

REVOLUTION or WAR

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Capitalist War and Crisis as Factors of the Class Struggle

International Situation

Workers' Struggles and Revolutionaries' Intervention

Communique of September 9th 2022:

The Death of Queen Elisabeth and the Dynamic of Strikes in United Kingdom

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Commentary on the Basic Positions of the IGCL

Struggle against Opportunism

The Fight against the Introduction of Anarchism within the Proletarian Camp

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Capitalist War and Crisis as Factors of the Class Struggle

The war in Ukraine is becoming more and more entrenched. It continues in an escalation of massive destruction and massacres. For the time being, there is no material fact that can indicate the outcome, let alone the end. This war is on top of all the catastrophes caused by capitalism and those, even more dramatic and massive, that capital is preparing and announcing. It is thus easy to add up these catastrophes without any real link and even less “hierarchy” between them. According to this view, each of these catastrophes one would have its specific cause, each one its solution, each one requiring a particular mobilization and struggle, for those who call not to suffer them without reacting. Among all the dramatic and destructive consequences that the survival of capitalism implies, global warming and the deterioration of the environment are, without any doubt, as much a mortal danger for humanity as the threat of a generalized atomic war. It is interesting to note that the struggle for ecology, the defense of the environment, etc., is advocated by almost all bourgeois, capitalist political and social forces; especially by the left and leftist forces. On the other hand, it is also interesting to note that no bourgeois political force, neither of the left nor the right, defends the struggle against war, whether it is the imperialist war in Ukraine today, or the march to generalized war of which the former is an expression. Of course, we cannot be surprised that no bourgeois political force defends the principle of *proletarian internationalism* on the occasion of this war nor on the occasion of any other imperialist war.

The communists of today, that is to say the organizations, groups and militants claiming the international Communist Left and its struggles, from the historical ones within the Communist International until those of today, do not deny that capitalism is destroying the planet. But they know that the supposed struggle for the defense of the environment is doomed to impotence as such and, above all, to become a dead end for the proletarians who would let themselves be dragged into it. Indeed, like any supposed particular struggle such as anti-racism, feminism, etc., it does not provide the ground and the conditions leading to the destruction of capitalism; and by not designating the particular subject of these struggles, apart from the “people” or those with good intentions, it can only lead to the ground of inter-classism and, therefore, of collaboration between the classes. That is to say, to hand over the initiative and the control of these supposed struggles to the capitalist class, the very one that is the cause

and the factor of the *disease*. Is it not the capitalist states that are restarting coal-fired power stations and fighting over fossil fuel resources, gas in particular, since the outbreak of the war in Ukraine?

On the other hand, communists know that the struggle against imperialist war provides the terrain and the conditions for the struggle for the destruction of capitalism and that it designates very clearly the revolutionary subject of this struggle, the exploited class, the international proletariat, because the perspective of generalized war produced by the capitalist crisis itself reveals the class antagonism between bourgeoisie and proletariat. Indeed, to the attacks against the living conditions of the wage-workers, of the proletarians, that the bourgeoisie imposes because of the crisis, are added the further direct and massive attacks, necessitated by the war in Ukraine and the march to the generalized war. Contrary to the supposed struggle for the defense of the environment, the struggle against the effects of the crisis and of the war provides the terrain of the confrontation between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

One can, as a proletarian in a collective struggle, fight against the effects of the crisis and of the war, against the various sacrifices that are imposed on us, and will be imposed on us more and more. In this way, proletarian struggles slow down and will slow down the march to generalized war, just as they push back or limit the attacks due to the crisis on the one hand; and, on the other hand, they can open the way to the revolutionary response, to the destruction of capital, starting with its state, and to the establishment of communism, a society without commodities, without money, without division of labor, without exploitation, without classes therefore, and thus in which production of social wealth is directed towards satisfying needs and not generating profit. “*Communism as the positive transcendence of private property (...) is the genuine resolution of the conflict between man and nature.*”¹

This is the object of our fight, of our organized regroupment and of our struggle so that the international proletariat can give itself its politico-historical leadership, its world party. This party will carry loudly and clearly the demand of proletarian insurrection and dictatorship, prerequisites for the establishment of communism, and will indicate the way and the means to attain them.

December 28th 2022

¹ . K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Progress Publishers, Moscow 1959.

International Situation

Workers' Struggles and Revolutionaries' Intervention

Since last spring, in connection not only with the crisis but also with the war in Ukraine and its consequences, direct or indirect, on the living conditions of the international proletariat, a dynamic of resumption of workers' struggles tends, albeit slowly, to assert itself and to develop. It is in the United Kingdom that this dynamic has expressed itself the most. We cannot explain here why, without ignoring or underestimating other workers' struggles and social revolts at the international level², we think that the proletariat in Great Britain has been, and still is, in the vanguard of the workers' revival, however modest it may be in itself. It is therefore a first experience, in the period opened by the war, for the revolutionary forces both from the point of view of understanding the dynamics of confrontation between the classes and of the intervention that they must put forward in order to best assume the role for which the proletariat produces them: that of political leadership.

That is why we publish below the communiqué that we have put on our website and sent to our contacts and groups of the proletarian camp. It is dated September 9. If it is outdated as to the course of events themselves, the facts, it seems to us that it remains a moment of this workers' mobilization – the intervention of communist groups, however limited, is an integral part of workers' struggles. Let's recall that the spring and summer had seen a series of wildcat strikes break out in the United Kingdom, initially overwhelming the unions; then forcing them to urgently organize legal strikes by sector lasting 24 to 48 hours in order to try to channel and control the growing workers' combativity. In August we published a leaflet, *For Wage Increases, Strike Everywhere and Without Delay!*³ calling on all workers in the country to go on strike without waiting. In particular, without waiting for the so-called “hot autumn” that the unions advanced as an alternative to entering into mass struggle immediately. This orientation raised some criticisms, in particular that “workers [do not] need to be told to strike since the situation will become dire but to know that the strike is only the beginning.” We responded to this then in *Response to Some Critical "Posts" about our Intervention*⁴ by trying to present our conception and method of intervention in workers' struggles. Basically, we considered then that waiting for the autumn left the field

free for the bourgeoisie and its unions to prepare themselves and to prepare the ground with a planning in advance of days of union action divided by sector and corporation and in time – by 24 or 48 hour strikes; and thus to break definitively the dynamics of mass strike that the wildcat strikes of the summer announced.

And then... Queen Elizabeth II died. It was clear to us that this event, independent of the particular class confrontation in progress, as pure contingency, could only break the dynamics in progress. This is the object of the following communiqué, which was our political responsibility, “party responsibility”, to assume until the end, since we had called for a strike on August 20. Since then, at the call and under the control of the unions, the strikes – legal – have resumed in Great Britain, particularly during the Christmas and New Year period. They affect many sectors, health, railways, post office, education, which are called to strike one after the other. Obviously, it is the whole state apparatus, government, political parties, trade unions, media, including the repressive apparatus, which are prepared to render impotent and sabotage any generalized and united workers' response. Thus, the proletariat in Britain has lost the initiative to the bourgeoisie and could only regain it today at the cost of an open and frontal confrontation with the unions and at the risk of massive repression – is not the government already threatening to declare strikes in certain sectors illegal?⁵ Unfortunately, it is unlikely that it will be able to do so in the immediate future – we have no indication or material fact to suggest otherwise.

Our intervention if we had a section or militants in the UK? We would not call for a massive strike by means of a leaflet as we did in August. Where combativity continues to be expressed, essentially behind the unions and their days of action, we would participate in the strikes of course and try to gather the most combative workers and those most aware of the sabotage work of the unions so that they can regroup, intervene with their comrades at work and act to put forward particular – or even local – alternatives to the days of union action; in particular by advocating any concrete action, including strike and street demonstrations, aiming at overcoming the corporatist divisions.

December 29th 2022

² . We do not have the space here to provide our position on the social movement and workers' strikes in Iran, which are of major international importance. We refer our readers to the articles of the proletarian camp, in particular of the ICT.

³ . <http://www.igcl.org/Dynamics-of-Wildcat-Strikes-in-The-807>

⁴ . <http://www.igcl.org/Quick-and-Incomplete-Response-to>

⁵ . It was the same in the United States, where the government and the Senate declared illegal the strike in the railways, although it had respected the legal framework following a large majority vote (99%!).

Communique of September 9th 2022

The Death of Queen Elizabeth and the Dynamic of Strikes in Great Britain

“UK unions suspend strike action following death of Queen Elizabeth.” (Reuters, September 8th 2022)

Insofar as we have written an agitational leaflet⁶ addressed to the attention of the proletarians of the United Kingdom on August 20th, it is our political responsibility, if we are to consistently apply the *party method*, to take into account the evolution of the situation, in particular the change brought about by the death of Queen Elizabeth, a *contingency* becoming a factor of rupture of the dynamic of class struggle in progress in the United Kingdom, and to warn the proletarians whether or not we maintain our previous orientations and slogans.

As soon as the death of Elizabeth II was announced, it was highly likely that the death, the period of national mourning, and the massive media, political and ideological campaign that immediately followed would inevitably bring to a halt the momentum of the ongoing labor strikes in the UK. As soon as the death was made public, the British unions rushed to announce the suspension of the planned days of union strikes; those that the unions had set up one after the other, sector by sector, sector after sector, to take control of the workers' combativity that had expressed itself, especially during May-June, by a dynamic of so-called wildcat strikes, unofficial, without union notice; those *days of action* that they had submitted to the vote of the workers in order to make them legal, official, but which do not need any vote to be canceled.

Not having a militant presence in the U.K., it is difficult for us to grasp the immediate state of mind that may prevail in the ranks of workers, in workplaces, in strikes and picket lines. In particular, at the time we wrote our leaflet of August 20, it was difficult for us to grasp whether the union days of action at the end of August represented an attempt by the unions to regain control over the dynamic of strikes or whether these days were the culmination of the unions' control of this dynamic, or even its stifling. Nevertheless, convinced that the line of confrontation could only be situated then, in August, around the extension and the generalization of the struggle, we called on all the proletarians in Great Britain to go on strike "without waiting"; without waiting for the unions to have definitively concluded their operation; without waiting for the days of action in "one's" sector. We also called on them to continue the strike after the union day of action in a given sector or enterprise had elapsed. In doing so, they

would have risen up against the union counter-offensive, whether it was a simple attempt to regain control or the culmination of this takeover. However, today, there is no need for a local militant presence to point out that the dynamic that was underway, whether it was still in the making or already in decline, can only be interrupted following the death of Elizabeth II. And therefore that the orientations and the slogans that the communist vanguards, the party of tomorrow, must advance are already no longer the same.

Indeed, and on the basis of our evaluation of the general balance of power between bourgeoisie and proletariat, whether on the international or even simply British level, and as confirmed by the *spontaneous* and *wildcat* strikes of May-June, it was possible – it was a political stake of the immediate concrete situation, of the confrontation between the classes – that the most combative fractions of the proletariat in Great Britain would engage, more or less directly, in the open confrontation with the unions for the conduct of the strikes and in opposition to their tactics of days of action. Hence our intervention and our slogans of August 20. However, since yesterday, the level of commitment and struggle has become much more demanding for the proletariat in the UK because the balance of power has become much more unfavorable. The course of events is no longer at all, immediately and for the moment, in its favor.

To continue the strikes or to launch a struggle is now to confront openly and head-on the whole of the state apparatus, which is mobilized around national unity and mourning. All its forces are stretched to the extreme to draw the *British people* into the emotion and national unity around the monarchy. The inevitable result is that the *sympathy* which public opinion – that is to say, the whole of the proletariat and the petty-bourgeois strata – might have shown in August, and even up to yesterday, towards the strikers and the concern about the ravages of inflation can only be greatly attenuated, if not disappear, and isolate the few proletarians, or minorities, who would risk going on strike in the days to come. As a result, the potential to impose a balance of power on the bourgeoisie forcing it to back down on its attacks, in particular by *accepting* general wage increases in the face of inflation, is greatly reduced, if not altogether absent for the time being. In the same way, the potentialities of extension, generalization and unification of the strikes are also reduced, prob-

⁶ . <http://www.igcl.org/Dynamics-of-Wildcat-Strikes-in-The-807>

ably absent for the immediate future. The favorable moment to launch into the strike and to extend them is thus past. Recognizing the inversion of the dynamic, of the course of struggles, that the queen's death has provoked – if this inversion was not already in the process because of the reinforcement of union control – does not preclude another inversion of dynamics in the weeks or months to come. But recognizing this reversal must lead us, and should lead any communist organization wanting to assume the role of effective political leadership, to adapt or change the previous orientations and slogans; in our case those we put forward on August 20. The death of Elizabeth II, a contingent factor, thus interrupted the dynamic of strikes that had been underway since May in the United Kingdom. Its use against the strikes by the state apparatus and the British bourgeoisie as a whole was undoubtedly facilitated by the apparent – or so it seems – pacification of the situation of *wildcat* and *spontaneous* strikes by the unions thanks to the days of action in August. Nevertheless, the fact remains that there is no defeat, even minor, of the proletariat during this episode of struggle. The British bourgeoisie simply succeeded in interrupting the dynamic that was underway. In this sense, the workers' mobilization against inflation and for wage increases in Great Britain remains relevant and should be expressed again in the coming months, in one form or another. Because of the crisis and the imperialist war, the preparation for the generalized war, the generalized rearmament and the development of the *war economy*, the attacks against the proletarians will not stop. And the first declarations of the new Prime Minister Liz Truss have certainly removed the last doubts that might have remained. So, if the dynamic of struggle and strikes that prevailed this summer in Great Britain is probably a thing of the past, it is just as likely that it was only the first battle of an episode of class struggles in Western Europe, or even in Great Britain itself. In any case, it is not a defeat that would handicap any resumption of struggles in the medium and short term.

The result of this situation, where the dynamic of struggle is strongly reversed, is that the *wait-and-see* position which consisted in "waiting for a hot autumn and for the strikes to develop mechanically" to intervene and to put forward general orientations and slogans for the struggle is today undone by the rapid evolution of events and, above all, by the initiatives of the bourgeoisie itself. If it was difficult, and without sense, to speculate on any *contingent* event, such as the queen's death, in the analysis of the dynamics of the relation of forces between the classes in the United Kingdom, it does not remain

less that the action of the trade unions against the strikes was an element of the situation which had to be taken into account – otherwise one forgets that the *class struggle is the struggle between the classes*, is a two-way struggle – and which demanded the putting forward of general orientations and slogans for immediate action without waiting. There is no doubt that this is a first experience of struggle – and of *mass strike* dynamics – for the young generations of revolutionaries, from which it is up to them to draw the first lessons as to the role of the communist vanguards, in particular to assume the effective political direction of the workers' struggles.

