, "*We have always maintained contacts with Moscow and continue to do so because we need them (...) the political, economic and societal links between Europe and our Russian neighbor are far tighter*" than the US's ones (Steinmeier, *Der Spiegel*, July 28th 2014). If the United-States have certainly taken an important part in the riots and events of the Maidan Place in Kiev which saw the former President Yanukovich resigning, they afterwards have been practically excluded from the discussions and negotiations between the different Ukrainian and Russian parties. It is under the aegis of the European Union, of Germany and its closed allies, that the installation of the new power and the problem of Crimea annexation by Russia have been discussed and defined. "*In the last two weeks, I haven't taken my eye off the Ukraine crisis for a single second. The foreign ministers of Russia, Ukraine, France and Germany reached agreement on the path to a ceasefire at the beginning of July in Berlin*" (Steinmeier, *Der Spiegel*, July 18th) – the important fact here is not that the ceasefire is, still at the time we write, a failure but the fact... the US (and with them Great-Britain) have been excluded of this meeting and that the German Minister cries it out so loudly.

Much to the annoyance of the United-States which didn't stop, since then, to outbid with threats against Russia, to push to war and to pressure the Europeans in order to drive a wedge between these ones and Russia. "*Following the downing of the Malaysia Airlines flight in eastern Ukraine, calls are growing in Washington for tough sanctions against Moscow. Many European governments are still hesitating, paving the way for the next big trans-Atlantic row*" (*Der Spiegel*, July 22nd 2014).

For American imperialism, the stake is very important: to avoid a strengthening of Germany's weight, and the main countries of the EU around this one, in all Europe as well as on the world scale; and to avoid seeing an obvious reaffirmation of the Berlin-Moscow-Paris axis which appeared in 2003 during the Iraq war. The affirmation of the European power and its attraction towards countries like Ukraine as well as Russia would mean to the whole world that Europe around Germany is a quite credible imperialist alternative to the American domination and a new step in its dynamic of historical weakening it knows since 20 years now.

What ever is the outcome of the conflict in Ukraine, this one will have marked a new step – doubtless as significant as the German-French 2003 opposition to the war in Iraq – of the tendency towards imperialist bi-polarization that the perspective of generalized imperialist war **inescapably** imposes.

To the measure of what reveals the Ukrainian conflict, can we understand the significance of the diplomatic and of the less and less hushed campaigns between the US (supported by Great-Britain) and the Europeans. Still a few years ago, the spying affairs were dealt in silence, behind the scenes. Today the German (and European) bourgeoisie has taken the occasion of the NSA spying of the personal phones of government members – up to Merkel was under phone

tapping! – to denounce publicly the American practices. It went up to the expulsion of the CIA chief of the Berlin American Embassy on July 10th; a practice never seen before between supposed NATO allies and which belongs to the Cold War practices. This affair is the occasion to revive even more the anti-American campaigns in Europe. There too, Germany took the lead of this crusade as well as it has maintained, with the support of its main European partners, Juncker's appointment as President of the European Commission despite the British blackmail and threat to quit the EU.

For their part, the United-States and their British ally are not outdone to fustigate the "Munich" spirit and the Europeans' indulgence with the dictatorships, Putin, terrorism and islamism. "*Europe has become the main financial windfall to Al-Qaeda, according to the New York Times. In an investigation published July 29th, the newspaper points out that, since 2008, Al-Qaeda would have received 125 millions dollars (93 millions Euros) thanks to the ransoms*" (*Le Monde*, July 30th 2014, translated by us). Either still to highlight, and by the way charging a record fine, the participation of European, Swiss and French banks in particular, to the commercial activities of "enemy" countries as the Sudan, Iran and Cuba subjected to American embargo.

In short, every "side" as soon as the occasion appears, develops and refines its ideological and nationalist themes to entail the populations and, particularly, the working class behind the defense of "its" state and "its" nation.

Often, an argument is given against this perspective of generalized war: no potential rival is able to military compete with the American forces. Globally it is correct. And it is an element which is still lacking to the European countries and particularly to Germany. But it is also a dynamic, active, factor which explains why the latter also aims at establishing a lasting alliance with Russia and France for each one being equipped with nuclear weapons and considerable military forces. Besides, let's bet that Germany - quite as Japan - would not last long to catch up its delay at that level once the political, specially "national, conditions be fulfilled. Thus this argument which deprives nothing of the reality of capitalist and imperialist contradictions leading to the imperialist war, has however to be relativized : "*Collectively, Europe spends \$270 billions on defense annually, second only to the United States. Our European Allies possess peer or near-peer capabilities in several areas of joint warfare, including tactical fighter operations, surface warfare, and special operations. Nowhere else in the world does there exist a comparable pool of interoperable, proven, and combat-ready allies to deploy with U.S. forces*" according to General P. Breedlove, April 1st to the UC Congress¹¹).

The March towards Generalized War is it thus Opened ? Inescapable ?

The warlike course seems to have become obvious for the bourgeoisie. As it had self-convincing that nothing could prevent it. As if the massive and deliberate censorship on the workers struggles – as weak as they are, they are not less a reality – in reaction to the crisis and to the sacrifices imposed

11 . See www.eucom.mil quoted by www.lapresse.ca, August 9th.

to the workers themselves, had succeeded to erase this reality for its own eyes and consciousness. Thus, forced and stimulated by the gravity of the economical dead-end and the exacerbation of the economical and imperialist rivalries, the ruling class confronts, - the process is already underway – the international proletariat both at the level of the economical crisis and at the level of war. That is unprecedented in Capitalism's history !

But even if the proletariat seems today far from reacting at the level of the attacks and of the historical stakes, it does remain the only force capable of opposing itself to the effects of the crisis and to the perspective of war by confronting Capitalism, both as an exploited class and as a revolutionary class, by paving the way to the overthrow of its state by insurrection and the setting up of its own class dictatorship, by destroying from top to bottom the capitalist mode of production, wage-labour and exploitation, up to the coming of a classless society, with no money, nor commodities and without war: communism (we say it one more time: it is the opposite of stalinism and of what leftists of any kind do

propose).

As long as the proletariat won't let itself imposed those sacrifices without reaction, as long as it won't let itself massively led to warlike conflicts, then the bourgeoisie won't be free to launch the holocaust. So, while the workers mobilization in the ex-Yugoslavia, yesterday torned apart by war – in Bosnia in particular – carries on since February against the crisis consequences and with the slogan "down all nationalisms", the fact is that "*in the western Ukraine, demonstrations and riots have broke out against the war and militarism. Demonstrators say they don't want to die or see dying their children for the Kiev oligarchs' interests*" (quoted by the Letter "nous sommes les oiseaux de la tempête" from the KRAS-AIT, July 31st 2014). This can't but encourage the revolutionaries and the conscious proletarians to take confidence in the working class' revolting and revolutionary capacities.

Jonas/RL, August 3rd 2014

Montréal : Open Meeting of the IGCL: Sunday October 19th.

The next meeting in Montréal will be Sunday October 19th at 3.30 pm at the Pub Le Saint-Ciboire, 1693 rue St-Denis, Montréal (near the subway station Berri-UQÀM).

Open Meetings with the IGCL

We hold regular open meetings in Montréal and the Toronto region for any reader, sympathizer or militant who desires to meet and debate with us. They are announced on our Web Site : www.igcl.org.

The comrades can also write to our email adress, intleftcom@gmail.com, for any encounter. Up to date, we don't organize open meeting in France but one can contact us to the same address in order to organize any encounter or meeting in Paris.

We reproduce here after the statement the IGCL published on our web site after the beginning of the war in Ukraine which introduced the publication of the ICT article : *Ukraine : A nationalist Dead-End !*

Ukraine : A Nationalist Dead-End !

The conflict between the pro-Russian and pro-European factions of the Ukrainian bourgeoisie is a dead-end and horrible trap for workers lured into it in the name of the struggle against corruption and dictatorship. This democratic mystification serves to mask imperialist rivalries pitting Russia against Germany with the European Union rallying around it. For Ukraine is, in turn, the object of a fierce struggle between the main imperialist powers. And they won't hesitate to provoke and wage a "civil" war in the defense of their interests.

Above all, democratic mystification serves as an attempt to enlist workers into a conflict where they have everything to lose. They "should include no support for any of the bourgeois factions who represent only different aspects of the spectrum of exploitation and oppression" our ICT comrades write. But this is not enough to escape the trap, or to stop the slaughter that has already begun. Much less the threat of a bloodier massacre. As our comrades say, the only way for the working class to avoid this trap is by regrouping in workplaces, defending living conditions and fighting against capitalist exploitation, that is, engaging in the struggle against bourgeois political forces and against the state, regardless of whether it's "dictatorial" or "democratic", pro-Russian or pro-European.

Which way forward for the workers in Ukraine? By the same path taken by their class brothers from Bosnia and former Yugoslavia who, themselves, had known very well the monumental powerlessness evident when faced with the bloody massacres provoked by the Yugoslav nationalist war in the 1990s. Today, they rise up and fight, united, across all nationalities, as a united working class, against capitalist exploitation and misery, in facing the devastation of the crisis, and against the "democratic" and nationalist governments! This is the only way forward!

The IGCL, February 23rd, 2014.

Summary of *Revolution or War* #1, January 2014

Editorial : Foundation of the International Group of the Communist Left (IGCL)

Conference of Constitution of the IGCL

Communique on the Constitution of the IGCL

Resolution of the Conference on the Constitution of the IGCL

Introduction of the Theses on the Historical Situation

Theses of the Conference on the Historical Situation

The Regroupment of the Revolutionaries

Correspondence

Struggle against Opportunism

20th Congress of the International Communist Current

Text of the Workers Movement

Introduction of the text of *Internationalisme* (GCF, 1948)

On the Nature and the Political Function of the Political Party of the Proletariat

Regroupment of the Revolutionaries

Statement on the ICT¹² and ICC¹³ Platforms (Stavros)

We reproduce below the criticism and the comments that comrade Stavros has written in March 2014 on the Platforms of the International Communist Current and the Internationalist Communist Tendency. Since then, and after having contacted also the ICT, the comrade asked to be candidate to our group. But independently of this adhesion, this contribution represents, we think, a kind of militant balance-sheet of the Proletarian Camp such as it is presently. Actually, several individuals adhering to the positions of the historical Communist Left tend to politically line up with one or the other Platform of these two currents.¹⁴

Thus, Stavros' comments sets themselves in a necessary present process which should see the most serious individuals of the historical Communist Left converge in order to undertake the discussions leading to their regroupment. With the worsening of the inter-imperialist tensions and the Proletariat's attempts to resist at the level of the economical struggles, the time is more than ever to the historical alternative "Revolution or War". And for the first of the two terms, the international and internationalist class Party is indispensable for orientating the economical struggles of the proletariat to their full political consciousness.

In regards with the two tendencies which diametrically oppose the Proletarian Camp at the present time, i.e. the partidist tendency and the one which tends towards academicism and towards more or less formal councilism, we address to the first one : here, according to the IGCL, is what should be the priority of the different individuals who claim the proletarian positions such as faithfully reflected by both the ICT and the ICC: the regroupment of our political forces in one Party, only rampart of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie which opposes it.

On this matter, several questions raised by Stavros in this discussion he began with us, have not been settled yet – nor even tackled – within the IGCL. For us, however, we don't think these questions constitute such an important demarcation between the ICT and the ICC to prevent a militant to take part to one or the other of these organizations (let's forget the present stalinist drift of the official ICC). The time is thus to mark off the ground on which the proletariat must struggle, **in other words the basic positions of the Communist Left**. The programmatic particularities of these two currents, as important they are, such as the theory of decadence and the one on Capitalism's crisis, don't represent the same stake when the struggle speeds up and when the conditions become more convenient to the historical alternative.

Sol, May 2014.

