

# REVOLUTION or WAR

## #4

Journal of the International Group of the Communist Left (IGCL)  
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## ***Call on Support***

We thank our readers who understand and support our activity through written, material or financial contributions, as well as by other means. Publishing, printing and mailing costs of our review represent a large financial effort, given our limited resources.

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).

### **Merkel, Hollande, Obama, Tsipras...**

#### **Each one Utilizes Bourgeois Democracy in Their Own Way Against the Proletariat**

**O**n October 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> 2011 in Athens, the working class was massively mobilized in Syntagma square against the austerity measures taken by the Greek Socialist government and state. It took the brutal intervention of the militia of the Greek Stalinist party KKE to prevent the demonstrators from invading the Parliament and blocking the Deputies' vote. On July 5<sup>th</sup> 2015 after the referendum, the “people” came to demonstrate in Syntagma square to support Tsipras' government bearing even more severe austerity measures than the ones adopted in 2011 and which have still been worsened at the Eurozone summit of July 12<sup>th</sup>.

In 2011, the Greek proletariat was showing the path to follow for the whole world proletariat after the bursting of the open crisis in 2008. In 2015, the national unity realized against the European diktats and thanks to the democratic virtues of the referendum, the so-called sovereign expression of the people, shows the path that the international bourgeoisie wants to take to impose a major defeat on the revolutionary class at the international level.

The utilization of the democratic mystification – which led to the end of the former Egyptian, Tunisian, Libyan, etc., dictators – had already succeeded to extinguish the movement of working class revolt during the “Arab Spring”. It has been likewise with the movement of the “indignados” – with the slogan *¡ Democracia ya !* (Democracy Now !) – in Spain which has formed today a “radical leftist” bourgeois political party with Podemos, ally of Syriza. The dead-end of the unions' Days of Action in the other main European countries has come to complete the smothering of these first struggles against the capitalist crisis opened in 2008. The Greek proletariat ended up isolated very quickly, without enough support from the other parts of the international proletariat, without immediate perspective, to be able to keep the energy it had manifested from 2008 to 2011. Even so, it was still important for the Greek and European bourgeoisies to force and derail as much as possible the workers from the defence of their living conditions, that is their class interests, and to push this advantage by imposing a political defeat and by erasing the experience of the previous years. This is the particular task of Syriza in objective link and coordination with the rest of the European ruling class, which allocates roles between the bad cops – the Troika and the European governments – and the good cops... the Syriza government and its austerity measures as severe and dramatic as the ones promoted by Europe, supported by the so-called radical European Left whose first ranks are occupied by Podemos of course, but also

Die Linke (Germany), le Front de Gauche (France), etc.

The political offensive is not only directed against the workers in Greece. Far from it. It is also directed against the proletarians of the whole world and above all of the central countries of capitalism. The great January 11<sup>th</sup> 2015 demonstration in Paris after the assassinations at the *Charlie Hebdo* newspaper, the racist PEGIDA demonstrations in Germany and above all their counter-demonstrations, were the signal that the capitalist class had decided to drag and mobilize in the streets around the defence of the state, the nation and democracy. The organization of demonstrations of support to Syriza in the main European cities as well as in other continents, particularly in North America (around the International Socialist Organisation in United States and Québec Solidaire in Canada for instance) has confirmed this willingness through the adaptation of this general policy to the immediate situation with a false play of opposition between the left and right, anti-austerity, indeed anti-capitalist, against the right so-called neo-liberalism.

The Syntagma square demonstration of last July 5<sup>th</sup> is the bourgeois response to the working class demonstration against the state and its Parliament of October 20<sup>th</sup> 2011. It goes the same with the street demonstrations in the United States after the successive racist and murderous police provocations of the last year. They constitute a bourgeois reaction, under the cover of supporting Obama's federal government behind the slogan of a “non-racist and democratic police”, which responds to the distrust and the anger which are increasing against the governments and states as was, for instance, expressed in México after the massacre of students in Guerrero, through the popular and workers demonstrations and revolts, massive and persistent, against the police, the justice, the government, the left as well as right parties; in brief against the state. Or still as response to the massive mobilizations and strikes in Brazil before and during the soccer world cup.

The economic crisis of capitalism and imperialist wars can't but increase even more. We are only at the beginning of this political and ideological confrontation in which the capitalist class, by adapting its offensive and its mystifications to the national situations, aims to derail the growing anger against misery, repression and wars, that is against capitalism, on to the terrain of defence of democracy and the nation. The stakes are huge :

- either the international working class will increasingly assert the defence of its class interests, the defence of its living conditions, and will oppose the political forces of

capital, right and extreme-right, left, so-called radical left and the unions;

- or it'll let itself be led on to the terrain of capitalist democracy and the defence of the state and nation under one form or another.

In the first case, it will not only succeed to defend itself at the immediate level and to limit the worsening of its living conditions but above all it'll open another perspective for itself and the whole of humanity: the perspective of a society without misery and without war. In the second case, that of the Syntagma demonstration post-referendum, of the demonstrations in Baltimore and other American cities, of January 11<sup>th</sup> in Paris, it will let itself be led on to its class enemy's terrain and will end up suffering political and bloody physical defeats in false dichotomies which don't concern it at all and are traps. Is this not what the 1936 Spanish war teaches us? Behind the defence of bourgeois democracy hides the international working class's defeat and the outbreak of a 3<sup>rd</sup> imperialist world war.

The first thing to do is to strongly reject bourgeois democracy in all its aspects. For the proletarians, not doing so implies defending the enemy class's interests,

thus those of capitalism.

To the defence of bourgeois interests, that is of capitalism, we must oppose the defence of the proletarians' living conditions. To national unity, that is the submission to the capitalist class, we must oppose the international unity of the revolutionary proletariat. To the defence of democracy, that is the dictatorship of capitalist class, we must oppose the massive organisation of the proletariat in general assemblies, strike committees and workers councils. To the defence of the capitalist state, that is its laws, its police and its political forces, we must oppose the geographical spreading and unification of the working class struggles so that we end up destroying this system which does not offer anything but misery and death.

IGCL, July 13<sup>th</sup> 2015

PS. We invite our readers to read also the statement of the Internationalist Communist Tendency *Greece - Solidarity with the Workers not the Capitalist Government!* whose position and political orientations we essentially share : <http://www.leftcom.org/en/articles/2015-07-10/greece-solidarity-with-the-workers-not-the-capitalist-government>.



**Athens in 2011**



**Athens in July 2015**

**Left in 2011** : a massive demonstration on Syntagma square in Athens, in front of the Parliament, against the austerity measures. There is no Greek flag and the demonstrators tend to oppose Capitalist state.

**Right, July 5<sup>th</sup> 2015** : the night of the “No” victory at the Tsipras’ government referendum : the Greek flag is every where and the demonstrators support the government and Capitalist state.

### **New Postal address**

**We have a postal address :**

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## International Situation

In this section on the international situation, we mainly deal with the question of struggle between classes and leave aside the monitoring and the analysis of the evolution of the economic crisis of capital and imperialist rivalries and wars. Amongst the three main factors which determine the world historical situation of capitalist society, class struggle is the one which raises the most questions and doubts. In fact, not many people continue to have illusions about a stop to capitalism's drop into crisis and imperialist wars. The politicians, the media, bourgeois propagandists and ideologists don't even attempt anymore to announce a brighter future. The ideological and political stakes and confrontations around these two questions are no longer, at least for the time being, at the forefront. On the other hand, the factor of class struggle, that is the economic and political attacks of the capitalist class and, above all, the reactions of the international proletariat, is the central question at the historical level. In the end it is the proletariat which holds the keys to the situation, but also at a more immediate level around the consciousness and confidence in its own strength and struggles. The bourgeoisie does all it can to silence the working class struggles by censoring them; and when it can't anymore, it misrepresents their reality and significance. Besides the slowing down of the workers' confidence in their strength and struggles as social class, this systematic and generalized policy of the bourgeoisie negatively influences the most militant parts of the working class, including also revolutionary individuals and political groups which, often, end up questioning the ability of the proletariat to oppose capitalism today. Thus, for us, it is important not only to engage in a fight against the bourgeoisie's censorship and lies on the working class struggles but also to struggle politically within the proletarian and revolutionary camp so as to fight against a kind of defeatism, or at least skepticism, amongst the revolutionaries and the communist groups. Such is the goal of the following articles and the debate – published below – that we develop from a comrade's correspondence.

### Workers Struggles throughout the World

We regularly publish in this journal a report of the working class struggles around the world. The aim is not to catalogue them all (there would be too many) but rather to make a list of the most significant while countering the media censorship which is increasingly strong. We want to report the evolution of the workers' struggles. For the wildcat strikes: the significance of wildcat strikes in a country like China (where all strikes are “wildcat” since they are illegal) is not the same as in countries with the strong and old democratic tradition of the historical centers of capitalism such as Spain. It is important to see in the course of the recent months a real tendency to resist capitalism's crisis measures and a trend towards massive class confrontations.

“This means that it [the proletariat] *can* “win” the massive confrontations which begin and which the international bourgeoisie took the initiative to start. To “win” this phase means that the revolutionary class will succeed to block the bourgeoisie and its projects of misery and generalized war. Thus it will set up the conditions for the opening of a revolutionary period. But for this, still it has to overcome the weaknesses it continues to express. Though, when the proletariat is struggling, it maintains itself on its class ground, it is also true that to date it hasn't succeeded in forcing a withdrawal of the economic attacks that it suffers (nor the setting up of anti-working class measures for repression in the streets as well as in the workplaces). This weakness doesn't reside in a lack of willingness to struggle and resist but essentially in its incapacity to raise its fight to the political level; that is to say to assume the political confrontation for the direction of its struggles against the forces, mainly union and Left

political forces, which hinder and sabotage them”<sup>1</sup>. Telefónica in Spain and Bursa in Turkey are examples which show that the working class can lead its struggles of resistance.

#### **Struggles outside the Union Framework at Different Levels**

**Spain** : tens of thousands of workers working for the subcontractors of Telefónica, the historic operator of telecommunications in Spain, have been on indefinite strike since April 7<sup>th</sup> in the whole country, the strike outside the unions having started in Madrid on March 28<sup>th</sup>. As in Turkey, these workers have been able to organize without the unions which do all they can to sabotage them (see the articles *Strike at the Telefónica* and *Spanish Telecoms Workers in an All Out Strike*, p. 4 and 8).

Moreover, tens of thousands of people demonstrated on March 21<sup>st</sup> in Madrid during “Marches for Dignity” to denounce the effects of austerity : “Bread, work, house and dignity”, could one read on a large banner held by the demonstrators in one of these marches.

**Turkey** : On Sunday May 17<sup>th</sup> 2015, some 5000 workers at a factory in Bursa (northwest Turkey), owned by the French car company Renault, stopped working and demanded a wage increase. The workers began their movement in the night between Thursday and Friday and several hundred gathered all Friday in front of the factory chanting hostile slogans against the management and the unions. As in Spain, this is another important strike outside of union control. Factory production was suspended,

1 . *A New Period Opens... The Bourgeoisie Goes on Massive Offensive against the World Proletariat which Resists* in *Revolution or War* #3, February 2015, <http://www.igcl.org/A-New-Period-Opens-The-Bourgeoisie>.

according to a Renault Turkey management spokesperson speaking anonymously . The strikers explained they went on strike to get a 60% raise of their wages. The strike spread to other factories in Bursa and to the industrial center of Izmir. The setting up of “workers councils” (actually strike committees) enabled the strikers to counter the sabotage of their struggle by the union and to spread it to other factories (see the article of the ICT : *Auto struggles in Turkey: "We don't want any unions. We have set up workers councils"*<sup>2</sup>).

**Italy :** In Late February, the workers of the Fiat Sata Melfi factory, in province of Potenza, received the unions leaders, who had negotiated new contracts for the working teams on the assembly lines, with hoots and insults. Also, on March 25<sup>th</sup>, the workers of Continental questioned the union secretary of the FIOM (CGIL) during the union assembly. The workers argued that we can't pretend to regain anything with sporadic demonstrations and national strikes if we adopt a policy of continuous capitulation in the workplace. .

**Brazil :** Tens of thousands of demonstrators took to the streets of Sao Paulo on March 27<sup>th</sup> in support to a teachers' strike. On April 7<sup>th</sup>, a day of protest against a new law favoring flexible hiring was called by the unions and the Left organizations. It happened in at least 10 states and ended in Brasilia with eight people wounded and four arrested after a pitched battle between demonstrators and police.

