

REVOLUTION or WAR #5

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Text of the Working Class Movement

Seize the Factory or Seize Power? (Bordiga, *Il Soviet*, 1920)

E-mail : intleftcom@gmail.com

www.igcl.org

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(Our review is also available in French and Spanish)

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

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

Economic Crisis and Wars Feed off Each Other and Announce the Class War

Since January 2015 and the attacks in Paris against the journal *Charlie Hebdo*, terrorist attacks have multiplied all across the world, on all continents, Africa, Asia, in Canada and the United States, until hitting once more Paris and Europe on November 13th even more violently. The local wars have not ceased and now see the main imperialist powers, the United States, France, Great Britain, Russia and Germany, all intervening military and directly, a **major first**, in Syria and Iraq; each one defending its own interests at the risk of provoking military incidents amongst them. Is this not what began to happen with the downing of the Russian warplane by the important NATO member Turkey? Since then, the calls for national unity to lead the war against terrorism have invaded the official discourses while the states, particularly the European ones such as France and Belgium, declared a state of emergency and adopted means of repression which forbid street demonstrations and any opposition to national unity; every important social protest equated to terrorism or supposedly supporting it. The climate of permanent war and repression that the passing of the American Patriot Act created in North America after the September 11th 2001 attacks, and which prevails in many countries around the globe, as in China and Russia, has set in also in Western Europe. This feeling is worsened by the exodus of millions of migrants in appalling conditions, in particular towards Europe, provoked by capitalist military conflicts and misery. Such massive displacements have not occurred in the "old continent" since 1945.

In parallel, the capitalist economy is unable to "restart" despite the official discourses and a gigantic general debt which, too, has multiplied since 2008. The myth of the emergent countries, and above all China, saving the capitalist economy has collapsed. In its place, bourgeois propaganda has tried to substitute a so-call American recovery as the saviour and heralding a renewal. But the reality of the data of the American growth have quickly dampened the enthusiasm since the financial sector is passing through new speculative bubbles which are just begging to explode as in 2008 – the falls in the stock markets, Chinese in particular, are one of its expressions. Except that this time, the economic and human harm will exceed by far that of 2008, itself already dramatic. And above all because the recourse to massive creation of money (or liquidity) by the states and the central banks, what they call today *Quantitative Easing*, has reached such levels that it no doubt has exhausted all its "economic virtues".

The Economic Dead End of Capitalism Pushes to War

Today crisis and war combine more and more directly. Nevertheless, it remains that it is capitalism's economic dead end, the contradiction between the productive forces and the capitalist relations of production, the former exceeding the limits of the latter, which finally determine

the infernal dynamic which would lead capitalism to a generalized 3rd World War if the revolutionary proletariat doesn't succeed to break this mechanic.

At the height of the 2008 crisis, the massive introduction of liquidity, that is the creation of money, by the central banks and the support of the banks' bad debts, had enabled the prevention of a sudden and brutal blockage of the economy like happened in 1929. The result was an explosion of already high public debt. While this policy, which is typical of state capitalism, has succeeded to avoid the generalized brutal collapse – but not without dramatic consequences for the populations and for some countries such as Greece for instance –, they did not succeed to revive the economy. "*The truth is that the world economy is [today] in recession, not a cyclical one but a structural one, and that the desire to make the monetary policy a universal remedy, smash into the wall of the real economy while being accompanied by a maximum of risk for financial stability*" (Patrick Artus and M.P. Virard, *La folie des banques centrales*, Fayard, dec. 2015, *The Madness of the Central Banks*, translated by us from French). The flood of money injected into the markets did not make it to the productive sector because of weak profits but to the financial and speculative sector which offers much greater returns, and so creates various bubbles which are now set to explode again. Yet, the level of debt, the low interest rates fixed by the central banks with some of them negative, the massive utilization of the money creation and the assets purchases by these same banks, which did not succeed to revive the capitalist economy, will this time render ineffective any recourse to *Quantitative Easing* faced with new crashes¹. Today, the drug-addict who was starved of money in 2008 and to whom it had been necessary to inject a massive dose of liquidities, cannot go without it and any announcement of a small rise in the interest rates – as has attempted to do the Fed, the American central bank – provokes worry and even panic in the markets. At the economic level, the dead end is there and the economic competition, around oil or still the currency war, gives way to imperialist rivalries – the defence of the dollar becoming, ultimately, more an imperialist stake than an economic one for the American ruling class. Faced with this dead end, there is no outcome for capital but the course towards war...

The European Union decision to allow France not to respect the limit of a budget deficit of 3% in the name of war against terrorism highlights another hidden aspect of the *Quantitative Easing* (QE) policies. It is an important step for Germany. Until recently fiercely opposed to surpassing this limit, the debate rages amongst the German bourgeoisie. It is worth to notice that the countries where QE has been definitively in place since 2008, the United

1 . For a more detailed analysis, the reader can refer to the ICT article [On the Supposed International Recovery](http://www.leftcom.org/en/articles/2015-08-04/on-the-supposed-international-economic-recovery) (<http://www.leftcom.org/en/articles/2015-08-04/on-the-supposed-international-economic-recovery>).

States² and Great Britain for instance, have respectively dedicated 3.5% and 2% of their GDP in 2014 for military expenses. Germany only 1.2%³. If France did not dedicate 2,2% of its GDP to military expenses, "*it would almost be within the [UE] Stability Pact*", that is a 3% deficit (*Libération*, Nov. 21st 2014). The putting in place by the US and UK of QE policies since 2008 enabled them to develop their respective war efforts. It is this path the European bourgeoisies, who are the most conscious of the historical stakes, seem to have decided to engage in and which is possible thanks to the new monetary policy of the European Central Bank initiated in 2014.

Economic crisis and wars feeding off each other more and more directly, plunge the capitalist world, and with it the whole of humanity, into an infernal spiral, into a descent into the abyss whose bottom nobody can see. There is only one real and possible alternative, far from "utopias" and mystifications of any kind: the destruction of capitalist society, with it of commodities, exploitation, social classes, states, by the proletariat's revolutionary action and by the exercise of its class dictatorship. This historical social force, constituted by the great majority of the salaried of the world, which produces the essential of the social wealth, is at the same time the exploited and revolutionary class. As such, and whatever is the reality and the power of its immediate opposition to capitalism, to the crisis and wars, to increased misery and exploitation, the proletariat bears within itself the destruction of capital and the revolutionary perspective of communism.

Crisis and Wars Force the Bourgeoisie to Declare Class War

Certainly the proletariat has not succeeded, to date, to force a withdrawal of the attacks against its living and working conditions. Its struggles of resistance – even though real – remain insufficient in number and for the most part confined within the legal limits and the divisions imposed by the states and their unions. The result is that many doubt the vitality of the "class struggle" all the more due to the silence, and even censorship, of the media when it comes to working class struggles that do develop.

Yet it suffices to look at what the enemy capitalist class does to conclude that it leads a resolute class struggle against the workers and salaried of each country. Crisis and wars combine to such a point, the events of 2015 are its product and its aggravating factors, that they compel the ruling class to now declare a genuine class war: crisis and increasing wars require a greater exploitation of the labour force, of the world proletariat; crisis and wars require a greater ideological and political submission

hence the calls for national unity in the name of war against terrorism and the defence of democracy; crisis and wars require a greater social discipline hence the institution of means of repression and other emergency measures prohibiting public gatherings and demonstrations, and condemning any "deviant" discourse at once qualified as being terrorist.

Finally, last fundamental historical element, ultimately decisive, which obliges the capitalist class to politically and physically defeat the world working class: the dynamic inherent to the relation between crisis and war bears in itself the perspective of a 3rd generalized World War opposing directly the main great powers. From the point of view of capital, its crisis, the crisis of overproduction, cannot be "overcome" without a massive destruction of productive forces, factories, infrastructure, and of the living labour force, that is the proletariat. The financial and stock market crisis and the local imperialist wars, even though they don't cease to increase and result in atrocities, don't suffice to "resolve" the excess of productive forces as the 2nd World War succeeded to do, thereby allowing the "Thirty Glorious" years of reconstruction. Yet, the present weakness of the proletarian resistance and the submission of the great masses to bourgeois ideology are not enough to guarantee against the risk that the revolutionary class will rise up and generalize its fights against the capitalist state faced with the open perspective of generalized war and the sacrifices that its economic and political preparation would require. The ruling class is obliged to impose such a defeat so that terror and total submission would reign within the proletarian ranks and masses.

Crises and war feed off each into a dizzying spiral that only the proletariat can break. The crisis can only provoke still more violent attacks against its living and working conditions; and the need for war provoke even stronger ideological and political attacks. We are at the beginning of massive confrontations between the classes due to the imperious necessity of capital. The outcome – "historical" working class defeat or generalization of the struggles enabling a significant spreading of class consciousness within the working masses, and with it of the influence and action of the communist groups – depends on the proletariat's capacity to break with the spiral driving to generalized war by opening the revolutionary path. From today, the communist groups must foresee the terrain and the terms of the battle between the classes which is coming so that they can stand at its political forefront according to its development. As weak and dispersed as they may be today, they nevertheless remain one essential factor of the confrontation to come and the main factor of consciousness if the path to the revolutionary destruction of capitalism is opened by the proletariat.

The IGCL, February 2nd 2016.

2 . "*After September 11th 2001*, [A. Greenspan, Chairman of the FED of that time...] *made it so that the real rates became negative (inflation rates higher than the interest rates) because, it is a tradition in the United States, when the country 'enters a war', they don't need to raise taxes to finance it but they rely on the wallets of investors and consumers*" (P. Artus et M.P. Virard, *la folie des banques centrales*, translated by us).

3 . China 2.1 % (but no one gives credit to the data provided by this country), Russia 4.5 %.

International Situation

Faced with Terrorism and Imperialist War, the Workers on Strike in Belgium this Monday November 23rd Show the Only and Unique Answer: The Working Class Struggle!

This Monday morning, workers strikes in Belgium. Despite a weekend of "maximum anti-terrorist alert" in Belgium (that is state of siege), despite the streets and places in Brussels and other Belgian cities emptied of any bystanders by the police and the Army armoured cars, despite the state of alert and fear generalized to all European countries, despite the deafening media campaign – transforming the huge emotion and sadness faced with the Paris slaughter into a call for national unity and war against "the barbarians" –, despite the warnings of threats of attacks in Brussels and the whole country, and thus the ban on any "popular" gathering, strikes and manifestations are taking place since this morning in several regions and cities of the country "against the austerity measures of the Federal government".