Platforms of the ICC and ICT

Most of the positions in the platforms of the ICC and ICT overlap to a large degree. I will start by highlighting the areas of agreement. The ICC and the ICT agree on the counterrevolutionary nature of bourgeois democracy, trades unions, national liberation struggles, state capitalism in the guise of socialism as well as all "workers' parties" that give "conditional" support to these states. They similarly reject as class collaborationist and counterrevolutionary united/popular fronts with leftist groups whether under the banner of anti-fascism or left unity, as well as workers' self-management under capitalism. They both also affirm the proletarian nature of the 1917 October revolution in Russia. Finally, both groups claim continuity with the internationalist elements within the 2nd International that went on to form the 3rd International, as well as with the elements within the 3rd International (especially the Italian left but also the Dutch and German left) that struggled against the slide into opportunism (ie opening to reformism) and abandonment of proletarian internationalism (Socialism in One Country).

However, the differences between them do need to be emphasized and are not simply a question of semantics but have political and programmatic significance. Apart from

their apparently divergent assessment of the balance of class power – the ICC is more optimistic in this regard, thinking that the bourgeoisie has not been able to impose its historic solution of generalized war onto the proletariat -- the foremost among their differences is their conception of the concrete role and organization of the revolutionary vanguard, their explanation of the development of crisis in capitalism and its periodization, as well as the nature of the period of the transformation of capitalism into communism, i.e. the transitional period.

On the question of the role of the revolutionary vanguard, both the ICC and ICT agree on the need for the existence of a centralized and international communist party -- as an expression of the political organization of the most class conscious part of the working class -- before the emergence of a revolutionary situation. The reason for this is to combat the bourgeois ideological mystifications that are sure to manifest themselves in such a situation, for example in a situation of dual power when there is a widespread generalization and politicization of workers' struggles through the formation of workers' councils, as well as after the seizure of power by the workers councils. The ICC and

12 . <http://www.leftcom.org/en/node/1165> (Platform of the ICT)

13 . <http://en.internationalism.org/platform> (Platform of the ICC)

14 . The International Communist Party, even though another important historical organization, is a special case for the IGCL because its position on Red Unions or its lip service adhesion to some national liberation struggles such as Palestine. However it shares the same programmatic legacy and fully fits within the Proletarian Camp.

the ICT also agree that the party cannot substitute itself for the class. From the ICC platform on the organization of revolutionaries: *“As a part of the class, revolutionaries can at no time substitute themselves for the class, either in its struggles within capitalism or, still less, in the overthrow of capitalism and the wielding of political power.”* Similarly for the ICT, *“Its [the Party’s] task will be to fight for a communist perspective in the mass organs of proletarian power (soviets). The party, however, will remain a minority of the working class and is not a substitute for the class in general. The task of establishing socialism is one for the working class as a whole. It is a task which cannot be delegated, not even to the class conscious vanguard.”* What, then, is the difference between these two groups with respect to the role of the organization of revolutionaries? It seems to be one of emphasis. The ICT puts more emphasis on the revolutionary leadership of the Communist party and the active role that its militants will take on the assault of the working class against capitalism and its state. *“...its principal task. This is to win over the masses to the communist programme and gain political leadership of the struggle in order to lead it forward to the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist state. The revolution, therefore, will only succeed if the revolutionary organisation - the communist party standing at the head of the class - is adequately developed and prepared for its own frontal assault against the political enemies of the revolutionary programme.”* For the ICC, *“The organisation of revolutionaries (whose most advanced form is the party) is the necessary organ with which the class equips itself to become conscious of its historic role and to politically orient the struggle for this future.”* Based on my reading of their respective platforms, the ICT places more emphasis on the active leadership which must be provided by the revolutionary party immediately preceding and during the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Here I am in agreement with the ICT position as I understand it, as the position of the ICC may lend itself to an interpretation of the Party as little more than a propaganda group.

What about the form of the organization of revolutionaries? For the ICC the process of building the revolutionary party is centralized from the start: *“the fractions and groups who lay the basis of the party necessarily tend towards a world-wide centralisation. This is concretised in the existence of central organs invested with political responsibilities between each of the organisation’s congresses, to which they are accountable.”* While I agree with the need for centralized coordination of the revolutionary minority even before the organization has matured to the point where it is justified to call it a party, I believe that the danger – in particular in times of relative social peace – is when these central organs try to exercise undue influence over its various sections (micromanagement), in terms of recruitment and the intervention of the various sections in their localities. On the point of adherence of the different sections to the political program of the organization as a whole, there can be no question. Similarly, the importance of centralization of the organization in its role of showing to the class the actuality and lessons of its own struggles unfolding globally needs to be stressed. However, it is vital that the central organs do not try to artificially impose political homogeneity from above. This homogeneity only has meaning when it is the result of

interchanges between all of the different sections and members. This presupposes that all militants of the organization not only have an understanding of the political positions of the party but also their methodological underpinnings (dialectical materialism). In cases where the central organs attempt to micromanage this is usually indicative of opportunistic recruiting practices, as it becomes necessary to impose more top-down control to prevent the political positions being diluted.

The position of the ICT seems to be that the future centralized party will be the result of the consolidation of different national sections that are already working together. *“The formation of the International Party of the Proletariat will come about through the dissolution of the various ‘national’ organisations which have worked together and are in agreement about the platform and programme for revolution. The International Bureau For the Party aims to be the focus for coordination and unification of these organizations [their bold].”* Although I can see why the ICT holds this position – namely, the unique experience and integration into the class of each section within its own regional context – I believe there is a danger in the possibility of tolerating lack of coordination between different sections in their interventions prior to the centralization which the ICT agrees is indispensable. Also, it is not clear to me why this sectional division should be on a national basis. Maybe more dangerous is the possibility of permitting national variations in terms of the understanding and application of the political program. However, I am not saying that the dangers highlighted above represent the state of affairs (I do not know enough about the inner workings of the ICT), merely that it is something which the ICT must be vigilant to prevent. Also, given that the ICT says that it is vital for there to be an already formed and centralized international party before the start of the revolutionary period, what will be the signal for this process of centralization to start? It is almost as if they are letting it be understood that this process will happen by itself in an organic or emergent fashion, rather than requiring the concerted and active participation of all of the different sections of the group *as the immediate priority*. Everything else being equal, an international organization which is centralized is more able to allocate its resources and efforts to rationally intervene in the class on the basis of its program than an organization that is divided into more autonomous national sections. As I understand, their position is that increase in class consciousness and struggle will drive the process of centralization of the pro-revolutionary forces that are currently fragmented and lack rootedness in the class. There is a need to navigate the tension between not wanting to arbitrarily impose centralism from above as well as the need for the revolutionary organization to coordinate its intervention.

Another important difference between the ICC and ICT is their understanding of the cause of capitalist crises as well as their periodization of capitalism. The ICT is unambiguous in their assessment of what causes capitalist crises; it is the tendency of the average rate of profit to fall. This is a consequence of the change in the organic composition of capital from lower to higher proportion of fixed capital relative to variable capital. For the ICC on the other hand

there are two related dynamics that are happening that explain capitalist crises: *"by generalising its relations of production across the whole planet and by unifying the world market, capitalism reached a point where the outlets which allowed it to grow so powerfully in the nineteenth century became saturated. Moreover, the growing difficulty encountered by capital in finding a market for the realisation of surplus value accentuates the fall in the rate of profit, which results from the constant widening of the ratio between the value of the means of production and the value of the labour power which sets them in motion."* Although this may seem like a marginal difference, it has important implications for the strategy of communists. For example, an explanation of the crisis as solely being the result of saturation of global markets lends itself to an understanding of crisis as a permanent aspect of capitalism in this phase of its development. This would be at odds with the observable cycles of accumulation in the 20th century, cycles which can be explained in light of the tendency of the average rate of profit to fall. This view (saturation of markets) underestimates the ability of marketing and credit to create new markets for capitalism's commodities. However, the position of the ICC on this is obviously more refined than rejecting outright the relevance of the tendency of the rate of profit to fall and relying solely on the "saturation of the global market".

A further difference between the ICC and ICT is how they conceptualize the different periods of capitalist development. In the platform of the ICC, they refer to the period of capitalist modernity starting with the Great War as capitalist decadence. Although the word decadence is not found in the platform of the ICT, it is mentioned in their About Us section. In their platform the ICT also refers to the *"means of production ... as the property of finance capital, which is the real form of capital in the imperialist era"*. This understanding seems to me completely consistent with an understanding of capitalist decadence. However, the ICC includes the concept of decomposition in its understanding of decadence: *"As in all other decadent societies this has led to a growing decomposition of social institutions, of the dominant ideology, of moral values, of art forms and all the other cultural manifestations of capitalism."* In addition to arguably being empirically demonstrably false, this seems like an unnecessary addition (with little or no explanatory or predictive value) to the theory of decadence. Did the absolute monarchy in decadent feudalism show tendencies of decomposition? The institution of the absolute monarchy did not decompose and weaken of its own accord. It needed to be smashed by the bourgeois revolution. Similarly with decadent capitalism. In the absence of proletarian revolution, we can look forward to new forms of totalitarianism, not a rotting society of every one for themselves. The other aspects of the theory of decomposition seem like they belong more to petty bourgeois idealism rather than dialectical materialism.

However, the ICC includes the concept of decomposition in its understanding of decadence. The ICC posited that the class struggle was entering a decisive period. This was supported by the increased combativeness of the working class in economic strikes at the time. Because of the lack of politicization and generalization, the working class was not able to assert its collective power and pose a threat to the

state. The class did not acquire for itself consciousness. The ICC overestimated the ability of the proletariat to resist bourgeois ideological mystification and state repression. After the failure of the "years of truth", the ICC revised the theory of decadence to include a new category of "decomposition" in which neither class can decisively impose its political interests. On the view of the ICC, this period is characterized by *"a growing decomposition of social institutions, of the dominant ideology, of moral values, of art forms and all the other cultural manifestations of capitalism"*. The problem with this view is that it underestimates the extent domination of the bourgeoisie and it obscures the historic dilemma posed by decadent capitalism: proletarian revolution or imperialist war.

The final and arguably most significant area of divergence between the ICC and ICT is their conception of the nature of the period of the transformation of capitalism into communism, i.e. the transitional period. For the ICC: *"During this period of transition from capitalism to communism, non-exploiting strata other than the proletariat will still exist, classes whose existence is based on the non-socialised sector of the economy. For this reason the class struggle will still exist as a manifestation of the contradictory economic interests within society. This will give rise to a state whose function will be to prevent these conflicts leading to society tearing itself apart. But with the progressive disappearance of these social classes through the integration of their members into the socialised sector, and with the eventual abolition of classes, the state will itself have to disappear."* However this seems to be at odds with the conception of the state as an instrument of class rule as well the related idea of the state as having a monopoly on the use of force. If there is a state apart from the dictatorship of the proletariat, how is it then that the proletariat has a monopoly on political power and the exclusive authority to use violence and repression that goes along with this? The ICT makes no mention of a semi-state separate from the dictatorship of the proletariat. Furthermore, the ICT has been highly critical of the ICC's view of the transitional period. *"The ICC way of seeing things results in the following consequences: the state in the transition period is not the dictatorship of the proletariat; the transitional state should, thanks to the magical power of the Holy Spirit made flesh by the alliance of all non-exploiting classes, all of which stand with equal right on the same level as the remnant of the bourgeoisie, merge into socialism; the dictatorship of the proletariat is according to this no such thing, as it exercises force on behalf of no specific class."*¹⁵

On this issue I fall on the side of the ICT. A state implies the rule of a class. The form of this rule in the transitional period is the dictatorship of the proletariat (DOTP). Based on my understanding, the DOTP is the centralized exclusive political rule of the working class. This takes the form of working bodies with combined legislative and executive power. The immediate task of the DOTP (along with suppression of reaction) is to socialize property since private ownership of the means of production of socially necessary things implies private accumulation of social power. Once the DOTP is

¹⁵ <http://www.leftcom.org/en/articles/2011-04-17/marxism-or-idealism-our-differences-with-the-icc>

consolidated in the central capitalist powers and property is socialized, the task is to abolish the law of value and the working bodies go from being political organs for the suppression of the bourgeoisie to organs whose task is to rationally administer production according to a centrally coordinated material plan. The process of withering away of the state corresponds to this transition from political tasks (repression, expropriation) to administrative ones (production according to material plan to satisfy needs). I do not see the need to include an entity of a semi-state separate from the councils. The monopoly on the use of force (ie the state) is in the hands of the workers' councils. So then what about the non-exploiting strata of society apart from the proletariat? Peasants and slum-dwellers have existed before the emergence of capitalism whereas the proletariat is a revolutionary class that only emerges with capitalism. The non-exploiting strata apart from the proletariat will find their political expression to the extent that they are progressively proletarianized, i.e. to the extent that they are included in socialized (rather than small-scale or subsistence) production.