Thousands of workers working on the infrastructure for the upcoming Olympics in Rio went on strike May 19<sup>th</sup> demanding a wage increase. The construction sites of the Engenhao Stadium, the Deodoro complex, the international airport of Galeao, the harbor and those of the subway South line as well as the trans-Olympic road have been paralyzed to 70%. All these anti-government demonstrations at a national scale have attracted international attention including of the International Olympic Committee. At the Mercedes-Benz plant, a large majority of the 10 000 employees opposed a 20% cut of their work day combined with a 10% reduction of their wage despite the union's position. The Brazilian proletarians have hardly begun to free themselves from the hold of the unions and Left organizations which supported the election of the Workers' Party of Lula and others.

**Canada :** Some 20 CEGEPS<sup>3</sup> in the province of Quebec stopped work illegally on May 1<sup>st</sup> in protest against austerity, despite the opposition of the union leaderships of the province. Several thousand peoples, mostly students, had demonstrated March 21<sup>st</sup> in Montreal against the austerity measures of the provincial government. The struggles in Canada are still strongly controlled by the unions which divide them sector by sector and province by province.

2 . <http://www.leftcom.org/en/articles/2015-05-19/auto-struggles-in-turkey-we-don-t-want-any-unions-we-have-set-up-workers>

3 . Public post-secondary education collegiate institutions exclusive to the education system in the province of Quebec in Canada (wikipedia).

**Israel :** opposed to their privatization, two of the largest harbors, including Haifa, were closed at the end of May for two days by the dock workers despite the union opposition. The workers initially defied a court order to return to work. They returned to work only after the government threatened to declare a state of urgency and resort to drastic measures.

### **Increase of the Struggles and Strikes in Relation to 2014 and Significant Demonstrations**

**United Kingdom :** tens of thousands people – up to 250 000 –demonstrated on Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup> in London against austerity. The unions were obliged to organize such demonstrations to control, derail and calm down the growing workers anger of workers.

**Russia :** the majority of the strikes are spontaneous and illegal. The number of strikes and pickets were 273 in 2014. In 2015 their number will beat all records and could reach up to 400. Two thirds of the protests are linked to delays in payment of wages or no payment at all. The second most important reason is redundancies and downsizing.

**Germany :** between January and the end of May, there have been 350 000 days of strike according to Foundation Hans-Böcker, close to the unions, in relation to 392 000 for the whole year 2014. The IW Institute, close to the bosses, estimates 500 000 days of strike during the first semester which is a record since 1993. Nurseries, hospitals, distribution, post, railway, air transportation, etc. have been affected by social conflicts which are still largely under the control of the unions.

**China :** during the first five months of 2015, there were three times as many strikes than during the same period in 2014. All these strikes are outside the union framework and illegal.

**France :** On June 23<sup>rd</sup>, the police attacked the strike of the MyFerryLink sailors. These forces of order, numerous in Calais to surveil the 3000 migrants there, acted violently against the sailors who had mobilized against the threat of transferring two of the three boats on which they work to Danish competitor of MyFerryLink, the Eurotunnel company (see ICT article : *What's Really Going On in Calais?*<sup>4</sup>). Besides, there have been 750 strikes in France during only the six weeks covering June and the first half of July. As in Germany, Italy and others, these struggles are strongly controlled by the unions and are localized.

**Bosnia and Herzegovina :** On July 30<sup>th</sup>, demonstrators destroyed police roadblocks protecting the Parliament building. A delegation of demonstrators, gathered in front the Parliament where the project of a new labor law was being debated, brought a message to the deputies : “you have 15 minutes to announce the withdrawal of this project otherwise we'll carry out new actions”. Delegations of workers arrived in Republika Srpska (the Serbian entity within Bosnia-Herzegovina) with a message

4 . <http://www.leftcom.org/en/articles/2015-08-02/of-migrants-and-mariners-what's-really-going-on-in-calais>

which said that workers solidarity overcomes nationalist and religious divisions that the powers of all sides attempt to impose on them.

**Greece :** Thousands of people demonstrated on July 15<sup>th</sup> in all of Greece while the Parliament was to approve an agreement with the creditors. At Syntagma square, in front of the Parliament, the demonstration turned to riot at night, 40 were arrested (see the article *Merkel, Holland, Obama, Tsipras... Each one utilizes Bourgeois Democracy, in his Way, against the Proletariat*, p.1).

**Cambodia :** during the period from January to March, the Cambodia association of Textile factories declared having counted 40 major strikes which was 74% higher than one year ago, movements whose growing extent is linked with an increase in violent repression.

**Iceland :** a capitalist country like any other despite what some leftists pretend. Thousands of proletarians participated in a wave of strikes in the Spring for an increase of the minimum wage. They got a raise of 30% over three years.

**Iraq :** demonstration of workers and blockage of the transit on Monday February 9<sup>th</sup> 2015 in front of the Finance Ministry in Bagdad for the payment of wages. Even though they suffer the terrorists' actions almost every day, the proletarians don't stop defending their class interests.

**South Africa :** the increase in the electricity prices by the state company Eskom sparked things off at the beginning of May with the Southern winter arriving in Soweto. Several hundred people demonstrated their anger in a suburb of the township of Johannesburg. To the burning of tyres and stone throwing, the police answered with rubber bullets.

**Portugal :** On March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2015, hospitals, schools, Social

Security centers and Courts were working at a slower pace because of a 24 hour strike by the state employees exasperated by four years of budgetary "discipline". Since mid-April, Portugal is confronted with an important strike movement in transportation. The workers protest against the privatization in this sector that the government decided.

**Ukraine :** On April 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015, hundreds of miners confronted the anti-riot police near the Presidential Palace in Kiev. The miners had crossed the first police cordon in the Bankova street which goes directly to the Presidential building. They demanded the payment of their salary and protested against redundancies and the closure of the mines. Besides this, on May 22<sup>nd</sup> there were confrontations in the center of Kiev where a crowd mobilized against the economic crisis and soaring private lending costs. According to local media, several people tried to enter in the Ukrainian Parliament.

**Iran :** a wave of protests swept across Iran in February during about ten days. The protests focused on the workers' demands, an increase of wage so keep up with inflation, the payment of delayed salaries and other issues such as redundancies and the non-renewal of working contracts.

**Armenia :** On Wednesday June 23<sup>rd</sup>, more than 9000 people gathered in the center of the Armenian capital chanting "*we are the masters of our country*" and claiming their resolution to maintain pressure upon the government of the President Serge Sarkissian until he withdraws his decision to increase electricity prices. The next day, around 12 000 protesters regrouped in front of Erevan city's Liberty Square for the most important anti-government demonstration for years.

Normand, July 2015

### **"Emerging" Countries and "BRICS", the So-Called Saviors of World Economy are Collapsing...**

**T**his August, the economic dead-end of world Capitalism is showing signs of worsening that we can't ignore because of their economic, political and imperialist consequences. On August 11<sup>th</sup>, the news announced that China devalued its currency in response to the reduction of its exports after the collapse of real-estate and of the Shanghai stock exchange, and that Russia's GDP has fallen 4.6% last quarter while inflation explodes (18%). The BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India China, South Africa) don't inspire illusions any longer : Brazil's GDP retreated since 2013 provoking increasing consequences in Latin America. Meanwhile, Europe and the United States attempt to delay as much as they can the effects of their huge debts. The first one is unable to resolve the so-called "sovereign" debt, the second has doubled its public and private debt since 2007.

The dead-end is obvious. The expedients used since the subprime crisis, generalization of misery and multiplied super-exploitation of the working class, for one part and, for the other, total international debt which has passed from 267% of the world GDP in 2007 up to 286% in 2014, don't succeed – they can't because of the very laws of Capitalism itself – to resolve the economic crisis.

Immediate consequences : China's decision, the devaluation of the Yuan (Reminbi), means an international revival of the currency war, the exacerbation of international economic competition and increased imperialist tensions; for the international proletariat, an inescapable redoubling of misery and exploitation on the altar of economic competition and imperialist rivalries and wars. These last events just confirm that there is no economic solution to Capitalist crisis except the 3<sup>rd</sup> World War or the most powerful and definitive class struggle against Capitalism's consequences, ultimately leading to its supersession and replacement with communism.

IGCL, August 11<sup>th</sup> 2015.

**Workers strike at Movistar (Telefónica) :**  
**We can struggle against the conditions of exploitation imposed by the bourgeoisie ! We can win if we utilize class means and methods !**

*We publish here the position taken by the comrades of the International Communist Party (whose journal is Le Prolétaire in France, www.pcint.org) on the Telefonica strike in Spain. We share with them the essential from the point of view of the immediate struggle and the orientations of the fight that the comrades put forward. But above all, the interest of this article (and of the strike) is in highlighting that the "modern" conditions of production are not an insurmountable obstacle to struggle. Effectively, the conditions of production and of capitalist exploitation today have seen the disappearance of a large part of factories and enterprises which gather thousands of workers at the same place and, in their place, the division into multiple "small" entities, often subsidiaries and sub-contracted businesses, which also have multiple work contracts. This results in the ubiquitous presence of the totalitarian ideology of "management" over the workers who are dispersed and isolated from one another, and in a feeling of powerlessness when it comes to launching an open struggle, indeed a strike. As such, the Telefonica strike is an experience which must be shared and resumed. This is the other interesting aspect of this article by the ICP. The reader will understand then that for us it is secondary to bring up the divergences that we have with these comrades, in particular in their characterisation of the sabotage of the unions as the fruit of "union opportunism" and not as the result of organisations which long ago become organs completely integrated into the capitalist State. It goes the same when they denounce the "renewed opportunism" of the party Podemos – the Spanish ally of Syriza, in power in Greece – even though the article illustrates the action against the strikers by the Catalan version of Podemos, Guanyem, in front of the city hall of Barcelona, and correctly highlights that "these parties have acted and will continue to act as genuine agents of the bourgeoisie in the proletariat's ranks". From the point of view of the class, opportunism is the expression of the penetration of bourgeois ideology in the workers' movement. It has been a long time since the parties of the left and the unions, gangrenous with opportunism, have betrayed the proletariat and have become an integral part of the apparatus of the capitalist State. As such, they are no longer opportunist as they are no longer in any way proletarian. They are entirely organs of bourgeois society.*

**ICP statement on the Workers Strike at Movistar - Telefónica**

**F**or 55 days the workers under fixed-term contracts, the subcontractors and the false independent workers under the status of self-employed (independent workers obliged to remain under a commercial contract and not a work contract with the employer company) of Movistar (Telefonica) lead a hard strike against one of the major companies of Spanish capitalism. Their demands are :

- Abolition of the “loop” contract which implies a system of points for receiving the salary and according to which the workers pay out of their own pocket the expenses caused by their work and which, furthermore, allow very heavy penalties which reduce accordingly the nominal monthly salary.
- Equality between workers with fixed-term contracts and of the subcontractors with the ones directly employed by the company itself with the same wage conditions and with a permanent contract.
- 40 hours work per week with 2 days off in regards with the present situation where one can work up to 12 hours every day.
- One month holidays a year.
- Security at work and tools and instruments for work paid by the company, including the personal protective equipment, vehicles, fuel, etc.
- That all the self-employed who ask for it, be directly employed by the company.
- Guarantee there'll be no retaliation for having been on

strike.

Telefónica, main brand of Movistar, is the main Spanish enterprise of the telecoms sector and one of the most important worldwide. It is present in all European countries (mainly in United Kingdom and Germany where it operates under the name of O2), in Brazil (where it is the main brand of the telephone market under the name of Vivo), and in Argentina and other American countries in which it is less important. It is also the main Spanish company listed on stock exchange and its official profit has been 4.403 billion Euros in 2012. In fact, Telefónica has been considered for many years as the crown jewel of Spanish capitalism amongst the main financial entities and above any other company of the so-called real economy. Since it has been privatized in the years 1995 and 1999 under the successive governments of the Socialist Felipe González and the right Popular Party of Aznar through public offering of shares, it has become the emblem of Spanish capitalism's dynamism capable of spreading almost to all developed markets of the planet (except China) and to compete advantageously with the other national and foreign capitals. Capable of developing an advanced system of management of the labour force which, since its privatization, allowed it to increase vertiginously the profits through the reduction of the labour cost, Telefónica got rid of a great part of its staff which was 80 000 workers before the privatization and now is barely 28 000 after the successive “downsizing



plans for economical reasons”<sup>5</sup> which has been set up these last years under the Popular Party and Socialist governments.