"There are neither buses, nor subway on the transportation lines [in Charleroi]. (...) 1/3 of the train drivers of the Charleroi train depot were on strike at 6h45 a.m. (...) Many trains were stopped in the Tournai city station. (...) In Flanders, the strike impacts the railway lines between Binche and Turnout, Charleroi and Antwerp as well as Antwerp and Nivelles (...). The TEC management [the public transportation company for the Wallonia region] of Charleroi has noticed that some workers had placed buses across the depots entrance. (...) The strike is total at the TEC depot of the city of Tournai"... (Le Soir, Belgium newspaper, November 23rd 2015).

This is the only real response – because it is of the working class –, to the capitalist barbarism which burns the whole world. To terrorism, to the attacks, to the imperialist war and to national unity which only drive to more attacks, more terror, more wars until the generalized one, until a Third World War, we must oppose the class struggle, that is the defence of our living and working conditions, against capitalist exploitation. Not only because it can enable us to limit the inescapable worsening of exploitation and misery but also because, doing so, it can open the path to the destruction of capitalism and the perspective of another society with neither misery nor war. There is no other alternative to capitalist barbarism.

The workers on strike in Belgium this morning, whether they are all conscious or not of it, reject the calls for national unity (and discipline), for sacrifices and warlike mobilization to the defence of the nation and the democratic state. They refuse the false dilemma, the trap set up to derail the world proletariat: choosing between democracy and terrorism. They oppose their specific class interests to the former. And they are right: bourgeois democracy gave birth and fed the Al Qaida's and IS (Daesh)'s terrorism since decades – in first place the CIA. Capitalism is imperialist war and... terrorism has become a means, a moment, utilized directly or indirectly by all the state powers, great ones, medium and small ones. Terrorism and capitalism, war and democracy, are not opposed but they fuel each other.

The economic crisis of capital which inescapably worsens, provokes misery and generalized impoverishment as well as the exacerbation of the imperialist rivalries and wars – and terrorism. Capitalist crisis and imperialist wars also fuel each other.

Whatever is the coming development of the present strikes in Belgium this morning, whatever are their limits, they show the path to follow. The bourgeoisie is not mistaken : *"'what great rubbish' cursed Carlo Di Antonio, Wallonia Minister of transportation"*⁴ and the whole European press is keeping fully silent on these strikes. No doubt, the pressure might, at the very hour we are writing, become strong through the unions, "official" organizers of the Day of Action, on the workers to give up their fight "given the circumstances". In the region of Namur, the FGTB union has *"reckoned, as responsible organization, that it was better to cancel these public gatherings which require some police mobilization while the forces of order are under maximum pressure"* (Le Soir). But in several other cities and regions, they didn't succeed – until now and despite several days of "anti-terrorist alert" – to prevent the workers from being on strike. This is of importance and says a lot about the working class combativity in Belgium. Let's recall that exactly a year ago the workers of Charleroi, Liege and Wallonia were on wildcat strike⁵ and that the unions had difficulties to force the return to work, while the massive Brussels demonstration of November 6th 2014 ended up in violent confrontations between Antwerp dockers and Wallonia steelworkers on one side and on the other the anti-riot police. Obviously, the workers combativity remains strong despite the censorship on the working class struggles and the media brainwashing.

The political stake between the classes, what is at stake in this very moment at the international level and particularly in Europe, is the following: are the war and the attacks, the anti-terrorist media campaigns and the repression measures which are adopted⁶ going to be successful to silence any workers mobilization and even reduce the class distrust, more or less massive, against the

4 <http://www.7sur7.be/7s7/fr/1502/Belgique/article/detail/2533535/2015/11/23/Le-mouvement-de-greve-tres-largement-suivi-a-Charleroi.dhtml>

5 <http://igcl.org/Strikes-in-Germany-Belgium-Great-108>

6 Which don't aim specifically to fight terrorism but more generally ensure "state security" and so have significance to any important working class mobilization.

states, whether democratic or not, and capitalism?

The strikes of this morning in Belgium give a first answer, still insufficient of course to foresee the final outcome of this battle. **But above all they show the path to follow.**

This is why it is the duty of the communist groups to inform the world proletariat as much as they can about the existence of these strikes of today and to attempt to provide political orientations and slogans which can be taken and followed. The struggles of this morning have a particular political meaning which certainly surpasses them. They precisely develop at a moment when the national bourgeoisies, while defending their own imperialist interests against the others, are united to unleash an ideological, political, economic and repressive offensive against the working class. Because, don't be mistaken, pressured by the economic and historical dead-end of capitalism, the international bourgeoisie "has two irons in the fire" if so we can say: engage itself more and more in imperialist wars on one side; and on the other, lead a class war against the proletariat. This is what the Paris attacks of late January against *Charlie Hebdo*, and the reaction of the states and governments, announced. They're one against the proletariat. The final – historical – stake is the following: proletarian revolution or generalized imperialist war (at the risk that humanity will be annihilated forever).

**Faced with capitalist terror, the workers in Belgium show the way:
No to National Unity! No to Imperialist Wars! Yes to Class Struggle!
Active Solidarity with the Strikers! Let's refuse Austerity and Sacrifices!
Down with Capitalism, its Misery and its Wars! No to Generalized Imperialist War!**

The IGCL, November 23rd 2015.

Post-scriptum Nov. 26th

Since this Monday morning – and to our knowledge –, the censorship of the international media has been complete about these strikes and the website of the Belgian newspaper has stopped giving any information from the afternoon. Obviously, once the union Day of Action over, the strikes have not been called on Tuesday. In itself, the return to work and the global control (even though they could not cancel the Day of Action) of the unions express the limits of these strikes as we sensed it in our statement. On the other hand, in the context of nationalist and warlike propaganda which is presently prevailing at the international level and particularly in Belgium, their significance – the affirmation of the class interests to the detriment of the calls for national unity and to give up the workers fight – is not lessened. This Monday morning, as limited as these strikes were, the workers in struggle in Belgium have shown the path to follow in the new period which sees the bourgeoisie engaging increasingly into imperialist wars.

**Slaughter and Blind Terror in Paris : Capitalism is Imperialist War !
(November 14th, 2015)**

More than a hundred deaths, hundreds of wounded persons, it is a real carnage that has just suffered the Parisian population yesterday night. It is the last dramatic episode of a series of bloody and barbaric attacks around the world, amongst them the recent Ankara one in Turkey and against the Russian flight in Egypt. They respond to the massive and rough military intervention of the main imperialist powers in Syria. At their turn, these attacks are going to relaunch even more the imperialist war and rivalries, in particular in the Middle East, with the lot of persons killed, misery and populations constrained, for their very survival, to run away the war and to migrate. One more time, the macabre reality comes to confirm the classic position of the working class movement and Marxism : Capitalism is war. No peace is possible as long as this society of misery and death isn't be overturned.

Looking forward to a more elaborated analysis on what has just taken place in Paris, we republish *our past position* (<http://igel.org/No-to-Terrorism-No-to-the>) on the attacks against *Charlie Hebdo* and the kosher market of January 7th, 2015 in Paris in which we affirmed that *"the further that capitalism falls into economic crisis, imperialist rivalries and war, the more that terrorism will develop and hit innocent people."* Capitalism's reality has just confirmed, so much, our past statement.

The IGCL, November 14th 2015.

Workers' struggles throughout the world

“The outpouring of anger and fighting spirit overflows into all countries, on all continents. But for all that they fail to fend off the attacks. Because the working class, for the most part, remains behind the slogans and demands of leftists and the unions - slogans and demands which constrain and limit the struggle within the framework of state and capitalist ideology. Because it has yet to take up the fight against the sabotage and corruption of its struggles, against the very forces responsible for setting them up. Because it can't seem to pull itself up to the level of conscious political struggle; i.e. up to political confrontation against all forces of the bourgeois state apparatus, particularly against those which ‘impose themselves on the workers’ terrain’, the unions, official or ‘rank and file’, of the political Left and leftist forces, including those hiding behind the various and diverse apolitical and democratic mystifications.

However, in all of capitalism's history, never has it found itself so weakened before the proletariat, in a situation so difficult ‘historically, ‘objectively’: since the crisis and perspective of generalized war arise at the same time. To the masses of workers and exploited, it will be more difficult than ever for capitalism to pass off its ideological mystifications, as promises of prosperity and peace fade more and more with each passing day. And despite the ‘black-out’, the outright censorship, of workers struggles and mobilizations, their fighting spirit is unfailing, unabated, enduring. How many massive demonstrations against the adoption of misery measures in all countries have been suppressed or ignored by the media? How many isolated struggles against layoffs or against wage cuts have been given the silent treatment? Illusions on our part?” (Editorial of Revolution or War #1).

USA: Not seen in a quarter century! Workers from large automobile factories voted overwhelmingly against the Fiat Chrysler-UAW agreement in September 2015 (see United Auto Workers Concessions in Talks with the Big Three <http://www.leftcom.org/en/articles/2015-08-10/united-auto-workers-in-concessions-talks-with-the-big-three>). It is only by fraud and manipulation that the UAW was able in November to accept at 51 % the collective agreement of 4 years.

Italy: November 25, workers of the regional bus company in Rome went on wildcat strike for three days because they had not been paid for two months. On January 8, in the Bormioli company near Parma, the riot police attacked and dismantled a kind of sit-in set up by warehouse workers. They fought against the agreement signed between the company and the main unions, the CGIL and the CISL. This agreement was worsening working conditions. This is yet another confirmation that at this stage of the profound crisis of capitalism, the bosses cannot tolerate any class resistance, even though unfortunately it only comes from small sectors. See the ICT article <http://www.leftcom.org/en/articles/2016-01-11/italy-solidarity-with-the-workers-of-bormioli-di-fidenza> or in Italian <http://www.leftcom.org/it/articles/2016-01-11/solidariet%C3%A0-ai-facchini-di-fidenz>

France: A series of postal strikes continued in various cities in November and December **despite the state of emergency** and the censorship of the media. The post workers are determined to struggle against redundancies and exploitation at work. Nevertheless, because the unions' control, there is no unification, nor geographical spreading of the strikes.