It is no longer time for communists to call massively for the strike and its extension for the time being in the United Kingdom, as we did on August 20th⁷. "*If it goes without saying, it will be even better if we say it*", according to Talleyrand's formula: if proletarians go on strike in spite of everything, we will support them to the maximum, while limiting the extent of the slogans and the action that we will launch. In the same way, revolutionary militants may be led to call for a strike in a particular workplace, depending on the situation and local potential, and it is their duty to do so, taking into account the fact that the possibilities of extension and active *sympathy* for their strike have been greatly reduced. But our general *party* slogans for the moment – that is to say, on September 9 and subject to any new event modifying the course of events, or even another contingency that is always possible – are rather to call on the combative proletarians to regroup in struggle committees in order to mobilize and best prepare the next episode of the ongoing confrontation, of which we have just lived the first episode. Our *party* intervention in the United Kingdom ceases to primarily be one of *agitation* to become one of *propaganda*, aiming to draw lessons and to favor the regroupment of the most combative proletarians in view of the resumption of this particular mobilization. And this is for the new episode, the new moment, of the class struggle in Great Britain that is opening up in the face of the crisis, the war and the preparation of each national capital for the generalized imperialist war, a preparation that demands from the proletariat the bulk of the sacrifices.

September 9th 2022

⁷ . It is even possible that our own intervention was itself behind the events – we were not able to verify this, in particular because of our absence from British territory.

Abort Bourgeoisie Democracy: Reflections on the American Midterm Elections

This statement was written before the final results of the mid-term elections were fully known; in particular, before the Democratic Party's control of the Senate was fully secured. As with the election of Biden, and the defeat of Trump, two years ago, the US bourgeoisie and its entire state apparatus have demonstrated their mastery of their electoral game by allowing the Biden administration to have free hands to pursue US imperialist policies on the offensive in Europe and the Pacific vis-à-vis China. In order to successfully mobilize voters and achieve these results, the use of "democratic" mystifications, and in particular leftist identity and feminist ideologies, was once again essential.

Another election, another bourgeois victory. It appears that, despite a wavering economy, the ruling Democratic Party will maintain its hold on the Senate and make gains in numerous state governments, leaving the Republican Party only to gain a slim majority in the House of Representatives at best.⁸ With this election the Democrats now will be able to persist in their support the continuation of the imperialist war in Ukraine. With the war beginning to settle into a bloody stalemate, the continuation of dollar military-aid in the billions from the United State is more necessary than ever for the imperialists, and the maintaining of Democratic power helps facilitates this flow.⁹ Of course, a Republican victory would not have constituted a victory against imperialism as it would have only resulted in America's war engine turning to face China.¹⁰ Additionally the results of these midterms have allowed President Biden and Congress to invoke the Railway Labor Act of 1926 in order to prevent rail workers from striking to obtain sick leave.¹¹

While there are several factors at play for these results, Donald Trump's unpopularity, the inability of the Republicans to link fear of crime to an electoral program, the Republican reliance on a shrinking demographic of retirees, the most essential explanation is the recent Dobbs decision by the Supreme Court, giving state governments the jurisdiction to determine abortion laws. While the Democratic Party now presents electoralism as a necessary weapon in the war for "women's liberation," it is nothing more than a bourgeois sham to mobilize voters into supporting the capitalist state.¹² As Kollontai observes in her 1909 pamphlet, *The Social Basis of the Woman Question*:

"The women's world is divided, just as is the world of men, into two camps; the interests and aspirations of one group

*of women bring it close to the bourgeois class, while the other group has close connections with the proletariat, and its claims for liberation encompass a full solution to the woman question. Thus although both camps follow the general slogan of the "liberation of women", their aims and interests are different. Each of the groups unconsciously takes its starting point from the interests of its own class, which gives a specific class colouring to the targets and tasks it sets itself."*¹³

This is not the first time the bourgeoisie have utilized the cause of "women's liberation." During the First World War bourgeois feminists buoyed the war efforts of their varying nations by mobilizing women to work in factories and maintain support on the homefront. Suffragettes such as Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst not only called for the end of militant action but supported the "white feather movement," which utilized patriarchal ideas about honor and cowardice to shame those who did not enlist for the slaughter.¹⁴ This is not to suggest that these figures "failed" to be proper feminists, but rather that the realities of working within the boundaries of bourgeoisie society cannot lead to the abolition of bourgeois social relations. As the IGCL's political platform states:

*"While it is true that the proletarian revolution will bring about new relations in all areas of social life, it is wrong to believe that we can contribute to this by organizing specific struggles on piecemeal problems such as racism, women's condition, pollution, sexuality and other aspects of daily life. By their very content, partial struggles, far from strengthening the necessary autonomy of the working class, tend on the contrary to dilute it in the confusion of particular categories (race, gender, youth, etc.) which are totally powerless in the face of history."*¹⁵

In the end, the feminist movement during the First World War only served to advance the cause of the bourgeoisie, not the liberation of women beyond those within the bourgeoisie camp.

Just as the bourgeois mobilization in World War One tells us about the pitfalls of answering the "women question" on the bourgeois terrain, the Russian Revolution tells us much about the advantages of answering this question on the terrain of the

⁸ <https://fivethirtyeight.com/live-blog/2022-midterm-election/>.

⁹ <https://carnegieendowment.org/2022/11/17/how-midterm-results-will-affect-u.s.-foreign-policy-pub-88436>.

¹⁰ <https://www.marketwatch.com/story/tim-ryan-and-j-d-vance-spar-over-approach-to-china-during-first-of-two-senate-debates-in-ohio-11665452768>.

¹¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/article/railroad-strike-explained.html>.

¹² <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/10/us/abortion-ballot-midterm-elections.html>

¹³ <https://www.marxists.org/archive/kollonta/1909/social-basis.htm>

¹⁴ <http://itech.fgcu.edu/&/issues/vol1/issue1/feather.htm>

¹⁵ <http://www.igcl.org/+Political-Platform+>

proletariat. While the Provincial Government did grant suffrage, the October Revolution attempted to change the social fabric upholding the patriarchal order. Not only did women position themselves in important roles in the Red Army and the Cheka, but they brought about a sexual revolution in which marriage was secularized, abortion became legal, and the process for receiving a divorce was eased. As Kollontai argued, women workers were not passive actors in these events as they had been before during bourgeois revolutions, but active participants. In undoing bourgeoisie morality, the Bolsheviks hoped to see the emergence of a “new woman,” who was free from all patriarchal norms and superstitions.^(a) Such changes could not come about in a piecemeal fashion but only as part of a wider revolutionary movement led by the Communist Party. Unfortunately, these changes were

reversed *with the revolution itself* during the Stalinist Counter Revolution.

These lessons are doubly applicable to those living in the current form of state capitalism. Instead of voting for bourgeois rule in the United States, a rule which continues supporting the war in Ukraine, increases tensions in East Asia, and imposes austerity at home, in the hopes that local governments may be able to protect abortion access, workers must strike at the heart of social relations, capitalism itself.

Abort the Bourgeoisie! Abort Capitalism! No War but the Class War! These are the proper proletarian responses to the current moment in the United States.

Frederick, November 2022

Note ^(a): Richard Stites, *Women's Liberation Movement in Russia: Feminism, Nihilism and Bolshevism, 1860-1930* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 317-318, 350.

Pamphlets (orders at intleftcom@gmail.com)

IGCL Platform

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La dégénérescence de l'IC : le PCF (1924-1927) (International Fraction of the ICC, only in French)

Groupe des Travailleurs Marxistes (Mexique, 1938) (International Fraction of the ICC, only in French and Spanish)

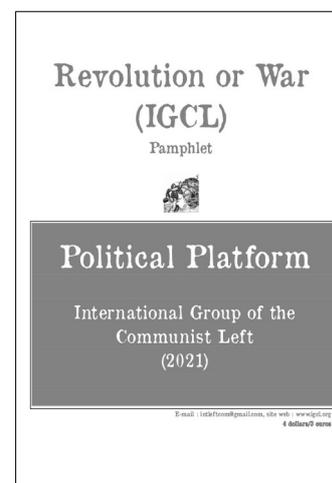
La question de la guerre (1935) (International Fraction of the ICC, only in French)

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The difficult Road of European Imperialism (Internationalist Communist Tendency – Battaglia comunista)

The following article from Battaglia Comunista of the Internationalist Communist Tendency is an updated version on November 18 of a text written on July 27, 2022. Due to lack of space, we were unable to publish it in the previous issue. It deals with two questions which are essential, even crucial, for the international proletariat in the face of the march towards the generalized imperialist war that capital seeks to impose and of which the war in Ukraine is only the first step. It is therefore this one that, for the moment, tends to define the concrete conditions of the process towards the generalized war. The first of these two questions is the place, the role and the future of the different factions of European imperialism in the growing imperialist polarization, which is also a product and a factor of this march towards generalized war: continental Europe, the European Union, finds itself divided between its eastern and western components, and its main historical powers, Germany, France and Italy in the first place – the United Kingdom has already made the choice of aligning itself behind the United States with the Brexit – are caught in a vice because of the open and growing military polarization between Russia and the United States. The emergence of a European imperialist pole, of an autonomous, imperialist, European military and diplomatic sovereignty, is in the balance. Let us warn the reader: at the center of the July version, this question is only addressed here in a second step in the part entitled Let's Move on to a Topic That Is only Apparently Collateral.

Second question, equally essential and linked to the imperialist alignments, of a first order actuality in the European case: the concrete conditions of the class confrontations that the process of imperialist polarization and the wars of today will define and already define according to the national situations. That is to say the grounds and the tempos of the attacks that each national bourgeoisie, according to its place and its role in the imperialist polarization in progress and in the war itself, in Ukraine and in Europe today – but also in the confrontation exacerbating between China and the United States starting from Taiwan – will be and is already led to carry against its own proletariat. The revolutionary class and its vanguard political minorities cannot be satisfied with displaying an abstract proletarian internationalism, of principle, valid in any place and at any time, as necessary as it is. It is still necessary to be able to articulate it in each concrete situation in order to be able to answer efficiently to the bourgeois attacks and to put forward orientations and slogans indispensable to each particular battle that is coming. This is the effort that the ICT article makes and that we want to underline and support.

The Editorial team

The Difficult Road of European Imperialism

On February 24, 2022, the “Ukraine campaign” launched by Russia, “the special operation”, as Putin calls it, began. In *Prometeo* #26, we explained the reasons for the Russian intervention in Ukraine following the encirclement of Russia by Nato. We also explained that the current war directly affecting two proletariats that have nothing to do with the nationalist interests of their respective bourgeoisies, is not reducible to a warlike confrontation between Moscow and Kiev, but has a wider dimension involving the US, Nato, Europe and Russia, as well as Ukraine of course. That said, the military operation, which, according to Russian calculations, should have been over very quickly, has been going on for almost a year and there is not much sign of a negotiated solution to end the conflict.

The causes are simple. In this context of economic recession, stagflation, speculation, capital flight, or rather, to put it more succinctly, the permanent crisis of the capitalist system of production, characterized by the ever-increasing difficulty of capital invested in the real economy and at the origin of low rates of profit, the tensions between capitalisms and

their imperialist “ambitions” are exacerbated to the point of episodes of war waged directly and no longer only by proxy.

Since we do not have a prophetic crystal ball, we simply say that the ongoing war will last a long time, or at least longer than expected. Russia has been bogged down in the Ukrainian quagmire, initially putting up great resistance and then even mounting counter-offensives. This does not mean that Moscow will capitulate or accept a negotiation compromise, it continues its war effort a) to achieve the objectives that were the basis of the “campaign” of Ukraine, that is, to overthrow the Zelensky government, not to allow it to join Nato, to retain the Crimean peninsula, to conquer the autonomous regions of Donbass and, if it could, to take from Kiev the entire Black Sea coastal strip. b) to get hold of mineral wealth, especially rare earth deposits. c) not to lose face in front of imperialist adversaries and allies, which Russia needs enormously, especially at this particularly delicate stage. These are objectives that must always be achieved, barring an unlikely but not impossible economic and social debacle, even before the military debacle. For Russia, negotiated solutions are there-

fore out of the question for the moment, and it is blaming Ukraine, which in turn declares that it will not accept any “peace” solution or negotiation proposal as long as the Russian occupation troops remain on its territory.

For the United States, however, the fact that the war continues is not a mystery. In support of this thesis, there are not only many statements of Biden “*the Russians must go*”. Of course, these are only statements that are worth what they are worth, but when strategic interests are behind them, things change, words become deeds and deeds become actions. Biden has a vested interest in the continuation of the war for an infinite number of reasons. First, the longer the war continues, thanks to Washington and Nato's military and financial assistance to Kiev, the more the Russian economic and war apparatus is weakened, and the latest military events in Ukraine prove this. Second, by weakening Russia, Biden is reshuffling the deck with China. Xi's declared dream is to create the New Silk Road, with which he would like to establish himself as the world's leading power, both economically and financially.

If the project were to go ahead, it would cross the entire Asian continent and reach Europe, one of whose gateways would be Russia. The weakening of one of the terminals of the Silk Road would thus be strategically important for the United States, which could strike directly at Russia and China as a result, not to mention the fact that Moscow remains Mr. Biden's enemy number two. In the perverse imperialist game, the United States is not only disturbed by China's ambition to become the world's leading power in terms of trade. What scares Wall Street the most is Xi's attempt to compete with the dollar in the world's money markets with his national currency, in the quagmire of speculative activity and, not least, as a safe haven currency. A role that the dollar has always played and that the United States cannot do without, if it wants to maintain the level of monetary and military superiority – where the former finances the latter – that it has enjoyed until now and that it intends to continue to enjoy in the future.

Whether the New Silk Road remains on paper as a child's imaginative drawing, whether it starts, stops halfway or does not start at all – although Beijing is working hard by buying ports, airports, building *ad hoc* pharaonic infrastructures in many Asian countries and beyond – does not change the American attitude. Weakening Moscow is a way to weaken the Chinese project and its imperialist ambitions.