Telefónica is a model for the whole of Spanish capitalism. It has been able to restructure its organization so that it has thousands of enterprises which depend on it but with a juridical status of their own and which assume all the work of installation, repair, maintenance, customer relations, etc. It is an extremely flexible productive structure which enables the company to minimize the risks by reducing the cost of constant capital and of variable capital which depends directly on it. Like this, in the period of economic growth such as during the boom of the telecommunications at the end of the 1990's, Telefónica has simply raised the number of contracts with subcontracted enterprises and, at the time of recession, it got rid of them at no cost which would have been impossible in the case of an over-capacity of production and an excess of labour force employed directly.

For the proletarians, the increase of productivity and the management excellence of Telefónica took a bitter dimension: the fragmentation into thousands of enterprises which are the employers now, allowed them to set working conditions clearly unfavourable for the workers. By imposing to some tens of workers, a negotiation in which they are, by far, the weakest part, the wages had been lowered drastically, the working hours got longer, always based on the demands of production and without respecting the minimum wage fixed by law. Finally, we have arrived to a situation where the workers often pay the enterprise for being able to accomplish their work. All this, always, conditioned by the demands that Telefónica imposes upon the sub-contracted enterprises which, in their turn, compete to maintain their relation with the company and to not disappear. If in the capitalist crisis, the proletarians pay through unemployment and over-exploitation the crime they committed by not being profitable enough for capital, in the expansion moments, those who have made Spanish capitalism a model for the world based themselves too on the workers' misery. Before the proletarians sold their life to the enterprise in exchange for their survival, today the enterprise ends their lives to survive itself.

Since the beginning, the Telefónica workers' strike has developed by a total break with the collaborationist leadership of the unions. These ones, arguing that the workers did not belong to the company, refused to include them in the demands which related only the staff directly employed by the company itself and, on the other side, always under the condition of respecting its requirements. That is why, for the first day when the strike of the installers under precarious contract began in Madrid, the workers set up strike committees to organize and lead the conflict. The fundamental demand of this mobilization has been that these strike committees be recognized as the unique negotiators of the workers in front of the bosses. In

April, the CCOO and UGT [the two main Spanish unions] called for a strike within the company addressed only to its direct employees. Some days before the beginning of this strike, these same unions decided to call it off under the pretext that all the demands put forwards had been obtained which actually meant that the situation would remain exactly the same as before and without any demands put forwards by the workers through their strike committees being satisfied. The alliance between the company and the collaborationist unions simply attempted to finish with the independent organization the workers had set up and which was the reflection of their demands far removed from the policy of concessions to which the unions accustomed.

Throughout this strike, the precarious workers of Telefónica have utilized the means and the methods consequent to their demands so that they could win. Like this, they have been able to organize pickets which were in charge of ensuring that the enterprise did not utilize scabs to break the strike. They have collaborated with other proletarians who were in conflict themselves; they have spread their struggle beyond the limits of the enterprise to exceed the narrow limits of the corporatist action; finally, they have struggled to develop their fight as a class struggle and not as a confrontation stuck exclusively in the nets of the negotiation that the bourgeois state allows and in which it guarantees the rapid submission of all rising conflicts. This way to confront the struggle has led to, once the combined action of the enterprise and the collaborationist unions were unable to break it off, the bourgeois state itself, as collective representative of the interests of national capital, taking things in its own hands to arrest 13 strikers in early May under the charge of sabotage and pressure against the scabs. The so-called “Operación Muro” of the national police had the goal to frighten the workers a few days before the UGT and CCOO called for an end to the strike. Again, the Telefónica workers with precarious contracts had demonstrated that in bourgeois society, law, order and rights only mean maintaining the proletarians slave to capital's requirements.

Finally, the precarious contract workers of Telefónica had broken the usual dynamic of the strikes and the struggles controlled by the opportunist policy which has as basic point the scrupulous respect of the interests of the bosses at the very moment they are questioned. Actually, not only is the economy of the company maintained in the margin of these conflicts but also the brand, its image and its position in relation to its rivals on the market, thus transforming any struggle into a simple ineffective gesture. The occupation on two occasions of the Telefónica head office at the World Mobile Congress was a severe blow to the company's image, struck at the very centre of Barcelona, economic and tourism capital in Spain. These occupations have been until now the culminating point of a struggle which has always placed the proletarians' demands before the needs of the company. They have led to the intervention of the future mayoress of Barcelona,

5 . An **expediente de regulación de empleo**, known in Spain as **ERE**, is a state plan for “ economic downsizing ”

Ada Colau, of the Party Guayem (local version of Podemos\*) which had to resort to all the political force of her formation to get the precarious contract workers to give up their occupation while several hundred families and workers of other enterprises had gathered to prevent their expulsion, and that they stop demanding that Telefónica negotiate as integral part of the conflict. [The Telefónica management was refusing to participate arguing that they weren't "its" employees but "subcontractor's", translator's note].

The precarious contract proletarians of Telefónica have shown that if the bourgeoisie, who fights permanently with its national and international rivals, but also against the workers to obtain every time more profit and for this purpose reorganizing the productive process to maximize the extraction of the surplus value from the labour force, can isolate every worker and set them in competition with the other workers, it also can suffer hard setbacks once the proletarians unite to confront that competition.

The proletarians of Telefónica have shown that, to win, the workers must take their struggle in their own hands and defend only their class interests despite all the calls for compromise with the economic necessities of the enterprise. They have shown that the class means and methods are the only ones which, without guaranteeing victory, can enable it. The proletarians of Telefónica are confronted with the united forces of the union opportunism and the bourgeois state police. They have suffered the repression in the police stations charged with serious offences and they thus highlighted that any attempt of

proletarian struggle which aims at taking the path of real confrontation with the bosses will be confronted with all possible attempts of the bourgeoisie to destroy it.

Finally, the proletarians of Telefónica have seen appearing on the scene the force of this renewed opportunism in the "renewal" parties such as Podemos and Guayem. These ones, which verbally support the working class struggle, have acted and will continue to act as genuine agents of the bourgeoisie in the proletariat's ranks by actually defending the general interests of the bourgeoisie which uses them as mediators that always oppose the small improvements we can get through struggle, in truth the conflict between proletarians and capitalists, with the excuse of "really possible conquests" thus preventing the great conquest which is "the ever expanding union of the workers" according to the words of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*.

**FOR THE RESUMPTION OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE OF THE PROLETARIAT !  
FOR THE INTRANSIGENT DEFENCE OF THE LIVING CONDITIONS OF THE PROLETARIAT !**

International Communist Party, June 1st 2015. (translated from Spanish by the IGCL)

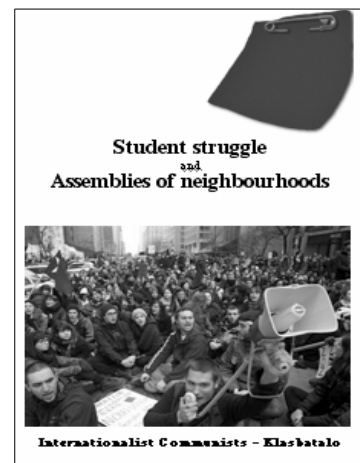
\*. The political group "Podemos" is coming from the "Indignous" Spanish movement and which claim a "radical anti-liberalism", indeed "anti-capitalist", Left and supports the Syriza government in Greece

## **Student Struggle and Assemblies of Neighbourhoods in Québec (2012)**

*« Throughout our involvement in the student struggle, we've had as the leitmotif that students alone, facing the government, could not aspire to impart any transformation on society. Thus, it was necessary for them to broaden their struggle to other sectors of society, especially workers, the only truly revolutionary social class.... »*

*« In summary, the "social strike" failed mainly because Labour was not put on strike. And if workers didn't go on strike, it is mostly through the consciously calculated inertia of large unions. »*

*(Internationalist Communists – Klasbatalo)*



## **Spanish Telecom Workers on All-Out Strike (CWO-ICT)**

We reproduce here the statement that the Communist Workers Organization, the British group of the Internationalist Communist Tendency ([www.leftcom.org](http://www.leftcom.org)), on the Telefónica strike. It presented the translation of text in spanish send by a striker. We have no place to publish it here and we think that the previous article of the ICP reports better on this working class struggle. In the following, we make some comments of discussion: extension to the sector or geographical extension?



## **Spanish Telecom Workers on All-Out Strike**

The following document is translated from [telefonica.blogspot.com.es](http://telefonica.blogspot.com.es). It concerns the indefinite or all-out strike of workers in the telecommunications sector in Spain. This in itself has been a rare thing in the class struggle in recent years. We don't necessarily share the perspectives of the writer (who we don't know) but we are publishing it as part of our internationalist duty to break the communications black-out on workers' resistance to the increasing attacks of the capitalist system on their living conditions. From what we understand the strike is still going on after two months and the workers have organised themselves in assemblies which meet every fortnight. It is rare these days for workers to go on all-out strike but as JM makes clear they have reached a point of desperation faced with the level of exploitation through the kind of casualisation of working conditions (fake "self-employment" to make workers pay for their own equipment, zero hours contracts etc) that are now increasingly prevalent across the advanced capitalist world. It will have many echoes for workers everywhere facing the same conditions.

His comments about unions, established and new are interesting. Basically he accuses them both of being useless for defending the immediate interests of workers. This seems to be putting it more than mildly. We have learned from other sources that the traditional unions the CCOO (Workers Commissions linked to the Spanish Communist Party) and the UGT (General Union of Workers) linked to the Socialist Party have done everything in their power to sabotage the strikes. Once it was clear (after several weeks) that the strike was organised without them and that it was solid these trade unions called their own weekly two-day strike. They then entered into an agreement with the bosses, going behind the backs of the self-organised workers. The strikers denounced the actions of CCOO and UGT as an attempt to destroy the strike before its demands had been met. Slogans such as "we fight, we negotiate" have featured prominently in the protests, while union offices have been surrounded by angry workers and bombarded with eggs, flares, fireworks and other missiles.

This is not betrayal as some think but the normal actions of established unions which have become so much part of the legal framework of the state that this is now accepted by many workers world wide. However many still hope that by setting up new, rank and file, unions they can transform them into real organs of struggle. However, as JM hints, the new unions are little better than the old ones as they soon find that having a permanent existence means also that they too are sucked into the institutional arrangements of the state and answer to a different agenda than that of the workers in struggle. The problem here is not of intentions, or good or bad leaders, but the function of any economic organ which attempts a permanent existence under capitalism today. For the workers strike committees formed out of the struggle controlled by mass meetings or assemblies are a more likely fruitful path to real struggle as the telecoms workers in Spain are showing.

The telecoms workers are fighting for their very existence here and JM's arguments about why there should be greater solidarity with them are very persuasive. We do not comment on their demands raised which are a matter for the workers in struggle but achieving them will be difficult given that a capitalism in crisis needs to raise the rate of exploitation. There

is also one omitted aspect in JM's account. There are concrete possibilities here for international extension of the struggle as Telefonica operates in 5 countries and has over 100,000 workers but this is not mentioned in this document. However this does not detract from the fact that after years of retreat this struggle is one more piece of evidence that the working class which capitalist scribblers have written out of history still has a history of its own to make. In the long run this will not be just about demanding better working conditions from bosses but a better system which not only does away with bosses but the entire system of exploitation. From struggles like these the sparks of consciousness will develop and in the course of time link up politically with the communist programme to establish an organisational framework which can lead the fight for a new world of freely associated producers.

CWO

### **Extension within the corporation or on a geographic basis? (IGCL)**

**W**e salute the introduction that the comrades of the Communist Workers Organization (group belonging to the Internationalist Communist Tendency in Great Britain) have made to their translation into English of a report of an indefinite strike (*Spanish Telecom Workers on All-Out Strike*) in Spain in the telecom sector ([telefonica.blogspot.com.es](http://telefonica.blogspot.com.es)). We side with the CWO in its support to the strikers in Spain (who, as everywhere in the world, suffer increasingly unsustainable conditions of exploitation) and its willingness to underline the political importance and significance of the kind of working class struggle in the present days: these struggles are a “censored” reality today at the international level. By reproducing this text, we first of all try to participate in the CWO fight to attempt “to break the communications black-out on workers’ resistance”.