Algeria: Strike and demonstrations of Rouiba auto workers. Wednesday, December 2, workers of SNVI (Société Nationale des Véhicules Industriels) are again out to protest the delay in the payment of salaries for October and November. The promises made to them by the former company officials have not yet materialized. No longer

able to wait and to be heard, they closed the road between Rouiba to Régahia. Immediately, the anti-riot police troops amassed in large numbers near the workers' gathering place and intervened.

South Africa: Johannesburg. The garbage collectors on wildcat strike against the corruption of their management and for better working conditions were attacked with rubber bullets and stun grenades. There were 9 injured strikers.

Brazil: Students and teachers in São Paulo protested against Governor Alckmin's attempts to "reorganize" the education system in São Paulo. "Reorganization" plans propose to close nearly 100 schools, most of them in working class neighbourhoods of the city. As of Tuesday, December 1st, 200 schools are occupied by students from São Paulo. Despite widespread public support, the students were attacked and arrested by the very brutal police force. This restructuring would mean that there would be, in some cases, more than a hundred students in each class. During the month of January, several protests – ferociously repressed by the police – took place to protest against the rising cost of public transport in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Belo Horizonte. Transport prices upset Brazilian workers struggling with double-digit inflation and a corruption scandal linked to the state oil company Petrobras and to the bosses of the building and public works (BTP), reflecting the corruption of the bourgeoisie and particularly its politicians of the Workers' Party, a party praised by leftists and trade unionists in the last few years.

Switzerland: In November in Geneva. Strikes and demonstrations uniting private and public sector, civil servants, hospital workers and construction workers in a fight against the austerity measures.

India : Following an agreement between the union and the management of Maruti (Suzuki cars) for an increase in wages of permanent workers and excluding temporary

workers, they have launched a wildcat strike on 26 September. More than 600 workers were on strike that day when 1000 police officers stationed in and around the factory started to beat and arrest about 100 of them. The workers said that the assembly lines operated "stop-and-go", so that only about half of the usual 1440 cars were assembled.

Belgium: A huge demonstration against austerity on 7 October. Some 80 000 people, according to police, 100,000 according to the trade unions which organized the march, marched through the center of the capital against the austerity measures. On November 23rd Strikes despite the weekend "top anti-terror alert" (that is to say, a state of siege). See text [Faced with Terrorism and Imperialist War, the Workers on Strike in Belgium this Monday November 23rd Show the Only and Unique Answer: The Working Class Struggle!](#)

Quebec, Canada: During the fall, the public sector workers made several strikes divided by unions by regions, sectors and one day at a time for the renewal of their collective agreements and against the austerity measures. A demonstration of 100,000 people took place Montreal on 3 October. Also, 2400 Montreal municipal workers participated in a special general meeting on December 8, during the hours of work despite an order prohibiting them from attending to it. The reason: their anger at the Bill 15 imposing severe cuts in pensions, and against the "fiscal pact" between the Quebec government and municipalities.

Finland: In September, widespread anti-austerity strike in Finland closed ports and disrupted flights in the country. Teachers and daycare workers joined this struggle which is the largest labour movement for decades. Train drivers also stopped working to reach a mass demonstration on 18 September in Helsinki.

Cambodia: In December, an impromptu walkout triggered the worst labour unrest this year. Thirty thousand factory workers participated in a wildcat strike for a pay rise. Some unions have urged workers to return to work and negotiate their demands peacefully.

China: The number of strikes and incidents increased from 1,379 in 2014 to nearly 2,774 in 2015. The year 2016 will be even worse for the Chinese working class. Steel factories and coal mines, railways predict the firing of tens of thousands of workers. Even at the factory in Zhengzhou, the same one that assembles the iPhone 6s and which employs 200,000 people, layoffs are planned. Pay cuts, layoffs and salaries paid with delays of several months, this is what Chinese capitalism is doing to the working class.



Workers' General Assembly in Belgium

Egypt: Late in December, 3000 workers began a strike in the largest aluminum company, while several hundred more workers have also launched a sit-in protest at the largest steel factory - Steel and Iron Company – in Helwan. This while other protests continued elsewhere - a strike at Shebin al-Kom Textiles Company and the Petrotrade company in Assiut City.

Netherlands: Dockers of the port of Rotterdam, the largest in Europe, began a strike on January 7 of 24 hours, the first in 13 years, claiming

the assurance that no jobs will be lost following a process of automation of installations. In a country with high class collaboration, strikes are rare.

Tunisia: No change since five years after the fall of Ben Ali. The establishment of the democracy of the bourgeoisie has changed nothing. There are always thousands of unemployed. In January, they protested in the thousands in several cities against unemployment to the point that the democratic government introduced a curfew on Friday, January 22 in the whole country.

January 23rd, Normand

Massive Exodus on All Continents : It is Our Class Brothers that Capitalism Murders

The medias, which work for the bourgeoisie , hypocritically bombard us of messages, photos and wishful thinkings on the refugee crisis in Europe. They can't silence thousands of men, women and children, miserable proletarians, who flee wars and travel through South Europe in the most appalling conditions. They can't hide the death of Aylan, his brother and mother. The lifeless body of this little three year old boy ended up on a Turkish

beach just because he wanted to live quietly with his family far from the misery and war that capitalism imposes. They forget very quickly those refugees elsewhere in the world, such as the Palestinians and Haitians. These millions of refugees are escaping from misery which is caused by the increase in capitalism's crisis (Mexico and Central America) and above all they are running away from the wars throughout the world caused by the capitalist great powers:

Libya, Syria, Somalia, Eritrea, Thad, Mali, Nigeria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen and others. These great powers like Merkel's Germany utilize the migrants to present themselves as more welcoming. In fact, Germany, like the others imperialist powers, have need of labour power in order to be competitive in its rivalry with the other great powers. If need be, Merkel (and her colleagues) would accept the father but not Aylan and his family. They've proved it with this three years, old child's death with most of his family.

They also use the misery of millions of human beings to attempt to make over the image of the bourgeois democracies that are the main culprits for all these dead (and not only the smugglers) and that set up more and more walls (USA-Mexico, Hungary-Serbia, Palestine-Israel, Spain-Morocco in Ceuta) and internment camps (France, Hungary, USA, Greece, Italy). The return of these refugees to their country of origin is impossible since wars are going to continue. For Obama, and the "great" democrats, for the Canadian Prime Minister Harper for instance, the solution to this massive exodus is more bombardment in Iraq and Syria. There is no solution in the framework of capitalism to this exodus of millions of human beings. Decadent capitalism in crisis can only integrate into its worldwide system of exploitation a greater number of salaried if they are ready to accept the worst conditions. This capitalism and above all its "democracies" want proletarians which are particularly submitted to their crisis. The economic crisis of capitalism and the imperialist wars can only worsen even more towards a world war (if we let them) which will lead, amongst other things, to an incalculable number of refugees. We are just at the beginning of this political and ideological confrontation in which the capitalist class, adapting its offensive and its mystifications to the national situations, seeks to derail the growing anger against misery, repression and wars which provoke the flight of millions of human beings, that is against capitalism and the ruling class which puts forward the defence of democracy and the protection of national values of the different bourgeoisies.

**It is not behind the Bourgeoisie and its State
that the Proletarian Populations Fleeing
Misery and War Will be Saved**

The proletarians of all countries can't let themselves be impressed, nor dragged, by the humanitarian campaigns, supposedly in solidarity with the migrants, and even less participate in the street demonstrations called by the Left parties and leftists. This won't resolve the migrants' situation and it will only reinforce misery and wars which are the causes of this massive exodus by strengthening the "internal" power of the bourgeois states. Even worse, it will only favour even more and speed up the massive exodus and multiply the dramas. Yet, the images and the testimonies of people bringing water and food, help and moral support to the poor refugees, express immediate feelings of solidarity and certainly relieve some of the unfortunate ones who walk all along the roads and paths. And that's fine for the few people

who receive these expressions of solidarity and material help. But these individual reactions are not only largely insignificant given the extent of the disaster but also and above all they are often derailed and used by the media at the service of the so-called humanitarian campaign that the main states, that is primarily the main democratic states, Germany at the head, have decided to launch.

**Only the International Working Class Struggle
can Bring both Hope and an Immediate
Response**

The proletarians of the world who saw Aylan's dead body must collectively respond to all this. In time, this can only mean capitalism's destruction and the advent of communism (which is the proletarian, Marxist, solution and which is opposed to Stalinism).

For the moment, the proletariat is not powerless. First, it must develop its struggles, in the factories, the working class neighbourhoods, in the streets, against generalised misery and wars that all proletarians suffer. It is only on this ground, because it is only here that it can impose a relation of forces which would compel the national bourgeoisies to limit, or even temporarily withdraw, their economic attacks against the whole working class, including the migrants. The working class in struggle can and must spread and unify its demands and its fight to all proletarians, active or unemployed, "national" or immigrants, legal or illegal, indigenous and migrants, refugees, exiled...

The death of the little Aylan is the death of one of their own, one of their sons. The thousands of drowned or killed while passing the frontiers, the 70 suffocated enclosed in a truck in Austria last week, are the macabre and awful price that the international proletariat pays, one more time, in its flesh, for capitalism's survival.

By taking on its historical responsibilities, the proletariat will not only limit its misery in the great capitalist powers but also will definitively prevent new Aylans. Thus it will progress towards its definitive solution.

Only one solidarity with the migrants : the international working class struggle against capital! All together! Whatever the nationality, the origin, legal situation, illegal, exiled, refugees, steady job, precarious, unemployed, "without paper" (ID, passport), men, women...

Only one solution against this barbarous society: the communist transformation of society which will need the conscious abolition by the working class of the capitalist social relationships, that is of wage labour, the production of commodities for profit and national borders. This will require the creation of a world community whose entire activity will be dedicated towards the full satisfaction of human needs.

**International Group of the Communist Left, September 5th
2015**

Reflections on the National Elections under Way...