In addition, another consideration deserves to be taken into account: trade sanctions, including those on Siberian gas and oil, financial sanctions on ex-

changes between European and Russian banks, and on technological exchanges necessary for production are not paid by the United States, not even a cent, but by European countries. This, once again, allows the United States to undermine an ally that is no longer as reliable, even if it is for the moment aligned with the strategies of the White House. It allows Biden to keep the EU under his thumb in the name of the “role” of the West, the defense of national identity against the Russian invader, and to thwart the ambitions of the euro against the dollar. In essence, Ukraine also has an interest in continuing the war, benefiting from American support, it can drag its feet while waiting for the balance of power to change on the ground of confrontation and therefore at the negotiating table. Whereas only China has a vested interest in advocating a negotiated solution, at least with a ceasefire, in order to arrive as soon as possible at a negotiation that “satisfies” both parties and saves the Silk Road project.

In this climate of crisis and war, of hunger and death for millions of proletarians, the Ukrainian question, in the medium term, is destined to follow a road already traced by international imperialist interests. This road could stop suddenly and then resume on larger economic and military spaces. It could remain “isolated” and act as a gas pedal of confrontation between other international actors such as the US and China, opening the way to much more serious war scenarios in the Indo-Pacific area, on the disputed island of Taiwan or for the control of the Tonga, Fiji and Solomon Islands, where China is replacing US and Japanese imperialism.

It is true that informal attempts are underway to reach an agreement between the United States and Russia and between the United States and Ukraine to reach a negotiated solution, taking advantage of the strength of the Ukrainian resistance (financed by the United States and Nato, as mentioned above) and the weakness of Russia, even if technologically supported by China, both in military and diplomatic terms. But it is also true that spaces are currently very limited. In fact, the war continues, its end, if there is one, whatever it may be, as well as its timing, will be determined by the imperialist interests at stake, which, if necessary, could dilute the confrontation by widening the scope of the war.

The 20th G20 Congress opened in Bali on November 15. The expectations of international political opinion were high to see the two most powerful imperialist countries at work. In the preliminary phase, both sides made many promises of “healthy” cooperation between China and the United States. Listening to Biden and Xi, one got the impression of a

surreal atmosphere of commonality of views on peace in Ukraine. No use of nuclear weapons in this conflict. Joint efforts to reach a final peace as quickly as possible that satisfies both sides. Hugs and kisses and a toast with tar and wine. Then came the first real intentions, still inflamed, however, by a “let's love each other” that predicted a kind of imperialist dualism based on the common struggle for a healthier environment – both countries are, by the way, the world's leading polluters – for adequate cooperation in all areas of technological production and foreign trade, i.e., all-out détente. What has emerged, at first, is a kind of declared partition of the world on the basis of the common interests of the two imperialisms, as if the world, once the “good” pacts have been concluded between Washington and Beijing, were a hunting ground exclusively reserved for them.

Later, however, stripped of the stage props, the speeches became more concrete. Biden began by re-primating about Chinese aid to Russia in the ongoing war. Xi responded that if the ally is in military trouble, it owes it to the massive military and financial aid the Pentagon has been providing for years, even before the war broke out, to the government in Kiev. Moving forward, Biden accused China of ethnic oppression in Xinjiang, Tibet and Hong Kong, and then got to the heart of the matter, the Taiwan issue. Then, the tone was raised. Biden confirmed that the United States will never, ever change the island's independence position based on the principle: two territories, two “Chinas” and that if this principle were to be challenged, the United States would be forced to defend its “historical” ally. Xi was even more explicit: the only valid principle is that of one China and the island of Taiwan is the red line that no one should cross. To put it plainly: what is at stake is the inevitable confrontation between the young imperialism that is advancing and the old imperialism that does not want to retreat in the midst of a permanent economic and financial crisis capable of opening another war front in Asia after having opened it in Eastern Europe.

Let's Move on to a Topic That Is only Apparently Collateral

In such a perspective of generalized war, within the bourgeoisie, but unfortunately not only, the “war in Ukraine” poses a number of problems, the most urgent of which is the role that the European Union is playing or should play in the war that is taking place on its eastern borders and, more generally, in the future wars that will develop everywhere.

The “right-minded bourgeois” on the right and on the left compete over who should be given credit for

the primogeniture of a role aimed at building a truly united Europe, united not only by the single currency, the euro, but also structured by a common fiscal system, a cohesion in foreign policy that would make it more credible internationally and, last but not least, a modern and effective military system that would enable it to be autonomous in its strategic choices and not a weak pawn within the international imperialist arena.

In other words, the European bourgeoisies of both the Western (Germany, France, Italy primarily) and Eastern (Poland, Hungary, Romania, as well as the three Baltic republics, plus Finland and Sweden) areas in the face of war found themselves like so many crock pots in the midst of steel canisters as the U.S. and Russia. All caught in the grip of individual interests, whether in the terrain of energy supply, political alignment, or strategic military choices, they felt weak and divided. Hence the emergence of “strong thinking”: either we constitute ourselves as a firm and autonomous imperialist unit capable of playing its role on any front, or the EU will remain out of the picture and submitted – as well as blackmailable – to the strongest imperialism of the day.

Certainly, from a bourgeois point of view, the problem exists, and not a few are its advocates who fearlessly raise the issue on a daily basis in the European parliament and in the responsible national bodies. We who belong to that opposite political sector, the one that does not pose the question of how to solve bourgeois problems, but only those of the international proletariat, in this regard have a couple of points to make to the question posed by the war and the proponents of a strong, powerful and autonomous European imperialism.

The first concerns the real possibilities of the 26 countries that make up the European Community to embark on the road to true imperialist autonomy that would place them on the same level as the other imperialist powers such as Russia, China and the US. However, in this ambitious perspective, the EU has as its first obstacle the now secular dependence on the financial, political, monetary as well as military superiority of the United States. A situation that has always been expressed and even more clearly before and during the course of the war in Ukraine. To clear the field of misunderstandings and misconceptions, a few things should be clarified at once. Above all, in the historical phase of imperialist domination, any act of defense or military attack is entirely within the logic of the global dynamics of the capitalist economic system, its deepening economic and financial crises and the abnormal growth of speculation.

Second, all this originates from the difficulty of capi-

tal in realizing profit rates adequate to the risks of productive investment, which undermines the very mechanisms of capital valorization that underlie the exploitation of labor power and, therefore, the existence of capitalism itself as a productive form, and denounces its historical caducity. Third, wars, whether “offensive” or “defensive”, are driven also, and not least, by the need to violently seize markets for energy commodities, those functional to the production of surplus value, and to export capital to where the cost of labor is cheaper. In short, wars have always been the “last resort” to the contradictions of capital, because, in addition to plunder, destruction means creating the conditions for reconstruction and giving oxygen to the asphyxiated lungs of a decaying capitalism.

That said, the “Ukraine war”, provoked by the NATO encirclement of Russia and wielded by Moscow as a pretext for invasion, takes place in Europe with a series of consequences that, by facilitating Washington, penalize the EU, forcing it to be even more subject to American diktats on all fronts. In fact, Biden demanded and obtained “unity” from European countries, subject to a few exceptions and many discontents, which did not strengthen the EU, but rather highlighted its weakness and the emergence of conflicting national interests. Again from a capitalist point of view, those who are paying the price of sanctions on Russia are Europe and certainly not America, first of all on energy, but not only. Russian supplies have been called into question and Moscow, in retaliation, has cut gas supplies to Germany and Italy by 30 percent, putting the two strongest European economies in trouble, alongside the French economy, which, despite Macron's mediation efforts – *“let's not humiliate Russia”* – will end up the same way.

As a first effect, there has been a rush in disarray by the major European countries to find possible alternatives. European governments have offered themselves as an energy demand, resembling more like a begging, to the countries of the lower Mediterranean, such as Algeria, Tunisia and Central Africa as well as the Emirates, with the result of paying more expensive gas and oil, receiving in return an energy product that, very often, is a third less effective. From a commercial point of view, sanctions once again come down on European economies and its inhabitants, proletarians included. The staggering increase in the price of grain and fertilizer is bringing to its knees a sector, agriculture, already suffering from climate change that, inflation aside, threatens to starve hundreds of millions of people not only in Europe but around the world. Still on the subject of the consequences of the war, it should be added how

the conflict contributes, on the world money market, to the advantage of the dollar over the euro, which has lost almost 20 percent in four months.

All this has not only failed to enable the European Union to strengthen itself internally but, at least to date, has fostered its opposite. That is, further economic and financial weakness to the benefit of the U.S., with the inevitable result that each individual member country is seeking individual “solutions”, very often in competition with those partners with whom it should cooperate. Some examples: Italy and France are in bitter competition for Libyan oil, although today they have had to leave the coveted business in the hands of Russia and Turkey. The same countries are fighting over the “disposal” of thousands of refugees on the Ventimiglia frontier, resulting in one of the darkest manifestations of national egoism. Not to mention the Visegrad group, which does not even want to hear about refugees. The Berlin-Paris axis, which was supposed to be the economic-political locomotive of future European imperialism, is crumbling under the blows of the crisis. Germany and France are also confronting each other over the complex issue of European leadership and the very thorny prospect of German rearmament, which risks splitting Europe more than uniting it on military ground.

Macron, strong of the fact that France is, after United Kingdom's exit from the EU, the only nuclear country in Europe, believes that, should the old continent go down the road of collective rearmament in accordance with a more effective imperialist posture, France will have to be its pivot around which the other 25 countries should revolve. However, the French president forgets that such a process would find at least two almost insurmountable obstacles. The first would consist in the economic difficulty that many member countries would have in contributing to the financing of such a project in which they would enter, yes, as small co-financiers, but with a role as extras under the hegemony of Paris. As usual, national interests would end up prevailing, which would be poorly reconciled with the vague interests of a common army moreover led by France. The second and far more serious obstacle would inevitably come from the obstructionism of Scholz, who would never leave such a strategic objective in the hands of its ally-adversary.

What is more, Scholz's Germany is the European nation with the largest number of U.S. nuclear bases in Europe. Which makes it, at the moment, a closer military ally to the U.S. and NATO than to France and a European military with autonomous ambitions. Not to mention that German rearmament must necessarily rely on military supplies from the Pentagon, as

demonstrated by Berlin's recent agreement with Washington to purchase U.S. F-35A fighter jets. So the 100 billion euros that have been allocated by the Berlin government for German military reconstruction, although this will still take some time before it is fully realized, would end up being the link between the hypothetical, as difficult as it is, EU army and NATO, with much welcome to French ambitions. Not even on the diplomatic ground has the EU managed to find unity and compactness by putting itself forward as an international mediator for the purpose of a "solution" to the war. It is not so much out of false pacifism, but rather to get out of the umbrella of American strategies, leaving the initiative to the opportunistic Erdogan who, as a mid-caliber imperialist, has put himself forward as an international mediator. In reality, he is acting as an interpreter of his own interests and, secondarily, of the national interests of a Turkey in severe economic crisis, but which wants to be a protagonist of its own imperialist destinies by exploiting the course of a conflict that is still a long way from a negotiated settlement. Indeed...

As can be seen, the war, instead of creating the material conditions for the construction of unified European imperialism, complete with a common army, has exposed the weakness of the 26 countries, their contrasts concerning political leadership, the prevalence of national economic interests and their absolute inability to play the slightest role in the diplomatic field, much less the military. In return, it has made the project of a strong EU, cohesive on monetary, fiscal, trade and military grounds, a utopia that only the most naive bourgeois continue to pursue against the reality of the facts. Meanwhile, the **war with its rhetoric of death and destruction** continues.

The second remark puts us in a completely different perspective, opposite in terms of strategies and political attitudes towards both the war and the emergence of a new imperialism such as Europe's, which, if it materialized as its bourgeois supporters hope, would only increase international competitiveness, imperialist frictions, accelerating the mechanisms of war and shrinking the hypothetical spaces of mediation, always assuming, granted, that at that point there might be the will to exploit them.

But the most important thing we must consider is the response that the proletariat, whether directly involved in wars or indirectly affected by them, should give, in order to defend its own class interests. Interests that by definition are opposed to their own bourgeoisie, irreconcilable economically as well as politically, and least of all in the war clash involving proletarians against proletarians. For ease of dis-

course, let us take as an example what is happening in Ukraine to the Russian and Ukrainian proletariats. At the moment, the two proletariats are yoked to their respective bourgeoisies, suffering their political logic, their justifications for who attacks or who defends. They are hostage to their respective capitalisms, their present and future national interests. Within this war framework, not only are the two proletariats unable to express class demands that would in any way be a disturbance, if not an obstacle to a war that is not theirs, but they are merely the instrument through which the respective bourgeoisies attempt to achieve their strategic objectives, whether offensive or defensive in nature.

The Proletariat and the War

The first task a proletariat faces within a process of class struggle, all the more so when involved in a war, is always to fight its own bourgeoisie. The first enemy to fight is always at home, never forget that. One's own bourgeoisie, whether belligerent or not, is still the class adversary, the domestic enemy which, as such, must be fought before any other enemy.

Substituting war with class struggle means first of all getting out of the bourgeois logics of nationalism which are nothing but the defense of capitalism, the perpetuation of national exploitation, and the forcing the proletariat to defend with arms that regime which is the basis of wage slavery.

This means distancing oneself from war not on the ground of an imbecile pacifism that, should it succeed (which never happened), would leave things exactly as they were before, both because of the presence of capitalism – based on the exploitation of labor power – and because of the crises that, as scripted, are the causes of wars.

Only desertion, revolutionary defeatism, is valid in this case, but not, as seems to have happened, albeit minimally in the ranks of Russian soldiers who, by deserting, went over to the other side, the Ukrainian side. For in so doing, they went from serving one bourgeoisie to aggregating with the interests of another. In the presence of a class movement, even if only incipient, desertion and revolutionary defeatism consist in moving from the ranks of the national army to the proletarian ranks by joining their struggles.

Not only that, but such attacks on one's own bourgeoisie must necessarily be accompanied by the effort to "export" them to the proletarians "in the other trench", in the name of a militant internationalism that unites those oppressed by capital against imperialism, its wars and its barbarism.

For those proletarians who, though not directly called to arms, belong, with their bourgeoisie, to an

imperialist front that has direct, immediate or only future interests in the war, the discourse changes, but only for the scenario in which they are called to move. That is, only for tactical contingencies, but not for strategic ones, which remain the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism, the transformation of war, even if not fought in person, into class warfare.