We also globally agree with its denunciation of the unions whether they be “official” (the great and “old” Trade Unions or “Confederations”) or whether they be more militant and minoritarian unions presented as “rank and file unions” or “base unions”. Actually, any unitarian mass organization, any organization of struggle (like unions of course but it goes the same with any assembly or strike committee which would survive to open struggle) cannot live on permanently without being inescapably absorbed and turned by the totalitarian capitalist state of our time against the working class's interests, except during periods of massive mobilization (that is mainly in pre-revolutionary and revolutionary periods). In this sense the formula of the CWO text according to which “strike committees formed out of the struggle controlled by mass meetings or assemblies are a more likely fruitful path to real struggle” is at least clumsy since it leaves the door opened to the idea that the unions would still represent “a path (though less efficient) for the struggle”. In fact, the unions are the saboteurs and the opponents of the struggle (whatever the willingness and the sincerity of the base delegates and members).

Finally, we think the orientation of international extension within the telecoms sector put forwards by the CWO because “there are concrete possibilities here for international extension of the struggle as Telefonica operates in 5 countries and has over 100,000 workers” is not the path to take, nor the orientation of struggle to put forward. Concretely, **in the real facts and practice**, this orientation remains confined by its economic nature, and if followed by workers, would mean being trapped in a corporatist struggle which would quickly revert to its strictly syndical nature.. According to us, the orientation communists should put forward in this kind of struggle is on the contrary the “**geographical**” extension beyond the sector or “corporation”, in the cities and companies which are physically accessible by the mass of the workers on strike; from here to other workers sectors of Madrid, Barcelona, etc. So the spreading of the struggle to other sectors on a geographical basis tends to assert the unity and the autonomy of the working class as a whole against the capitalist state and its whole apparatus (unions, political forces, police, media, etc.) which, amongst other things, always aims to divide it and precisely break its unity. According to us, the geographical extension of the struggle across sectors is “the most efficient path” because it allows a “concrete possibility” (practically, it is easier to contact the workers of the same city than those of the same “globalized” company) to impose a relation of forces to capital at the level of the immediate demands (and so force capitalism to withdraw for a moment its economic attacks) as well as at the level of the indispensable historical revolutionary experience of the proletariat. It is also thus that “the sparks of consciousness will develop and (...) link up politically with the communist programme”.

These few critical observations<sup>6</sup> do not change our siding with the CWO-ICT in its support to this and all of the working class's struggles, nor does it change the fact that we share the essentials of its denunciation of the unions as well as its underlining “that after years of retreat this struggle is one more piece of evidence that the working class (...) has a history of its own to make”

IGCL, June 8th 2015.

6 . Since this first article, the CWO has published another one which comes back on this struggle. It matters to note that the weaknesses of the first we criticize here, are not taken back in this one, [Teléfono strike in Spain](http://www.leftcom.org/en/articles/2015-08-01/telefonica-strikes-in-spain) (<http://www.leftcom.org/en/articles/2015-08-01/telefonica-strikes-in-spain>).

## Debate within the Proletarian Camp

### On “Predictions” and the Historical Course

We publish here after a letter of a former member of the ICC, comrade MG. He sent us critical comments on the last issue of our journal. In particular, he comes back on our article *A New Period Opens...*<sup>7</sup> and so participates in our internal debate that we opened to the readers with the publication of *Critical Comments*<sup>8</sup> of one of our members. But before entering into this debate, some amongst our readers and sympathizers will certainly wonder : what interest is there in developing discussions to know if the situation is more or less favourable for the proletariat? Is it not useless hair-splitting? For revolutionaries and all those who wish to participate in the class struggle against capital, is it not enough to support and participate in all struggles which develop, and just to “defend the revolutionary principles and positions”? In fact, this question relates in a manner more or less open, or affirmed, to all revolutionary and communist groups : should they advance “hypotheses” on the evolution of the working class struggles and more widely on the historical course of the classes' struggle ? And if so, up to the point of risking falling into hazardous predictions and mistakes? This finds its most accomplished expression in the longstanding debate which opposes the “historical” ICC<sup>9</sup> and the ICT (ex-IBRP) on the question of the “historical course”<sup>10</sup>.

Any revolutionary worker or simply a combative and militant one who has been confronted by any workers struggle, more or less wide, in his working place, in his neighbourhood or city, has been led with his comrades of struggle to ask himself the following question: does our struggle tend to develop and win strength and vitality against the management, the boss, the company... or rather does it tend to lose strength, energy and efficiency, and to withdraw? The response to this question sets the attitude and the concrete and immediate orientations for the fight in attempting to adapt them according to the evolution of the situation day by day (sometimes by hour), that is the dynamic of the relation of forces which are confronting. Why should, what is obvious and a necessity for any combative and militant worker, and even more for any active revolutionary militant in his working place or neighbourhood, not be even more obvious for the revolutionary political groups organized precisely for intervening in the struggles of their class? And even more so, for the communist groups whose main and specific task is to defend not only the class positions of principle but also, and in a certain way above all, political orientations and slogans responding to the necessities of each moment – historical and immediate, international or local – of the struggle between the classes?

*« The social democrats [the communist groups today] are the most enlightened, most class-conscious vanguard of the proletariat. They cannot and dare not wait, in a fatalist fashion, with folded arms for the advent of the “revolutionary situation,” to wait for that which in every spontaneous peoples’ movement, falls from the clouds. On the contrary, they must now, as always, hasten the development of things and endeavour to accelerate events. This they cannot do, however, by suddenly issuing the “slogan” for a mass strike at random at any odd moment, but first and foremost, by making clear to the widest layers of the proletariat the inevitable advent of this revolutionary period, the inner social factors making for it and the political consequences of it. If the widest proletarian layer should be won for a political mass action of the social democrats, and if, vice versa, the social democrats should seize and maintain the real leadership of a mass movement – should they become, in a political sense, the rulers of the whole movement, then they must, with the utmost clearness, consistency and resoluteness, inform the German proletariat of their tactics and aims in the period of coming struggle. »* (Rosa Luxemburg, Mass Strike).

Here is why we attach so much importance to clarify and understand if events such as September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 (the attacks in New York) or January 7<sup>th</sup> 2015 (those in Paris), to mention just a few, represent or don't represent a change, indeed a break, with the previous historical dynamic and if they announce, or not, new historical stakes. This is also why it matters to try to understand the general march of the events, their course, and more particularly the dynamic of the working class struggles. This is the debate we continue here publicly with comrade MG's letter.

IGCL, July 2015.

7 . <http://www.igcl.org/A-New-Period-Opens-The-Bourgeoisie>.

8 . <http://www.igcl.org/Critical-Comments-about-the-Text>.

9 . Understood as historic current which overtakes widely the formal decrepit organisation of today.

10 . « *In no case can it be a question of a revolutionary organisation playing Nostradamus and building its politics on abstract predictions. But it is precisely this error that the ICC makes with its concept of the "historical course" »* [Marxism or Idealism, our Differences with the ICC](#), ([www.leftcom.org](http://www.leftcom.org)).

## Are We Thinking Wishfully? Are We Too “Optimistic” on the Dynamic of the Working Class Struggles? Response to Comrade MG:

I have glanced at *Revolution or War* #3 in which I found many good things but also much regurgitation of positions which seem like they could have been written 10, 20 or 30 years ago. So everything is not false. Far from it, but I rather develop my critical moods.

### Vagueness on Where We Are Today

There is a kind of incantatory appeal with the multiplication of exclamation points which reflects more an “indignation” than a profound reflection on the conditions of the present situation.

The prospect of “decisive confrontations of classes” sounds as a repeat of the (erroneous) perspectives of the ICC in the 1980s. You'll tell me that it is not because it was mistaken in the 1980s that the affirmation of this perspective today is not valid. Maybe but the argumentation must then be more supported. It is this lack of argumentation which makes Stavros, in the internal discussion of the group if I understood, voice reserves on the orientation of *RoW* “*A New Period Opens...*”.

If I schematize, *RoW* defends the idea that the change of period (there is a before and an after January 2015) expresses the beginning of a generalized offensive of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat to drag this one into “*massive class confrontations*” and so be able to open the path towards a new generalized world war.

At the same time, the proletariat must “*raise its fight to the political level against the State and its apparatus (...). For this, driven by its most militant minorities, it must take charge of the organization of the extension and unity of its struggles against the unions and leftist manoeuvres. For this, the organized revolutionary minorities and, in first line, the communist groups must develop a general political intervention – against the ideological and political manoeuvres of the capitalist States – and particularly in the working class struggles so that they assume and materialize the political leadership behind which the whole proletariat will regroup, oppose with all its forces and finally destroy capitalism*”.

It is not by chance we find nearly, word by word, the same formulation in the article “*the Beginning of Massive Confrontations*” and the one on the new period: what is missing for the proletariat is that it knows how to “*raise its fight to the political level; that is to assume the political confrontation for the leadership of its struggles (...)*”.

This is not an argumentation, but an incantation. One reads and says: is that so?

But to establish what? How to achieve this from the conditions of today? Nothing beyond generalities: “*oppose with all its forces and finally destroy capitalism*” and, at the very end: “*That quickly comes genuine Communism (which is the opposite of Stalinism), a society without exploitation, without classes, without misery and war!*”.

The *quickly* is wishful thinking, what is more, dangerous. Just referring only to these last years, the social characteristics of the different “popular” movements of 2010-2011 in which some expressions of the working class broke through, have given way to a reorganization of the control by all political, military, religious means in “national unions” against “terrorism” which pushes into the background the concern for the defence of the living and working conditions. The present relation of forces is not favourable to the proletariat. The working classes, proletarians, unemployed, absorbed in the hardness of the daily living conditions, suffocated by an omnipresent propaganda and advertising, brutally repressed as soon as the mobilisations radicalise, are not or are very little in a dynamic of mobilisation, still less of extension which is a necessary and indispensable condition for a dynamic of proletariat's rising struggles.

It is, in fact, what enables the different national bourgeoisies to carry on their policies and why the accumulation of capital, even during austerity and economic war and wars as such, has still much profit to come. Tendency of the Rate of Profit to Fall and tendential saturation of the world market are still there but the perspectives of overthrow of this “world market”, that is the political, economic and military power of the capitalists are yet on the agenda.

Given the present relation of forces, attention not to fall in **premature** confrontations at the risk of seeing the proletariat defeated “packet-by-packet” with no possibility of international extension. This was the scenario in the 1980s: after a big physical and ideological defeat (Poland 1981), then a succession of defeats, one after the other, schematically one per year (83 Belgium, 84 United-Kingdom, 85 Denmark, 86 French railway workers, 87 Italy Cobas and “C oordinations”<sup>11</sup> in France...). And that's the end of the only and unique “wave” (at a generation scale) of working class struggles: 1968-81. Since then, it is the national bourgeoisies, the globalized and financial capitalism at their service, which have the initiative. It is the inter-imperialist geopolitics which are at the forefront: a “war course” [I would not say today “course towards war” as we formulated it in the ICC, it gives an impression of mechanistic analysis].

I'm struck by the fact that *RoW* does not mention at any moment this danger of “premature confrontations” (an analysis yet important of the positions of the ICC whose continuity you assume) and let itself be led to this infantile formula “*that quickly comes genuine Communism*”... while for this it would first have to get to a situation of “dual power”, in the whole of society at an international scale... A process which will go through the constitution of class organizations, from the

11 . Both, “COBAS” and “Coordinations” were a kind of open organizations of the struggle between strike committee and general assembly of different working places which appeared in Italy and France at that time.

general assemblies with the participation of the greatest number, with goals to define, from the **real** conditions in which the “confrontations” take place...

The few current examples we can give of quite real class resistance show well their lack of weight in front of the measures of all kinds that the working class, which hardly considers itself as “class”, still less as “international revolutionary class”, is suffering.

The classes' struggle is there and it is the bourgeoisie which it is winning for the moment. It is no use to pathetically call for “rising itself” up to we don't know which height; above all if one rejects the present characteristics of the classes struggle as expressed in the “indignados” or “occupy” kinds of movements which, despite their limits, are a major component of the perspectives of struggles to come (occupation of the street, widest participation, self-organization which, in their initial expression, are genuine “proletarian” characteristics, in particular in the context of massive unemployment for the younger generations.

It is totally mistaken for your part to just remember the “apology of democratism” amongst these characteristics (see my previous remarks on the workers democracy”).

(...)