In 2015, different elections have provoked the arising of new bourgeois political parties, sometimes just created as in Spain, in the first line of the national political game – indeed even in such a position that they can participate in the government. Do these electoral novelties have an international dimension and a particular political significance for the proletariat ? This is the question which the two following articles, try to respond to. The elections to come in 2016, in particular the outcome of the American presidential election, will aid in understanding the policies that the bourgeoisie attempts to set up for the present period.

October 2015 Canadian Elections : The Longest Electoral Circus in Canadian History

The electoral circus has brought a change inside the Canadian bourgeoisie. After almost ten years in power, Stephen Harper's Conservative party has been replaced by Justin Trudeau's⁷ Liberal party on the 19th of October. Almost all of the big newspapers have supported Trudeau's election. The Conservative party wanted to maintain a « zero deficit » budget no matter the cost. The NDP (New Democratic party) had the same agenda. The Liberal party and the Green party (which preaches an impossible ecological capitalism) put forward budget deficits.

Deficits of 10 billion Canadian dollars (7 billion euros) each year lasting 3 years to invest in infrastructure and lower taxes for what they call the middle class, that was the electoral promise of the Liberal party. The debt of the Canadian state, exemplified as good budgetary rigor because the debt has diminished during the past decade, is again on the rise since the 2008 crisis. Rising deficits announced by Trudeau (unlike Harper's Conservative zero deficit) expresses that the Canadian bourgeoisie, like all the other international bourgeoisies, is caught in a dilemma between the need to "sort out finances" to stay away from the risk of a new 2008 on the one hand and the need to maintain a minimum economic activity by deficits and debt on the other hand. This contradiction expresses the impasse of capitalism in economic terms since the path toward massive destruction of productive forces to solve the crisis of overproduction, that is to say the path to a generalized holocaust, is not open. The Canadian bourgeoisie is not yet in direct preparations for a world war because the proletariat is not crushed physically, ideologically and politically. However like other bourgeoisies, the Canadian bourgeoisie has "two irons in the fire" so to say, to engage more and more in imperialist wars on the one hand; and also to lead the class war against the working class as the Canadian proletariat is struggling against austerity measures even if they are well contained by the unions. This election will allow a greater rapprochement with US imperialism and serve the Canadian bourgeoisie in its competing territorial claims with Russia about the rich seabed of the Arctic.

Now, the government announced that the deficit will be of 15 billion (10.5 billion euros) for the first year instead of the 10 billion expected because of the lower prices for oil and

metals. Already the promise to cut taxes for the middle class will cost 2.3 billion more than expected. The Canadian central bank announced on October 21 that the increase in gross domestic product of Canada would be 1.1% this year, before reducing its forecasts for 2016 and 2017 from 2.0% and 2.5%, respectively. In short the growth of the Canadian economy will be very weak for the coming years and as during the 2008 crisis with the Conservatives, the Liberals want to revive the Canadian economy ... another attempt of the bourgeoisie that will fail.

During the election campaign, the Liberals promised a cessation of bombing in Syria before March 2015 which marks the final date for the commitment of the Harper Conservatives. However they want to increase the number of soldiers in Iraq for the training of Kurdish soldiers or to send special forces who will intervene on the ground. The Canadian imperialism still wants to maintain its place among the imperialist powers, particularly among the G7. It will remain in the coalition of American imperialism and even get more involved, but in another form than bombing. Regarding the reception of refugees, the Liberals have backtracked on the expected number of 25,000 in 2015. It will be less than 6000. The arrival of refugees is an opportunity for media and politicians during an extensive propaganda on bourgeois democracy and the "benefits" of Canadian capitalism. They consciously avoid to say that Canada's participation in the Middle East wars is one of the causes of their migration.

The electoral circus was one of the longest in the history of Canada. We saw the unions do everything to beat Harper and encourage the workers to do a strategic vote saying that it would improve their situation. For example, the Fédération des travailleurs du Québec (FTQ) has not skimped on how to mobilize hundreds of volunteers. Louise Chabot, president of the Centrale des syndicats du Québec has launched an appeal to block the Conservative Party by going to vote massively on October 19. « Hassan Yussuff, president of the Canadian Labour Congress, said he is convinced this strategy will work – if members vote. "The reality is we represent 3.3 million workers and if you add one family member to that equation, you're looking at potentially 6 million votes," he said. "If they go out and vote and bring their family along ... there is no question we're going to change the outcome. » (note a)

In addition to trade unions, the reformist and independentist left Quebec Solidaire called to beat Harper without any mention of the existence of the proletariat and the class struggle. The call to fight Harper was, in fact, support to other fractions of the Canadian bourgeoisie. This unprecedentedly

⁷ Son of former Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau recognized for having set the law of war measures in the province of Quebec in October 1970 to allegedly stop an apprehended insurrection. This law allowed the arrest of nearly 500 people. Despite the promise made at the last election campaign, the Liberal government of PET decreed, in 1975, control of prices and wages.

long electoral period allowed the revival of individualist and bourgeois democratic ideologies namely the principle "one person, one vote" for the elections and the choice of governments. Nationalism has been put forward by all parties: Conservative, Liberal, New Democratic and Green have revived Canadian nationalism while the Bloc Québécois (a party advocating the secession of Quebec) was counting on Québécois nationalism.

« In decadent capitalism, parliament and elections are nothing but a masquerade. Any call to participate in the parliamentary circus can only reinforce the lie that presents these elections as a real choice for the exploited. 'Democracy', a particularly hypocritical form of the domination of the bourgeoisie, does not differ at root from

other forms of capitalist dictatorship, such as stalinism and fascism. » (Basic position of the IGCL)

The Canadian proletariat, as with proletarians around the world, have everything to lose by participating in the electoral circus. The working class must organize and rather start working to build an international and internationalist party to fight not only misery, unemployment, war and terrorism but the system that produces these and to fight for a society with neither classes, money nor borders, that is to say a communist society that has nothing in common with Stalinism.

Normand

Note a : <http://globalnews.ca/news/2206189/labour-unions-across-canada-preparing-to-launch-major-anti-harper-offensive/>

2015 Elections: Adaptation of the State Political Apparatus to the New Stakes?

The last national or local elections which took place throughout 2015 in various countries, European in particular, have seen upheavals in the electoral results of the bourgeois parties and the emergence of new parties, often "extreme-left" or "extreme-right" presenting themselves as "outside the system". The end of "the two-party system", that is the alternating in power of a traditional right wing party and a left party (social-democrat), is announced in Spain, Portugal, France, after having arrived in Greece and elsewhere (Italy for a long time).

Certainly, it is contrary to the proletariat's interests to participate in the electoral game in our historical period and the revolutionaries denounce the mystification and the trap it represents. Nevertheless it remains that the electoral periods are moments of massive ideological and political hype on the populations and particularly on the workers. Today their role is not to convince the latter to march towards world war but to conceal the reality of growing exploitation and misery and to make them forget the necessity for the class fight against these. As such, they have an impact upon the working class.

But also, depending on the moments and the international and national situations, it happens that beyond the simple alternation between governments aiming to lend credibility to the democratic electoral game, the choice of government teams may represent inflections, even changes, of policies. It can be at the economic level and in direct relation to the working class as well as at the imperialist level. For instance, in the 1990s and 2000s, we can consider that, globally, that is in the main capitalist countries with a strong democratic tradition, the political alternating between right and left governments based on the two-party system did not present fundamentally different political bourgeois options; but it is beyond all doubt today that the coming to power of Thatcher in Great Britain and Reagan in the United States at the dawn of the 1980s represented a considerable inflection of the policies led by the main Western ruling classes. They set up so-called "neo-liberal" policies at the economic level, brutal attacks against the working class conditions and particularly aggressive ones at the imperialist level against the USSR and the Eastern Bloc. The negative consequences for the international working class quickly followed.

In 2015, has the constitution of coalition governments between "classical government" left parties (Socialist Party)

and "radical" left in Portugal (*Bloco de Esquerda* and the CP) and in Greece (Syriza), the 20% of votes for *Podemos* (equal to the 21% of the PSOE – the Socialist Party) in Spain where the negotiations for forming the government continue at the time we are writing, an international political significance? As well as the electoral victory of "extreme" right parties such as the National Front in France? And if such is the case, is this simply to end with the two-party alternating game which is greatly discredited? Are they short-lived phenomena? Or rather do they announce new stakes for the bourgeoisie and the proletariat?

Probably, it is too soon to provide a precise response. It nevertheless remains that beyond the particular national situations, these political changes feed the debate which develops increasingly through the European bourgeoisies within the European Union: should the economic policy be the drastic reduction of deficits or rather should they join the policy led by the United States since 2008 of the creation of money which lets the deficits keep increasing? Today no one has doubt that neither option can respond to the economic dead-end of capitalism whose crisis inexorably continues to deepen. Until now, the German ruling class had imposed the first option which had enabled it to establish its leadership in Europe. But the question is posed again since the 2015 Paris attacks. After the November 13th slaughters, the EU, thus Germany, have accepted in the name of war against terrorism that France does not reduce its deficits as agreed beforehand. Even better, the German Minister of Finances, Schäuble, yet fervent slayer of the European deficits, has called on Europe to develop the "means" for a common European army.

Let us make no mistake: in no case an easing (even so-called "Keynesian") of the European economic policy constitute an improvement of the working class situation, nor even a stop in its deterioration. On the other hand, it could well mean an increase of expenditures and other "major works" for military defence and the fact that the EU, answering to the *Quantitative Easing* policies of the American Central Bank, would have decided to march more resolutely towards the imperialist war. Besides the increased weight of these growing military expenditures upon the European proletariat which still worsens the exploitation it suffers, this orientation of the European bourgeois policy would have the consequence of deepening the international ideological and

political offensive against the working class; this very one which has started from the January and November 2015 attacks, with the calls for war against terrorism, to increased military interventions in Middle East, to national unity, to the state of emergency which forbids any demonstration and worsens the measures of anti-worker repression.

This is why the revolutionaries and the proletariat as a whole, while rejecting the bourgeois electoral game and any

participation in it, cannot remain “indifferent” to the results and the changes of government and of political staff which can indicate inflections or changes of the policies that each national bourgeoisie leads. It is a matter of their ability to recognize the terrain, the lines of confrontation, and the stakes of the different battles that the bourgeoisie attempts to impose upon the working class in the crucial period to come.

RL, January 2016.