One of the major tasks of the transitional period will be the inclusion into socialized production of this part of the population which is structurally excluded by capitalism.

Despite the apparent similarity in the programs of the ICC and the ICT, there are important differences, most notably the ICC's theory of decomposition and the divergence between the two groups on the question of the transitional period. On this basis alone it would be difficult to imagine unification between these two groups. This is quite apart from the issue of the organizational health of these groups (for example the ICC's opening to anarchism as well as its reported sectarian and monolithic nature), issues that have been discussed elsewhere.

Stavros, March 2014

Public Meetings of the ICT in Canada

Last June, the Internationalist communist tendency (ICT) came to Canada to meet militants and sympathizers from three major Canadian cities: Montreal, Hamilton and Toronto. The topic in Montreal and Toronto was "global economic crisis" while in Hamilton, the ICT wished to address a somewhat delicate subject for the proletarian camp: "the true division" between Marxism and anarchism.

The IGCL had therefore mandated itself to intervene in these three meetings to both support the intervention of the ICT and allow maximum clarification of the program of the proletariat ... But also to address the issue of the regroupment of the revolutionary in the proletarian milieu. We were hoping to take the opportunity to shed light on the difficult relationship between the Internationalist Workers Group (IWG) - Canadian affiliate of the ICT - and our group.

Montréal

We can say that this meeting was a success because at the peak of the meeting, about thirty people were present (which is high for this type of meeting in Canada). It was a classic analysis of the crisis of capital in the ICT point of view, that is to say its cause is the falling rate of profit and its effects are an absolute trend towards imperialism. An interesting point raised by the presentation, which is ignored by many: the accumulation of fictitious capital, as monstrous as it is now, had already been anticipated by Marx. So with it the notion of speculative bubbles that burst with more depth ... and with a frequency of more and faster (most recently in 2008).

The level of class consciousness among the participants was generally not very high but some good questions were nevertheless raised, including a critique on the fact that the problem is not that Capital can no longer accumulate but it just meet more and more difficulties in the process of valorisation and extraction of plus-value.

Since the IGCL has given itself a mandate to call for regrouping revolutionary elements around the ICT, one of our members has asked the following question: what is the way into the creation of a political party of the proletariat for the ICT? The response was consistent with what has always said the ICT in the days when it was still called the IBRP: the ICT is neither the core nor the anticipation of future class party. For more precision, it has been reformulated to directly address the issue of regroupment: according to the editorial of issue 59 of *Revolutionary Perspectives* (review of the CWO, British section of the ICT), if the ICT does not consider itself as the core of the future party, so what is the way of regrouping the revolutionaries? Because it makes no sense in the current historical context that our two groups can not consider dialogue and the possibility of joint action towards the class. The answer was unfortunately what follows: the ICT does not have to discuss with the IGCL as some of its members (former sympathizers of the ICT in Canada) have not withdrawn their divergencies (allegedly "calomniatics") with the one who formed the IWG in Montreal. The meeting has almost ended on this issue.

Toronto

There were fewer people present, but the level of political consciousness was higher than in Montreal. Several interesting

contacts were made there by a candidate of our group. Among other things, the anarchist group Common Cause has come participate and a representative of the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty. The same comrade from the ICT addressed the issue of Labor Value, the organic composition of capital and the inherent need of Capital, in the era of imperialism / decadence, to destroy the constant capital to restart more vigorously its accumulation process. For the ICT, the technological revolution of the microprocessor has also slowed the falling rate of profit by reducing the cost of constant capital. Financialisation has also been discussed as a response to the crisis of profitability that started in the 70s.

During the discussion period, our member intervened reaffirming that the IGCL and the ICT defend the positions of the Communist Left (CL), both consider the crisis of capital is inevitable and that the IGCL believes that the ICT is the only pole of regroupment of the CL. As a result, the question was asked whether the ICT saw in the struggle of the class - against the austerity measures - the beginning of a consolidation of the revolutionary forces. The answer was that there is not enough revolutionary forces to consolidate anything ... because there is a lack of politicization.

Hamilton

On the ICT website, the meeting was presented in this way: *"The real division today is not between anarchism and Marxism. It is between, on the one hand, these "Marxists" who want to reform capitalism and those anarchists who think they can find a way of life within the system, and on the other hand, those of the two tendencies that aims to abolish capitalism and its state."*

For us, from the outset, this is problematic. Indeed, anarchism, by its historical rejection of the class Party of the proletariat and the dictatorship of the proletariat, is located on the grounds of the left Capital and is not a revolutionary perspective. Its main self-management program is by no means the destruction of capital but his idealistic management. It is the Marxists know snatch anarchists from this ground, by force of argument, to get them to Marxism and Revolution; but then, they are not anymore anarchists. So it is with caution that we expected this meeting.

The ICT member began the meeting by noting the important difference between communist revolutionaries and "revolutionary" anarchists on the notion of the state as it is for Marx and Engels, especially after the Paris Commune as the Bolsheviks in the early years of the Russian Revolution. However, and rightly, the ICT said that they should have allowed that the executive was elected by the Soviets themselves rather than imposing their People's Commissars, and it's more questionable in our view, that they replaced the workers' militia by the Red Army. These errors, the Bolsheviks shared with most communists around the world are, for the ICT, to put at the same level as the "betrayals" petty-bourgeois anarchists pretending to be anti-capitalists. For the ICT therefore, betrayal of anarchism are the same as "those" from communists ... and are summarized in a misunderstanding of the class struggle and the class nature of the state.

As conclusion

Through the ICT, Communist Left was able to speak and talk to some of his supporters in a region where it has little presence and is unknown. Thus the ICT defended class positions we share also, even if some clarifications need to be made between us, particularly as regards anarchism, some visions of the period of decadence and economic analysis of crisis.

It is important to note that some of these issues, such as the economic analysis, are not even definitive positions in the ICGL and doesn't prevent us to intervene in defending "its" position and militate in the same group.

Our group has therefore fulfilled its mandate by participating in these meetings, inviting sympathizers around us to participate as well, and especially in supporting the intervention of the ICT by our mere presence and by our active participation.

Moreover, the ICT seems to have problem to set itself as an organization, the meetings being presented as that of a speaker rather than of the largest political group in the current CL. It did not know, either, how to put forward the unity of the Communist Left, rejecting a joint intervention with our group, and not recognizing the existence of the IGCL after almost a year of existence. This sectarianism is most unfortunate in the current context, while our two groups express - on the most important points - a clear agreement.

Despite our differences and some critics, despite some weaknesses as expressed by the ICT, we believe that the result of these meetings is very positive. We hope, at least, the time to participate in other meetings from the ICT, if not to work together for our class.

Sol and Stavros

Critical Review of a Contribution to a Balance-sheet of the International Communist Left (CIK)

Since the constitution of the IGCL, a number of comrades question us on the fact we have set up a new group in stead of asking for integrating the ICT since our main orientation towards the Proletarian Camp is to push for and favour the regroupment around this one. For many, this appear to be contradictory. We have already responded in the first issue of this review through a Correspondence¹⁶ that the conditions for a possible integration to the ICT were not gathered today; and that, according to us, the « regroupment » does not limit itself to the only adhesion to a particular group, even if it is the main one, even if this one be in capacity to represent the international pole of « reference » and **around which** we must regroup and center on the historical fight for the Party. It looks important to come back on this issue through the publication of the following text. It was writtent in 2012 by the former Internationalist Communists -Klasbatalo as a conclusion of the contradictory debate between them and the Fraction of the International Communist Left (ex-IFICC).

The review Controversies – set up in 2009 by comrades who had left the ICC with not any public explanation – had declared the bankruptcy of the Communist Left existing groups (It's midnight in the Communist Left. It has been joined, amongst others, by the comrades resigning from the ICT (of Battaglia Comunista) in Italy and at the origin of the Istituto Damen. Calling for "to detach oneself from the formal organizations", i.e. abandoning the ICT, the ICC and the bordiguist groups, Controversies positionned itself clearly in the anti-organization tendency, the one we define as "councilist", in the side of Internationalist Perspectives, of the Italian circle Connessioni, and other groups, circles, or individuals more or less claiming the Communist Left, above all the German and Dutch one. Even worst, by its initial dynamism – today faded – Controversies had taken the leadership of this milieu and seemed to offer an alternative to the real and various difficulties of the communist groups whose disappearance was even to wish, according to this review, in order to sweep away the past.

This offensive, within the very Proletarian Camp itself, against the communist organizations as main highest and most consistent expressions – even though not unique – of class consciousness, has participated to weaken the lattestand and even to sow confusion amongst the militants, often young and new ones, who were looking for a path in the Communist Left tradition. So has been the case for the Internationalist Communists – Klasbatalao (see only in French : Contribution à un état des lieux de la Gauche communiste¹⁷). Engaged in a process of organizational regroupment, the IC-K and the FICL then decided to suspend this process and to engage a debate aiming at clarifying the disagreements and to develop the reflection on this central question for the orientation of a communist group's intervention. The text of the IC-K we publish here, ends this debate with an agreement and it defines the political orientation of the IGCL – it was adopted as an Orientation Text by the November 2013 Conference of constitution.

With the response to a comrade mentioned above that we provided in our first issue, this text must enable the readers, if not sharing our position, at least to understand the political meaning of this fundamental orientation.

More over, new factor, the present and last internal organizational crisis of the ICC won't miss, whatever one may think, having repercussions within the Proletarian Camp as a whole, directly or indirectly. Whether these repercussions be positive or negative for the whole camp (in particular at the level of political credit or discredit of the Communist Left groups) don't depend on the outcome of the crisis within this organization itself. Its internal outcome is already predictable (opportunism ruling the "apparatus", the "opponents-accused" having remained on the psychological and non-political ground, have already been forced to admit they were guided by clanish and "progromist" (!) instincts: the image of sect and stalinist caricature which will result from this nth crisis of the ICC, will soil the image of the Communist Left as a whole. Only small hope from the very inside of this organization in the grip of the destruction of its militants' convictions : that some may succeed to refuse the framework of clanism, of individualism, of psychological self-criticism, which is imposed on them for "resolving the crisis" and may return on the political ground of the Communist Left. But let to themselves, alone and isolated, if these militants, even only one, emerge, they won't be able to politically and, no doubt, personally resist. It matters they can find active support from the Proletarian Camp as a whole, and above all from the forces which set resolutely in the "partidist" camp. Here is the sense of our Call¹⁸ to the sincere members of the ICC and to the Communist Left organizations, in the first place to the main one, the Internationalist Communist Tendency.

The following text thus provides the framework of comprehension of our intervention in the Proletarian Camp: regroupement around and with the organized forces, mainly the ICT, which turn towards and struggle for the constitution of the political party of the proletariat as organ of the political leadership of the proletariat's revolutionary fight against capital; struggle against opportunism and its theoretical, political and organizational expressions whom the ICC has become the quintessence and the first tool within the Communist Left since now around 15 years.