Fraternally  
MG, February 18<sup>th</sup> 2015

Note \* : In a previous letter, comrade MG had sent us rapid critical comments on the approach we develop for denouncing bourgeois democracy in particular in RoW #2. No doubt we'll have the occasion to come back to it in the future.

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## Response to Comrade MG's Comments

In the first place, let's note that the comrade could only make rapid critical comments and that its mail does not pretend to present a complete analysis or statement. This won't prevent us for our part to attempt to push the logic of his commentary to its conclusions – hoping we won't betray his thought. Later let's notice that MG warns us that he focused on his “*critical mood*” and that he “*found many good things*” in our journal. Though we regret he could not point out what he found “good”, we salute the effort and the willingness to write his critical point of view and we encourage any reader to do likewise. For our group, it is important and even essential for our own internal reflections and discussions as well as for the political fights we want to lead within the revolutionary milieu. Finally, we'll only deal here with the question of the analysis of the situation and the relation of forces between the classes and we'll leave aside his criticism of the political organization. Neither will we enter into the specific discussion of the ICC analysis which presented the 1980s as the “years of truth”<sup>12</sup>. We think it is not an

IGCL task to defend the ICC history which, essentially, belongs to the past – it suffices to look at the present state of decay, let's say... decomposition, of its “formal” organization.

What is comrade MG's main criticism? Globally, he thinks we overestimate the proletariat's capacities to struggle today. His impression is based on our affirmation of the perspective of “decisive class confrontations”. On this point, he joins many of our critics, individuals or political groups, which makes his comments still more interesting. That he goes up to think that we are in a “*war course*” has the virtue of going to the end of the logic of his comments.

### **The Workers Resistance against the Capitalist Crisis Today Pushed in the Background?**

We don't agree with the statement according to which “*the social characteristics of the different 'popular' movements of 2010-2011 in which some expressions of the working class broke through, have left the place to a reorganization of the control by all political, military, religious means in 'national unions' against 'terrorism' which pushes into the background the concern for the defence of the living and working conditions*” (we underline). Our article Workers struggles throughout the world<sup>13</sup> underlines precisely that it is not so and that the **dominant**<sup>14</sup>, that is determinant “ultimately”,

of intervention of this organization in the working class struggles in the 1970s and 1980s.

13 . <http://www.igcl.org/Workers-struggles-throughout-the->

14 . “Dominant” since it matters to avoid any unilateral vision

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12 . To discuss seriously, with method, the degree of validity or error of this analysis would imply to come back to the conditions of that time for its elaboration, the value of the political questions which were raising at the end of the 1970s and at the start of the 1980s – in particular with the change of the bourgeoisie's political orientation vis-a-vis the working class passing from the perspective of Left parties in power (the 1970s) to the one of “tough” Right parties which embodied Thatcher's coming to power (1979) in Great Britain and Reagan's (1981) in United-States. Besides, most of the critics of the “years of truth” of today, often former ICC members, present this analysis as the beginning of the ICC decline. Actually, whether they are conscious or not, they aim at making forget and even at moving the young generations away from the richness of the experience

tendency – or dynamic – in the present period is precisely the affirmation of the specific class interests. The significant mobilizations (later than the comrade's letter) such as the ones of Bursa in Turkey or Telefonica in Spain (just to mention the last ones at the time we are writing), show well that despite the “reorganization of the control – paraphrasing MG –, the concerns for the defence of the living and working conditions remain in the first place”. This resistance more or less asserted, more or less open (in struggles) to the imperatives of every national capital is precisely an essential characteristic of the present period which each bourgeoisie is constrained to take into account for its policies especially since the open crisis of 2008. But we have no intention to start a discussion to establish if “the glass of the proletarian class struggle is half full or half empty” which will lead us very quickly to oppose in an abstract, absolute and categorical manner the strengths on one side and on the other the weaknesses of the working class struggles.

*“In the unreal sphere of abstract logical analysis it can be shown with exactly the same force on either side that the mass strike is absolutely impossible and sure to be defeated, and that it is possible and that its triumph cannot be questioned. And therefore the value of the evidence led on each side is exactly the same – and that is nil.”* (Rosa Luxemburg, Mass strike, part 2).

The root of the disagreement is elsewhere. As many, MG argues from the fact that the working class struggles have not succeeded to force a withdrawal of the bourgeoisie's attack to conclude that it is “*the inter-imperialist geopolitics which is at the forefront [and that we are in] a 'war course'*”. Thus, that the working class is today in great part powerless in front capital, misery and the prospect of generalized imperialist war.

### **Stop Misery and Wars without Destroying Capitalism?**

*“The present relation of forces is not favourable to the proletariat. The working classes, proletarians, unemployed, absorbed in the hardness of the daily living conditions, suffocated by an omnipresent propaganda and advertising, brutally repressed as soon as the mobilisations radicalize, are not or are very little in a dynamic of mobilisation, still less of extension which is a necessary and indispensable condition for a dynamic of proletariat's rising struggles. (...) **It is, in fact, what enables the different national bourgeoisies to carry on their policies and why the accumulation of capital, even during austerity and economic war and wars as such, has still much profit to come**”* (MG, our emphasis). In one form or another, this argument is regularly opposed to us against our conception of

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excluding any reality to opposed tendencies.

historical course and our analysis according to which we are entering in a period of massive confrontations between the classes. The proof of the proletariat's powerlessness would be in the continuation of capitalist crisis, austerity, misery and local imperialist wars.

As if it could be differently! As long as the state power remains the bourgeoisie's class power, that the capitalist state (whether democratic or not) remains in place, the “immediate” relation of forces, taken in itself, is not favourable to the exploited class. That the (local) imperialist wars and the capitalist crisis with its dramatic consequences for hundreds of millions of proletarians and human beings carry on worsening whatever the dynamic of the working class struggles is an obvious fact. The dynamic of development of the working class struggles can only **momentarily** influence the degree of austerity and misery, indeed in some precise cases local wars, but in no way can it stop them as long as the question of state power is not directly present and raised by the exploited and revolutionary class massively mobilized: as long as the workers' insurrection, the destruction of the capitalist state and the exercise of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat have not become slogans for immediate action. The argumentation according to which the fact that austerity, misery and wars continue to worsen would be the manifestation that the proletariat is not in a dynamic of development of its struggles, means to consider that capitalism could be not misery and not war, that is that it could be not capitalism; that misery and war could disappear without it be destroyed. Then its destruction becomes a wish, a generous or utopian idea, but not a material necessity determining the radical character of revolution and the absolute antagonism between proletariat and bourgeoisie. If one pushes this argumentation to final consequences, he can join very quickly the Anarchist vision which ignores the state power and the fact that the confrontation with it imposes itself permanently and everywhere on the proletariat. It leads to the illusions and traps of self-management or autonomous communities and to the underestimation, indeed pure and simple abandonment, of the political fight that the whole working class has to assume. There is the fundamental mistake of “principle”, above all for someone who is linked with the experience of the workers movement and its revolutionary theory, Marxism, and its position on the state, of the argumentation that comrade MG, in his turn, takes back.

That austerity and local wars continue to multiply does not say anything in itself about the reality of the concrete dynamic of the struggle between classes in progress except that the international proletariat is still far from its taking power and its insurrection; and as far to be able to present an alternative to this daily and



generalized barbarism. And that it is really the bourgeoisie which is in power and the ruling class at the economic, political and ideological levels.

### **How to Understand the Evolution of the Relation between the Classes?**

*“What these gentlemen all lack is dialectic. They never see anything but here cause and there effect. That this is a hollow abstraction, that such metaphysical polar opposites only exist in the real world during crises, while the whole vast process proceeds in the form of interaction (though of very unequal forces, the economic movement being by far the strongest, most elemental and most decisive) and that here everything is relative and nothing is absolute...”* (Engels to Schmidt, October 27<sup>th</sup> 1890).

First let's clarify a widespread confusion – MG expresses it in his way – in relation to our position according to which “the new period which is opening is one of massive confrontations”. Many see it as an “overestimation” of the present capacities of the proletariat. But, let's repeat it one more time, claiming that we are entering **in a particular period of massive confrontations between the classes** does not mean at all that the international proletariat inescapably will be victorious. We attempt precisely to warn that we are entering into a period where the bourgeoisie moves into an even more head on and decided attack against the exploited class. That the capitalist class won't simply limit itself worsening the exploitation of labour but also will attempt to impose a series of ideological, political and... bloody physical defeats (through provocations and repression) on the international proletariat. And this to inflict on it an “international historical” defeat which is the only thing for capitalism that can open the road towards a 3<sup>rd</sup> imperialist World War. Claiming that we have entered into this period is not “optimistic”, nor “pessimistic”, and it does not prejudge at all the outcome of this phase of classes struggle. On the other hand, it means that we enter into a real, practical, historical, particular process whose characteristics and “heavy” tendencies, that is determining ones, it matters to understand while refraining from mixing up “*an historical tendency, which is, correct as such, as an accomplished fact*” (Engels to Kautsky, October 14<sup>th</sup> 1891). Why do so many comrades understand the affirmation of an historical tendency to massive confrontations between the classes as the affirmation of the proletariat's victory as “an accomplished or inescapable fact”?

There is an unbroken thread (a film, a movie, we are tempted to say), an historical continuity, of the struggle between classes and of the working class struggle in particular. This thread of struggle between classes, this

continuity, its history, is thus marked by moments which “respond” to one another in a manner of speaking – including in the periods of the worst counter-revolution – and often indirectly, not in an immediate or mechanical way:

*“In a word: the economic struggle is the transmitter from one political centre to another<sup>15</sup>; the political struggle is the periodic fertilisation of the soil for the economic struggle. Cause and effect here continually change places; and thus the economic and the political factor in the period of the mass strike, now widely removed, completely separated or even mutually exclusive, as the theoretical plan would have them, merely form the two interlacing sides of the proletarian class struggle in Russia. And their unity is precisely the mass strike. If the sophisticated theory proposes to make a clever logical dissection of the mass strike for the purpose of getting at the “purely political mass strike,” it will by this dissection, as with any other, not perceive the phenomenon in its living essence, but will kill it altogether”* (Rosa Luxemburg, Mass strike, part 4).

Roughly<sup>16</sup>, we can say that the working class struggles respond to the bourgeois attacks and that the ruling class responds to them mainly at the political level (unions, Left parties) and more generally ideologically through campaigns and particular issues according to the moment. This historical continuity of the classes' struggle manifests itself too through the experience that both classes have developed on this ground. Even in the worst moments, the 1930s and 1940s for instance, the classes' struggle exists and above all “is in movement”. Even at the heart of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, the classes'

15 . The French version is a little different. The first sentence says : « *En un mot la lutte économique présente une continuité, elle est le fil qui relie les différents nœuds politiques* » that we can translate as “*In a word, the economic struggle presents a continuity, it is the thread which links the different political knots*”. The political meaning is not exactly the same and we can't find the exact meaning of the German word “*Fortleitende*” used by the author in the original version: “*Mit einem Wort: Der ökonomische Kampf ist das Fortleitende von einem politischen Knotenpunkt zum andern, der politische Kampf ist die periodische Befruchtung des Bodens für den ökonomischen Kampf*”. As far as we understand it, the French translation seems to be closer to the German version than the English one (Note of the IGCL).

16 . It would be wrong to reduce this permanent interaction, this permanent struggle, between the classes to “*their economic struggle, i.e., by making this struggle the exclusive (or, at least, the main) starting-point, by making it the exclusive (or, at least, the main) basis*”, by restricting them to “*the sphere of relations between workers and employers*” (Lenin, *What is to Be Done?*) and joining so the Economist vision according to which the classes' struggle is only at the immediate economical level and essentially from the relations in the sphere of production. Unlike the common idea which opposes both revolutionaries on this question, Lenin joins the statement developed by Rosa Luxemburg in the *Mass Strike*... But that's another debate.

struggle had carried on and the working class struggles (rare but real) developed, including in massively bombarded Germany. The classes' struggle is a permanent process which presents, linked to the historical relation of forces between the classes, dynamics in such or such way, or direction, in relation to the revolutionary prospect. Whether it goes away from this one or it gets closer or turns towards it. The classes' struggle, the relation of forces between classes, is never static but always in movement (more or less rapid). The historic course of the events turns one way or the other without this predominance fully erasing or causing the the other tendency to disappear.