Open Meetings with the IGCL

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

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

Pamphlets of ICKlasbatalo and the IFICC (orders at intleftcom@gmail.com)

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

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

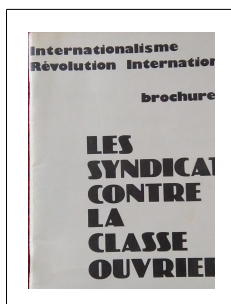
Groupe des Travailleurs Marxistes (Mexique, 1938) (International Fraction of the ICC, only in French and Spanish)

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

Morale prolétarienne, lutte de classes et révisionnisme (IGCL from the IFICC, only in French and Spanish)

Unions Against the Working Class (1976, reprinted from the ICC Pamphlet).

French Reprinting of the ICC Pamphlet *Unions Against the Working Class*



For our readers from North America, we have reprinted the ICC pamphlet in French *Unions Against the Working Class* in French that it is difficult to find on this continent and which was written in 1976. It is also available in English. For the readers from Europe who could not get it directly from the ICC, they can also write us at our email intleftcom@gmail.com or still at our Postal address : CP 55045, Centre Maisonneuve, H1W 1B0 Montréal, Canada.

Even though our group, the IGCL, does not necessarily claim all the arguments and positions of this pamphlet, we think it is an historical document which matters to make known by the young generations and which can serve as a “programmatic” reference for today's communist groups.

Debate within the Proletarian Camp

On the Development of the Imperialist Rivalries since the Russian Military Intervention in Syria and on Revolutionaries' Intervention

The following statement stems from a discussion and a contradictory debate within our group on the significance and the implications of the Russian military intervention in Syria since September 30th 2015. A comrade began to question our position on the dynamic of the imperialist polarization which, if the proletariat can't hinder it by imposing its own revolutionary perspective, leads to the setting up of imperialist blocs and to the start of a 3rd World War. According to the Thesis on the Historical Situation (note a) we adopted at our 2013 Conference, "since 1989, only Germany has emerged as an imperialist power with the capacity to establish itself as head of an up-and-coming imperialist bloc". It could seem that the brutal and massive Russian military intervention belied our thesis by putting Russia back at the centre of the imperialist rivalries. In the course of the discussion, the comrade said he was feeling closer to the positions of the Internationalist Communist Tendency. In a general way and to summarise, the ICT doesn't share our vision of an "historical course" and so, amongst other things, neither its implications at the level of the development of the imperialist rivalries such as we understand them. To systematise our discussion, we have thus taken the ICT articles, in particular Turkey Downs a Russian Warplane (b) and Putin's Latest Move in Syria (c), as the axis of our internal debate. At the time of writing, it is still in progress.

Thus we continue the discussion and the problematic linked to the method of analysis of the situations and to the possible "predictions", that is to the definition of the march and the course of events, that we have already dealt with in the previous issue of this journal (d). Actually, our internal debate, whether it tackles the analysis of the classes' struggle or imperialist rivalries, greatly exceeds the framework of our group. It goes through the Proletarian Camp. It centres essentially around two approaches and methods put forward and in practice by two of the main historical currents of the Communist Left of the 1970s and 1980s then represented by the IBRP (today the ICT) and the ICC of that time. If we could participate in these debates being consciously assumed, fraternally and without "defending at any cost the past of one's own group", by the whole Proletarian Camp, we would accomplish one of the tasks that our group set itself when it was constituted.

The IGCL, January 2016

a) . <http://igcl.org/Theses-on-the-Historical-Situation>

b) . <http://www.leftcom.org/en/articles/2015-11-27/turkey-downs-a-russian-warplane>

c) . <http://www.leftcom.org/en/articles/2015-10-13/putin%E2%80%99s-latest-move-in-syria>

d) . see Are We Thinking Wishfully? – one can also read in the same issue On the "Predictions" and the Question of the Historical Course (<http://igcl.org/On-Predictions-and-the-Question-of>) (Revolution or War #4).

Towards a "New Cold War" between the United States and Russia?

The articles of the ICT defend very clearly and with no ambiguity a class position not only by denouncing the imperialist camps that exist but also by defending the historical alternative between war and revolution. This last point is indispensable for a genuine internationalist statement which, in class term, differentiates from and opposes the pacifist movements and organisations of the bourgeois Left. The immediate development of the confrontations in Syria and in the Middle East and, more particularly, the imperialist motivations of Turkey and Russia which brought them close to a direct confrontation, are rightly described. The discussion and the criticism we can make of these statements are thus of a secondary order and are directed to comrades who are on the same side of the class barricade faced with imperialist wars in general and particularly faced with the one presently taking place in Syria. Debating to know who between Russia and Germany – exposing roughly the stakes of our debate – can eventually be the likely main imperialist rival of the United States can appear without importance for the classes' struggle and the intervention of the revolutionaries faithful to the principle of internationalism. For our part, on the contrary,

we think that the conclusions of such a debate are necessary for the development of an efficient communist intervention because it can enable us to recognise the timeline, the stakes and the different moments of the offensives and battles that the bourgeoisie is going to impose on the international proletariat.

Beyond the present conflict in Syria, the article Putin's Latest Move in Syria (dated October 5) tends to open, amongst many antagonistic interests, a main line of imperialist division opposing the United States and Russia⁸:

« Against his will the small-time Syrian dictator found

8 . Since this article has been written, the ICT has reported on the General Assembly of its group in Italy, the PCInt, Life of the Party (in Italian : <http://www.leftcom.org/it/articles/2016-01-16/vita-di-partito>) in which it takes a much more precise position : « In regards with the crisis, the so-called recovery and the war, we underlined how the current war is, actually, a little world war apparently led against IS but which in fact see imperialist gangsters lining up the ones against the other **in a dynamic which sees coming out what, in a more or less close future, would become two opposed imperialist poles**, on one side China, Russia, Iran and on the other, the United States, the Arab Emirates, Japon and part of Europe (which also depends on energy from Russia) » (translated from Italian and underlined by us).

himself in the middle of an imperialist conflict involving the most powerful forces on the international stage. For US imperialism, backed by Europe, the elimination of the regime of Bashar al-Assad, like that of Ghaddafi, has meant and means removing any obstacle to the manoeuvres of its Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean. It means removing any residual support in the small sea for the resurgent imperialism of Moscow and forcefully retaking the leadership of the West from Europe, at the same time undermining the Russian "monopoly" of energy supplies to Europe itself. The theatres of this "new Cold War" are the Eastern European countries, from the former Yugoslavia to Ukraine via Poland, Bulgaria and Hungary. The usual means are being employed: the use of NATO, its expansion to the east, fomenting civil wars, the "colour" revolutions and economic sanctions. The important thing was not to allow the old Russian bear to growl again on the strength of its barrels of oil and cubic metres of natural gas »

Considered in themselves, each one of the elements or noted facts, which are real, can appear to be part of a dynamic of imperialist contrast which organises itself mainly around a division between Russia and the United States, the latter being « backed by Europe ». But from our point of view, there are also other elements that the article does not take into account and which, considered in themselves, can indicate another dynamic of imperialist polarisation⁹:

- the military inability to allow the Assad government to regain ground against the different rebel forces in Syria have quite quickly revealed the limits of Russian imperialism;

- France proposed a military coalition to Russia, to increase its military intervention in Syria and to lead the other main European countries to support it militarily by intervening at its side in the framework of the European Union – and not NATO;

- the French proposal of military coalition with Russia that Putin supported – some weeks after the final French refusal to provide it the "Mistral" warships – has come to a sudden end after the Russian warplane was shot down by Turkey on November 24th, precisely two days before the French President Hollande's visit to Moscow. *"The point is, all major decisions and most minor decisions are taken by NATO at Washington's behest."* (Asia Times, Dec. 5th, 2015). How can we not see the sabotage of the US of any bridging between France and Russia?

- Germany, on the pretext of the attacks in Paris, has decided to intervene in Syria (and Mali) alongside France in the formal framework of the European Union.

These important facts indicate that a latent opposition between the Americans and the "Europeans" expresses itself permanently. From these elements alone, claiming that it is the historically determining opposition would not be worth much. It would be looking in an absolute manner at each event, each immediate fact, for the verification of a general analysis disregarding the contradictory character of any

process. However, the recognition of the main line of imperialist divide leading to the generalised war remains fundamental for the revolutionary proletariat and its political minorities be able to comprehend the moments, the battles and the concrete stakes with which they **already** are confronted and will be: what is the degree of danger of war of each moment; what are the ideological themes and the political offensives set up by the bourgeoisie; the level and development of the relation of forces between the classes, and so what fights and political orientations to put forward...

Recognising the "Central Axis" in the Imperialist Antagonisms in the midst of an Apparent Chaos

The contradictory reality, indeed even apparently "chaotic", of the process driving the imperialist rivalries and leading to the affirmation of a central axis of opposition and to generalised war, is not a new problem for the working class movement:

"All these occurrences, coming blow upon blow, created new, extra-European antagonisms on all sides: between Italy and France in Northern Africa, between France and England in Egypt, between England and Russia in Central Asia, between Russia and Japan in Eastern Asia, between Japan and England in China, between the United States and Japan in the Pacific Ocean – a very restless ocean, full of sharp conflicts and temporary alliances, of tension and relaxation, threatening every few years to break out into a war between European powers. It was clear to everybody, therefore, (1) that the secret underhand war of each capitalist nation against every other, on the backs of Asiatic and African peoples must sooner or later lead to a general reckoning, that the wind that was sown in Africa and Asia would return to Europe as a terrific storm, the more certainly since increased armament of the European states was the constant associate of these Asiatic and African occurrences; (2) that the European world war would have to come to an outbreak as soon as the partial and changing conflicts between the imperialist states found a centralised axis, a conflict of sufficient magnitude to group them, for the time being, into large, opposing factions. This situation was created by the appearance of German imperialism." (Rosa Luxemburg, *Junius Pamphlet*, ch.3, 1915, we underline).

There is nothing new in the fact that, before the historical conditions allow the clear affirmation of the "central axis", we see a kind of "each one for oneself and all against all" – the present ICC sees in it the chaos peculiar to Decomposition. As Marxists, we must see it as a moment of the process leading to a new imperialist world order up to the definitive affirmation of the "central axis" organised in imperialist blocs for generalised war. So it is important to distance ourselves from the immediate – without disregarding it – and to attempt to recognise the lines of force which will end up asserting themselves – unless the proletariat does change directly the parameters of the historical problem.