May 2014, the IGCL.

16 . Revolution or War #1.

17 . See the IFCL's response (in French) Réponse au texte des CIK

18 . Some have criticized our Call (<http://www.igcl.org/spip.php?article12>) for having made public a internal crisis of an organization without this one wanted it. And actually, in similar situations for other organizations we have heard about through "informal" ways, we had directly adress to these groups and had respected their decision. But when an organization as the ICC, claiming the Communist Left, utilizes real Stalinist practices – internal Jury of Honor whose main actors are both judge and jury, control and investigation permanent commission, substitution of the political debates and relations by personal and psychological self criticisms (during which the accused are summoned to recognize their hatred for others and themselves ask that the organization takes sanctions against them (!), insults, internal and public accusations and condemnations, etc. - then we claim the right to denounce this publicly and to alert the whole forces of the Proletarian Camp.

Critical review of a Contribution to a balance sheet of the International Communist Left (CIK)

A lot has happened since the publication of our Contribution to a balance sheet of the International Communist Left (Communist Bulletin No. 4, February 2011), particularly discussions and appeals by groups from the proletarian political milieu. So this is intended as a critical review, since we now see and absolutely have to correct its major political weaknesses.

Two texts published by organizations of the Communist Left compel us to reexamine the positions that we had developed in our "Contribution..." First, the "*Réponse au texte des Communistes Internationalistes – Klasbatalo sur leur Contribution à un état de la Gauche Communiste*" and from the International Fraction of the Communist Left (IFCL) criticizing some aspects of our text, especially its centrist character in relation to councilism. Secondly, the editorial in *Revolutionary Perspectives #59* of the Communist Workers Organization who came deny that, at least for a majority of local sections of the Internationalist Communist Tendency (ICT), there were only a few criticisms dealing with its refusal as an international organization to assume its responsibility as a pole of regroupment. These two texts along with intense debate within our group, and between our group and IFCL over several months have ensured that we are now able to make this critique.

Context

But first let's put this writing into context. The proletarian political milieu was, and is still overwhelmed by sectarianism and opportunism just as an economic crisis unparalleled since 1929 has burst forth entailing the bourgeoisie's ferocious attacks on the working class, but also the latter's fight-back against the ruling class. Our proposal for a Left communist website a few years ago, just to break with the surrounding sectarianism and allow a space for debate and political intervention for the communist Left, had no resonance save for the support of IFCL. The International Communist Current (ICC) increasingly opened itself up to anarchism¹⁹, thus aggravating the opportunist turn initiated some years ago. The Internal Fraction of the International Communist Current (IFICC) split over its political role and its future tasks. This gave rise to IFCL, which remained tight-lipped on the politics behind the split, publishing the bare minimum. IFICC quite simply ignored its responsibilities as a proletarian group by integrating *Controverses* and in closing its website without publicly announcing its reasons. Finally, we also learned of a split in *Battaglia Comunista* (ICT's Italian section). Needless to say, all these political events left us with very demoralizing and pessimistic feelings toward the proletarian camp. Anyway, keeping all of this in mind, we

19 . See the illuminating series of texts "Communist Left and anarchism: what we have in common" where the ICC squirms theoretically in order to make the anarchists 'internationalists' (sic) appear as genuine revolutionaries. ICC, instead of trying to create political ties with other left communist groups, particularly the ICT, creates a new wave of fake revolutionaries , the "internationalist anarchists" through historical falsification. Here the ICC is theorizing a tactical front with petty bourgeois organizations.

need to understand our "Contribution..." its strengths and especially its weaknesses. However, we entirely dismissed the political depth in IFCL's criticism of *Controverses* in their text: *Has the proletarian camp definitively gone bankrupt?*

In our view, the "*Contribution...*" suffers from two major weaknesses. The first is a political illusion in *Controverses* and its program, which explains the councilist drift in our text. The second is our critique of the ICT and IFCL's position, which recognizes the ICT as a pole of regroupment of communist forces. This last aspect has led us to see the ICT from a static point of view, that is, seeing only its current weaknesses while ignoring its potential as a pole of regroupment. In developing this critique of its two main weaknesses, we now rejoin with the general political positions of IFCL.

Controverses on the bankruptcy of the Communist Left

Our text "*Contribution ...*" was among other things a response to the *Controverses* text: *It's midnight for the Communist Left*. Our mistake was to take up some of *Controverses* theses while attempting to criticize its text. It's on the basis of this error, that we find our group's illusions towards *Controverses* as a group. Indeed, the fact that a few years after publishing our proposal for a Communist Left website, *Controverses* founded a "*Forum of the Internationalist Communist Left*", which made a strong impression. We were well aware that *Controverses'* forum lacked the clear political criteria (i.e. the dictatorship of the proletariat, international party involvement in the class) that we established in our own proposal for a website. Worse, we didn't see at the time that our two forums were designed for quite different purposes. *Controverses'* forum is an informal meeting place allowing academics (with strong councilist tendencies) to discuss for the sake of discussion, without real political substance, while our forum pushed for a regroupment of communist forces to actively and effectively intervene in class struggles as an organized revolutionary vanguard brought to life by the economic crisis. Thus, we were unable to discern the opportunistic weaknesses of *Controverses*, weaknesses that IFCL had pointed out: "*They give up the struggle for the consolidation of the communist Left, that is they refuse and even renounce the confrontation of real political positions expressed and defended by the oldest and largest groups, particularly in their press and in their interventions. These people prefer to chat on networks or worse in informal 'structures' in which one comes and goes at will and where everyone, as in a 'Spanish Inn', picks up or leaves off, depending on the mood, or one's poor 'production'.*"

These illusions have allowed a shift to a centrist position relative to the concept of councilism. Indeed, we gave credit in part to the comrades of *Controverses* in asserting that "*As the appearance and disappearance of revolutionary organizations depends highly on the evolution of the relationship of forces between classes, and the exacerbation of the objective and subjective conditions behind workers'*

mobilizations takes place in a relatively short time, Marx and Engels understood that the existence of these organizations was temporary, intrinsically linked to the flux and reflux of struggles." And we were wrong. Here, *Controverses* comrades develop a clearly councilist organizational position that is close enough to the theory of 1930's councilist "opinion groups" (Dutch GIK and International Council Correspondence, for example). The latter, just as *Controverses* today, saw no importance in organized and politically formed minorities, namely the activity of the party, suggesting that workers' councils are themselves sufficient to play their revolutionary role as proletarian organizations of mass struggle. "Revolutionary individuals" would simply give their opinion to the workers' councils, which only arise and disappear according to fluctuations of the class struggle.

While it is true that an ascendant or descendant period of class struggle has some influence on proletarian organizations, a downturn in struggle may be one of many reasons for the degeneration of a proletarian organization²⁰ just as a favorable upturn in class struggle can be one of several reasons for the passage from the fraction form to that of the party form; the proletarian organization, political party or fraction, is a permanent feature. The permanent nature of the organization is based on a very simple explanation: as a stable and active part of the class struggle, as a revolutionary vanguard in its party form, and as an advocate for programmatic integrity against attacks from opportunism as well as a transmitter of political experience for future generations of revolutionaries in its fraction form.

Thus the whole experience of past revolutionary movements, invaluable experience transmitted precisely by communist nuclei able to resist the counter-revolution such as the ICC or ICT, would, through the pernicious logic of *Controverses'* program, be jettisoned. Because, according to *Controverses*, both the ICC and ICT have failed, here these comrades explicitly proposed a departure from what they call political bickering in order to focus on a theoretical balance sheet²¹ of this supposed failure of the Communist Left. According to *Controverses*, one must "*know enough to distance oneself from the formal organizations which have not succeeded in adapting to the needs of the evolution of the balance of forces between classes, and to retire from fruitless squabble to focus on 'better things'.*" Worse, the comrades implicitly argue that, in order to implement their proposals, we should dissolve the existing organizations of the Left and "...do something else"! What *Controverses* calls "political squabbling" is in fact a

process undeniably filled with obstacles, (sectarianism, among others), but nonetheless essential for the consolidation of communist forces. In addition, the desire to first and foremost accomplish theoretical work, as according to *Controverses* the Communist left has produced nothing theoretical for thirty years, is a refrain of the modernist intellectual for whom all has failed, except of course that of the workings of one's own little circle. But the greatest danger is that *Controverses* rejects the Communist left under the pretext that it will become bankrupt when the economic crisis worsens, aggravating the social crisis: the class struggle. What could be the reason for rejecting the proletariat's most advanced political expressions at the dawn of a social conflict of historic proportions? It's something that rhymes with councilism!

However the Communist Left isn't bankrupt. A political current fails when it falls into enemy hands, that is, when it defends theoretically and practically the politics of the bourgeoisie in the broadest sense. Social democracy has failed. Trotskyism has failed. But there aren't any groups of the communist left that fall under these criteria; they are in no way bankrupt. This doesn't necessarily mean that there haven't been political mistakes or bad cyclical analysis.

The *Controverses* comrades delude themselves in trying to justify their political positions with the history of Marx's activity in the Communist League and the 1st International. In fact, they make a virtue out of a weakness. The League and the International were dissolved by their leaders because as young and embryonic revolutionary workers movements they had already simply ceased to exist while their militants watched helplessly. *Controverses* uses this state of helplessness, in which the very young and inexperienced communist movement of the 19th century found itself, as an argument to convince us that the current Communist movement, with over 150 years of struggle under its belt and still very much alive against all the elements, should dissolve or at the very least "do something else"!

The ICT and its role as pole of regroupment

In our "*Contribution...*" we remained perplexed and criticized IFCL's position which saw the ICT as the pole of regroupment for communist groups internationally. At the base of this political perplexity regarding the ICT are two important aspects. First, the majority of our members have been sympathizers of Internationalist Workers Group (IWG), the North American section of the ICT. To put it in a nutshell, we had to fight a tendency in Klasbatalo, which saw the ICT through the lens of a rather difficult and negative experience for some of our members as IWG sympathizers, where Canadian members were no strangers to sectarianism and opportunism. But this is not the main point.

Our biggest mistake was in not recognizing the political significance of IFCL's position, viewing the ICT as a pole of regroupment for the Communist Left. We said at the time: "*The fact is that for CI-K not only is the ICT currently unwilling to fulfill this role (which it itself constantly denies) but, even worse, we don't see it capable of doing so. This organization, while focusing on class positions, seems vague to us, you never really know what the Bureau does, or what*

20 . There is an association, that we should like to deepen on that question, with the fact that the ICC called the '80s the years of truth (which at the time was quite legitimate, for example, given the mass strike in Poland in 1980) when that decade ended with a clear decline in political struggles which was exacerbated in the 1990s, the years when the ICC actually developed the revisionist and opportunist theory of the decomposition of capitalism.

21 . The idea of making a bilan (balance sheet) of the Communist Left, or more particularly the ICC the organization most affected by opportunism, is not a bad idea. Indeed, there are many important lessons found in the reasons why an organization can make an opportunist political shift. The IFICC (and now IFCL) made a very good bilan of the ICC, but some political aspects are still lacking for us. For its part, *Controverses* hasn't made a bilan of the Left, but none the less rejects the communist program and the organizations that defend this program in order to join in the revisionist and modernist logic of "all things new, and beautiful."

its intervention in the class is." We were not completely wrong in saying this. But, this isn't the question here. Indeed, we cannot sit complacently in the face of the ICT's hesitation to take on its historic political role; we must try to convince it through discussion. This, we believe is what the IFCL did with the ICT. Finally, we now understand the IFCL's position as not being that of "...awarding the contract of the pole of regroupment to the bidder with the fewest programmatic errors" as we said with some humor in our "Contribution ...", but as a battle for the ICT, as the only organization of the current Left with the potential to play the political role in the process of regroupment, becoming the center of reunification that small communist groups like ours obviously need.