### **Is There a Difference between the Years 1930 and today?**

Eighty years later, it is today clear for all that in the 1930s the course of the classes' struggle, globally, in trend (tendentially) was going towards war. This course didn't cease (except a few sudden fits quickly defeated as the massive strikes of May-June 1936 in France and Belgium, as during the workers insurrection against Franco's coup d'État of July 1936 in Spain) to drive the working class of all countries to line up every time more behind the national banners, the anti-fascist slogans and the great Left parties (Socialist and Stalinist) and to provoke bloody repression. Each

proletarian sudden start of this period ended up in a strengthening of bourgeois ideology within the proletarian ranks and the loss of confidence in the proletarian perspective because of the political as well as physical defeats. And this even when there could be a feeling of immediate victory as in France after the great strikes of May-June 1936 (with wages rises and paid annual vacations). Nevertheless, if we compare in a static manner the years 1920-1930 with today, it appears that the 2015 proletariat is far from presenting the same class feelings and the same revolutionary yearnings and so, apparently, the same strength than the 1920-1930 generations. The photos of armed workers from July 1936 in Barcelona waving black and red, red or black, flags arouse more our imagination and hopes of a mythical working class than the workers of today,

mobile phones in hands for “twitter”, and marching behind the unions' banners or for *¡Democracia ya!* of the Spanish Indignados. And yet, the ones and the others don't bring the same strength and dynamic. If the first ones seem to be at a higher bar on the ladder, according to the photo, the film shows that they inescapably go down it while the second, the present generations, go up it (even though too slowly for our liking). The first ones headed towards bloody defeat because they already were politically and ideologically defeated before being slaughtered on the military fronts<sup>17</sup>. The others, today, even though most of them hardly consider themselves as “workers” and don't wave red flags, tend to resist against the imperatives for sacrifices behind the capitalist state. Do they rather go towards a wide **adherence** to bourgeois ideological issues (the struggle against terrorism and the defense of democracy for instance), towards an **active participation** in bourgeois political organizations

(particularly Left or unions ones), towards an **enlistment** behind the state and the nation, and do they tend to give up the defense of their class interests as MG wrote it? Or do they rather go towards a defense of their immediate class interests, towards indifference as regards to the great ideological campaigns, towards disaffection from bourgeois political and unionist organizations, a detachment from and distrust towards the state? We believe that amongst **the two living**



**Workers, become Spanish Republican militiamen, on the military front in 1936 : so far from the cities, so far from their class interests...**

**tendencies**, the latter is **dominant** today and that it **determines** the course of the events. This difference, this opposed direction, this contrary course compared with the 1930s is fundamental from the historical point of view. To acknowledge this does not mean that the proletarian victory is certain. But on the contrary that a difficult fight is engaging in which the communist groups, as dispersed and numerically weak as they are today, must struggle for influence, and even win, the most workers as possible to their political orientation

17 . In Spain, the political defeat had unfortunately taken place once the state power was given to the Catalan nationalists and most of the “insurreccional” workers of Barcelona had departed to the Saragossa front in the anti-fascist militias – just a few days after July 18<sup>th</sup> 1936 – where they were massively sacrificed, similar to ones from Madrid and other great Spanish cities, for the defense of the Republican state.

and thus prevent the reversal of the course of events. For this, they have to be able to acknowledge the general dynamic to adapt their slogans to its evolution, including the jumps and breaks it may pass through.

Thus it is not a question of knowing if the “immediate” relation of forces is favourable or not for the proletariat – it is unfavourable for the exploited class since the state power is exercised by the exploiting class – but to know what is the march of the events, their “course”, faced with the historical alternative, proletarian revolution or generalized imperialist war. We also know that this “course”, this heavy tendency of the proletariat to be “concerned with its living conditions” to the detriment of the economic and political interests of capital, can well be reversed by a “counter-tendency become at least as strong”. This could not be but the result of a series of ideological, political and physical defeats at a scale comparable to the ones suffered... in the 1920s, mainly in Germany (the final defeat is delivered in October 1923) and in Russia (the German defeat precipitating the adoption of the theory of “socialism in one country”, the counter-revolutionary course and the Stalinist terror which goes with it).

These are exactly the stakes of the period in which we are entering: will the ruling class succeed to impose

such defeats on the different fractions of the international proletariat? For comrades and groups who think there is no “historical course” and, as MG thinks, that today the working class is not in a general dynamic of “defense of its living conditions”, that is of struggle for its class interests, the particular political stakes which are appearing (and will concretely appear ones after the others) don't exist. Thus, besides the argumentation they provide to prove their position – “misery and wars continue” – turning its back on the Marxist theory on state and flirting with Anarchism, they make themselves unable (if they want to intervene in the struggle between classes) to go beyond, in the best cases, a simple presentation of great abstract principles without taking into account the situation and its different steps, and when they'll do it they'll be without compass, rolled around by the different episodes and battles, late in regards to the situation, at last incapable of “*seiz[ing] and maintain[ing] the real leadership of a mass movement [and] becom[ing], in a political sense, the rulers of the whole movement,..., with the utmost clearness, consistency and resoluteness, inform[ing] the proletariat of their tactics and aims in the period of coming struggle.*” (Rosa Luxemburg, Mass Strike).

RL, July 2015

### **On the Relation between Revolutionary Organizations, the Communist Party, the Analysis of the Situations and the Tactic and, in Return, their Influence on the... Party**

*“Comprehending and weighing up the situation has to be the key requirement for making tactical decisions because this allows us to signal to the movement that the time has come for an action which has already been anticipated as far as possible; it doesn't however allow arbitrary «improvisations» and «surprises» on the part of the leaders. We can't predict with absolute certainty how objective situations will turn out, but we can predict what we should do in certain hypothetical situations, that is to say, we can predict tactics in their broad outlines. To deny this possibility and necessity would be to deny both a fundamental party duty, and to reject the only assurance we can give that in all circumstances party militants and the masses will agree to take orders from the leading centre. In this sense the party is not like an army or any other State mechanism, for in these organs hierarchical authority prevails and voluntary adhesion counts for nothing. (...) We have no hesitation in saying that since the party itself is something perfectible but not perfect, much has to be sacrificed for clarity's sake to the persuasive capacity of the tactical norms, even if this does entail a certain schematisation: for even when tactical schemes prepared by us collapse under the weight of circumstances, the matter is never remedied by relapsing into opportunism and eclecticism but rather by renewed efforts to bring tactics back into line with the duties of the party. It isn't only the good party that makes good tactics, but good tactics that makes the good party and good tactics have to be amongst those that everybody has chosen, and everybody has understood in their main outlines.*

*Basically, what we are rejecting is that the difficult work of the party in collectively defining its tactical norms should be stifled by demands for unconditional obedience to one man, one committee, or one particular party of the International, and its traditional apparatus of leadership.*

*The activity of the party takes on **strategic** aspects in the culminating moments of the struggle for power, at which point it assumes an essentially military character. Even in the preceding phase, the party's activity is not restricted merely to ideological, propagandist and organisational functions but consists, as we've already mentioned, of active participation in the various proletarian struggles. This being so, the system of tactical norms must therefore be constructed with the precise aim of establishing under what conditions the intervention and the activity of the party in such movements - its **agitation** in the life of proletarian struggles - harmonises with the final revolutionary objective whilst simultaneously guaranteeing useful progress in the spheres of ideological, organisational and tactical preparation.”*

(Party Tactics and Party Action, “Theses of Lyon” presented by the Left at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Congress of the CP of Italy, 1926)

## Struggle against Political Opportunism

### Pale Blue Jadal (Turkey) : Last Runt of the Opportunist ICC ?

Here is the position we took in the form of a letter we sent to the ex-members of the ICC in Turkey following their resignation from this organization. The reader can read their document in English on their blog: *Our departure from the ICC* (<http://palebluejadal.tumblr.com/>). Following the sending of our position as is usual in this kind of situation – to date and as far as we know, no group has taken a position that is really political on Pale Blue Jadal and their writings –, the comrades replied to us that they have “absolutely no interest or desire in maintaining any contact with [our group], and consider any e-mails sent or attempts to establish contact after this point to be harassment” (sic). *Harassment? What the hell! The poor dears. Why not accuse us directly of attempting a pogrom like they learned in the ICC? Here are these self-styled revolutionaries. Above all, what an attitude in practice, concretely, in the facts, which seems directly dictated by the ICC theses on parasitism which the comrades, however, claim, pretty much everywhere, to reject. To ignore “on principle” the reality of the proletarian camp, the groups which constitute it – whether it pleases us or not – and the positions which are developed here cannot but lead to eventually insurmountable contradictions like the idealist speculation critiqued by Marxism: “Criticism, which has a free attitude to its object, calls to history: ‘You ought to have happened in such and such a way!’ ” (Engels, *The Holy Family*, ch. 2). For the Turkish comrades, we fear that the course of their experience has quickly reached its limit. Besides their sectarian attitude, product of the theory of parasitism which they have very well integrated despite what they say, a reading of their “road map” seems to indicate that they wish to quickly distance themselves from the tradition and method of the Communist Left even though they were part of the ICC of today*

*They are free to not read us, but we are free to send them our positions based on our analysis of their evolution and in the hope, that we have never completely abandoned, that they’ll be convinced by our arguments and more generally by the tradition and method of the Communist Left. They are free to put in practice, in the facts, the theory of parasitism. We are free to fight against it in practice. The damage is evident that the ICC “wreckers” inflicted on the young generations that they were able to influence! Apart from the numerous silent resignations of disorientated and demoralized militants, the dissolution of a section of the ICC in Turkey and the politically confused perspectives, if not openly opportunist, that these comrades displayed since the publication of their initial document to which we respond, are its last public manifestation.*

### Open Letter to Pale Blue Jade (former section of the ICC in Turkey).

**I**t was our duty as a political group that is part of the tradition of the Communist Left to take note of your text recounting your time in the ICC. We also debated it collectively in our group where we managed to establish a critical political appreciation of your path which will be received, we hope, fraternally all the same. This attitude is based on an important principle of the tradition of the Communist Left, that is the importance of international debate and discussion between groups of the Left designed as a moment in the determined and daily process of the formation of the class party.

First of all, we appreciated the clarity and thus the straightness of certain of your observations on the opportunist plunge of the ICC. You very justly critiqued *“the culture of agreement in the organization, the idea that expressing indignation against what was done against this comrade was a measurement of how revolutionary one was, the analysis of pogromism developed over this individual incident and the fact that the discussion revolved too much around personalities. Also, we emphasized that what was going on was a political crisis rather than a moral<sup>18</sup> one.”* We said nothing different when

we affirmed : *“Contrary to the liquidationist ICC, we claim a tradition, the tradition of the Communist Left, in which the conception of militantism bases itself not on abstract and confused concepts from the point of view of the class such as morality and values, but on a clear political program synthesizing the experience of hundreds of years of the workers’ movement.”<sup>19</sup>* We have always strongly critiqued the psychologizing ideologies placed at the front by the leadership of the ICC as opportunist and foreign to the Communist Left. These types of ideologies contribute to creating a climate of generalized terror and suspicion in the heart of the organization which explains what you have experienced: *“that a culture of everyone agreeing with everything had emerged in the organization and that the discussions had become shallow (...) While the culture of agreement was extensively criticized in the congress, it still continued in its effects: only the comrades with whom the majority agreed had changed. The new dominant tendency did really seem to desire a debate.”*

<http://igcl.org/Morale-proletarienne-lutte-des>

19 . <http://igcl.org/20th-Congress-of-the-International> We strongly encourage the Turkish comrades to read this text on the 20th Congress of the ICC, a Congress in which they assisted. The comrades will appreciate perhaps the less “polemic” tone of this text.

18 . We have published a brochure on the question of the ICC and its new theories on morality (available in French only).

You have stated yourselves this climate of terror and political demoralization when you said : *"The biggest problem of the ICC is that the orientations determined by positions of power in the organizations are being largely and lately increasingly approved constantly by nearly all the comrades and this being seen as normal."*

Another point where we agree is on the question of the theory of political parasitism. You affirm : *"The Turkish section was to become the most critical section in the ICC. The most important example of this is the fact that the section in Turkey was the only section which had rejected the ICC's infamous position on parasitism."* That's very well, but we do not know on what you base your rejection of this theory. What is your critique, in short? Maybe this has already been treated in a text of which we are not aware. But it would be interesting for the entirety of the revolutionary milieu to know your real position on this question, in place of a simple rejection. For us, the theory of parasitism is foreign to the entire tradition of the Communist Left and is not, for the opportunist leadership of the ICC, but a fig leaf the purpose of which is to obscure the banning of factions and oppositions within the ICC. Relatively speaking, it is the equivalent of the banning of factions in the Bolshevik party in 1921. It is the theoretical justification for the abandonment by the ICC of its statutes in particular with respect to the right of forming factions and it is used to break, exclude and insult undesirable opponents.