One of the difficulties for understanding the present imperialist dynamic is also due to the fact that today there are not constituted imperialist blocs as there were before 1989. **Yet the schema of the Cold War is dead.** The exceptional existence of strictly definite imperialist blocs from 1945 to

9 . We leave aside here the interests and the game of the local imperialisms, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Iran, etc., which, while the great powers directly intervene at the military level and confront at the diplomatic one as well as with manoeuvres and "foul plays" of the secret services, are obliged to line up behind the latters.

1989 and without open war will not happen again. The question of the imperialist polarisation and the constitution of imperialist blocs is not posed like after the 2nd World War... but rather like before when *"the two opposite camps grouped together until the last few weeks before the outbreak of war"* (F. Sternberg, *Capitalism and Socialism on trial*¹⁰). Famous example: the German-Russian pact was signed just a few days before the beginning of the 2nd World War while *"in these conditions, nothing looked so natural as a military alliance between the western powers and the Soviet Union against Nazi Germany"* (idem). This alliance "against nature" which lasted almost two years and during total war did not prevent the historical, fundamental, "natural" tendency from being expressed despite everything and launching them at one another in June 1941.

The Dynamic of Imperialist Assertion of Germany

Capitalism's history teaches us that, in the imperialist epoch, the main antagonism which finally determines the evolution of the rivalries and wars is the historical one opposing the ruling imperialist power of the moment, yesterday the British and French colonial powers, today the American power, and those arrived later on the world market and on the imperialist scene. Amongst them, Germany, because of the energy and dynamism of the national capital, is the only one which, twice, could seriously consider questioning the prevailing imperialist order and threaten it directly. But both times it was defeated. Always frustrated, restricted, constrained, repressed, it is unable to really give and express all its historical force except in the world wars, Germany has been relegated at a second rank power after its total and systematic destruction by the American-English air force in 1945 and during the 40 years it remained divided. Since the implosion of the Eastern bloc and Germany's reunification, it has not stopped coming back as primary actor of the world scene at all levels, economic and imperialist. So it is for fundamental historical reasons and because of the dynamic of the last 25 years that we think that this country will eventually be – regardless of whether the Germany bourgeoisie is aware of it today – the main imperialist rival of the United States. As any process, this one is not inescapable. This is why it is important to follow the development of the imperialist rivalries and to take into account the facts which oppose this. Yet it remains that we don't see to date any element of historical importance – as was 1989 for instance – which would question the present tendency of the assertion of imperialist Germany. And even less being challenged by the history and the particular dynamic of Russia of these last 25 years – even though Putin can well aspire, dream, of a return of the past imperialist power of the USSR.

This general view enables the understanding that the genuine stake of the American-Russian opposition – which is real – in Syria as in Eastern Europe, rightly described and denounced by the ICT, is precisely for the Americans to prevent any regroupment between Russia and Europe, Germany and

France in the first place. It was partly a success in Ukraine: the ceasefire agreement was negotiated between these latter countries and in the absence of the USA which was pushed aside. On the other hand, the latter had succeeded to impose economic sanctions against Russia which not only handicap Russia but also, to a lesser degree, Europe. Up to having driven an important wedge between Russia and France with the non-delivery of the Mistral warships. It is with the same concern that the Americans have "authorised" – to a lesser or greater degree – the destruction of the Russian warplane by Turkey... as a NATO member and two days before the French President Hollande's visit to Moscow. So the military coalition in Syria proposed by France and accepted by Russia had become impossible.

But globally and since the end of the USSR, and despite the American efforts, the tendency to a reinforcement of the economic links and to imperialist rapprochement between Germany (and behind it France, Italy, etc., that is the main continental European powers) and Russia has not ceased confirming itself.

From an historical point of view, Germany's decision to intervene militarily alongside France after the November attacks in Paris¹¹, is one more step of the imperialist assertion of Germany on the world scene, whatever one can think about the more or less modest scale of its military intervention in the present time. In itself, immediately, this will not change anything, or so little, in the military and imperialist relation of forces in Syria. One of the difficulties of the German ruling class, besides the Constitution of its state and its "pacifist" national ideology inherited from 1945, is the relative inadequacy of its army forces. On the one hand, it does not have nuclear weapons – but we can bet it will build them very quickly and very easily when the day comes – and, on the other hand, its army still remains in great part adapted to the situation prior to 1989, that is to NATO of that time. If the external military intervention in Afghanistan within the NATO framework had represented a break, the end of a "taboo" with regards to the German Constitution, the intervention within the EU framework alongside France represents another significant break from the point of view of the framework of the intervention, outside NATO, that is from the political and strategic point of view. *"We will have to make resources available for initiatives of common European defence (...). Our goal must be a common European army"* (Wolfgang Schäuble, German finance Minister, *Bild* dec. 27th 2015 quoted by *La Tribune*, translated by us).

Predicting and Looking Ahead the Course of the Events

It is not enough for the communist groups to proclaim the class principles, internationalism in this case, nor to affirm that the historical alternative is revolution or war, or that the proletariat has to retake the path of the struggle. They need to try to place themselves at the vanguard of the class fight by putting forward orientations and concrete slogans and to struggle to win the **effective** political leadership of their class. The capacity to anticipate the events to be able to indicate the

10 . F. Sternberg, *Le Conflit du siècle – capitalisme et socialisme à l'épreuve de l'histoire*, Editions du Seuil, 1958, translated by us from the French version of this book which differs a little bit with its shorter English version we have at our disposal: *Capitalism and Socialism on Trial*, Greenwood Press, 1968.

11 . The January and November terrorist attacks in Paris have been the ideal pretext and this German decision is another demonstration that we have entered into *A new period...* (see *Revolution or War* #3) since the attacks against *Charlie Hebdo* in Paris on January 2015.

fight to be led and the lines of confrontation between the classes is essential for the organ of political leadership which is the Party, and which is a task that communist groups of today must already take up. And it is not limited only to the terrain of the working class struggles. *"A basic condition for the necessary expansion of political agitation is the organisation of comprehensive political exposure. In no way except by means of such exposures can the masses be trained in political consciousness and revolutionary activity. (...) The consciousness of the working masses cannot be genuine class-consciousness, unless the workers learn, from concrete, and above all from topical, political facts and events to observe every other social class in all the manifestations of its intellectual, ethical, and political life; unless they learn to apply in practice the materialist analysis and the materialist estimate of all aspects of the life and activity of all classes, strata, and groups of the population"* (Lenin, *What is to be done?*).

Certainly, it is right, in itself, by principle, **and indispensable**, to claim that *"A capitalism in decline can produce only crises, unemployment, pauperisation and wars however they are fought, with the proletariat playing its usual role as cannon fodder. There is only one alternative: either the international proletariat takes up again the forgotten road to frontal struggle against capitalism..."* (Turkey Downs a Russian Plane). But this is not enough and it is clumsy – since it can be misunderstood – to affirm that **"It does not matter** if these episodes of war are isolated in various strategic zones, like the spots on a leopard, or are more generalised" (we underline). Yet, **it matters** to know the place and the scale of these conflicts. Whether they take place in Afghanistan, in Syria or in Ukraine, to mention only present wars, they do not have the same significance and do not present the same stakes for the international proletariat as when war directly affects the proletariat of the central capitalist countries. It is important to point out the particular meaning and the new situation the various wars reveal. In the other case, the defence of principles, of proletarian internationalism, it becomes insufficient, because it is a-temporal, valid at any time and any place, without taking into account the terms and the concrete stakes that each imperialist war poses more or less directly to the proletariat.

As well, not distinguishing clearly, or at least underestimating, the "qualitative" difference between the present "local" imperialist wars and the world generalised war does not enable to clarify in concrete terms how the question of imperialist war is posed **today** to the working class. Between the view of a predominant dynamic of "local" imperialist wars adding up in a continuous way until the generalised war – what one of the articles of the ICT leads us

to understand¹² – and the one of a dynamic of massive confrontations between the classes which will decide if this leap towards generalised war is made – what we defend –, the stakes and the battles to "predict" between the classes are not exactly the same, nor are the concrete political orientations to put forwards.

The Imperialist War Becomes a Direct Factor of Class Consciousness

The historical situation – the crisis, the wars and imperialist rivalries, and the proletariat's situation just to mention the main factors – has changed in 2015 and does not present the same stakes. "The new period which is opening" brings a very important concrete element for the class struggle: under one form or another, **the question of imperialist war is directly posed to the international proletariat and, because of this, becomes a direct factor of consciousness.**

The same is true for the economic crisis. Until now, the economic sacrifices demanded by the development of the military and the expenses of wars still remained not much directly perceptible or identifiable for the whole world working class – except for its fractions from countries of the periphery of capitalism which are directly struck. Through the threats of indiscriminate bombings, repression, the worsening of the working conditions, the justification of the economic and political attacks, the calls for national unity – let's remember the "indignant" reactions of the bourgeois politicians after of the strikes, though restrained,

in Belgium of November 23rd¹³ –, the imperialist war becomes also a concrete and immediate question which interpellates directly the great masses of the proletariat in the historical centres of capitalism.

Maintaining that war is becoming a factor of consciousness in the same way as the crisis has implications not only for the communist groups' intervention but also has as a consequence new lines of ideological and political confrontations and stakes between the classes. With the war in the Middle East and the direct intervention of all the great powers, the attacks in France and against the Russian airliner, the calls for war against terrorism and for national unity, the measures of generalised repression set up everywhere, we have really entered *a new period of direct confrontations between the classes* that the bourgeoisie is constrained, crisis and imperialist rivalries oblige it, to impose upon the international proletariat.

RL, December 2015.



1945 : German city of Cologne

12 . *"To those who love to be alarmist and fear a third world war we can tell them that "a small world war" is already taking place"* (Turkey Downs a Russian Warplane).

13 . <http://igcl.org/Faced-with-Terrorism-and>

General Assembly of the PCInt-*Battaglia Comunista*: Towards a Greater International Unity and Centralization of the ICT

We reproduce here after the article in Italian [Vita di Partito](#) – that we have translated – from *Battaglia Comunista* (January 2016) which presents the General Assembly of the Partito Comunista Internazionale (Italian group of the Internationalist Communist Tendency) which has just been held. It is followed by a short statement from us.