In the meantime, however, the CWO published in its journal an editorial whose political positions on the proletarian camp had and will continue to have a positive influence on the camp and the process of regroupment. We strongly supported this editorial, finding this extract of historical importance: *"In short, serious revolutionaries have a real battle on their hands to dismiss not only the illusions of the "anti-capitalists" but the manipulations of the old Left. We need to create a movement that unites all who can see the problems that we were discussing. This movement (or party) must be guided by a clear vision of the society we want. We call it a communist program. It has to be based on the autonomous struggles of the working class, as they increasingly break free from the shackles a hundred years of reaction has imposed on us. Its goal has to be in abolishing the exploitation of wage labor and money, as well as the state, standing armies and national frontiers. We have to reassert the original view of Marx that we are fighting for a society of "freely associated producers" with the principle - "from each according to ones ability and to each according to ones need". At the moment there are many groups and individuals around the world who recognize this but we are either too scattered, or too divided to take a lead in forming such a united movement. Some object to it on principle declaring that the spontaneous movement will suffice in itself. We wish we could share their confidence. We think responsible revolutionaries should re-examine their differences, asking themselves if the things that we thought divided us now do so in the light of this new period in working class struggle. We should emphasize not the few things we disagree on but the many things that we do agree on. We should seek to work together in common struggles not simply to recruit this or that individual to our own organization, but to widen the consciousness of what a real working class struggle means. In the face of the obstacles we have outlined above it would be suicidal not to do so."*

Need we say more? It's all there: the need for a party with clear positions (the communist program) to achieve the objective of the revolutionary overthrow of bourgeois society and the need for consolidation of communist forces to form this party in a process of debate and political confrontation. The CWO with this editorial has taken a big step in the direction of assuming the role of regroupment as now all communist groups around the world can refer to the CWO's appeal and thus begin a process of regroupment. Moreover, the conclusion of the 2012 Mayday leaflet in fact strengthens this position for the entire ICT:

"The Internationalist Communist Tendency is not "the Party", not even an organization of this type. That said, we have given ourselves the goal of working together with serious working class activists and revolutionaries to further the construction of a new international revolutionary organization. We invite everybody who can identify with this perspective to contact us and to enter into discussion."

In short, in the current context of rising struggle and a greater willingness for regroupment of internationalist revolutionary forces, the need for a centralized and international journal arises for ICT. For our part, we can say that we are ready to participate in the distribution, financial support and translation to the extent of our limited resources.

Finally, we need to rectify an error in our text in relation to the ICT concerning the Instituto Onorato Damen (IOD). We wrote: *"let us also underline the incredible silence that (Battaglia) has shown toward the IOD and its recent response, the political character of which has yet to emerge."* Now, the ICT was not silent for long concerning the Instituto Damen comrades' exit from *Battaglia Comunista*, and its response to the Institute was correct from the perspective of the communist program and proletarian principles. The Instituto Onorato Damen meanwhile took the opposite approach: that of opportunism and intellectual modernism.

Conclusion

We are now immersed in a process of rising struggles for our class in a context of an economic crisis unprecedented since 1929. Around the world, the working class is beginning or resuming its fight against the economic austerity imposed forcibly on it by the international bourgeoisie. For example, be it in Greece or Egypt, the proletariat is beginning to challenge the bourgeois organs of containment such as trade unions and capital's parties on the left. It is impossible to say whether we are at this time experiencing "years of truth", but the increasingly massive struggles of our class give us the responsibility, as a communist left, to intervene according to our forces to transform the struggles of despair without a future into the successful struggles of the international communist revolution. The time for the consolidation of the Communist Left approaches. An international and internationalist communist party is currently missing in our struggles.

In this vein, we leave the last word to the IFCL comrades concerning those in the proletarian camp who oppose regroupment and the party and those who have the ability to accelerate and facilitate the formation of the party:

"Basing ourselves on an immediate but nonetheless real observation of division and sectarianism, which strikes at groups claiming to be Left Communist, where we see these elements breaking with their organization and seeking "individual freedom" with their undeclared divergence with the political orientations that they had defended, some for decades within their organization, as in this case within the ICC."

"Finally, the proletarian camp in this situation, in which the two original currents ("Bordiguism" and the ICC) are no longer able to face their historical responsibility as poles of

reference and regroupment, the Internationalist Communist Tendency (ex-IBRP), the only organization with a real capacity for occupying and assuming this responsibility, somehow doesn't grasp the full importance and historical significance in this, preferring to stick to immediate certainties. Nevertheless, this organization succeeds every now and then in imposing itself in this very role, in directly regrouping around itself – which we commend and support – although at the same time it doesn't quite grasp the full dimensionality of resolute politics of "regroupment" around itself, since it sees its aim only in terms of immediate adhesion within its own ranks. Thus, it tends to underestimate, indeed to ignore, the other currents of the proletarian camp and the indispensable political struggles

against the opportunist drift developing within them, seeing this as sterile polemicising. Yet how many revolutionary elements in search of political clarification and coherence – which there will be even more of in the future fueled by the crisis and the inescapable response of workers struggles – could then refer and orientate themselves amongst the positions and groups if the ICT would assume the full dimension of the role that history offers it today. What a step forward for regroupment! »

May 16th, 2012

The Internationalist Communists – Klasbatalo



**Student struggle
and
Assemblies of neighbourhoods**



Internationalist Communists – Klasbatalo

The Student Struggle in Canada

The student struggle against tuition hikes which began in spring 2012 in Quebec wasn't a bolt out of the blue. Since the 2008 US financial crisis, the deteriorating economic situation has become increasingly global and international in nature.

This text won't go into precise chronology of the 2012 student strike. Instead, what we present is the political analysis of the struggle that unfolded last year. We intend this both as an assessment of the movement, as well as a preparatory tool for coming struggles.

Internationalist Communists-Klasbatalo, 2012.

To order this pamphlet write to this e-mail : intleftcom@gmail.com

Comrade Alberto's Death (Mexico)

It is with great sadness we have just learnt comrade Alberto's death, member of the ICC, then of the IFICC, late August 21st. For those among us who have known him, who had the honor and the privilege of fighting at his sides, our sorrow is considerable. We quickly recall the comrade's history and his important political role, even though discreet and unknown, all along these years on our web site : <http://www.igcl.org/spip.php?article37>.

Debate within the Proletarian Camp

Marxism is Proletarian and Revolutionary, Anarchism Has never Been...

We publish here extracts of a text of the *International Communist Bulletin* #6 of the IFCL (*Le marxisme est prolétarien et révolutionnaire, l'anarchisme ne l'a jamais été*) written in 2001. At the origin, this text was aiming at denouncing the opportunist openness of the ICC towards anarchism as political current and to recall the theoretical and principle opposition, the class opposition, between this one and Marxism as theoretical weapon and method of the proletariat. We have considered necessary this new publication for the reading of an article of the English group of the ICT, the Communist Workers Organization : Marxism and Anarchism. Even though this one doesn't go up to the openly opportunist approach of the ICC and to the giving up of the all time position of Marxism and the Communist Left, it opens the door to the idea that *"the course of anarchist and anarcho-syndicalist history politically has certain parallels with the course that Marxism has followed"*. The article hopes that we can end up understanding that *"the real divide is not so much between Marxism and Anarchism per se, but between those revolutionaries who see a future (...) without classes and without a state and those who claim the title of Marxist or Anarchist but either defend a distorted version of capitalism"* ; i.e. *"between revolutionaries and reformists"* of the two currents. As a result, the article presents the Stalinist, the Trotskists and the Maoists as reformist expressions of Marxism, which commit mistakes, in stead of denouncing them for their betrayal and break with Marxism²². And on the other hand, it rehabilitates the supposed revolutionary part of the anarchist political current while this one has showed all along history its bankruptcy from the proletarian point of view by systematically lining up behind... the bourgeois State whether during the imperialist wars or whether the revolutionary periods. **It is only by breaking with the theoretical and political positions of anarchism, and by joining the Marxist current**, that the sincere "anarchist" militants devoted to the proletariat's cause could participate, for instance, to the Russian Revolution side by side with the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and, for the most determined, by adhering to this one.

The concessions made by this article to anarchism have immediate and dangerous political consequences from the political point of view – we already noted it with the Stalinist and Trotskists classification as "reformist Marxists":

- *"There is no doubt that the Marxists have had the greater baggage to ditch in this respect"* of the State... while precisely the Marxist theory on State is not only unique but central in the Proletariat's theory! It is only because they don't have any more something in common with Marxism, because they became their opponents within the working class itself, that the Stalinist and Trotskist currents "don't understand the question of State";
- the article seems to support the political positions developed by the Left fraction of the Bolshevik Party in 1918, formed mainly by Bukharin and Radek, which, just a few weeks after the proletariat's seizure of power in Russia, was *"the first to condemn the direction of the revolution as heading towards state capitalism"* and which is above all known for having denounced the peace signed at Brest-Litovsk (1918) by the new workers power and Germany. We can't develop here on this question but just recall that the Communist Left, particularly the one called "Italian", – not because it would be an inviolable dogma but to come back and study why and how – has rightfully criticized, in continuity with Lenin, the "leftism" of this fraction and its political adventurism²².

For us, in the present historical situation (furthermore since the end of Stalinism, the fall of the USSR and the anti-communist campaigns), any theoretical and political concession of the Communist Left vis-a-vis the anarchist political current is particularly dangerous from the point of view of the proletariat as a whole as for the revolutionary camp. The anarchist ideology, because its anti-state themes, its apoliticism, its criticisms against Marxism, against the Russian Revolution and the Bolshevik Party, fully participates to the anti-communist campaigns and to the strengthening of the ideological offensive of the bourgeoisie against Marxism. To consider anarchism, even a supposed "revolutionary" or "internationalist" part of this one could make common cause with Marxism, indeed would be a "parallel" current to this one, represents a weakening of the theoretical and political fight against bourgeois ideology.

The groups of the Communist Left must maintain themselves on revolutionary Marxist ground by trying to *"(...) convince even the youngest that, in any circumstances, anarchism is only the synonym of reaction; and more honest are men and women who set themselves in this reactionary game, more tragic and dangerous it is for the whole movement of the working class"* (Eleanor Marx, 1895, translated by us from a Spanish version).

The IGCL, May 2014.

22 . The comrades can refer to the following statement of the IFCL, *The defense of the Proletarian Character of the October Revolution is still a class frontier !*, after the publication of the statements of Bukharin's fraction and, above all, the Preface which presents it, wrongly, as the first fraction of the Communist Left.

Marxism is Proletarian and Revolutionary, Anarchism has never been... (Extracts)

Let's recall first to the present ICC how Marx and Engels – one and a half century ago – considered necessary to lead the fight against anarchism, by its "exclusion" from the ranks of the international workers movement (at that time, the refusal of admission of Bakunin's International Alliance of Socialist Democracy) :

"The first phase of the proletariat's struggle against the bourgeoisie is marked by a sectarian movement. That is logical at a time when the proletariat has not yet developed sufficiently to act as a class. Certain thinkers criticize social antagonisms and suggest fantastic solutions thereof, which the mass of workers is left to accept, preach, and put into practice. The sects formed by these initiators are abstentionist by their very nature — i.e., alien to all real action, politics, strikes, coalitions, or, in a word, to any united movement. The mass of the proletariat always remains indifferent or even hostile to their propaganda. The Paris and Lyon workers did not want the St.-Simonists, the Fourierists, the Icarians, any more than the Chartists and the English trade unionists wanted the Owenites. These sects act as levers of the movement in the beginning, but become an obstruction as soon as the movement outgrows them; after which they become reactionary. Witness the sects in France and England, and lately the Lassalleans in Germany, who after having hindered the proletariat's organization for several years ended up becoming simple instruments of the police. To sum up, we have here the infancy of the proletarian movement, just as astrology and alchemy are the infancy of science. If the International were to be founded, it was necessary that the proletariat go through this phase.