It would also be interesting to hear your thoughts on other positions of the ICC that we consider opportunist such as the reconciliation with anarchism and the decomposition of capitalism. According to us, as much as parasitism and the emphasis on questions of morality, positions which you have very justly critiqued, the opening to anarchism and decomposition are expressions of the opportunist degeneration of the ICC. What do the Turkish comrades

think?

What was the most surprising for us is despite your rejection of the theory of parasitism in words, you have applied it in the most pure manner to characterize us, which demonstrates to us confusion and incoherence. *"The*

*Turkish section condemned this provocative attack even before the Extraordinary Conference, becoming the first section in the organization to take position against it. Nevertheless, the members of our section in the central organ of the ICC didn't fail to criticize the extremely angry tone of the communiqué written in response to this attack, its engagement into polemics with this group which we didn't see as proletarian, the speculations made in the communiqué in regards to the internal life of the ICC as well the comparisons made with the Stasi and Stalin and the expression that a pogrom was taking place against the ICC in it."* In what way was our Appeal an attack against the ICC? In what way is our group not proletarian? You did not say.

These are the methods of the liquidationist faction of the ICC:

1. One affirms that the critical comrades are attacking the organization, creating an atmosphere of a besieged fortress with a view to close the ranks around opportunism,
2. One attacks the credibility of the critical comrades under diverse pretexts each one less political than the next. Remember that all of the critique of the triumphant stalinist counter-revolution

was labelled hitlero-trotskyism in the '30s.

The goal of this path is to break all critique. You must know it as you yourselves experienced it. The conclusion is that you have yielded to opportunism on this question and you have from then closed ranks around the comrades of which you yourselves were critical. Hence your ulterior positioning which was more or less centrist and which tied

**Rosa Luxemburg about the Revisionist Bernstein's Idealist Theories, on "human science", "human democracy" and "human morality".**

*"And thus the Bernstein's conception of socialism collapses entirely. (...) For when he abandoned scientific socialism he lost the axis of intellectual crystallisation around which isolated facts group themselves in the organic whole of a coherent conception of the world.*

*His doctrine, composed of bits of all possible systems, seems upon first consideration to be completely free from prejudices. For Bernstein does not like talk of "party science," or to be more exact, of class science, any more than he likes to talk of class liberalism or class morality. He thinks he succeeds in expressing human, general, abstract science, abstract liberalism, abstract morality. But since the society of reality is made up of classes which have diametrically opposed interests, aspirations and conceptions, a general human science in social questions, an abstract liberalism, an abstract morality, are at present illusions, pure utopia. The science, the democracy, the morality, considered by Bernstein as general, human, are merely the dominant science, dominant democracy and dominant morality that is, bourgeois science, bourgeois democracy, bourgeois morality."*

(Rosa Luxemburg, *Reform or Revolution*, ch. Collapse, 1898)

your hands.

We wrote our Appeal only to aid the critical militants such as yourselves within the ICC. We attempted to give you political arms, the tradition of the Communist Left, for your struggle against opportunism. Due to the theory of parasitism of the ICC leadership, you saw only an attack where there was an appeal. In short, you did not see the forest from the trees. Have you even read our Appeal? What is its principle content? *"Address to the ICC comrades still sincerely wishing to enrol in the struggle for communism who are either repulsed by what is happening, or still can't come to understand any of it: do not allow yourselves to fall silent or into psychological self-criticism; reject the clannish terrain as an explanation of organizational crises! Fight on the political terrain against these politics which, in addition to delusions of morality, revolutionary indignation, clan hatred, etc., led to the questioning of the original positions of the ICC and Marxism. The discipline that they try to impose on you is not Communist discipline. It is rather its negation and kills you. We must reject these outrageous trials that only seek to destroy your militant convictions and to make you despair of the communist organization. We can help. Our group is ready to hold discussions with you, to correspond and to meet with you, so that you can lead the internal battle. But this fight, in view of the situation and internal climate of the ICC, in view of the attacks, pressures, blackmail, threats that you are undergoing, the hostility of comrades whom you considered yesterday as friends, etc., is a fight that you can only lead with the support of the whole proletarian camp and the lessons of the whole Communist Left. You must try to conduct an internal struggle, but by relying on the entire Left and, if possible, forming an organized minority, that is an internal fraction - suffice to say, formed on the platform of the ICC and its original statutes."*

Thus, don't pass your own political weaknesses and inconsistencies on to us by saying : *"In fact, the people who the provocative text of the IGCL harmed the most were the critical comrades and especially our section by creating a feeling within the ICC of being under attack."* You have ceded to the discipline of the liquidationist

faction of the ICC rather than struggling for the true principles of the Communist Left.

The main weakness of your text according to us remains the fact that you never connected to the tradition of the Communist Left. You do not base yourselves on the struggles against the opportunism which has marked the history of the workers' movement. That for us is a sign of political inexperience at best, at worst a tendency towards the ultra-left and modernist swamp. The problem is that in constantly trying to reinvent the wheel, one forgets the lessons of history, that is to say one forgets that the problems that you, us and together with the Left are faced with in this moment have largely already been treated in a more than satisfactory manner by our political antecedents. The choice of your name, Pale Blue Jade, is meaningful on this point since at first glance, one believes to have come across a ultra-left clique rather than a group willing to participate in the foundation of the class party. Up to you to determine where you stand on this question.

On the questions of organization and of militantism, you state very justly the malfunctioning of the centralization of the ICC : *"in a meeting of the ICC's central organ, the central organ of the French section tried to call a vote to exclude the Turkish delegate of the ICC's central section, claiming that the Turkish section was a clan and couldn't be trusted. In an organization which cares about international centralism so much, the central organ of a local section demanding the exclusion of a member of the international central organ from a meeting of the latter was a tragicomic situation."* However, for us this reality does not demonstrate that the principles of centralization of the original ICC are bad, but on the contrary that the liquidationist faction shamelessly squanders the organizational principles and statutes of the

historic ICC. So we do not follow you when you affirm : *"The process had led each of us to question certain essential positions of the ICC on the questions of organization and centralization."* For us the organizational principles and statutes of the ICC are the clearest expression of what must be the class party from the organizational point of view. Evidently these questions can and must be debated in the proletarian milieu. But as for us, we continue to defend the tradition of the ICC in organizational matters, and this against the current ICC.

### **Morale prolétarienne, lutte des classes et révisionisme**



Groupe International de la Gauche Communiste  
*Révolution ou guerre*

E-mail : intleftcom@gmail.com  
site web : www.igcl.org  
3 dollars/3 euros  
(imprimerie sydelale)

**Against the opportunist idealist theories of the ICC, read our pamphlet **Proletarian Morality, Classes Struggle and Revisionism** (in French and Spanish)...**

It is clear that the ICC no longer represents a pole of regroupment for the new revolutionary energy which surged since the crisis of 2008. You are an expression of this. The ICC poorly integrated you from the political point of view. It acted opportunistically in integrating you before the process of discussion had achieved a certain level of political agreement. In this, it betrayed one of the lessons of *What is to Be Done?* by Lenin which placed agreement with the political program as a fundamental criterion for adherence to a political group. Your criticisms were ignored or tolerated while the organization desired to grow and when your criticisms began to be a nuisance to the opportunist faction of the ICC, you became since then pariahs in the ICC. The responsibility does not lie with you. The fault belongs to the ICC which violates all of its organizational principles of which one of the principle ones was to see in a discussion between revolutionaries a moment in the process of homogenization of the organization. Political homogenization of an organization

is not a point of departure, but a work in progress.

As the ICC is no more than a sect that has nothing to offer the proletariat, we must turn ourselves towards the last representative of the tradition of the Italian Left, the ICT. Despite its weaknesses and hesitations, the ICT remains a historic and political reference for the whole of the proletarian milieu and thus for new revolutionary militants. We therefore call on you, comrades, to connect to this rich political tradition which is the Communist Left. This leads to a regroupment around the ICT. That is not to say that you should abandon from one day to the next all of your political positions to accept as a whole those of the ICT. This signifies that you must start a process of discussion with all of the current groups of the Communist left at the international level, in particular with the ICT, and that this process will be a moment among others in the formation of the class party.

Robin, June 2015

### **Montréal : Open Meeting Wednesday October 21<sup>st</sup> 2015, 7pm**

Our next meeting will be hold October 21<sup>st</sup>,7pm at the bookstore La Flèche rouge, 3235 Ontario Est, Montréal.

We hold regular public meetings in Montréal and in Toronto for any reader, sympathizer or militant who wants to meet us and debate with us. For now, we don't organize meetings in France but one can contact us ([intleftcom@gmail.com](mailto:intleftcom@gmail.com)) to organize any possible meeting .

### **Pamphlets of IC – Klasbatalo and the IFICC (orders at [intleftcom@gmail](mailto:intleftcom@gmail.com))**

*Student Struggle and Assemblies of Neighbourhood* (Internationalist Communists - Klasbatalo)

*IC Degeneration : the French CP (1924-1927)* (International Fraction of the ICC, only in French)

*Group of Marxist Workers (Mexique, 1938)* (International Fraction of the ICC, only in French and Spanish)

*The Question of War (1935)* (International Fraction of the ICC, only in French)

*Proletarian Morality, Struggle of Classes and Revisionism* (IGCL from the IFICC, only in French and Spanish)

## Text of the Workers Movement

### Marxist Theory and Revolutionary Tactics, Anton Pannekoek, 1912 (extracts)

*Anton Pannekoek's text whose extracts we reproduce here, is from 1912. It fits in full debate on the mass strike – or mass action – within the German social-democrat Party and it responds to Kautsky. He too took position, but in a formal manner, against the rightwing current of the German social-democracy and the union bureaucracy who deny any “spontaneous” action or initiative of the masses. From the 1905 Russian Revolution, Rosa Luxemburg defined the mass strike as “a universal form of the proletarian class struggle resulting from the present stage of capitalist development and class relations». For us, this still remains fully valid a century later and the mass strike, as process, still remains the universal form of the working class struggle. For Kautsky and the centrist current behind him, the mass action can't be utilized but exceptionally; for instance in the case the bourgeoisie would realize a coup d'État in front the accession to power of the social-democracy by the elections. Pannekoek responds to that by criticizing the method that Kautsky utilizes in his argumentation and by presentint the Marxist method for comprehending the classes struggle and understanding its dynamic.*

*This discussion is thus particularly topical today amongst the revolutionaries and it comes to feed the debate that this issue our journal pretends to develop on the approach we must have on the present historical situation, the historical course and the dynamic of the working class struggles. Obviously, it belongs to the reader to remind that some arguments are determined by the fact the proletariat still had at that time at its disposal mass political organizations, its party, and unions which is no longer the case today.*

*Finally, it particularly interesting to notice the last part of this text. In fact, in 1912, Pannekoek, member of the German Socialist Party, defends that the party is “the representative and leader of the entire proletariat”. Far from the “councilist” and anti-party Pannekoek of the 1930s and 1940s, the Pannekoek of that time besides Rosa Luxemburg and Lenin not only on the mass action before the war, on proletarian internationalism during the war, on the workers insurrection and the dictatorship of the proletariat in 1917 in Russia, but still on the party as organ of political leadership of the proletariat.*

*The following passage is eloquent on the method and the aim of the struggle of the revolutionary class and we make it ours : “In our view, revolution is a process, the first stages of which we are now experiencing, for it is only by the struggle for power itself that the masses can be assembled, drilled and formed into an organisation capable of taking power” (Anton Pannekoek).*

### Marxist Theory and Revolutionary Tactics<sup>20</sup>

For several years past, profound tactical disagreement has been developing on a succession of issues amongst those who had previously shared common ground as Marxists and together fought against Revisionism in the name of the radical tactic of class struggle. It first came into the open in 1910, in the debate between Kautsky and Luxemburg over the mass strike; then came the dissension over imperialism and the question of disarmament; and finally, with the conflict over the electoral deal made by the Party Executive and the attitude to be adopted towards the liberals, the most important issues of parliamentary politics became the subject of dispute.