A) That is why, first of all, it is necessary to emphasize that every proletariat, while not participating in the war, must take a stand and mobilize itself against its bourgeoisie. This one, belonging in any case to an imperialist bloc – such as all the European and American proletariats faced to NATO, or those faced to the Chinese-Iranian imperialist front – seeks to prepare it ideologically, politically in function of a possible, forthcoming, direct intervention

B) The current war crisis is imposing immense sacrifices, not only on proletarians engaged as cannon fodder in the current conflict, but also on proletarians halfway around the world. Economic, trade and financial sanctions are also affecting the countries that practice them. The consequence is the deepening economic crisis, rising inflation, and abnormally high prices of energy goods that are passed on to consumer goods, that is, to proletarians and their families. Among the price rises are also, let us recall, those of wheat, soybeans and many agricultural goods and fertilizers which, once again, are passed on to the workers as the first recipients of the consequences of the war in the form of unsustainable inflation of food goods. The poverty line has already been lowered for hundreds of millions of workers and their families, both in Europe and around the world.

C) Not only that, the war crisis is also going to hit businesses, resulting in the closure of thousands of small to medium-sized businesses. Which means possible (but in part already occurring) layoffs for millions of European workers, low wages losing purchasing power with inflation, and term contracts making job and social insecurity increasingly as the “normal” pattern of life imposed by capitalism. Last but not least, rising interest rates devastate the complex of debts incurred by families to put their children through school, mortgages to buy a house after a lifetime of savings, not to mention the difficulty of accessing bank loans for so-called exceptional expenses, which very often are not such, such as medical care, necessary recourse to insurance, any

unforeseen event that involves an extraordinary economic outlay, etc.

D) In this tragic scenario, on the fringes of the even more tragic scenario of war, a first step the proletariat should take, outside and against any bourgeois ideology of denouncing the aggressor or giving armed support to the aggressed, is to oppose with all available forces the war economy, the sacrifices that war massacres impose even on proletarians not directly involved. The struggle against the war economy is not only a moment of non-acceptance of the sacrifices it imposes, but it is also a first element of consciousness towards the causes of wars and the necessity of their overcoming.

E) A concrete example would be to see workers in the arms production sector cross their arms in protest and refusal to produce war material to be sold on the death market run by imperialisms of all kinds, if not their own. Another example would be military support logistics that should make it difficult or sabotage the transportation of ammunition and complementary equipment.

F) Fantasies, utopias of frustrated revolutionaries? No because it has happened before in the past and some small but significant episodes have occurred even recently in the course of the current war.

All of this can happen, and on a much larger scale, provided that the resumption of the class struggle begins to mount again, progressively breaking out of all the traps that the imperialist bourgeoisies put in place to contain it within the compatibilities of the system on the economic level, and to condition it ideologically on the nationalistic one of “*Justum bellum*” [of just war]. Obviously, any episode that were to place itself on the terrain of “**fighting the war by the class struggle**” if it does not have a tactic on how to counter imperialism, a strategy that points the way to the overcoming of capitalism and the awareness of communism as the only alternative, would be doomed to defeat. Only the presence of the international revolutionary party can and must be the political instrument of this social process against exploitation, capitalism, its inevitable imperialist expression. Against its economic and financial crises, against wars and all “dominant” ideologies, which divert the international proletariat from its real goals by dragging it into the abyss of barbarism.

FD, *Battaglia comunista*, November 18th 2022
(translated by us from Italian)

Debate within the Proletarian Camp

Public Meeting in Paris of the “No War But Class War” Committee

We cannot make here and now a first balance-sheet of all the "No War But the Class War" committees that have been set up on an international scale and, mainly but not only, on the initiative of the Internationalist Communist Tendency. For our part, in addition to Paris, our strengths allow us to intervene directly in the Montreal and Toronto committees^(a) – the latter on our initiative and that of other comrades including members of the Group of Revolutionary Workers. The activity of the two committees was centered both on the organization of public meetings to regroup around them and on the intervention by means of leaflets during street demonstrations or strikes, mainly on the picket lines, for example in the schools of Ontario. These are the first experiences, to which should be added those set up in Great Britain, USA, Italy, Turquia...

Note (a): See RW #22 (<http://igcl.org/No-War-But-the-Class-War-809>.)

As soon as the Appeal of the ICT¹⁶ was launched, its members in France and ourselves have, in fact, constituted a committee whose first interventions took place, by means of leaflets, during the demonstrations of last June in Paris and some other cities. The purpose of this first public meeting, December 2, was to regroup proletarian energies and wills in the face of the capitalist dynamic leading to generalized imperialist war. There were about thirty participants, among which a part constituted of political circles and organizations. In addition to a large delegation from the ICC, there was a member of the group *Matière et révolution*, a CNT-AIT militant wanting to put forward internationalist positions, a member of Robin Goodfellow, a group of young people who we will call *autonomous* and who did not present themselves, and a group that publishes the newspaper *ASAP révolution*¹⁷; more than a dozen individual comrades attended. Among them, some presenting themselves as "sympathizers of the Communist Left" and others as CGT unionist or *revolutionary syndicalist*.¹⁸ Let us specify at once that the whole of the meeting took place in a fraternal atmosphere, most of the interventions – including those of the ICC – respecting the turn of speech and the agenda.¹⁹

Together with the comrades of the ICT, we had decided to organize the discussion in two parts: the first on the historical situation and the dynamics towards the generalized imperialist war; the second on *what to do* and the proposal of the committees in relation to the general understanding of the new in-

ternational situation opened with the outbreak of the war in Ukraine. In spite of this organization, it was difficult for some interventions not to intervene immediately on the committees. This part of the discussion focused essentially – we leave aside here the other questions raised – between the presentation made by a comrade of the ICT, on the basis of the analysis that we share with it on the war in Ukraine being the first step towards the generalized imperialist war, on the one hand; and on the other hand the ICC's first intervention according to which "there is no perspective of generalized imperialist war". This one, after having greeted the committee as "without any doubt, a clear expression of proletarian internationalism", defended that "the proletariat is not ready to go to the war. It can only mobilize in relation to the economic crisis, not in relation to war." It did not mention, nor did it defend, the *Declaration of the ICC on the war in Ukraine*²⁰ that, for our part, we consider an abstract affirmation of proletarian internationalism. It is precisely on this question of the danger of generalized imperialist war that is founded the necessity of committees No War But the Class War and on the recognition that the principle of *Proletarian Internationalism* will have to be articulated according to situations, according to countries and continents, and according to moments; that is to say according to conditions, timing and grounds that each bourgeoisie will try to impose to "its" proletariat. The conditions and grounds of the class confrontation are not the same in Russia and in Ukraine. They are even more different between Western Europe²¹ and the other continents for the moment. This is why, if the general defense of proletarian internationalism is certainly a minimum, it is not sufficient in the present situation. And this is why, among other

¹⁶ . <http://igcl.org/Against-the-Imperialist-War-for-779>

¹⁷ . www.asaprevolution.net

¹⁸ . No doubt we are forgetting some of them. We mention mainly those whose interventions participated directly and actively in the political debate and confrontation that took place.

¹⁹ . Only some members of the *autonomous* group could not resist some untimely interruptions. The chair proposed to give them the floor for an intervention, which they accepted. It was only after an hour or so that they left the meeting..

²⁰ . <https://en.internationalism.org/content/17159/joint-statement-groups-international-communist-left-about-war-ukraine>.

²¹ . The development of the *war economy* decided by Macron, the massive rearmament of Germany – 200 billion euros – will inevitably define the conditions and the tempo of the bourgeois attacks in France and Germany for example

things, the setting up of committees can allow minorities of revolutionaries and combative proletarians to regroup, to act and to respond to each particular situation.

The second part of the discussion focused mainly on two questions: the role and nature of the proposed committees and what they could do in the current situation. It was introduced by a comrade from the ICT and a member of the IGCL gave a presentation of the activities and interventions of the Toronto and Montreal committees. Several speakers questioned what these committees could be: “*Are they new political bodies?*” Others, like the member from *Matière et révolution*, also expressed erroneous understandings. He criticized the call of the ICT for not referring to the soviets and *the dictatorship of the proletariat*.

But again, most of the political confrontation was organized around the second intervention of the ICC, as it expressed most clearly the confusions about what these committees were, which we consider to be *struggle committees*. It began by saying the opposite of its previous intervention: the first had supported the initiative as “*undoubtedly internationalist*”, this one denounced it as “*activist and leftist*”. Focusing its denunciation on the ICT, which “*has never made any balance-sheet of the NWBCW committees of the 1990s and 2000s, a negative one because no committee was able to organize a single anti-war demonstration*”, it asserted that “*forming anti-war committees means nothing today, that it is a bluff, because there is no mass movement against the war.*” It is worth mentioning that it was a part of the audience that answered it: “*You certainly never have participated in a workers' strike to select who*

can participate in it, prepare it, or not. Do you exclude anyone who is a union member or a leftist from going on strike with you, because they are a union member or a leftist?” For our part, we had to remind the ICC delegation of the historical position of the ICC on the *struggle committees*, itself based among other things on the ones set-up at the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s: it is precisely since the working class hesitates to enter into open struggle that minorities of militant proletarians and revolutionaries group together to act in the best way to lead the rest of the proletarians, whether in a factory, a region or a country, in front of such and such a situation, and on such and such a precise demand or attack of the bourgeoisie.

More decisive for the committees was the intervention of the anarchist militant. After having emphasized a first intervention on the material support to the Russian deserters or a “*campaign of solidarity with the internationalists of Karkhiv*”^(a), he declared himself in agreement to carry out propaganda and agitation in the demonstrations and all expressions of workers' struggle by way of leaflet or other. Many participants seemed to recognize themselves in this proposal for the committees. It is thus on this general basis, and within the framework of the march to the generalized war of capital, that a part of the audience committed itself to participate in the committees. A meeting was then decided to enlarge the committee as such and to discuss the concrete possibilities of intervention.

RL, December 2022

Note ^(a): <http://nowar.solidarite.online/blog>

Impasse and Contradictions of the ICC in Front of the So-called “parasitism”, the ICT and the IGCL

The politically responsible and fraternal attitude of the ICC delegation at the NWBCW committee meeting in Paris – which we welcome – may have been surprising. Was not the meeting organized at the initiative of the IGCL, which it denounced as a “parasite group” and “*an office of the bourgeois state*” (*Révolution Internationale* 446), and of the ICT, which it criticizes for its opportunistic concessions to parasitism? Did not the chair of this meeting, composed of three comrades, include two former members, Olivier and Juan, who were excluded and publicly denounced in its international press as “*Nazis, Stalinists, thieves, blackmailers, thugs, lumpen, slanderers, provocateurs, cops*” in 2002? Yet, during the public meeting, no denunciation of the parasites and cops. No warning to the other participants that they were going to attend a meeting held by a “*police agency*”²². No ultimatum demanding the exclusion of the meeting from... its own organizers.

Either the members and active sympathizers comprising the ICC delegation do not believe a single word of the resolutions and other public articles denouncing the IGCL and its members – who are otherwise banned from attending public ICC meetings; or they have shown a particularly serious opportunistic concession to not only so-called parasitism but even to so-called “*agents provocateurs of the state.*”

We leave the ICC to face its contradictions, which are becoming more and more gaping and striking.

²² . <https://fr.internationalism.org/revolution-internationale/201501/9177/conference-debat-a-marseille-gauche-communiste-docteur-bourrin>

***Bilan et Perspectives* #21 : Renewal and Dynamism of the Internationalist Communist Tendency's Journal in France**

We want to draw the attention of readers, militants and sympathizers of the Communist Left to the latest publication of the Internationalist Communist Tendency in France, *Bilan et Perspectives* (B&P) #21.²³ Its first issue was published in 2000 and its frequency remained random throughout these years. Its last issue shows a renewed dynamism that we want to welcome and encourage. Our attitude may surprise those, militants and groups, who remain fundamentally marked by sectarianism and consider relations between communist groups only as a competition, even a rivalry. Others will suspect an opportunistic attitude, or even a hidden maneuver or intention, towards the ICT. We would remind them that we have criticized the first issue of the 1919 journal²⁴ of the ICT in the United States without concession. We take this opportunity to point out that the two subsequent issues of 1919 were able to correct some of the errors and political confusions that we had pointed out.

B&P #21 centers its contents on a *Dossier on imperialist war and internationalism*, which corresponds to the needs for intervention by communist groups in the face of the imperialist war in Europe. In addition to articles on the meaning and analysis of the current war, including the one *Russia's Annexations in Ukraine are Another Step Towards Global Imperialist War*,²⁵ other articles focus on the consequences of the war on the working class and others elaborate on the initiative launched by the ICT to set up *No War But the Class War* committees, including providing a framework and historical references. We invite all readers to read this dossier and discuss it with the ICT and ourselves in particular.

We encourage the reading of the two articles on Iran, if only because we don't have the strength, and especially the space, to publish one ourselves in this issue. In this sense, we can consider that B&P, like other publications of the Communist Left – *Le Prolétaire*, for example, in the French case – completes the intervention of the Communist Left as a whole beyond the divergences that we may have. An article on the world economic crisis ends by putting forward perspectives that we share: “*The evolution of the crisis will tend, without a doubt, to precipitate larger fractions of the proletariat into the social struggle. In order to defend themselves, they will have to use other means than those of the unions, in order to extend, generalize and organize the struggles. These means include: the necessity of the mass strike; the setting up of real struggle committees to ensure that the proletarians themselves take charge of the struggle; the urgent search for the extension of the movement to neighboring workplaces, breaking with corporatist confinement.*” Is it necessary to say that we sign with both hands this passage?

Finally, the editorial looks back at the June 2022 legislative elections in France after Macron's re-election. We share B&P's insistence on the political significance of the success of the Nupes, a grouping of the left-wing parties. In our view, this is one of the main facts of these elections, well beyond the 88 far-right deputies: “*The maintenance of the bourgeois order seemed precarious at the time (...) in the absence of a 'left' political force. Its victory [the election of more than 131 deputies] should make it possible to divert the proletarians from the open struggle (...) to make believe that the social question can be solved in Parliament. (...) But also, it is necessary to occupy the social ground in case the struggles would escape its control. The Insoumis [France insoumise, the main party of the Nupes and the one most to the left of it] are preparing street demonstrations, but all of this is going to be well framed, with dates planned in advance, and ultimately allow the discontent to be channeled into parliament and behind its initiatives rather than into strikes.*”

The fact that there are formulations, or even particular questions, with which we could express “nuances”, or even disagreements, in certain articles, does not detract from our fundamental political agreements and support for the orientations and positions advanced by B&P. The Communist Left is strengthening in France.