Contrary to the sectarian organization, with their vagaries and rivalries, the International is a genuine and militant organization of the proletarian class of all countries, united in their common struggle against the capitalists and the landowners, against their class power organized in the state. The International's Rules, therefore, speak of only simple "workers' societies", all aiming for the same goal and accepting the same program, which presents a general outline of the proletarian movement, while having its theoretical elaboration to be guided by the needs of the practical struggle and the exchange of ideas in the sections, unrestrictedly admitting all shades of socialist convictions in their organs and Congresses.

Just as in every new historical phase old mistakes reappear momentarily only to disappear forthwith, so within the International there followed a resurrection of sectarian sections, though in a less obvious form.

The Alliance, which considers the resurrection of the sects a great step forward, is in itself conclusive proof that their time is over: for if initially they contained elements of progress, the program of the Alliance, in the tow of a "Mohammed without the Koran", is nothing but a heap of pompously worded ideas long since dead and capable only of frightening bourgeois idiots or serving as evidence to be used by the Bonapartist or other prosecutors against members of the International. (...)

Anarchy, then, is the great war horse of their master Bakunin, who has taken nothing from the socialist systems except a set of slogans. All socialists see anarchy as the following program:

Once the aim of the proletarian movement — i.e., abolition of classes — is attained, the power of the state, which serves to keep the great majority of producers in bondage to a very small exploiter minority, disappears, and the functions of government become simple administrative functions.

The Alliance draws an entirely different picture.

It proclaims anarchy in proletarian ranks as the most infallible means of breaking the powerful concentration of social and political forces in the hands of the exploiters. Under this pretext, it asks the International, at a time when the Old World is seeking a way of crushing it, to replace its organization with anarchy" (Fictitious Splits in the International, K. Marx and F. Engels, 1872, www.marxists.org).

As we can see, since Marx and Engels, the fight of Communism against Anarchism does not only refer to "its attitude in front of imperialist war" but also to all its program and goals which are regarded as **a reactionary utopia dressed up as ultra-radicalism**, and its methods of action and of "organization" as **belonging to an already historically overcome sectarianism**. Firstly, political abstentionism, i.e. the rejection of the political parties and activity defended by anarchism, tends to move the workers away from conscious revolutionary political struggle and to maintain them at the level of spontaneous resistance struggles. Secondly, all the anarchist "organizational" principles as federalism, autonomy or anti-authoritarianism, tend to provoke the disorganization and the dispersion of the proletarian forces and to undermine the working class' tendency to set up centralized organizations. Thirdly, finally the anarchist goal of immediate abolition of the state opposes to the imperious need that the proletariat seizes power (and thus that it prepares itself, fights for and organizes for this). So it leads proletariat's revolutionary struggle to a dead-end and it gives the bourgeoisie the possibility to reorganize and to defeat it. As Marx and Engels said, the introduction of the anarchist doctrine and methods in the workers ranks is the surest way to "eternalize" Capitalist state.

We can also see here in what consists Marx and Engels' "**real internationalism**": in the uncompromising defense of the International as "real and militant organization of the working class of all countries" which fights for the overthrow of all Capitalist states and for the establishment of the working class' political power (the dictatorship of the proletariat), in opposition to the "creators of sects", firstly the anarchists, who tend to reduce it. It means that, for revolutionary Marxism, proletarian internationalism has never been an abstract principle, nor even a simple declaration of being "against all states, all nations and against all imperialist wars". For Marxism, internationalism implies a concrete effort of the working class to organize itself at the international scale, to act in a united and centralized manner

at the international scale too, with the aim of world communist revolution. **These two concrete expressions of proletarian internationalism – the working class' centralized organization and the struggle for world communist revolution – through the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship, are antagonistic, opposed, to anarchism's foundations.**

Marx and Engels' analysis of the reactionary and disorganizing character of anarchism has not been only confirmed by the sabotage action of Bakunin's Alliance within the International, but also in the mass struggle of the proletariat. A significant example is the uprising of 1873 in Spain during which the anarchists, placed at the head of the proletariat, had the occasion to put into practice their positions and methods with disastrous results for the class. Engels, basing himself on a study which included the relations of the anarchists amongst them, makes them a caustic criticism. For the sake of brevity, we only present here the conclusions:

1) As soon as they were faced with a serious revolutionary situation, the Bakuninists had to throw the whole of their old programme overboard. First they sacrificed their doctrine of absolute abstention from political, and especially electoral, activities. Then anarchy, the abolition of the State, shared the same fate. Instead of abolishing the State they tried, on the contrary, to set up a number of new, small states. They then dropped the principle that the workers must not take part in any revolution that did not have as its aim the immediate and complete emancipation of the proletariat, and they themselves took part in a movement that was notoriously bourgeois. Finally they went against the dogma they had only just proclaimed -- that the establishment of a revolutionary government is but another fraud another betrayal of the working class -- for they sat quite comfortably in the juntas of the various towns, and moreover almost everywhere as an impotent minority outvoted and politically exploited by the bourgeoisie.

2) This renunciation of the principles they had always been preaching was made moreover in the most cowardly and deceitful manner and was prompted by a guilty conscience, so that neither the Bakuninists themselves nor the masses they led had any programme or knew what they wanted when they joined the movement. What was the natural consequence of this? It was that the Bakuninists either prevented any action from being taken, as in Barcelona, or drifted into sporadic, desultory and senseless uprisings, as in Alcoy and Sanlúcar de Barrameda; or that the leadership of the uprising was taken over by the intransigent bourgeois, as was the case in most of the revolts. Thus, when it came to doing things, the ultra-revolutionary rantings of the Bakuninists either turned into appeasement or into uprisings that were doomed to failure, or, led to their joining a bourgeois party which exploited the workers politically in the most disgraceful manner and treated them to kicks into the bargain.

3) Nothing remains of the so-called principles of anarchy, free federation of independent groups, etc., but the boundless, and senseless fragmentation of the revolutionary resources, which enabled the government to conquer one city after

another with a handful of soldiers, practically unresisted.

4) The outcome of all this is that not only have the once so well organized and numerous Spanish sections of the International -- both the false and the true ones -- found themselves involved in the downfall of the Intransigents and are now actually dissolved, but are also having ascribed to them innumerable atrocities, without which the philistines of all nationalities cannot imagine a workers' uprising, and this may make impossible, perhaps for years to come, the international re-organization of the Spanish proletariat.

*5) In a word, the Bakuninists gave us in Spain an unsurpassable example of the way a revolution can't be done" (F. Engels, *The Bakuninists at Work*, 1873, www.marxists.org, point 5 doesn't appear in the marxist.org English version, thus translated by us).*

Engels describes the anarchists' action which has repeated, in great lines, every time throughout history. At the head of a real mass movement, the anarchists see themselves obliged to leave aside, or to reverse into their opposite, the principles of their utopian program : political abstentionism is converted to a political intervention without direction, nor precise objectives ; state abolition is converted to a formation of multiple small states ; anti-authoritarianism to dispersal of the movement ; finally, the lack of concrete goals brings them to stand behind the well-organized Capitalist forces, to adhere to any bourgeois party and to participate in bourgeois government.

The very tragedy the proletariat in Spain suffered in 1873, tormented between the bourgeois parties and anarchism, repeated in 1936, but much worse. At that time, in full Stalinist counter-revolution, in the midst of the deepest defeat suffered by the proletariat in all its history, anarchism – especially anarcho-syndicalism – knew a new impetus and succeeded to enlist the large masses in various countries. It is not surprising if we consider that anarchism has the role of recruitment of the proletariat and the peasants behind the bourgeoisie. It is precisely what it started doing again in Spain. United with the chorus of the bourgeois "republicans" and Stalinist, they tried to maintain the myth of the "Spanish Revolution", the ICC (our "old" ICC) used to say that the anarchists "*find it hard to swallow the behavior of the most important organization in the history of anarchism, which had the most determining influence on the working class of a whole country: the Spanish CNT. It is obviously difficult to lay claim to the tradition of an organization which, after years of propaganda for "direct action", of denouncing any kind of participation in the bourgeois political game of parliamentarism, of fiery speeches against the state in all its forms, found nothing better to do in 1936 than to send four ministers to the bourgeois government of the Spanish Republic and several councilors to the Catalan Generalitat. In May 1937, when the Barcelona workers rose against the government's police (controlled by the Stalinists), these anarchist ministers called on them to lay down their arms and "fraternize" with their executioners. In other words, they stabbed the workers in the back*" (ICC, Spain 1936 and the Friends of Durruti, *International Review* #102, 2000, http://en.internationalism.org/ir/102_durruti.htm).

So, the passage of the anarchist organizations to the Capital's

camp is not, strictly speaking, a "betrayal" of "genuine proletarian internationalism". **It is rather a "natural" trajectory to which are condemned the anarchist organizations because of the petit-bourgeois utopian character given by their own program and their own methods of action and "organization"**.

In the "Period of Wars and Revolutions", Anarchism Found its Place: At the Service of the Bourgeois Class

The period of the international proletarian revolutionary wave – which really begun with the 1905 Russian Revolution and found its highest and triumphant expression with the October 1917 one – marks a definitive turn in the history of anarchism: the one of its historical bankruptcy as independent, "parallel", current fighting in front of Marxism to set up itself as proletariat's class consciousness, as ideology of the proletarian revolution.

*"The Russian Revolution, which is the first historical experiment on the model of the class strike, not merely does not afford a vindication of anarchism, but actually means the historical liquidation of anarchism. (...) But the fatherland of Bakunin was to become the burial-place of his teachings. Not only did and do the anarchists in Russia not stand at the head of the mass strike movement; not only does the whole political leadership of revolutionary action and also of the mass strike lie in the hands of the social democratic organizations, which are bitterly opposed as "bourgeois parties" by Russian anarchists, or partly in the hands of such socialist organizations as are more or less influenced by the social democracy and more or less approximate to it (...) but the anarchists simply do not exist as a serious political tendency in the Russian Revolution. (...) What is the actual role of anarchism in the Russian Revolution? It has become the sign of the common thief and plunderer; a large proportion of the innumerable thefts and acts of plunder of private persons are carried out under the name of "anarchist-communism" – acts which rise up like a troubled wave against the revolution in every period of depression and in every period of temporary defensive. **Anarchism has become in the Russian Revolution, not the theory of the struggling proletariat, but the ideological signboard of the counterrevolutionary lumpen-proletariat, who, like a school of sharks, swarm in the wake of the battleship of the revolution. And therewith the historical career of anarchism is well-nigh ended**" (Rosa Luxemburg, The Mass Strike, 1906, www.marxists.org).*

The 1917 Revolution confirms this historical liquidation of anarchism. Indeed, Marxism and anarchism had two objectives, two different "proposals" for the "day following" the bourgeoisie's overthrow. Marxism stressed the necessity for the proletariat to assume the political power in order to overcome the resistance of Capital (the Dictatorship of the Proletariat); on the contrary, anarchism wanted "to abolish at once any form of state". **Real life, the class struggle, has proven Marxism right: the proletarian revolution had led to the establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, i.e. the violent seizure of power by the proletariat organized in workers councils (centralized organization of the class) and politically led by the revolutionary Marxist**

party (the Bolsheviks).