Life of the Party (*Battaglia Comunista*).

At the beginning of December, the General Assembly of the PCInt militants has been held. Various themes of discussion have been addressed during the two days.

The first day essentially dealt with technical-organizational questions. The organization of the group of translators to Italian and the report of our delegates to the central Bureau of the Internationalist Communist Tendency reflect the image of an international organization which is strengthening within a process of maturation and confrontation with individuals who are coming closer (see the internationalist comrades of Greece) and a growing number of high quality articles and texts which come from the different national sections and which deserve to be translated whether to circulate internally or to be on the site and in the regular press.

On the other hand and unfortunately, we had to note the growing economic difficulties for our press, in particular *Battaglia Comunista*, which should be reorganized to face the new demands of propaganda in a period dominated by the new means of communication and a new approach, above all by the new generations, with regard to paper printing.

A great attention has been brought to the process of political formation, in particular of the new young comrades who come closer to us and who need serious basic positions. To this end, we have decided that the fundamental reference of the political formation for 2016 which will develop with bi-weekly meetings, will be the book *Contro venti e maree* [Against the wind and the tides] edited for the 70 years of the life of the Party.

The second day mainly dealt with the political questions of the present phase of the crisis and a beginning of work on the theme “Leninism today”.

In regards to the crisis, the so-called recovery and war, it has been underlined how the war underway is actually a

small world war apparently led against ISIS but which, in reality, the imperialist bandits line up the one against another in a dynamic which sees taking shape what could become in a more or less near future two opposed imperialist poles, on the one side China, Russia, Iran and on the other the United States, the United Arab Emirates, Japan and a part of Europe (which is also dependent on Russia's oil and gas). The relations and dynamics are extremely complex. However the war confirms itself as being the extreme response of capital to its crisis which it only succeeds to overcome at the price of massive destructions and devaluations of constant and variable capital. The recovery itself which seems to appear in the United States is one demonstration of it: they speak of a GDP increase of 2.5%, a figure which would have been ridiculous twenty years ago. But at what price? An intense fall in wages, thousands of bankruptcies, concentrations and mergers; enormous rise of public and private debt; increased importance of speculative and financial capital in relation to that invested in production. Finally, this small recovery which is going to slightly relieve the worst crisis of capitalism since 1929 is based on debt, low salaries,

devaluation of capital and it will prepare new policies which will attack even more the labour force as the winds of war are reinforced. In this context, the work of a small revolutionary minority like ours is and remains vital: to keep alive the program and the perspective of the socialist alternative to this mode of production which is falling into the spiral of a profound and violent crisis.

A new year of internationalist militantism is opening. Each one of us is called on to accomplish their task for the common ideal.

Battaglia Comunista, January 16th 2016



**"Settantanni Contro venti e maree" on sale on the ICT web site (Italian pages) :
www.leftcom.org**

Fraternal Salutation and Political Support to the PCInt and the ICT

For any political group that defends the necessity of political organizations of the proletariat and that struggles for the formation of its political vanguard in the Party, the holding of congresses, conferences or general meetings of other communist groups are important moments on which they have to reflect and take a position. The balance-sheet that *Battaglia Comunista* (BC) presents of its December general assembly is quite short. Apparently, this meeting has also been the occasion to develop and refine the analyses and political orientations for the present period.

A Reinforcement of the International Unity and Centralization

On the basis of the report, we salute the step forwards to international unity and centralization of the ICT that this meeting could realize. We attach even more importance to it since, as our sympathizers and regular readers know, we have an important divergence with the ICT on the method of formation of groups at the international level and, ultimately, of the international party. Faithful to the lessons and the tradition of the Communist International and to the “Italian Left”, we both agree and defend the need for an international centralization of the party around a unique program. But, we differ on which way to get there. In broad outline, the ICT thinks – we hope we don’t misrepresent the position of the comrades – that the process leading to the future party must base itself from “national” organizational experiences which have developed a certain experience and rooting within the working class. For the ICT, any artificial and premature international centralization should be avoided at the risk of blocking the process of development and growth of each local group. For our part, we claim the position developed by the Bordigist current (PCInt-*Communist Program*) and the “historical” ICC which both defend that any communist group must right away constitute as an international group, at the international level, whatever is its immediate reality, as limited and local as it may be. The formation of the organization consequently follows a somewhat different path in particular with respect to the centralization of each group. If the latter try to adopt at once an international centralized functioning on the basis of a unique program valid for all territorial “sections” or nuclei, the ICT adopts a lesser centralization in the functioning allowing more autonomy to the “national” groups and a greater “liberty” in regards to their political positions and experiences.

Thus, from our point of view, each step forwards, as during this meeting, that the ICT makes towards a greater international centralization and unity – including if it does not consider them as we do – is to be saluted and encouraged.

We also note the economic difficulties of the newspaper

Battaglia Comunista because of the new techniques which go with the development of the Internet. For us, beyond the fall of “paying” readers and the change of habits of the new generations, these difficulties are also and above all the product of the ideological bourgeois utilization of the new technologies to reinforce as never before both the state stranglehold over all sectors of society as well as the mystifying cult of individualism.

Finally, we support the decision to make the book *Contro venti e marée* (*Against Winds and Tides*) a reference for the sympathizers and young militants of BC. This book, unfortunately only in Italian to date, gathers the essential of the texts and resolutions of the PCInt throughout its history since 1943. As such, it constitutes the “theoretical and political corpus” of the so-called “Damenist” current. It should be one of the main references not only for the sympathizers and members of the ICT but for the whole Proletarian Camp, for the organizations and the militants which constitute it. We call on all the comrades and readers who can read Italian to get it and to read it. It is a genuine weapon for the class fight.

The Analysis of the Situation by the ICT

The analysis of the situation that the comrades present is of big interest for us in two ways. At first in itself because it draws political orientations which respond to the questions with which any “conscious” worker and, even more, any revolutionary organization is confronted. But also for our group since we are presently debating in a contradictory way about the analysis of the development of the imperialist rivalries and on the validity of the concept of historical course. We refer our readers to the article in this issue about the imperialist rivalries which defends a different position that we can summarize as belonging to the historical ICC’s method of comprehension while other comrades within our ranks defend the analysis put forwards by the ICT.

Nevertheless we are homogeneous on the denunciation of the imperialist war as “*extreme response of capital to its crisis*”, the link that BC makes between the terrible worsening of the economic dead end and present wars, and the denunciation of the American economic pseudo-recovery.

For us, the political positions of the ICT, whether we share them or not, are a constant reference which impels our discussion and our process of political clarification. It should be the same for any group or militant of the Proletarian Camp and even the revolutionary milieu. In any case, this is one more reason to call the attention of our sympathizers and readers to the political meaning of the General Assembly of the PCInt and to its political positions.

The IGCL, January 2016

Debate with the Group PostCap Collective from Russia and critic of the Text *Origin and Function of the Form Party of the Journal Invariance*

The group PostCap Collective from Russia took contact with us at dawn 2014. It claims the theories of the review Invariance. We exchanged several mails and letters and attempted, for our part, to open up a cycle of discussion with these comrades. We publish here the main correspondences. After our last letter, PostCap Collective responded us with a long ten pages text where it refutes our general vision on the “working class as revolutionary class” and on “the unity of the economic and political dimensions of the class struggle” as well as our notion of “decadence of capitalism” that it understands only as an economic question. Mainly this response is based on quotations of Marx’s classic texts and Bordiga’s from the 1960s that it accompanies with comments. Not only the length of the response but also its content do not allow our group, according to us, to open a public debate which can enlighten the reader and the sympathisers of the Communist Left. Obviously any reader can ask us their text and we’ll send it. This is where we are with these comrades a year later. Let’s clarify that, for our part, we don’t close the door to any revival of our political confrontation in relation to our possibilities and priorities.

Nevertheless, it remains that our text – the letter we sent – against a modern and academic kind of “Bordigism” – the main groups coming from the PCInt-Program Communist do not claim this caricature of “Bordigism” – gives us the occasion to present our critical position. It comes to complete our criticism of “its opiated”, councilism, and to precise our understanding and position on the question of the consciousness of the class and the Party.

The IGCL, January 2016.

From PostCap Collective: Hello,

So, now we’ll try to explain some main aspects of our positions. We prefer to call ourselves communists. We could call ourselves Marxists, but we try not to do this cause we’re staying (accordingly to the materialistic understanding of history) against any cult of individual and against attempts to giving some person central role in the historical process.

In some extend we are successors of Italian left communism, we appreciate many Bordiga’s works. In a question about Party, it’s role, etc, our positions in general is the same as the positions of Bordiga (but in some other aspects our views may be different). We’re a small group now, and of course we don’t call ourselves “Party”, because (formal) Party will be born from objective process of self-organization of the working class in struggle, so now we appraise our role rather lowly.

Party will be not-democratic structure and decision-making process will be perform not through elections, but through the scientific method, so we oppose to democracy organic unity, or organic centralism. As for democratic elements outside the Party they will wither away and leave in the past as well as capital, private property, the state etc.

We follow Marx’s understanding of the historical formal and real subsumption of labor to capital, so we don’t share theory about decadence of capitalism.

As for trade unions this question is complex. Of course we are not trade unionists and fully understand all narrowness and faults of trade unions, but in analyze of this question we must consider it in the context of particular situation. Under certain conditions trade union action can be step forward, nonetheless it may be just one step, moreover, we must remember that bourgeoisie may use trade unions as a brake for the worker’s movement. Here in Russia most workers is really rather passive now, and we would not regard so negatively to all the trade unions at this moment.

Our positions presented much more detail in our blog’s part “Questions and answers”, but it’s only in Russian for now. About political activity we can say that it’s rather hampered now in Russia and there aren’t much opportunities for this, however we tried to do something when situation makes it’s possible and when it’s expedient. Our group exists no so long, and some of our members already had a certain experience of the struggle in the past.

One way or another we interact with the part of anarchists (but of course we’re not share their positions), with some communists there in Russia. As for international contacts we keep in touch with the Robin Goodfellow group, some people from Ukraine, couple of people in other European countries.