December 2022

²³ . It is a pity that the ICT does not decide to change this title, particularly politically neutral and without propagandistic or agitational value, for a more “political” one. Why not *Bataille communiste* [Communist Battle-Battaglia comunista]?

²⁴ . *Revolution or War* #18 (<http://www.igcl.org/What-Future-for-the-ICT-s-1919>)

²⁵ . <https://www.leftcom.org/en/articles/2022-10-22/russia-s-annexations-in-ukraine-are-another-step-towards-global-imperialist-war>

Commentary on the Basic Positions of the International Group of the Communist Left

We publish below a position of a comrade who is new to the Communist Left. He takes position on our "basic positions". Recall that these, besides being a "summary" of our platform which presents without any argumentation the whole of our principles and class positions, define the framework of principles – and therefore of membership of any member – of the IGCL. The comrade quotes our positions one by one and follows them with his comments. For our part, we respond in a letter, here below after his text, to the main question that the comrade raises: "I am skeptical on the role of the party as it relates to the course of revolution and afterwards, as I am fearful of the possibility of the internal degeneration of the party into something which is counterrevolutionary to the proletariat." For the rest of the punctual questions or misunderstandings that the comrade expresses, are answers are in bold and in brackets. The fact that the comrade, who recognizes it himself, discovers the Communist Left and seems to be unaware of some of its traditional positions does not diminish the interest of his observations and the need to answer them in the most precise way possible; for him as for so many others...

This commentary of the basic positions of the International Group of the Communist left (henceforth the IGCL) will serve to extrapolate the significance of these positions to the world-historical task of the working class (the proletariat) to break itself from the bondage of the capitalist mode of production and exchange, and to realize communism. This commentary also serves to share the views that I hold regarding these positions, as to give readers of this commentary an indication of my political positions and perspectives for the communist left. I would like to preface however, that the extent of my theoretical readings and the serious understanding of the writings of Marx and other theorists from a critical perspective is lacking. I am not as well read as I would ideally like to be when it comes to theory, however that does not mean I lack the understanding of the necessity for theory, and the understanding of how capitalism affects my life (...) as well as others. It is possible that after I have acquired for myself a matured and critical understanding of the proper theory, this commentary may not reflect the positions I hold in the future, so perhaps this can be seen as a time capsule of my ideas. But I digress. To begin, the IGCL's basic positions are outlined in twenty points. I will go about addressing each position point by point, and after stating each point, I will then comment on the point with whatever information and commentary that seems relevant to include.

1) *"The IGCL considers and defines all its activities, both internal and external, in relation to and as moments of the struggle for the constitution of the world political party of the proletariat, indispensable tool for the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a communist society."* The constitution of a world political party of the proletariat is key towards the realization of communism, as it is through proletarian

internationalism in a genuinely internationalist sense, leaving no room for nationalism no matter how "revolutionary" or "progressive" or "Marxist" it may be. Only through the establishment of a party which comprises and represents the interests of the international proletariat can we overthrow capitalism, and realize communism, which leaves countries, states, classes, and most importantly: Capital, in the dustbin of history.

2) *"In addition to intervening in the proletariat's struggles, the IGCL leads this struggle especially in the international proletarian camp. This camp is composed of revolutionary political groups defending and sharing the class positions of the proletariat, in particular proletarian internationalism and the necessity of the class dictatorship of the proletariat."* One cannot build a proletarian movement without proletarians. The global working class, those who must work to survive, those who are constrained by capitalism and its functions, who are both the exploited and revolutionary class who are the only class to liberate itself, the planet, and humanity from the shackles of capitalism, must find a way to organize with itself globally towards that very end. Communism, as Marx says in the German Ideology, is "...the real movement which abolishes the present state of things." It cannot be something which is "tried" or "established", especially not in a single country. Just as capitalism is global, so must communism be global, and therefore, the ultimate expression of the proletariat's interests dictated by and for themselves – the dictatorship of the proletariat – must ensure that they leave no stone unturned until all workers of all lands are freed from the capitalist nightmare.

3) *"The IGCL claims the First, Second and Third Internationals and the struggle of the left fractions within them. In particular, it claims the struggle of the left fraction of the CP of Italy within the Communist*

International against its Stalinist degeneration and for the programmatic contributions that it has been able to develop and pass on us to this day.” This point seems to give readers a historical outline of the genesis of the communist left as a tendency, however, I must comment to say that I do not know enough on the specifics behind the historical origins of this tendency. It seems as when left-communists discuss the 3rd international, its uncertain as to *when* the 3rd international was “bolshevized” or “Stalinized” or whatever word one wants to use. The ICT states in their most recent platform that the first two congresses of the international were valid, but the IGCL claims that the “left fractions” of the third international after its second congress are valid as well, (at least that is how I’m reading it, but I could be wrong of course). To me currently, this is a matter of semantics and insignificantly nitpicky details that would not matter so greatly especially if it were simply a “basic positions” document.

[The whole of the Communist Left, especially that part which claims the Communist Left of Italy, has the same position on the first two congresses of the International. Moreover, the whole of the so-called Left of Italy claims to be part of the struggle of the CP of Italy, and then of its left fraction, within the Communist International against the opportunist weaknesses which began to be expressed at the second congress, then against the concessions of the same type starting from the third congress. The Communist Left also claims the fraction’s struggle against the process of opportunist degeneration which expressed itself in the rise of Stalinism in the various national parties and in the International itself. There is therefore no divergence on this point between the ICT and ourselves.]

4) *“Only the proletariat, exploited and revolutionary class at the same time, is able to destroy capitalism and to establish communism, the classless society. The consciousness of this revolution, the communist consciousness, is produced by the historical struggle of the proletariat. So that it can materialize, defend and develop itself, the proletariat produces communist minorities who organize themselves in parties and whose permanent function is to carry this communist consciousness and to return it to the whole proletariat.”* The European bourgeois revolutions of the 18th and 19th centuries, manifested under the liberal ideals promulgated during “the enlightenment”, were those revolutions which sought to remove the yolk of Feudal relations in production, but not necessarily their institutions in some cases. Britain, Spain, and Japan have monarchies for example - a feudal institution - yet the mode of production that is prevalent in these countries is capitalist. The bourgeois revolutions of

the past had the revolutionary bourgeoisie abolish feudal relations of production as their nascent accumulation of capital emerged. Their incentives to ensure liberalized markets and reforms for their continued growth, allowed them to organize politically to ensure that their interests and incentives for the production of capital are met. Thus, as the bourgeois develops, the relations of the old society are done away with to form new relations. One may ask, “What the hell does this have to do with the proletariat?” Well, the uniqueness is that in the historical transition from feudalism to capitalism, the revolutionary class was not always an exploited class, but in the transition from capitalism to communism, the revolutionary class – the proletariat – is also the exploited class. Their exploitation is what gives them their revolutionary character, and the proletarians who realize their conditions and what they must do to realize their ultimate interests (the communist society) must aim to organize their class against the bourgeoisie whose interest is to maintain capitalism. If I may say however, I am skeptical on the role of the party as it relates to the course of revolution and afterwards, as I am fearful of the possibility of the internal degeneration of the party into something which is counterrevolutionary to the proletariat. Perhaps it is because I am uneducated on the subject.

[see our comments following this text]

5) *“As the highest expression of this consciousness, the party – or, in its absence, the communist fractions or groups – constitutes and must assume the political leadership of the proletariat. In particular, the party is the only organ that can lead the proletariat to the insurrection and to the destruction of the capitalist state, and to the exercise of the dictatorship of the proletariat.”* As I stand with the party, I must concede that the party form is one of the working class’s most forceful ways of achieving their demands, and for the mobilizing of the class. Whether I would ideally want an overarching centralized bureaucratic party leading the proletariat, I really cannot say I do. But of course, any communist throws that out the window. What I am fearful of is the proletariat losing political control and therefore control over themselves, and instead being managed by the worker’s state and by an internally degenerate party which controls not just a single country, but the globe. I am not dismissive of the party, rather it is that I may be uneducated as to the party’s function in the revolution, and the difference in function from a “communist” or “socialist” party today. I hope that this is not seen as a dismissal of the party, but rather it is my lack of understanding of it, and the current unwiring of Marxist-Leninists conceptions of “the

party” that I have currently, as I was for, some time, sympathetic to Marxism-Leninism but not explicitly a Marxist-Leninist or even a member of a party.

6) *“The party is organized and functions on the basis of the principles that govern the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, proletarian internationalism and centralism as moments of its international unity and struggle. From the start, the party constitutes, functions and intervenes as an international and centralized party. From its very start, the IGCL constitutes, functions and intervenes as an international and centralized group.”* The workers of the world have no country. Despite what individual workers may understand to be their individual interests, it may not be in the interests of their entire class, and if the workers are to be led by the party of, and for the workers, the party must commit towards the realization of the working class’s real interest: the world communist society. This would require the use of centralism. However, the important question to ask is: what kind of centralism? Many on the left-of-capital, most notably Marxist-Leninist organizations and political parties would also agree on the use of centralism, but it stands that the platform of the international party of the proletariat is fundamentally different from that of the bourgeois “communist” and “socialist” parties of the left of capital. From how I see it, it is dependent upon *what* kind of centralism the party practices. Onorato Damen in his pamphlet “Centralized Party Yes! Centralization Over the Party, No!” maintained that although a centralized party was necessary, the party imposing itself as the only body for proletarian control was at a disadvantage to the proletariat, and therefore the revolution as a whole. Damen asserts that a centralism over the party would simply degenerate into Stalinism, and that he was avoiding the “disastrous consequences which occur in a supposedly revolutionary party when its central organ, as a body, operates outside of the bounds and control of the organization’s membership.” (Par.11) I mention Damen only to agree with him, as the party must organize itself centrally, however, it should centralize itself so as to alienate its members from their leadership, and especially not even just members, but the entire working class itself.

[The comrade specifies that the *“the platform of the international party of the proletariat is fundamentally different from that of the bourgeois “communist” and “socialist” parties of the left of capital”, therefore including the “Marxist-Leninist” parties. In this sense, the comrade commits a methodological political error by comparing the bourgeois centralization, including in its caricatured and abject form of Stalinism, claimed by these leftist parties*

with that of the communist organizations and the class party, which is a centralization with proletarian class character. This error of method opens the door to the rejection of proletarian centralism, defined by the very experience of the proletarian class struggle, which must be centralized, for the party. In this sense, we do not understand well the end of his commentary on this point.]

7) *“The party, as well as the IGCL, bases its program, its principles, its political positions and its action on the theory of historical materialism. By explaining the course of history through the development of the class struggle and by recognizing the proletariat as the revolutionary class, it is the only world view that places itself from its point of view. It is the theory of the revolutionary proletariat.”* In all of history for which human beings have existed in their modern form, roughly 200,000 years, capitalism has been a part of it for roughly 300 years or so. Considering how infinitesimally small that period of time is compared to humanity’s existence, as well as it being just one mode of production human beings have lived under, out of the many others (slavery feudalism, primitive communism &c.) it is clear to understand that human history is a history of human beings being divided into their economic classes struggling between themselves for their own material interests. All human history is based off of class struggle.

8) *“Only after the victorious insurrection and the disappearance of the bourgeois state will the proletariat be able to organize itself as a ruling class under the political leadership of its party. Its class domination, the dictatorship of the proletariat, is exercised by means of the workers’ councils, or soviets. These can only maintain themselves as a unitary organization of the proletariat if they become organs of the insurrection and organs of the class dictatorship, that is to say, by making the party’s slogans their own.”* By making the slogans of the party dictatorship their own, the worker’s councils maintain a line between the party and the class, ensuring that the councils are a tool for the realization of a higher phase of communism, instead of degenerating towards being vessels of reaction. But consequently, I can envision the possibility of a degenerating party leading the councils of worker’s control in a way that is antithetical to the worker’s real interests. Such a degeneration needs to be met with some sort of check so that it does not manifest into a counter-revolutionary organ of bureaucratic control.

[see our comments following this text]

9) *“The dictatorship of the proletariat consists in using the class power of its mass organizations, the councils or soviets, to abolish the economic power of the bourgeoisie and ensure the transition to a classless communist society.*

The state of the transition period, of the class dictatorship, between capitalism and communism is destined to disappear with the disappearance of the classes, of the proletariat itself and of its party, and the advent of the communist society.” An important piece of information is garnered from this statement; that the dictatorship of the proletariat is only a transition from capitalism towards communism (at least that is how I’m reading it.) It is also saying that this transition would also mean the eventual disappearance of the proletariat as well as its class institutions. This is something rarely discussed in so-called “communist” circles, which is why I find this to be so refreshing. It doesn’t negate the necessity of class struggle, but it is making the very obvious point that we must seek to abolish classes as a whole during this transitional phase. There is class struggle, but there is also class abolition, and it must be apparent to any communist that these go hand in hand, once cannot exist without the other.

10) *“Since the First World War in 1914, generalized imperialist war and state capitalism have been the main expressions of the historical phase of decadence of capitalism.”* The decadence of capitalism will be its downfall through the dangers of imperialist war, I feel like this point needs no further elaboration.

11) *“In face of the unceasing development of state capitalism, the proletariat can only advance the research for its unity in all its struggles, even the most limited or localized ones, by taking charge of their extension and generalization. Every workers’ struggle, even the most limited, confronts the state apparatus as a whole, against which the proletariat can only advance the perspective and the weapon of the mass strike.”* The idea of finding unity in the working class’s struggles by “...taking charge of their extension and generalization” is one of the most important principles in internationalism and communism, that it is a shame that so many “socialists” would rather settle for the reforms of marginal struggles as if it’s a noticeable step towards something better. By reminding the working class that their many struggles they have are but an expression of the single generalized problem of capitalism. By listening to the grievances of working people and realizing the root cause of their ever-growing problems is due to the growth of capitalism, and by mobilizing them towards attacking it through the mass strike, it unites many localized struggles for worker’s emancipation into the generalized struggle against capital, and for a free and communist society.

[It is not “a shame that so many “socialists” would rather settle for the reforms of marginal struggles”. It is in the class, bourgeois nature of the left forces of capital, here the social democratic parties of today, and their

function in the service of the capitalist state to oppose the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat. Here again, it is crucial to understand politically, i.e. in the practice of the class struggle, how the parties of the left of capital, the so-called socialist or Marxist-Leninist parties, as organs and political forces of the bourgeois state have precisely an anti-proletarian and counter-revolutionary function.]