Thus, the 1917 Revolution has been the antithesis of all anarchism's predictions. It threw to the dustbin of history all the anarchist arsenal: its theoretical and political foundations (individualism, social contract), its declared objectives ("the immediate abolition of the state"), its methods of disorganization (federalism, autonomism, individual terrorist action). The Russian Revolution provoked the explosion of the inherent contradictions of anarchism which had been denounced by Marxism for decades (apoliticism, negation of the necessity of the seizure of political power by the proletariat, rejection of the class organization, etc.). All this led to the fact this current didn't actually take any role in the seizure of power by the proletariat (which the very anarchists themselves don't cease to bitterly acknowledge in their narratives on the Russian Revolution. Some "consistent" anarchists even opposed the revolution and the workers councils. The others had no other path than to "support", to march behind the revolution. The proletarian revolution led by the Bolshevik Party dragged along behind it the anarchists and the masses who were still influenced by anarchism (especially the peasants); and in Russia, as everywhere in the whole world (up to Mexico), the anarchists saluted the beginning of the Russian Revolution and the Bolsheviks thus recognizing the rightness of their action.

Yet, today, in a recent series of articles on anarchism (...), the present ICC presents a completely different point of view. According to the ICC :

*"The outbreak of the Russian revolution stirred up an enormous enthusiasm. The revolutionary movement of the working class and the victorious insurrection of October 1917 led the proletarian currents of anarchism to identify with it explicitly. The most fruitful contribution of the anarchists to the revolutionary process in Russia was concretised by their collaboration with the Bolsheviks. Internationally, **the political convergence of the internationalist anarchists with communism and the Bolsheviks was further strengthened**" (Anarchism and imperialist war, World Revolution #325, June 2009, we underline).*

Thus, instead of clearly stating that anarchism has been historically "defeated" in the Russian Revolution, that the anarchists didn't participated to the seizure of power by the proletariat in Russia and that, as far as they adhered to the movement, they only did it by giving up their anarchist point of view and by adopting some aspects of Marxism – in particular, the recognition of the necessity of the Proletariat's Dictatorship –, the present ICC exposes things completely upside down : as if anarchism had "driven" or "brought" something to the revolution; almost as if the Russian Revolution had been the product of the political "convergence" between anarchism and Bolshevism! This rough distortion of history is not but an opportunist concession of the present ICC to the anarchists, particularly to those who claim today the soviets (the councils) appeared in Russia as if they had been an expression and a product of anarchism. While, actually the workers councils as executive and centralized organization set up to the seizure of power are the direct antithesis of federalism, of autonomism, of political

abstentionism and of the "abolitionism" peculiar to anarchism.

Anarchism was historically liquidated from the 1917 Revolution but, paradoxically, it has not disappeared. On the contrary, one more time, it began again "to rise from the ashes". Why? As it happened throughout the workers movement's history, the resurgence of anarchism has been the fulcrum for the maintenance of the class struggle conditions which saw its birth, i.e. the proletarianization of the petit-bourgeois stratas which introduce their individualist class point of view within the workers movement and the existence of masses of peasants and workers particularly young or politically backward "inclined - as said Eleanor Marx – to take words for deeds, high-sounding phrases for acts, mere sound and fury for revolutionary activity"²³. But, moreover, and it is not the fundamental aspect, the wave of international revolution having withdrawn, the revival of anarchism is not due to its "ultra-radical" utopian theories, nor to its organizational intrigues, but mainly for having clung to the victory of the Stalinist counter-revolution and, more generally, to the ideological victories and domination of the bourgeoisie upon the proletariat; for having converted in "the last wheel of the coach" of the bourgeoisie (which, after all, is nothing else but the expression of its historical bankruptcy).

After the seizure of power by the proletariat in Russia, the Marxist communists clearly understood that the fate of the proletarian revolution was in its capacity to victoriously spread to other countries, particularly those of capitalism's "heart" of Western Europe. And so, they understood – by analyzing the growing difficulties to which the revolution came up against and by criticizing the Bolsheviks' mistakes – that, whatever would be the final outcome of this battle between the two antagonistic classes, the Russian Revolution would remain forever as the historical and practical proof of the proletariat's possibility and capacity to overthrow capitalist state, to set up its own power, and to open up a period towards the definitive elimination of capitalism and communism's building up. The Russian Revolution opened for the world proletariat a perspective in which its movement had to engage, a method to follow and a form of organization.

"The fate of the revolution in Russia depended fully upon international events. That the Bolsheviks have based their policy entirely upon the world proletarian revolution is the clearest proof of their political far-sightedness and firmness of principle and of the bold scope of their policies...."

What is in order is to distinguish the essential from the non-essential, the kernel from the accidental excrescences in the politics of the Bolsheviks. In the present period, when we face decisive final struggles in all the world, the most important problem of socialism was and is the burning question of our time. It is not a matter of this or that secondary question of tactics, but of the capacity for action of the proletariat, the strength to act, the will to power of socialism as such. In this, Lenin and Trotsky and their friends were the first, those who went ahead as an example to the proletariat of the world; they are still the only ones up to now who can cry with Hutten: "I have dared!"

23 . Préface to Plenajov's Anarchism and Socialism English translation, 1875.

This is the essential and enduring in Bolshevik policy. In this sense theirs is the immortal historical service of having marched at the head of the international proletariat with the conquest of political power and the practical placing of the problem of the realization of socialism, and of having advanced mightily the settlement of the score between capital and labor in the entire world. In Russia, the problem could only be posed. It could not be solved in Russia. And in this sense, the future everywhere belongs to "Bolshevism." (Rosa Luxemburg, *The Russian Revolution*, 1918, www.marxists.org).

And actually, although the proletariat made heroic efforts in many countries to extend revolution, the defeat of the movement in Germany – where the main proletarian detachment was concentrated – provoked a reversal in the course of the events, opening a counter-revolutionary course which led progressively to the degeneracy of the Communist Parties and of the revolution in Russia which, in the middle of the 1920's, ended up by the establishment of the Stalinist regime. Anyway, from this moment on, **the defense of the 1917 Revolution** as highest practical realization – up to then – of the proletarian revolution, as "model" from which the proletariat will have to restart its revolutionary movement (of course by overcoming its limits and mistakes) practically converted into a **class frontier**. That is why, for instance, the acceptance of *"the October Revolution as proletarian revolution"* was one of the criteria for the participation to the conferences of the Communist Left at the end of the years 1970. And, obviously, this defense includes too the admission of the necessity of the political leadership of a world party of the revolutionary Marxist vanguard:

*"The organization of revolutionaries (whose most advanced form is the party) is the necessary organ with which the class equips itself to become conscious of its historic future and to politically orient the struggle for this future. For this reason **the existence and activity of the party are an indispensable condition for the final victory of the proletariat.** (...) The necessarily world-wide and centralized character of the proletarian revolution confers the same world-wide and centralized character on the party of the working class, and the fractions and groups who lay the basis of the party necessarily tend towards a world-wide centralization"* (International Communist Current's political Platform, 1976, underlined by us).

Here again, we see the concrete expression of proletarian internationalism but in an even higher phase of the movement. According to the old ICC and to Marxism in general, the world and centralized nature of the revolution endows the party with this same world and centralized character. In this sense, revolutionary Marxism – from then on represented only by the groups of the Communist Left which appeared in front of the degeneracy of the Communist International – had to include amongst its tasks the pursuit of the permanent fight against anarchism in order to extract, keep and defend the experiences of the revolutionary wave. Even though this fight was faced with more difficult and disadvantageous conditions as far as anarchism could take advantage and would receive direct support from the monstrous ideological campaigns of the bourgeoisie aiming at crushing, mystifying and erasing Marxism, the Russian

Revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat from the proletarian masses memory; i.e. all of which had really and effectively threatened capitalism's survival itself if only for a short period.

Thus, with the reflux of the revolutionary wave, the anarchists forgot their "sympathies" (their "convergences" as says the present ICC) towards Marxism and Bolshevism as quickly as they had declared them previously. In particular, instead of assimilating the "key" for the proletarian movement's future, i.e. the understanding of the impossibility for the proletariat in power to resist for long in one country and thus, however, the necessity for spreading revolution to the international scale, the anarchists took out again from their dustbins their old stuff against "authoritarianism" and "centralization" (i.e. against the class' organization), on the "dangers of all parties" (in the first place the revolutionary communist parties) and on the harmful character of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" (whose example would be... the Russian Revolution!) which would not be but actually the dictatorship of some bourgeois-Jacobin-authoritarians such as Lenin and Trotsky, opposed to the councils (these being a prototype of anarchism). On this ground, anarchism is nothing but the echo of the furious bourgeois campaign to bring disgrace and discredit revolution.

Finally, during the Second World War, the anarchist current, the majority of its different groups, adopted a "social-patriot" attitude, i.e. it participated actively in war... side by side with "their" own bourgeoisies. That was nothing else but the reaffirmation that anarchism had integrated the capital's camp and that, in relation to its forces, it led the proletariat into the imperialist butchery. It is from this time that the reduced and weak publications of the surviving Communist Left in this dark period (such as *Bilan* and *Internationalisme*) did not stop their permanent fight, despite all difficulties, to denounce and also to distinguish themselves from the anarchists' activity of that epoch.

"It was during the discussion about the groups to be invited to the next conferences that we were able to bring out the social-patriotic role of the anarchist movement during the 1939-45 war, in spite of its hollow revolutionary phraseology. We also pointed out that its participation in the partisan struggle for "national and democratic liberation" in France, in Italy and even today in Spain is a logical continuation of its participation in the bourgeois "republican and anti-fascist" government and in the imperialist war in Spain in 1936-38. Our position that the anarchist movement, as well as the Trotskyists and any other tendency that participated in the imperialist war in the name of the defense of a nation state (the defense of Russia) or of one form of bourgeois

domination against another (the defense of the Republic or of democracy against fascism) has no place in a conference of revolutionary groups, was supported by the majority of the participant" (An international conference of revolutionary groups, *Internationalisme* #23, Gauche communiste de France, 1947, reproduced in the ICC *International Review* #132).

Again, we see here that it is not a simple "drift" or a "betrayal" of internationalism by some anarchist elements or groups – as makes believe the present ICC – but an historical process of passage of the whole current, of the anarchist movement **to the camp of capital**, through a series of events of world historical importance (as in 1936-1939 in Spain as well as its participation to the Resistance in the countries occupied by Germany, etc...): its participation to bourgeois governments, its participation in the crushing of the proletarian insurrection and, finally, its participation in the enlistment of the proletariat to world imperialist war.

(...) Fraction of the International Communist Left, 2011.

Against the idealistic and opportunist theories of the ICC, read the pamphlet of the ex-Internal Fraction of the ICC !



To order this pamphlet (only in French and Spanish) write to this e-mail : intleftcom@gmail.com

Reader's Correspondence

Struggle against Opportunism : About the New Organizational Crisis of the ICC

We publish here after a political contribution of a sympathizer about the internal crisis of the ICC and our public "Call" to the Proletarian Camp at that matter. Besides the critical analysis of the present situation of the ICC whose great lines we share, the comrade opens the debate on "should we have intervened publicly" in front such an internal crisis or rather consider it as a "private affair" and keep silence on it ? The comrade supports the political choice and practice of the whole opposition to the rising Stalinism within the Communist Parties in the 1920's : "We will be told too this: you make a counter-revolutionary job by displaying publicly the decline of your party. To this sophism, we respond the following : the counter-revolutionaries are those who have made the Party what it is, who set up a scandal that can only be eliminated if it is denounced" (*Bulletin communiste* #6, Nov. 1925, translated by us from French).

The IGCL, June 2014

About the New Organizational Crisis of the ICC

The International Communist Current fades away, dies out inescapably, as revolutionary organization. It doesn't come from a giving up or an open betrayal of its revolutionary program. It is true that the ICC presents more theoretical and political stupidities – in particular from its "theory of social decomposition". But here it is not a question of definitive and abrupt jump into the bourgeois camp as it occurred, for instance, with the Socialist Parties of the Second International in 1914 at the beginning of the First World War (even if we must remember that this jump of the Social democracy into the bourgeois camp took place after a prolonged period of opportunism degeneration).