(...) The source of the recent tactical disagreements is clear to see: under the influence of the modern forms of

capitalism, new forms of action have developed in the labour movement, namely mass action. When they first made their appearance, they were welcomed by all Marxists and hailed as a sign of revolutionary development, a product of our revolutionary tactics. But as the practical potential of mass action developed, it began to pose new problems; the question of social revolution, hitherto an unattainably distant ultimate goal, now became a live issue for the militant proletariat, and the tremendous difficulties involved became clear to everyone, almost as a matter of personal experience. This gave rise to two trends of thought: the one took up the problem of revolution, and by analysing the effectiveness, significance and potential of the new forms of action, sought to grasp how the proletariat would be able to fulfil its mission;

20 . <https://www.marxists.org/archive/pannekoek/1912/tactics.htm>.



the other, as if shrinking before the magnitude of this prospect, groped among the older, parliamentary forms of action in search of tendencies which would for the time being make it possible to postpone tackling the task. The new methods of the labour movement have given rise to an ideological split among those who previously advocated radical Marxist party-tactics.

In these circumstances it is our duty as Marxists to clarify the differences as far as possible by means of theoretical discussion. This is why, in our article “Mass action and revolution”, we outlined the process of revolutionary development as a reversal of the relations of class power to provide a basic statement of our perspective, and attempted to clarify the differences between our views and those of Kautsky in a critique of two articles by him. (...)

It is over the nature of this revolution that our views diverge. As far as Kautsky is concerned, it is an event in the future, a political apocalypse, and all we have to do meanwhile is prepare for the final show-down by gathering our strength and assembling and drilling our troops. In our view, revolution is a *process*, the first stages of which we are now experiencing, for it is only by the struggle for power itself that the masses can be assembled, drilled and formed into an organisation capable of taking power. These different conceptions lead to completely different evaluations of current practice; and it is apparent that the Revisionists’ rejection of any revolutionary action and Kautsky’s postponement of it to the indefinite future are bound to unite them on many of the current issues over which they both oppose us.

(...)

### **Class and Masses**

We argued that Comrade Kautsky had left his Marxist analytical tools at home in his analysis of action by the masses, and that the inadequacy of his method was apparent from the fact that he failed to come to any definite conclusion. (...) If, in analysing a phenomenon, you find that it takes on various forms and is entirely unpredictable, that merely proves *that you have not found the real basis determining it*. If, after studying the position of the moon, for example, someone “came to the very definite conclusion” that it sometimes appears in the north-east, sometimes in the south and sometimes in the west, in an entirely arbitrary and unpredictable fashion, then everyone would rightly say that this study was fruitless — though it may of course be that the force at work cannot yet be identified. The investigator would only have deserved criticism if he had completely ignored the method of analysis which, as he perfectly well knew, was the only one which could produce results in that field.

This is how Kautsky treats action by the masses. He observes that the masses have acted in different ways historically, sometimes in a reactionary sense, sometimes in a revolutionary sense, sometimes remaining passive, and comes to the conclusion that one cannot build on this shifting, unpredictable foundation. But what does Marxist theory tell us? That beyond the limits of individual variation, — that is where the masses are concerned — the actions of men are determined by their material situation, their interests and the perspectives arising from the latter and that these, making allowances for the weight of tradition, are different for the different classes. If we are to comprehend the behaviour of the masses, then, we must make clear distinctions between the various classes: the actions of a lumpenproletarian mass, a peasant mass and a modern proletarian mass will be entirely different. Of course Kautsky could come to no conclusion by throwing them all together indiscriminately; the cause of his failure to find a basis for prediction, however, lies not in the object of his historical analysis, but in the inadequacy of the methods he has used.

(...) ... he counts the wives of organised workers as belonging to the twenty-seven million not organised, and secondly because he denies the proletarian class character of those workers who are not organised or who have still not shrugged off bourgeois traditions. We therefore re-emphasise that what counts in the development of these actions, in which the deepest interests and passions of the masses break surface, is not membership of the organisation, nor a traditional ideology, but to an ever-increasing extent the real class character of the masses.

It now becomes clear what relationship our methods bear each other. Kautsky denounces my method as “over-simplified Marxism”; I am once again asserting that his is neither over-simplified nor over-sophisticated, but not Marxist at all. Any science seeking to investigate an area of reality must start by identifying the main factors and basic underlying forces in their simplest form; this first simple image is then filled out, improved and made more complex as further details, secondary causes and less direct influences are brought in to correct it, so that it approximates more and more closely to reality. Let us take as an illustration Kautsky’s analysis of the great French revolution. Here we find as a first approximation the class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the feudal classes; an outline of these main factors, the general validity of which cannot be disputed, could be described as “over-simplified Marxism”. In his pamphlet of 1889, Kautsky analysed the sub-divisions within those classes, and was thus able to improve and deepen this first simple sketch significantly. The Kautsky of 1912, however, would maintain that there was no kind of unity to the character

of the motley masses which made up the contemporary Third Estate; and that it would be pointless to expect definite actions and results from it. This is how matters stand in this case — except that the situation is more complicated because the future is involved, and the classes of today have to try and locate the forces determining it. As a first approximation aimed at gaining an initial general perspective, we must come down to the basic feature of the capitalist world, the struggle between bourgeoisie and proletariat, the two principal classes; we attempted to outline the process of revolution as a development of the power-relations between them. We are, of course, perfectly well aware that reality is much more complex, and that many problems remain to be resolved before we comprehend it: we must to some extent await the lessons of practice in order to do so. The bourgeoisie is no more unified a class than the proletariat; tradition still influences both of them; and among the mass of the people there are also the lumpenproletarians, petty-bourgeois, and clerical employees whose actions are inevitably determined by their particular class situations. But since they only form admixtures insufficiently important to obscure the basic wage-proletarian character of the masses, the above is merely a qualification which does not refute the initial outline, but rather elaborates it.

(...)

### **Marxism and the Role of the Party**

In conclusion, a few more words on theory. These are necessary because Kautsky hints from time to time that our work takes leave of the materialist conception of history, the basis of Marxism. In one place he describes our conception of the nature of organisation as spiritualism ill befitting a materialist. On another occasion he takes our view that the proletariat must develop its power and freedom “in constant attack and advance”, in a class struggle escalating from one engagement to another, to mean that the party executive is to “instigate” *the revolution*.

Marxism explains all the historical and political actions of men in terms of their material relations, and in particular their economic relations. A recurrent bourgeois misconception accuses us of ignoring the role of the human mind in this, and making man a dead instrument, a puppet of economic forces. We insist in turn that Marxism does not eliminate the mind. Everything which motivates the actions of men does so through the mind. Their actions are determined by their will, and by all the ideals, principles and motives that exist in the mind. But Marxism maintains that the content of the human mind is nothing other than a product of the material world in which man lives, and that economic relations therefore only determine his

actions by their effects upon his mind and influence upon his will. Social revolution only succeeds the development of capitalism because the economic upheaval first transforms the mind of the proletariat, endowing it with a new content and directing the will in this sense. Just as Social-Democratic activity is the expression of a new perspective and new determination instilling themselves in the mind of the proletariat, so organisation is an expression and consequence of a profound mental transformation in the proletariat. This mental transformation is the term of mediation by which economic development leads to the act of social revolution. There can surely be no disagreement between Kautsky and ourselves that this is the role which Marxism attributes to the mind.

And yet even in this connection our views differ; not in the sphere of abstract, theoretical formulation, but in our practical emphasis. It is only when taken together that the two statements “The actions of men are entirely determined by their material relations” and “Men must make their history themselves through their own actions” constitute the Marxist view as a whole. The first rules out the arbitrary notion that a revolution can be made at will; the second eliminates the fatalism that would have us simply wait until the revolution happens of its own accord through some perfect fruition of development. While both maxims are correct in theoretical terms, they necessarily receive different degrees of emphasis in the course of historical development. When the party is first flourishing and must before all else organise the proletariat, seeing its own development as the primary aim of its activity, the truth embodied in the first maxim gives it the patience for the slow process of construction, the sense that the time of premature putsches is past and the calm certainty of eventual victory. Marxism takes on a predominantly historico-economic character in this period; it is the theory that all history is economically determined, and drums into us the realisation that we must wait for conditions to mature. But the more the proletariat organises itself into a mass movement capable of forceful intervention in social life, the more it is bound to develop a sense of the second maxim. The awareness now grows that the point is not simply to interpret the world, but to change it. Marxism now becomes the *theory of proletarian action*. The questions of how precisely the proletariat’s spirit and will develop under the influence of social conditions and how the various influences shape it now come into the foreground; interest in the philosophical side of Marxism and in the nature of the mind now comes to life. Two Marxists influenced by these different stages will therefore express themselves differently, the one primarily emphasising the determinate nature of the mind, the other its active role; they will both lead their

respective truths into battle against each other, although they both pay homage to the same Marxian theory.

From the practical point of view, however, this disagreement takes on another light. We entirely agree with Kautsky that an individual or group cannot make the revolution. Equally, Kautsky will agree with us that the proletariat must make the revolution. But how do matters stand with the party, which is a middle term, on the one hand a large group which consciously decides what action it will take, and on the other the representative and leader of the entire proletariat? *What is the function of the party?*

With respect to revolution, Kautsky puts it as follows in his exposition of his tactics: “Utilisation of the political general strike, but only in occasional, extreme instances when the masses can no longer be restrained.” Thus, the party is to hold back the masses for as long as they can be held back; so long as it is in any way possible, it should regard its function as to keep the masses placid, to restrain them from taking action; only when this is no longer possible, when popular indignation is threatening to burst all constraint, does it open the flood-gates and if possible put itself at the head of the masses. The roles are thus distributed in such a way that all the energy, all the initiative in which revolution has its origins must come from the masses, while the party’s function is to hold this activity back, inhibit it, contain it for as long as possible. But the relationship cannot be conceived in this way. Certainly, all the energy comes from the masses, whose revolutionary potential is aroused by oppression, misery and anarchy, and who by their revolt must then abolish the hegemony of capital. But the party has taught them that desperate outbursts on the part of individuals or individual groups are pointless, and that success can only be achieved through collective, united, organised action. It has disciplined the masses and restrained them from frittering away their revolutionary activity fruitlessly. But this, of course, is only the one, negative side of the party’s function; it must simultaneously show in positive terms how these energies can be set to work in a different, productive manner, and lead the way in doing so. The masses have, so to speak, made over part of their energy, their revolutionary purpose, to the organised collectivity, not so that it shall be dissipated, but so that the party can put it to use as their collective will. *The initiative and potential for spontaneous action which*

*the masses surrender by doing so is not in fact lost, but re-appears elsewhere and in another form as the party’s initiative and potential for spontaneous action; a transformation of energy takes place, as it were. Even when the fiercest indignation flares up among the masses — over the rising cost of living, for example — they remain calm, for they rely upon the party calling upon them to act in such a way that their energy will be utilised in the most appropriate and most successful manner possible.*

The relationship between masses and party cannot therefore be as Kautsky has presented it. If the party saw its function as restraining the masses from action for as long as it could do so, then party discipline would mean a loss to the masses of their initiative and potential for spontaneous action, a *real* loss, and not a transformation of energy. *The existence of the party would then reduce the revolutionary capacity of the proletariat rather than increase it.* It cannot simply sit down and wait until the masses rise up spontaneously in spite of having entrusted it with part of their autonomy; the discipline and confidence in the party leadership which keep the masses calm place it under an obligation to intervene actively and itself give the masses the call for action at the right moment. Thus, as we have already argued, the party actually has a duty to *instigate* revolutionary action, because it is the bearer of an important part of the masses’ capacity for action; but it *cannot do so as and when it pleases*, for it has not assimilated the entire will of the entire proletariat, and cannot therefore order it about like a troop of soldiers. It must wait for the right moment: not until the masses will wait no longer and are rising up of their own accord, but until the conditions arouse such feeling in the masses that large-scale action by the masses has a chance of success. This is the way in which the Marxist doctrine is realised that although men are determined and impelled by economic development, they make their own history. The revolutionary potential of the indignation aroused in the masses by the intolerable nature of capitalism must not go untapped and hence be lost; nor must it be frittered away in unorganised outbursts, but made fit for organised use in action instigated by the party with the objective of weakening the hegemony of capital. It is in these revolutionary tactics that Marxist theory will become reality.

Marxist Theory and Revolutionary Tactics,  
Anton Pannekoek, 1912.

## 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 statified 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, they 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 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.