12) *“In the era of dominant state capitalism, the trade unions as a whole, the leadership as well as the base sections, are nowadays full-fledged organs of the bourgeois state within the working class milieu. They aim at maintaining the capitalist order within its ranks, at framing the working class and at preventing, counteracting and sabotaging any proletarian struggle, in particular any extension, generalization and centralization of proletarian fights. Any defense of the trade unions and trade unionism is counter-revolutionary.”* Indeed, it seems as if the trade unions, far from being a tool for the proletariat’s interests, became mere constituencies of the state. Trade unions do not have the working class’s interests and cannot deliver upon the real demand for working people, and so they cannot be used as tools for revolution.

13) *“In the era of dominant state capitalism, all fractions of the bourgeoisie are equally reactionary. All the so-called workers’, “socialist”, “communist” parties, leftist organizations (Trotskyists, Maoists, Anarchists), or even those presenting themselves as anti-capitalist, constitute the left of the political apparatus of capital. All the tactics of popular front, anti-fascist front or united front mixing the interests of the proletariat with those of a fraction of the bourgeoisie, only serve to contain and divert the struggle of the proletariat. Any frontist policy with left parties of the bourgeoisie is counter-revolutionary.”* The reality of today, in the material conditions that the working class faces today, it is disastrous for communists to make any sign of alliance with the left of capital, i.e., the ideologies of the bourgeoisie, which contest in bourgeois elections, and which advocate for the interests of the bourgeoisie. Allowing for the working class to focus on struggles which would only benefit capital and the bourgeois class is to collaborate with a class which sees us as pawns. We do not accept unity with Marxist-Leninists, Trotskyists, Maoists, Anarchists, Democratic Socialists, or any other so-called “anti-capitalist” organization. The interests of the workers will only be realized once they develop their own organs of power, not by joining some party which sends its delegates into the chambers of the state, or by buying a stupid newspaper. Remember that the Communist Party of Great Britain had a member in the House of Lords. You cannot have a lordling as a

communist.

14) *“In the era of dominant state capitalism, parliament and electoral campaigns, and in general bourgeois democracy, can no longer be used by the proletariat for its affirmation as a class and for the development of its struggles. Any call to participate in the electoral processes and to vote only reinforces the mystification presenting these elections as a real choice for the exploited and, as such, is counter-revolutionary.”* Per my above response, electoral pursuits are pursuits of the bourgeoisie. The working class has no interests in elections that do not provide them their real interests. Nominally socialist and communist parties in parliaments cannot deliver upon the promises of a stateless classless and moneyless society that communism demands, no matter how sincere their deliverances.

15) *“Communism requires the conscious abolition by the proletariat of capitalist social relations: commodity production, wage labor and classes. The communist transformation of society through the dictatorship of the proletariat does not mean self-management or nationalization of the economy. Any defense of one or the other is counter-revolutionary.”* It is the task of the working class to usurp from their lives the social formations that capitalism has placed them in. Through this process, it must stay away from any ideas of workers-self-management as this does not abolish the concept of the firm of capital. Having workers manage their own suffering instead of the bourgeoisie doing so is tantamount to self-exploitation in my opinion. The hell of capitalism is the firm. Whether the firm is managed co-operatively or by the state, it is to be abolished.

16) *“The so-called “socialist” or even “communist” countries, the former USSR and its Eastern European satellites, China, Cuba, Vietnam, or even Chavez’s Venezuela, have only been particularly brutal forms of the universal tendency to state capitalism. Any support, even critical, for the so-called socialist or progressive character of these countries is counter-revolutionary.”* The experiment of socialism in one country is a failed experiment. I do have to say, as I do agree with this statement, I must admit that these “socialist” countries do give us valuable lessons for us communists. By this, I mean that one can look at their flaws and, albeit marginal, successes, and derive from these observations the truth. The truth being that in order for socialism to arise it must be done internationally, and through the organs of control of the proletariat (the councils, the party) and that these organs should do well to rid society of the capitalist social relations in place of a free and equal association of producers. The “socialist” countries, past and present, have done very little other than the nationalization of the firms, and the

generation of capital held by a state monopoly. Capital must be abolished, and so must the firm, as well as the bourgeois state.

[“The experiment of socialism in one country is a failed experiment.” Socialism in one country is not, cannot have been, an experiment of the proletariat, but the manifestation of the victory of opportunism in the Communist International and the Russian party, of their betrayal of class principles, in particular of proletarian internationalism. In the end, it is a successful experiment of the international capitalist counter-revolution, including in Russia itself.]

17) *“In a world now totally conquered by capitalism and where imperialism imposes itself on every state, any national liberation struggle, far from constituting any kind of progressive movement, is in fact a moment in the constant confrontation between rival imperialisms. Any defense of nationalist ideology, of the ‘right of peoples to self-determination’, of any national liberation struggle is counter-revolutionary today.”* This brings up an important point on changing material conditions. The statement is that “defense of nationalist ideology... of any national liberation struggle is counter-revolutionary today.” This statement implies that national liberation struggles were at one point a valid step in the right direction it seems. In the present conditions however, nationalism is only a dead end for the world working class and must be ignored as a tool for proletarian emancipation.

18) *“By their very content, the partial struggles, anti-racist, feminist, environmentalist, and other aspects of everyday life, far from strengthening the unity and autonomy of the working class, tend on the contrary to divide and dilute it in the confusion of particular categories (race, gender, youth, etc.). Any ideology and movement that advocates identitarianism, anti-racism, etc., in the name of the intersectionality of struggles, are counter-revolutionary ideologies and movements.”* I’m very hesitant on this point, and struggle to understand it. I understand how partial struggles for this or that can be co-opted and stripped of its real potential, and thus reduced down to something weak. I feel like this could open the gate to reactionary rhetoric against “partialism” that would inhibit working class people who are, for example, persons of color, LGBTQIA+, etc. from being able to achieve their own liberation under the broader movement to abolish capitalism and achieve the liberation of the entirety of the working class itself. Much like how the anti-fascist struggle cannot be done through a united front through liberals and non-communists (as it does not attack the problem at its root: capitalism) The anti-racist, anti-misogynistic, anti-homophobic, and anti-transphobic

struggles cannot be done within the terrain of the bourgeois organizations and the left of capital, as it would sincerely inhibit those who are fighting for their liberation to do so with purpose. Communists must resolutely open up avenues for those who face these prejudices to fight against them, in the name of the greater fight against capitalism. Liberation for people of color, LGBTQIA+ folks, etc. cannot be achieved outside of the proletarian struggle.

[First of all, let us note that the comrade does not seem to share, or at least to have understood, how the so-called “anti-fascist” struggle is contrary to the class struggle of the proletariat, whatever the political actors, even if they are working class and revolutionary and even if they exclude bourgeois political forces. Moreover, it is clear that the historical position of the international Communist Left on “partial struggles” is often the one that younger generations of revolutionaries, particularly in North America, have the most difficulty understanding and accepting. Leftist ideologies, especially those linked to the leftist-bourgeois theory of *intersectionality* and *identity politics*, are an obstacle on the road to the reappropriation of the communist program by the new militant forces and a divisive factor within the proletarian struggles themselves. We cannot fully develop this point here but we refer the comrade and the readers to our article *Intersectionality, an Ideological Production of the Capitalist Thought*²⁶ published in *Revolution or War #17*. We will limit ourselves to just two points :

- According to this ideology, alongside the emancipation of the workers and the disappearance of the classes, and thus to the liberation of the whole human species from the capitalist exploitation and the advent of the communist society, there could be particular, specific liberations to realize, supposedly “adjacent to” the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat. The result is that in practice the latter is only one struggle among others. In fact, on the political level, this position is opposed to the fight for the unity of the proletariat in the struggle. The unions, especially the American ones, have understood this to the point of imposing particular demands for such or such category of workers, blacks, homosexuals, women, and by excluding the other “categories” of proletarians²⁷, whereas the communists must try to impose the most unitary demands possible in which the whole of the proletarians, that is to say beyond the corporations and the particularities, can recognize themselves

and that they can make their own;

- more broadly, for the Communist Left and revolutionaries, “*the emancipation of the workers contains universal human emancipation [and] the transcendence of private property is therefore the complete emancipation of all human senses and qualities*” (Marx, Manuscripts of 1844). It follows that the overcoming of all particular oppressions and discriminations linked to gender, skin color, national or religious origins can only be assumed by the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat. Likewise, it is only within the framework of its daily struggle that these particular oppressions and discriminations, real and inevitably produced by the class-divided society and capital, can be fought and pushed back, if not totally eliminated until class society and the division of labor themselves disappear.]

19) “*Terrorism is an expression of social strata without a historical future and of the decomposition of the petty-bourgeoisie, when it is not directly the emanation of the war that the States are permanently waging against each other. It always constitutes a privileged terrain for the police manipulations and provocations of the bourgeoisie. Advocating the secret action of small minorities, it is in complete opposition to class violence, which is conditioned by the conscious and organized mass action of the proletariat.*” Terror is only a component for the liquidation of the struggle, especially in places where the advanced bourgeois state makes terrorism a dead-end for the real movement. I do inquire about one thing pertaining to the class struggle. Unless I am mistaken, do militants of the communist left abstain from armed struggle? I am ignorant and ill-informed on militancy in the communist left and what it entails, and I do not want to get it confused with terrorism.

[The international Communist Left rejects any terrorist action. For us, the use of class violence can only be by the proletariat as a whole, that is mass violence. Referring to the proletariat as a whole does not mean every single worker, but that the violence is part of general movement representative of the interests of the class at such or such moment.]

20) “*The IGCL fights, from today, so that the future party is constituted on the programmatic basis of the principles and positions that precede. The formal constitution of the party is necessary at the latest when the intervention, the orientations and the slogans of the communist groups or fractions become permanent material elements of the immediate situation and direct factors of the balance of power between the classes. Then, the immediate struggle for the formal constitution of the party is necessary and becomes urgent.*” The formation of the world party of the proletariat can be the working class’s only

²⁶ . <http://igcl.org/Intersectionality-an-Ideological>

²⁷ . For instance, see the GCCF article in *RW #17 USA: Lessons from the Teachers’ Struggle: Left-Racialism as a Tool of Union-Sabotage* (<http://igcl.org/USA-Lessons-from-the-Teachers>).

solution to capitalism's destructiveness. The IGCL is not claiming to be the sole nucleus of the future, nor is it the future party itself, but its aims and measures are to be apparent as a material force in the real movement if we are to advance towards communism. The fight the IGCL makes today is the

fight for the world proletariat, now, and in the future. May the working people of all countries come together for the communist society!

Leo Corelli, August 2022

Short Answer about the “Fears” about the Risks of Degeneration of the Party

Dear comrade,

In your commentary on point 1, you state that “*the constitution of a world political party of the proletariat is key towards the realization of communism*” and that “*only through the establishment of a party which comprises and represents the interests of the international proletariat can we overthrow capitalism, and realize communism.*” Then you worry about “*the possibility of the internal degeneration of the party*” and the risk of “*an overarching centralized bureaucratic party leading the proletariat.*” First, as presented here, the expression of your fears is in contradiction with your clear claim of the party as “*the key to the realization of communism.*” Practically, that is, politically, posing in itself the danger of degeneration of the party does not serve much purpose other than to issue a very strong reservation about the necessity and historical role of the party, where on the contrary it should be affirmed loud and clear. It is not, of course, a matter of denying that the party can suffer from failures and from an opportunistic process of degeneration. The Marxist method, namely **historical** materialism, approaches – and solves – the question of party *degeneration* from the historical experience itself: the growing influence of opportunism in the social-democratic parties before 1914 and in the Communist International from its 3rd Congress onwards, to put it simply; the political confrontation, at the time on questions of principle, within them between the opportunist currents and the left-wing fractions; the victory of the former and the failure of the latter as expressions and factors both of the defeat of the proletariat in 1914 and of the retreat of the international revolutionary wave of 1917-1923. How to explain – and to solve theoretically and politically the question of – opportunism winning the Communist International and the Bolshevik party? And, just as important if not more, the question of the struggle that the left fractions had to lead within it? The **fundamental** reason for the *bureaucratization* of the Bolshevik party is not to be found in Moscow or Petrograd, even less in the supposed personal aims of the *evil* Lenin and Trotsky, or even Stalin, but in Berlin, Budapest, Munich... namely, in the failure of the international extension of the revolution and the isolation of revolutionary Russia ravaged by three years of imperialist war and another three years of civil war, essentially led and directed by global imperialism of the time. The question of the *degeneration* of the International and of the Bolshevik party can only be treated and the lessons drawn from it in this historical framework.

It is also within this framework that we should ask the **other**, more fundamental question, the one you raise when you fear “*the proletariat losing political control (...) and instead being managed by (...) an internally degenerate party*”, that of the relationship between the proletariat and its party. In Russia, one of the factors and products of opportunism within the party – and in particular of its identification with, in fact absorption into, the state – has been precisely the increasing weakening of the participation and intervention of the great proletarian masses in the workers' councils, *organs of the insurrection and of the class dictatorship*, and in relation to the so-called proletarian State. **In doing so, it was not only the soviets that were weakening, but the party itself.** Once again, this phenomenon cannot be explained by the evil dictatorial practices of Lenin and Trotsky, nor by the infamous adventurer Stalin, but by the ebb of the revolution in Western Europe, then its definitive failure, the resulting isolation of the revolution in Russia and the dramatic conditions that prevailed there after more than six years of massive and bloody destruction.

These, dear comrade, are the few words of reply we wanted to give you.

Looking forward to your comments, internationalist greetings, the IGCL

Struggle against Opportunism

Fight against the Introduction of Anarchism in the Proletarian Camp

For several years, there has been a tendency within groups claiming to be part of the Communist Left to put the Marxist and the Anarchist currents on the same level. Both would be equally traversed by an authentic revolutionary current and a counter-revolutionary - often presented as “reformist” - current. The opportunist ICC of today has been particularly distinguished in this approach to Anarchism. Its main argument is that a distinction must be made between internationalist and non-internationalist Anarchism. For it, the Anarchist movement or specifically “internationalist Anarchism” is part of the proletarian camp: “Concretely, our organisation, which is Marxist, considers that it is fighting for the proletariat on the same side as the internationalist anarchist militants.”^(a) Even worse, according to it, the Marxist and Anarchist currents would be influenced by the same contradictions and political errors. In a 2010 article with a title provocative to any consistent Marxist, [Communist Left and Internationalist Anarchism: What We Have in Common](#) (Révolution internationale #414), the ICC proclaims that “under the same label 'Marxist', hide organizations that are authentically bourgeois and reactionary. The same is true of the label 'anarchist'”. Throwing in the dustbin the historical struggle of principle and politics of Marxism against Anarchism, and in the name of anti-sectarianism (!), it affirms that “it is necessary therefore also to struggle against the still too great tendency to the defense of one's 'chapel', of one's 'family' (Anarchist or Marxist) and against the spirit of shopkeeper (poor Marx and Engels reduced to petty proprietors because of their fight against the Bakunin faction within the 1st International!) which has nothing to do in the camp of the working class (...) and to know how to distinguish the revolutionaries (...) from the reactionaries, without focusing on the only label 'Marxism' or 'anarchism'.” Thus, defining in the clearest possible way the class character of the Anarchist political current is of primary importance for us, including more generally for the new generation of revolutionaries of today.