In the case of the ICC, on the contrary it is a question of a slow process of internal degeneration, of an involution of a revolutionary and militant organization, which claims to defend the legacy of the Communist Left, towards an "end of world" stalinized sect which now gets to its end. A watchful reader can find manifestations of this involution in the very publications of the Current. Let's take, at random, a recent example : the article *100 years of capitalist decadence*. The objective of this article would be to underline the historical alternative in front which is capitalism : proletarian revolution or new generalized imperialist war which is also summarized as "socialism or barbarity". However, very quickly, the article becomes an apocalyptic prophecy, of *a increasing social putrefaction, of a moral destruction and a generalized stupefying of humanity* (sic) in a description of a world converted in Sodom and Gomorrah and in which the ICC remains the last cubbyhole (itself threatened too by the atomization and the lack of perspectives) of conservation of human morality as the last hope capable of *touching the working class's heart*. It suffices to read some passages to verify that we don't exaggerate :

"(...) Still less has this been the case since the emergence of class society and the first great civilizations, all of which have long disappeared: only a very few of them have been able to transform themselves into something new. History reveals to us many epochs of cultural regression, the loss of skills and knowledge, generally accompanied by moral stultification and a brutalization of human relationships. (...) In this situation, where neither of its two determining classes are capable of imposing a decisive response to an

irreversible and ever deeper economic crisis, society is more and more rotting where it stands; a growing social decomposition makes it ever more difficult for the working class to achieve a clear awareness of its historical perspective – a historical perspective which a century ago was widely shared in the workers' ranks (...). Even in the face of general stultification, a moral indignation arises in the heart of the working class, which gives us our bearings today. The working class suffers with the rest of humanity under the burden of decadence. Atomization and the absence of perspective for the future attack our very identity" (ICC, *100 years of capitalist decadence*, January 2014, we underline, <http://en.internationalism.org/internationalreview/201401/9437/100-years-capitalist-decadence>).

Nevertheless, this mixture between Marxism and the "end of the world" morality is just only an indication of the situation in which the ICC lives in internally. As any sect, what is published and known by the external world is not but the emerged part of the iceberg and, as in the other sects, ever more withdrawn into itself, it is through a leak that we can have a clear idea of the stunning degree of the organizational degeneration and searisation to which the ICC arrived today. It is what clearly shows the Appeal of the International Group of the Communist Left, *A new (final?) Internal crisis in the ICC!*²⁴, (April 28th 2014).

This communique has provoked the immediate and violent reaction of the ICC which accuses the IGCL members nothing less than working for the state service secret. Obviously such a response was predictable. Thus what was the objective of the IGCL by making public this new internal crisis of the ICC ? Why provoking the ICC ? Would not it have been better that this group, although having such informations, just shrugs its shoulders and lets quietly the ICC "simmering in its own juice" as the majority of the ex-members of the ICC presently does ? This attitude would even be justified since the IGCL, recently set up, doesn't claim – as was doing one of its present components – to be "fraction" of the ICC.

24 . See the IGCL website : www.fractioncommuniste.org (English pages : www.fractioncommuniste.org/index_eng.php).

On the contrary, we have to support the communique and the call of the IGCL. We must acknowledge the militant courage and decision of the IGCL comrades for having published – while knowing the risks – the communique about the internal crisis of the ICC and for having underlined its political importance. The fact that **the internal crisis of the ICC overtakes the only ICC : it is a problem that – objectively – affects the whole militants and groups who claim themselves to be of the Communist Left camp**, and even that it affects the future of the working class movement.

Because the ICC carries on claiming to be the heir of the historical positions of the Communist Left (CL). And not only that : every time with more insistence, the ICC claims to be – indeed, that's another signal of its sectarian degeneration – the *only* organization of the Communist Left in all the world in front of which the rest of the militants and groups who claim this political camp would succumb to the ruling immorality and would be pure opportunists, parasites, traitors and policemen. This determines an objective confrontation – that is whether it is conscious or not – between two political and organizational conceptions of the function and the functioning of the working class's organization political vanguard : party of political leadership or sect of moral renovation. At the moment, it is necessary to consider that the ICC is, amongst the groups which claim the Communist Left, the most extended organization at the international level and which carries on to absorb militant forces in its own ranks, militants who have no other possibilities to know an organization of the Communist Left but through the sectarian and deformed functioning of the ICC. That is this organization has converted itself, today, into a force of sterilization of revolutionary energies. That's why the militants and the "old" groups of the Communist Left must defend the existence and the formation of these too few militants who approach the Communist Left orbit.

But besides, the militants and groups of the Communist Left have to learn of the historical experience : a revolutionary organization can collapse not only as a result of an open confrontation with the bourgeoisie, not only as a result of repression, but also from a process which develops within it. And even, a revolutionary organization can collapse not only from an unbearable historical social upheaval (as for the First World War for the Socialist Parties of the Second International, or from the world counter-revolution for those of the Communist International) but also by the incapacity of

withstanding during a long period, various decades, the pressure of bourgeois ideology. This can't express, at least not only, in the political mistakes or in the formal giving up of the programmatic positions, but above all in **the dislocation of its internal functioning**. So, already, during the 1980's, the organization of the Communist Left which, at its time, was also the most extended at the international level, the ICP (of the so-called "bordiguist" current) exploded. Today, another international proletarian organization, with another political program, and another conception of functioning, the ICC is **too collapsing in an irreversible way from its inside**, degenerating into a sect which reproduces the methods of Stalinist functioning, methods which are antagonistic to the revolutionary organization and to the proletariat. Thus is not it important that the present camp of the Communist Left determines what process and what circumstances have led to this situation ? How to prevent and avoid for the future a similar fate for the revolutionary organization which is to guide the proletariat in the decisive confrontations ? It seems to us that this is in the sense that takes all its importance the call of the IGCL comrades to the whole proletarian camp and to which we modestly join :

*"Like it or not, this ICC crisis and its consequences will still be a blow to the credibility of the Communist Left and a blow to all its organizations, participating in the weakening of the political convictions and communist commitments of militants and sympathizers. Like it or not, while we are on the same side of the class barricade, we have to learn to live with our differences, try to question and discuss, and where possible to overcome them; but again it is necessary that we see ourselves as as belonging to the same camp. In this the umpteenth ICC's crisis that is certainly the one in which it will sclerose forever, **two opposing historical forces that go far beyond the fate of this organization are beginning to face off: one to sabotage and annihilate the whole process of unity and consolidation of the communist political vanguard; while the other tries to fight the former and impose an inverse dynamic. Which trend will prevail over the other, what dynamics will prevail over the others in the communist left?** Fundamentally, it's a fight to the death, on the level of communist minorities, between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. This is what is at issue and it affects everyone!" (A new (final?) **Internal crisis in the ICC!**, IGCL, www.fractioncommuniste.org).*

Alex, May 2014

OUR POSITIONS

- Since World War 1, capitalism has been a decadent social system which has nothing to offer the working class and humanity as a whole except cycles of crises, wars and reconstructions. Its irreversible historical decay poses the single alternative for humanity : **socialism or barbarism.**
- The Paris Commune of 1871 was the first attempt by the proletariat to carry out this revolution, in a period when the conditions for it were not yet ripe. Once these conditions had been provided by the onset of capitalist decadence, the October revolution of 1917 in Russia was the first step towards an authentic world communist revolution in an international revolutionary wave which put an end to the imperialist war and went on for several years after that. The failure of this revolutionary wave, particularly in Germany in 1919-23, condemned the revolution in Russia to isolation and to a rapid degeneration. Stalinism was not the product of the Russian revolution, but its gravedigger.
- The stratified regimes which arose in the USSR, eastern Europe, China, Cuba, etc., and were called 'socialist' or 'communist' were just a particularly brutal form of the universal tendency towards state capitalism, itself a major characteristic of the period of decadence.
- Since the beginning of the 20th century, all wars are imperialist wars, part of the deadly struggle between states large and small to conquer or retain a place in the international arena. These wars bring nothing to humanity but death and destruction on an ever-increasing scale. The working class can only respond to them through its international solidarity and by struggling against the bourgeoisie in all countries.
- All the nationalist ideologies 'national independence', 'the right of nations to self-determination', etc. whatever their pretext, ethnic, historical or religious, are a real poison for the workers. By calling on them to take the side of one or another faction of the bourgeoisie, the divide workers and lead them to massacre each other in the interests and wars of their exploiters.
- In decadent capitalism, parliament and elections are nothing but a masquerade. Any call to participate in the parliamentary circus can only reinforce the lie that presents these elections as a real choice for the exploited. 'Democracy', a particularly hypocritical form of the domination of the bourgeoisie, does not differ at root from other forms of capitalist dictatorship, such as stalinism and fascism.
- All factions of the bourgeoisie are equally reactionary. All the so-called 'workers', 'Socialist', and 'Communist' parties (now ex-Communists), the leftist organisations (Trotskyists, Maoists, anarchists) constitute the left of capitalism's political apparatus. All the tactics of 'popular fronts', 'anti-fascist fronts' and 'united fronts', which mix up the interests of the proletariat with those of a faction of the bourgeoisie, serve only to smother and derail the struggle of the proletariat.
- With the decadence of capitalism, the unions everywhere have been transformed into organs of capitalist order within the proletariat. The various forms of union organisation, whether 'official' or 'rank and file', serve only to discipline the working class and sabotage its struggles.
- In order to advance its combat, the working class has to unify its struggles, taking charge of their extension and organisation through sovereign general assemblies and committees of delegates elected and revocable at any time by these assemblies.
- Terrorism is in no way a method of struggle for the working class. The expression of social strata with no historic future and of the decomposition of the petty bourgeoisie, when it's not the direct expression of the permanent war between capitalist

states, terrorism has always been a fertile soil for manipulation by the bourgeoisie. Advocating secret action by small minorities, it is in complete opposition to class violence, which derives from conscious and organised mass action by the proletariat.

- The working class is the only class which can carry out the communist revolution. Its revolutionary struggle will inevitably lead the working class towards a confrontation with the capitalist state. In order to destroy capitalism, the working class will have to overthrow all existing states and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat on a world scale: the international power of the workers' councils, regrouping the entire proletariat.
- The communist transformation of society by the workers' councils does not mean 'self-management' or the nationalisation of the economy. Communism requires the conscious abolition by the working class of capitalist social relations: wage labour, commodity production, national frontiers. It means the creation of a world community in which all activity is oriented towards the full satisfaction of human needs.
- The revolutionary political organisation constitutes the vanguard of the working class and is an active factor in the generalisation of class consciousness within the proletariat. Its role is neither to 'organise the working class' nor to 'take power' in its name, but to participate actively in the movement towards the unification of struggles, towards workers taking control of them for themselves, and at the same time to draw out the revolutionary political goals of the proletariat's combat.

OUR ACTIVITY

- Political and theoretical clarification of the goals and methods of the proletarian struggle, of its historic and its immediate conditions.
- Organised intervention, united and centralised on an international scale, in order to contribute to the process which leads to the revolutionary action of the proletariat.
- The regroupment of revolutionaries with the aim of constituting a real world communist party, which is indispensable to the working class for the overthrow of capitalism and the creation of a communist society.

OUR ORIGINS

The positions and activity of revolutionary organisations are the product of the past experiences of the working class and of the lessons that its political organisations have drawn throughout its history.

The IGCL thus traces its origins to the successive contributions of the Communist League of Marx and Engels (1847-52), the three Internationals (the International Workingmen's Association, 1864-72, the Socialist International, 1884-1914, the Communist International, 1919-28), the left fractions which detached themselves from the degenerating Third International in the years 1920-30, in particular the German, Dutch and Italian Lefts, and the groups of the Communist Left which had specially developed in the 1970 and 1980 and which were stemming from these fractions