It is precisely for this purpose that we publish the following text on the specific case of Makhno and the “Makhnovishina”. It was written by one of our sympathizers, now a member of our group, following discussions and confrontations within the North American milieu on this question.

The Editorial Team

Note ^(a): <https://en.internationalism.org/wr/336/anarchism>

The Non-Proletarian Class Character of the Makhno Movement

In the proletarian camp in general, there has often been a confusion about the nature of the Anarchist movement especially the Makhnovist movement. Some even assert that the Makhnovist movement was a genuine proletarian movement. Let us examine the experience of the Makhnovschina, how they actually treated the proletariat and the economic situation under Makhno's rule.

Even though the anarchists claim that the Makhnovist movement was a workers' movement, Voline, one of the comrades of Makhno who was actively participating in the insurrection has said that one of the “disadvantages of the movement” was “The absence of a vigorous organised workers' movement, which could support that of the peasant insurgents.”²⁸ This led to the Makhnovist movement openly taking the side of the peasantry, which lacked the political leadership of the proletariat and its class party. We will explain this further when we come back to the Makhnovists' experience.

Moreover, Peter Arshinov, a Ukrainian anarchist and chronicler of Makhno's uprising, in his work about the Makhnovists stated that the workers and masses were behind the Communists (Bolsheviks). “(...) the difference between the Communists and Wrangel was that the Communists had the support of the masses with faith in the revolution”²⁹. However, according to Alexandre Skirda, an anarchist historian, Makhno's own understanding of the working class after seeing the workers' side with the Bolsheviks and Left-SRs³⁰ was that “The working class was less radical than the poor peasantry. Makhno grasped that well enough when he occupied Ekaterinoslav for one-and-one-half months from November 9, 1919”³¹

²⁸ . <https://files.libcom.org/files/Volin%20The%20unknown%20revolution.pdf>

²⁹ . Peter Arshinov, History of the Makhnovist Movement (1918–1921)

³⁰ . The SRs were “agrarian socialists” and supporters of a democratic socialist Russian republic. The ideological heirs of the Narodniks, the SRs won a mass following among the Russian peasantry by endorsing the overthrow of the Tsar and the redistribution of land to the peasants. The Left wing of this organization had better relationship with the Bolsheviks and Anarchists than the rest of them

³¹ . Alexandre Skirda, Paul Sharkey - Nestor Makhno Anarchy's

Such statements are not the words of the Stalinists or Trotskyists but of the anarchist comrades of Nestor Makhno and of anarchist historians. Any group in the proletarian camp attempting to show the Makhnovist movement as a proletarian movement with the ability to abolish capitalist relations has fallen into opportunism and should be criticized.

Equally false is the comparison made between the Anarchist principle of federalism and democratic centralism of Marxism or claiming that these theoretical positions are merely a terminological difference, or that “they do not demarcate between bourgeois or proletarian camp”³², a comparison that is theoretically incoherent with communism and anti-Marxist in nature.

The Anarchist “Makhnovist” Organisational Platform of 1926

It is interesting to note that, for the ICC, the Organizational Platform of 1926³³ (henceforth referred to as *Platform*), “had rightly argued that one of the reasons for the crushing of the resistance to the counter-revolution in Russia was that those who resisted, and in particular the anarchists, lacked any organizational and programmatic coherence. It was basically a healthy class response to the problem of opposition to the degeneration of the revolution.”

A healthy response to the Stalinist counter-revolution? What exactly was this response? It openly talks about the production system of anarchist society, in which every production unit would directly trade with others without any centralized organ coordinating them. Indeed, they only talk about the local administrations. A change of scale in this mercantilistic economy with commodity production in no way changes the basic structure of the society from the present capitalist one.

*“The intermediary class which in modern capitalist society performs intermediary functions (commerce, etc.), as well as the bourgeoisie, will have to play its part in the new system of production on the very same footing as everyone else... In the new system of production, the functions of organization will devolve upon specially-created agencies, purpose-built by the working masses: workers' councils, workplace committees or workers' administrations of factories and plants. **These agencies, liaising with one another** at the level of municipality, province and then country, will make up the municipal, provincial and thereafter general (federal) institutions for*

Cossack The Struggle for Free Soviets in the Ukraine (1917-1921)

³² . <https://en.internationalism.org/wr/336/anarchism>

³³ . <https://libcom.org/article/organisational-platform-general-union-anarchists-draft>

*the management and administration of production.”*³⁴

The ICC tries to find a Marxist influence on the Platform, mentioning that the awareness of the Platform of class society and the class antagonism rooted in its core indicates they have been influenced by Marx and Engels

Such an assertion is incorrect, as Marx has stated in a letter to J. Weydemeyer that:

*“...And now as to myself, no credit is due to me for discovering the existence of classes in modern society or the struggle between them. Long before me bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this class struggle and bourgeois economists, the economic of the classes. What I did that was new was to prove: that the existence of classes is only bound up with particular historical phases in the development of production, that the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat, that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society.”*³⁵

So, acknowledging the existence of a class society is not something special and unique to Marxist theory. However, it is the class dictatorship of the proletariat as a means of transition to a classless society that is advanced by the Marxist method.

For the Platform itself the “transitional period” is nothing like the historical materialist (ie Marxist) position of a “newborn society with the birthmark of the old”³⁶. The very notion of a transitional period would be anti-Anarchist in its essence as the Platform says.

“The idea of the transition period, according to which the social revolution should culminate not in an anarchist society, but in some other form of system retaining elements and relics of the old capitalist system, is anti-anarchist in its essence.”

There are many examples of an idealistic and anti-Marxist method in the Platform. The approach and the formulations were not influenced by the Communist Manifesto but by the utopian socialists and petty-bourgeois Anarchists. For example:

“At the same time, the structure of present society automatically keeps the working masses in a state of ignorance and mental stagnation; it forcibly prevents their education and enlightenment so that they will be easier to control.”

“On all these and many other issues, the masses will

³⁴ . “In 1926 a group of exiled Russian anarchists in France, the Dielo Trouda (Workers' Cause) group, published this pamphlet (also known as the 'Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communists') on organisation based on their experiences in the 1917 Russian revolution.” (<https://libcom.org/article/organisational-platform-general-union-anarchists-draft>)

³⁵ . Marx's letter to J. Weydemeyer, March 5th 1852.

³⁶ . Critique of the Gotha Programme by Marx

demand clear and precise answers from the anarchists. And once anarchists bring the concept of anarchist revolution and of an anarchist structure of society to public attention, they will have to present a precise answer to all such questions, link the resolution of these problems to the general concept of anarchism and commit all their resources to its effective realization.

Only thus can the General Anarchist Union and the anarchist movement successfully perform their role as a leading force of ideas in the social revolution."

or "Anarchists, in fact, look upon the State as the chief obstacle, since it usurps all the rights of the masses and divests them of all their functions in social and economic life. The State must wither away, but not one fine day in the society of the future. It must be destroyed by the workers on day one of their victory **and must not be restored in any other guise whatsoever.** Its place will be taken by a system of self-managed workers' organizations of producers and consumers, unified on a federative basis. This system rules out both the organization of State power and the dictatorship of any party whatsoever." (idem. Emphasis added by us).

These statements are idealistic to their core. As Marx and Engels in *The German Ideology* have shown us, "The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas".

"Why do the anti-authoritarians not confine themselves to crying out against political authority, the state? All Socialists are agreed that the political state, and with it political authority, will disappear as a result of the coming social revolution, that is, that public functions will lose their political character and will be transformed into the simple administrative functions of watching over the true interests of society. But the anti-authoritarians demand that the political state be abolished at one stroke, even before the social conditions that gave birth to it have been destroyed. They demand that the first act of the social revolution shall be the abolition of authority. Have these gentlemen ever seen a revolution? A revolution is certainly the most authoritarian thing there is; it is the act whereby one part of the population imposes its will upon the other part by means of rifles, bayonets and cannon — authoritarian means, if such there be at all; and if the victorious party does not want to have fought in vain, it must maintain this rule by means of the terror which its arms inspire in the reactionists. Would the Paris Commune have lasted a single day if it had not made use of this authority of the armed people against the bourgeois? Should we not, on the contrary, reproach it for not having used it freely enough?

Therefore, either one of two things: either the anti-authoritarians don't know what they're talking about, in which case they are creating nothing but confusion; or they do know, and in that case they are betraying the movement of the proletariat. In either case they serve the

reaction."³⁷

By reducing the class struggle to the position of the struggle of ideas or by their position on the transitional period and their stance on the structure of the future society, the *Anarchist Platform* is a clear example of the petty-bourgeois nature of Anarchism. There is nothing Materialist and Historical about the Anarchist method and their theories. As the concept of class has never been the center of their theoretical positions, it has been treated merely as an accessory.

Anarchism in Theory and Practice

As far as the usage of Marxist theory for the Anarchist current goes, we can see that they tend to take whatever part of it suits their moralistic outlook while rejecting both the parts that do not suit them as well as the method as a whole. For instance, they would take the understanding of wage labor to pronounce it exploitative and therefore against their notion of morality, yet they do not understand the necessity of centralization and removal of autonomous production units as well as the mercantilism and trade between them, which has been part of the Marxist theory since the First International and its theoretical contributions.

In the proletarian camp these opportunistic writings and the attempt to ignore the real, class, difference between the Communist movement and the Anarchist movement should be criticized. Throughout the working class struggle and the struggle inside the First International, Anarchism as such³⁸ has directly or indirectly taken sides against the proletariat and its centralized revolutionary party and in no way can it be considered revolutionary and internationalist as a political current with its apoliticism and economic practice.

There are many historical examples of the fundamentally anti-working class character of Anarchism, up to the present day, including their

³⁷ . <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1872/10/authority.htm>

³⁸ . That is to say as a political current. We do not take into account the approach of the individual anarchist militants, as we do not for trotskyists or leftists, who, in the case of some, can be and certainly are honestly convinced they are fighting for proletarian revolution. However, precisely for these individuals, the best we can do for them is to denounce through clear and direct argumentation the historically petty-bourgeois class character of Anarchism as well as its complete integration into the left or capital today, which is to say into its political apparatus. Moreover, we certainly must not leave them with any illusions about the class character of Anarchism or Trotskyism as political currents. (Note added by the editorial team).

support for the bourgeois state in Spain 1936-1939, them taking sides in the imperialist war of 1914³⁹, or the present situation of the imperialist war between Ukraine and Russia where the overwhelming majority of the anarchists have either supported one of the sides or joined their armed forces. Ever since quite early in the development of the workers' movement, anarchist militants could remain faithful to proletarian internationalism to the extent that they have ceased to be anarchists. This was the case of many anarchists who participated in the Russian Revolution and became members of the Bolshevik party or adherents of the Communist International, such as Victor Serge, Andres Nin, and so many others, precisely because they broke politically with anarchism.

There are other instances where Makhno and his armed forces directly attacked and executed Communist sympathizers, Bolsheviks and the workers' who supported them. For example, Michael Malet (an anarchist at the time when he wrote the book) talks about a Communist called Polonsky in the ranks of the Black Army. The unfortunate Polonsky attended a provincial Bolshevik party meeting and Makhno ordered his counterintelligence force to execute them all.

“Polonsky's activities in Nykopil, and his comings and goings to Katerynoslav, even though some of them were on army business, must have been noticed. A conference of command staff was held in Katerynoslav on 4 December. In addition to Polonsky, other Nykopil communists came up for a meeting of the provincial party committee, where he was unwise enough to give a report on his activities. After the end of the conference, at midnight, Polonsky invited Makhno and other close friends back for supper. An hour later, Karenyk, Chubenko, and Vasylyvsky tied up Polonsky and some of the Nykopil and Katerynoslav Bolsheviks. If they were sentenced to death, this was a mere formality before being handed over to and disposed of by the kontrrazvedka (counter-intelligence). They were taken down to the river and shot.”⁴⁰

In the same work, Malet mentions a conflict between the workers in the region occupied by Makhno's peasant insurgency in which the workers were robbed by Makhno and suffered the consequences of the utopian understanding of economics that Makhno had put into practice. The goal of Makhno was to establish a form of bartering relationship between the peasant communes and the workers in

the cities.

“The Makhnovists (in Olexandrivske) organised two workers' conferences, at which the workers were urged to restart production under their own control, and establish direct relations with the peasants. The workers were not very keen, and wanted wages... A typical misunderstanding occurred when the Makhnovists sent some captured White guns to the big Bryansk engineering works for repair to the locks. The work was done, so the workers asked for payment. Not surprisingly, they felt insulted at the offer of a small payment in kind. Angered in turn by this seeming ingratitude, Makhno ordered the guns to be taken without any payment at all. (...) he followed this up with an article in the insurgent paper in which he attacked the Bryansk workers as 'Scum, self-seekers and blackmailers, trying to increase their prosperity at the expense of the blood and heroism of their front-line fighters'”⁴¹

The Makhnovist movement was far from being a workers' movement or even an exception. It was the exact consequence of the Anarchist method and its petty bourgeois nature. There is no need to try to purify these experiences of the Anarchists and by doing so fall into opportunism. Rather than trying to reconcile two very divergent traditions, we should note how Engels saw the Anarchist movement both by their activities in the Spanish Revolt of 1873 and their adventurism in the First International.

“The anarchists put the thing upside down. They declare that the proletarian revolution must begin by doing away with the political organisation of the state. But after its victory the sole organisation which the proletariat finds already in existence is precisely the state. This state may require very considerable alterations before it can fulfill its new functions. But to destroy it at such a moment would be to destroy the only organism by means of which the victorious proletariat can assert its newly-conquered power, hold down its capitalist adversaries and carry out that economic revolution of society without which the whole victory must end in a new defeat and in a mass slaughter of the workers similar to those after the Paris Commune.”⁴²

Historically anarchists have been disorganized and inconstant, not only in their tactics but also in their theoretical understanding. From their support of the bourgeois republican state in the Spanish civil war, first, they shouted "death to the state" but later on said that:

“The government (the republican state) in this hour, as a regulating instrument of the organisms of the State, has ceased to be an oppressive force against the working class, just as the State no longer represents the organism which

³⁹ . *“The Manifesto of the Sixteen (French: Manifeste des seize), or Proclamation of the Sixteen, was a document drafted in 1916 by eminent anarchists Peter Kropotkin and Jean Grave which advocated an Allied victory over Germany and the Central Powers during the First World War.”* (wikipedia)

⁴⁰ . <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/michael-malet-nestor-makhno-in-the-russian-civil-war>

⁴¹ . <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/michael-malet-nestor-makhno-in-the-russian-civil-war>

⁴² . Engels letter to Philipp Van Patten - 1883

divides society into classes. And both will tend even less to oppress the people as a result of the intervention of the CNT"⁴³

Alternatively, their support of the bolsheviks in the Russian civil war, which they later on turned against and started theorizing and calling the Bolshevik movement a bourgeois movement from the start, without even trying to understand the Russian revolution as an international revolution and the necessity of such an International revolution for forming a communist society. This change of theory in the anarchists was taken not only by the anarchists who took sides in WWI but also by the ones who rejected the Manifesto of The Sixteen and took an "internationalist" position. Their Internationalism is only in name and not in theory or even action as an internationalist revolution was never a necessity for them to achieve the disappearance of the classes.

This tendency of apoliticism shows that the Anarchist current cannot understand the material necessities of a revolution, leading to their abandoning of the revolution even when the proletariat has taken a single backward but necessary step. Even to the point of calling for the formation of labour camps – at the time also called concentration camps – under the aegis of the Republican state in Spain and using nationalist propaganda to get more people to their cause.⁴⁴ This practice may seem at odds with their concept of authority and hierarchy but in the context of their alliance with the bourgeois state and the oppression of the workers in their regions they control, they become "necessary" acts.

Federalism: Preservation of Capitalism

As we have shown above, Proudhonian economic utopianism is something innate in Anarchism. The economic structure of federalism or decentralization and self-management are constantly being upheld in different anarchist theoretical works.

As the IGCL and ICT comrades have shown in their works about the Spanish civil war⁴⁵, the social structure favored by Anarchism, with the independent and autonomous islands of power bartering and exchanging goods directly with each

other, will lead to the preservation of exchange value and, therefore, commodity production and wage labor.

With this way of bartering exchange, a monetary system will make the equivalence of commodities for exchange easier, and this equivalence of commodities means the strengthening of commodity production and not its extinction. Therefore, capitalism and the exploitation of the labor force will continue, not be extinguished.

*"As medium of exchange, money appears in the role of necessary mediator between production and consumption. In the developed money system, one produces only in order to exchange, or, one produces only by exchanging. Strike out money, and one would thereby either be thrown back to a lower stage of production (corresponding to that of auxiliary barter), or one would proceed to a higher stage, in which exchange value would no longer be the principal aspect of the commodity, because social labour, whose representative it is, would no longer appear merely as socially mediated private labour."*⁴⁶

All of this shows that, in practice, Anarchism is nothing more than the petty-bourgeoisie's dream of free exchange and the continuation of the free market and therefore capitalist social and economic relations. Its focus is on the individual as the main driver of society and of changes in it (in most cases without even considering the collective). A good example of how idealistic and non-historical can be is the practice of propaganda by the deed and the individual terroristic acts that did not change any specific part of capitalist relations.

Even at the time of Marx and Engels, federalism was being upheld by the anarchists, which they got from Proudhon and other Utopian Socialists' theories. Something that Engels, on the 20th anniversary of the Paris Commune, by stating the economic situation of the Commune, characterized as obsolete.

*"By 1871, even in Paris, the centre of handicrafts, large-scale industry had already so much ceased to be an exceptional case that by far the most important decree of the Commune instituted an organization of large-scale industry and even of manufacture which was not based only on the association of workers in each factory, but also aimed at combining all these associations in one great union; in short an organization which, as Marx quite rightly says in *The Civil War*, must necessarily have led in the end to communism, that is to say, the direct antithesis of the Proudhon doctrine. And, therefore, the Commune was also the grave of the Proudhon school of socialism. Today this school has vanished from French working class circles; among them now, among the Possibilists no less*

⁴³ . *Solidaridad Obrera*, Anarchist daily of the CNT, quoted by the ICT pamphlet *Spain 1934-39: From Working Class Struggle to Imperialist War*

(<https://www.leftcom.org/en/articles/2011-09-01/spain-1934-39-from-working-class-struggle-to-imperialist-war>).

⁴⁴ . https://files.libcom.org/files/WorkersAgainstWork-Seidman_0.pdf

⁴⁵ <http://igcl.org/Spain-1936-Can-There-be-a-and>
<https://www.leftcom.org/en/articles/2011-09-01/spain-1934-39-from-working-class-struggle-to-imperialist-war>

⁴⁶ . <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1857/grundrisse/ch04.htm#p213>

than among the “Marxists”, Marx’s theory rules unchallenged. Only among the “radical” bourgeoisie are there still Proudhonists.”^(a)

As we can see, the Makhnovist support of Federalism is similar to the Federalism of the Anarchists in the Spanish Civil War and the Federalism of Proudhonian economics.

This is not just a repetition of the terminology of the revolutionaries of the past but the legacy of their historical experiences with the Anarchist movement and their relation to the international proletarian struggle. These experiences prove the leftist, therefore the bourgeois, nature of the Anarchist movement not so different from the nature of the Stalinists and Trotskyists. By identifying the Anarchist movement as leftist – left wing of capital – we would understand how to treat it not as a revolutionary and militant current of the proletarian

camp, but as full force of the capitalist class.

In the end, to the groups of comrades in the proletarian camp that are justifying their support or recognition of the Anarchist movement as authentically revolutionary and proletarian with excuses such as “workers unity” or “gaining the attention of the anarchists”, we can only say:

“One had obviously had a desire to stifle all criticism and to give one's own party no opportunity for reflection. One knows that the mere fact of unification is satisfying to the workers, but it is a mistake to believe that this momentary success is not bought too dearly.”^(b)

Daron, october 2022

Note ^(a):

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1871/civil-war-france/postscript.htm>

Note ^(b): . (Marx to W. Bracke In Brunswick)

https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1875/letters/75_05_05.htm

Bilan #14, 1935, When a Class Party is Missing

"If we dwell on the attitude of the anarcho-syndicalists during the events in Spain, it is certainly not by sectarianism or to provoke sterile polemics. But here we are in front of a country – really the only one, if we disregard Latin America – where the influence of the anarchist ideology among the working masses is posed in an acute way, whereas even in Russia this problem was very limited. This problem must be examined because in the light of the facts anarcho-syndicalism reveals itself as a negative force for the interests of the working class, a force that does not want to take into account a century of class experience and the significance of October 1917."

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Summary of the journal #21 and #22

#21 June 2022

**Can The International Proletariat Hinder The March to Generalized Imperialist War
The Proletarian Camp and The War in Ukraine: on The Danger of Generalized Imperialist War**

The Internationalist Communist Tendency's Call for "No War But Class War" Committees

Theses on The Significance and Consequences of the Imperialist War in Ukraine

Internationalist Communist Tendency's Letter on our Theses on The War in Ukraine

Contribution: Capitalism and Bourgeois Democracy

#22 September 2022

Crisis and War are Raging. the Issue of the Moment...? Not to Leave the Initiative and the Leadership of the Struggles to The Unions

Dynamics of Wildcat Strikes in the UK: For Wages Increases, Strike Everywhere and without Delay!

Quick and Incomplete Response to Some Critical "Posts" on our Intervention

The Cost of Living Crisis is a Capitalist Crisis (CWO-ICT)

"No War But Class War" Committees in Canada Response to the ICT Comments on our Theses on the War in Ukraine

Correspondence with the Red Specter Collective (USA)

OUR BASIC POSITIONS

- The IGCL considers and defines all its activities, both internal and external, in relation to and as moments of the struggle for the constitution of the world political party of the proletariat, indispensable tool for the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a communist society.
- In addition to intervening in the proletariat's struggles, the IGCL leads this struggle especially in the international proletarian camp. This camp is composed of revolutionary political groups defending and sharing the class positions of the proletariat, in particular proletarian internationalism and the necessity of the class dictatorship of the proletariat.
- The IGCL claims the First, Second and Third Internationals and the struggle of the left fractions within them. In particular, it claims the struggle of the left fraction of the CP of Italy within the Communist International against its Stalinist degeneration and for the programmatic contributions that it has been able to develop and pass on us to this day.
- Only the proletariat, exploited and revolutionary class at the same time, is able to destroy capitalism and to establish communism, the classless society. The consciousness of this revolution, the *communist consciousness*, is produced by the historical struggle of the proletariat. So that it can materialize, defend and develop itself, the proletariat produces communist minorities who organize themselves in parties and whose permanent function is to carry this communist consciousness and to return it to the whole proletariat.
- As the highest expression of this consciousness, the party – or, in its absence, the communist fractions or groups – constitutes and must assume the political leadership of the proletariat. In particular, the party is the only organ that can lead the proletariat to the insurrection and to the destruction of the capitalist state, and to the exercise of the dictatorship of the proletariat.
- The party is organized and functions on the basis of the principles that govern the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, *proletarian internationalism* and *centralism* as moments of its international unity and struggle. From the start, the party constitutes, functions and intervenes as an international and centralized party. From its very start, the IGCL constitutes, functions and intervenes as an international and centralized group.
- The party, as well as the IGCL, bases its program, its principles, its political positions and its action on the theory of *historical materialism*. By explaining the course of history through the development of the class struggle and by recognizing the proletariat as the revolutionary class, it is the only world view that places itself from its point of view. It is the theory of the revolutionary proletariat.
- Only after the victorious insurrection and the disappearance of the bourgeois state will the proletariat be able to organize itself as a ruling class under the political leadership of its party. Its class domination, the dictatorship of the proletariat, is exercised by means of the workers' councils, or soviets. These can only maintain themselves as a unitary organization of the proletariat if they become *organs of the insurrection* and *organs of the class dictatorship*, that is to say, by making the party's slogans their own.
- The dictatorship of the proletariat consists in using the class power of its mass organizations, the councils or soviets, to abolish the economic power of the bourgeoisie and ensure the transition to a classless communist society. The state of the transition period, of the class dictatorship, between capitalism and communism is destined to disappear with the disappearance of the classes, of the proletariat itself and of its party, and the advent of the communist society.
- Since the First World War in 1914, generalized imperialist war and state capitalism have been the main expressions of the historical phase of decadence of capitalism.
- In face of the unceasing development of state capitalism, the proletariat can only advance the research for its unity in all its struggles, even the most limited or localized ones, by taking charge of their extension and generalization. Every workers' struggle, even the most limited, confronts the state apparatus as a whole, against which

the proletariat can only advance the perspective and the weapon of the *mass strike*.

- In the era of dominant state capitalism, the trade unions as a whole, the leadership as well as the base sections, are nowadays full-fledged organs of the bourgeois state within the working class milieu. They aim at maintaining the capitalist order within its ranks, at framing the working class and at preventing, counteracting and sabotaging any proletarian struggle, in particular any extension, generalization and centralization of proletarian fights. Any defense of the trade unions and trade unionism is counter-revolutionary.
- In the era of dominant state capitalism, all fractions of the bourgeoisie are equally reactionary. All the so-called workers', "socialist", "communist" parties, leftist organizations (Trotskyists, Maoists, Anarchists), or even those presenting themselves as anti-capitalist, constitute the left of the political apparatus of capital. All the tactics of popular front, anti-fascist front or united front mixing the interests of the proletariat with those of a fraction of the bourgeoisie, only serve to contain and divert the struggle of the proletariat. Any frontist policy with left parties of the bourgeoisie is counter-revolutionary.
- In the era of dominant state capitalism, parliament and electoral campaigns, and in general bourgeois democracy, can no longer be used by the proletariat for its affirmation as a class and for the development of its struggles. Any call to participate in the electoral processes and to vote only reinforces the mystification presenting these elections as a real choice for the exploited and, as such, is counter-revolutionary.
- Communism requires the conscious abolition by the proletariat of capitalist social relations: commodity production, wage labor and classes. The communist transformation of society through the dictatorship of the proletariat does not mean self-management or nationalization of the economy. Any defense of one or the other is counter-revolutionary.
- The so-called "socialist" or even "communist" countries, the former USSR and its Eastern European satellites, China, Cuba, Vietnam, or even Chavez's Venezuela, have only been particularly brutal forms of the universal tendency to state capitalism. Any support, even critical, for the so-called socialist or progressive character of these countries is counter-revolutionary.
- In a world now totally conquered by capitalism and where imperialism imposes itself on every state, any national liberation struggle, far from constituting any kind of progressive movement, is in fact a moment in the constant confrontation between rival imperialisms. Any defense of nationalist ideology, of the "right of peoples to self-determination", of any national liberation struggle is counter-revolutionary today.
- By their very content, the *partial* struggles, anti-racist, feminist, environmentalist, and other aspects of everyday life, far from strengthening the unity and autonomy of the working class, tend on the contrary to divide and dilute it in the confusion of particular categories (race, gender, youth, etc.). Any ideology and movement that advocates *identitarianism*, anti-racism, etc., in the name of the *intersectionality* of struggles, are counter-revolutionary ideologies and movements.
- Terrorism is an expression of social strata without a historical future and of the decomposition of the petty-bourgeoisie, when it is not directly the emanation of the war that the States are permanently waging against each other. It always constitutes a privileged terrain for the police manipulations and provocations of the bourgeoisie. Advocating the secret action of small minorities, it is in complete opposition to class violence, which is conditioned by the conscious and organized mass action of the proletariat.
- The IGCL fights, from today, so that the future party is constituted on the programmatic basis of the principles and positions that precede. The formal constitution of the party is necessary at the latest when the intervention, the orientations and the slogans of the communist groups or fractions become permanent material elements of the immediate situation and direct factors of the balance of power between the classes. Then, the immediate struggle for the formal constitution of the party is necessary and becomes urgent.