PostCap Collective, October 26th 2014

From the IGCL : Dear comrades,

Thank you for your quick response which helps us to know you a little bit. We’ll discuss your document and send you a response. Of course, as you may already know, while claiming the “Italian Left” also and most of Bordiga’s works and struggle up to the 30’s (at least), such as the Thesis of Rome (1922) and the Thesis of Lyon (1926), we also claim the Italian fraction in exile in France with the journal *Bilan* and partly the experience of the different groups coming from it in the 1940’s such as the PCint (today the ICT) of course and as the French Communist Group (GCF), today the current linked to the ICC (even though we fully disagree with its present opportunist positions). More particularly, we disagree with the specific “Bordigist” positions such as the one on the Party holding State power, red terror, national liberation struggles, and unionist activities.

Thus, we already have many questions we disagree on and we hope that we'll be able to confront them with you.

Fraternally,

The IGCL, October 27th 2014.

From PostCap Collective: Thanks. Our position on party is close to "Origin and function of Party form" of *Invariance*/ICP. We can't say that real party has restored in 1943, because conditions could not afford it and level of action class was not enough for the forming of the class party, so O.Damen, A.Bordiga and other communists were close to what we call historical party, communists minority in counter revolution phase without political class action.

Party emerges from the contradictions of capitalism, from the action of the proletarians. When the economic struggle goes on the political level and the proletarians unite the party, the class state surely cannot "establish" communist relations and it's obstacle on the way of communist movement, so it must be destroyed with all of its institutions. For the understanding of the proletarian state (the state of proletarian dictatorship of transitional period) we must say about the proletariat as a historical class, not only in narrow economical meaning. So proletarian dictatorship is not just state of workers, but it's the state in which proletariat acts centralized, "as one" and organically. Party form provides this. All organs of proletariat which appeared in revolution must be connected with Party, i.e. with the collective brain that will be defending communist program.

We don't "refuse" of the creativity of proletarians that not included in party. On the contrary, their activities can be expression of the real communist movement. State and administrative posts must be deprived of professionalism, protection against bureaucracy will be reached by permanent removeability, "circulation" between center and periphery.

It's important proletarian state can't be organized accordingly to permanent laws, constitutions, rights, etc. Communist revolution won't proclaim any "eternal laws" as bourgeois revolutions did. Therefore we must act against worker's councils if they are acting against communism, it must be done for protecting of the communist movement.

This is similar to the traditional discussions about authoritarianism, and we're exactly staying on authoritarian side. But we prefer to say that border lies between communists-materialists which are staying on the side of organized in Party proletariat and idealists, utopian enlighteners and democrats on other side. becomes a class in the historical sense. Therefore party defines a class.

Bourgeois state surely cannot "establish" communist relations and it's obstacle on the way of communist movement, so it must be destroyed with all of its institutions. For the understanding of the proletarian state (the state of proletarian dictatorship of transitional period) we must say about the proletariat as a historical class, not only in narrow economical meaning. So proletarian dictatorship is not just state of workers, but it's the state in which proletariat acts centralized, "as one" and organically. Party form provides this. All organs of proletariat which appeared in revolution must be connected with Party, i.e. with the collective brain that will be defending communist program.

PostCap Collective, November 14th 2014

Our Letter and Statement on the Theories of the Journal *Invariance*

The IGCL to Postcap Collective,

Dear comrades,

In the first place, we are sorry for not having sent you sooner a letter after our e-mail exchanges. E-mail exchanges don't allow the establishment and development of the basis of a genuine discussion and confrontation of political positions. We're going to try to define with you the terms of a possible (and necessary according to us) political discussion between our two groups. We hope you'll agree with these terms and that we'll be able to specify what are our reciprocal positions, the agreements and the differences, so that we can clarify and confront them.

Secondly, we had difficulties with the English translation (www.marxists.org) of the *Invariance* text we quote here because it doesn't exactly correspond to the original French version. As well, we couldn't find a correct and faithful

English translation of the Theses of Rome (1922). The websites of the "bordigist" groups don't have a translated version and the only one (www.signalfire.org) we found is politically very bad. Thus we translated it ourselves.

1) The Party Question

Reading your mails, we note that, on the party, your position "*in general is the same as the positions of Bordiga (but in some other aspects our view may be different)*". In another mail, you clarify that your "*position on party is close to Origin and Function of Party form of *Invariance*/ICP*". But, besides this, many of your formulations – we take them with reserve and care due to the e-mail form and, maybe, the translation in English can make difficult, indeed mistaken, the exact meaning of your real positions – appear to contradict the text *Origin and Function of Party form*. For our part, we reject its political approach and conclusions. And we think that it is in contradiction with the communist programmatic

positions, and particularly the ones of the Left Fraction of the CP of Italy: the Theses of Rome (1922) and of Lyon (1926) that it nevertheless claims.

As starting point for a discussion on the Party question, we're going to try to quickly point out the main theoretical and political mistakes of the *Invariance* text "Origin and Function". Beforehand, let's note that this text uses quite an abstract ("philosophical") language which, in our opinion, is used above all to conceal the moving away, not to say the giving up, of the communist tradition and its theoretical and political positions, and most particularly to the ones of the so-called "Italian Left".

"The proletariat tends to oppose its own *Gemeinwesen*, the human being, to the capitalist one, the oppressive state. It has to expropriate this being to realize this real opposition. It can only do so if it organizes in a party". Let's put aside the "philosophical" problematic around the *Gemeinwesen* (the human community) which opens up the door to political visions we characterize as "modernist" and that we can't deal with here. The proletariat would be unable to oppose, by the struggle, to capital as long as it doesn't organize itself "in party"¹⁴? This already contradicts your own expression: "(formal) party will be born from objective process of self-organization of the working class in struggle". Your expression (that, besides, we could criticize as such, at least it would be worth clarifying what you really want to say) makes the Party constitution a result, a product, of the reality, and even the development, of the working class struggle while *Invariance* actually makes it a precondition. Let's make clear that, for us, the abstract distinction "formal party-historical party" of *Invariance* is a mean to run away from the question of the party-class relation and to theorize this running away. Worse still, its vision leads it to consider that the class doesn't exist as long as there is no Party and, thus, that the class struggle disappears: "The class does not act and thus does not exist outside what is formed as the party" [the original French version exactly says: "the class does not act and thus does not exist but only when it constitutes in party"]. Besides its clearly opportunist political implications – it denies the existence of the class outside the Party constitution –, is in opposition to the theses of Rome which very clearly distinguish the whole proletariat and its vanguard communist political minorities. For the CP of Italy and of the Left of that time (so too Bordiga), the working class exists and struggles independently of the Party (which doesn't mean it can develop its historical fight without the Party): "Under the influence of new situations, under the pressure of events **provoking the working class to action**, it is **possible** to overcome such a situation and to return to the true class Party" (Theses of Rome, translated by us and passages highlighted which openly contradict *Invariance*). Where *Invariance* excludes any class action outside the Party, the CP of Italy acknowledges that the working class can "move to action" independently of the Party.

"The party seizes power, destroys the bourgeois state, sets itself up as ruling class, thus as the state **which now no longer has a political**, but a social function, hence arriving at

the human nature which is the real *Gemeinwesen* of man". Here, it is said that the state of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, the state of the period of transition from capitalism to communism, no longer has a political function! But, precisely, unless falling into "self-management" or "anarchist" visions, the function of this "half state" is **at first political**: the very one of exercising the dictatorship of the class until the disappearance of the classes. Here is the position, which we share, adopted by the CP of Italy at its foundation congress in Livorno (1921) and recalled in the theses of Rome: "10. This transformation of the economy and consequently of all activities of the social life will have as an effect, **once the division of society into classes is eliminated**, to eliminate too little by little **the necessity of the political state** whose apparatus will be progressively reduced to a rational administration of human activities" (translated by us). This statement is not a particularity of the "Italian Left". Marxism has always defended that the political dimension of the state won't vanish until the division of classes has disappeared and not the contrary as *Invariance* (which here joins the anarchist vision on the priority of the "social" upon the "political" and against the exercising of power "through" the state, even though with a "Marxist" language and above all an academic one): "When, in the course of development, **class distinctions have disappeared**, and all production has been concentrated in the hands of a vast association of the whole nation, the public power **will lose its political character**." (Marx and Engels, Communist Manifesto, underlined by us).

"The party thus represents the *Gemeinwesen*. (...) the party's existence is its programme, the prefiguration of communist society of the liberated and conscious human species [French version : "It (the Party) is the prefiguration...]. The party thus allows the organization of the class. **Then it will become the subject of the dictatorship of the proletariat**" (we underline). We are getting here to the political consequences of this vision: to the substitutionist position; the class doesn't exist anymore and has no historical role; only the Party exists and is the subject of history. The parallel we made with anarchism (in regards to the state question) can seem to be quite paradoxical. The negation of the "Party" is as abstract and a-historical (both are linked) as the affirmation that the "Party is the unique subject" of history. It is contrary to one of the (invariant) principles of Marxism and the Communist Program: "the emancipation of the workers must be the act of the working class itself". The subject of the Dictatorship of the proletariat **is the proletariat itself** under the political leadership and direction of the communist party. Here is, for our part, to which understanding of the Party-Class relation we attempt to refer to:

"It is in offering the maximum continuity in the defense of the program and in the life of the leadership hierarchy (beyond the individual replacement of unfaithful or worn out chiefs) that the Party ensures also the maximum of efficient and useful work **for winning the proletariat to the revolutionary struggle**. It is not simply to edify the masses, and even less to exhibit an **intrinsically pure and perfect party**, but in fact to obtain the best in the actual process. As we shall see later, it is by systematic propaganda and proselytism and especially active participation in social struggles, to shift a growing

14 . By the way, the use of "in party" as in the original French version instead of "in a party" have a slight different political meaning which is not worth discussing here.

number of workers from the terrain of partial struggles for immediate interests to the terrain of the organic and united struggle for the communist revolution. But it is only when a similar continuity of program and leadership exists in the Party that it is possible not only to overcome the reluctance of the proletariat to trust it, but to channel and to more quickly and effectively use the new energies conquered in communal thought and action to achieve **this unity of the movement which is an indispensable condition of the revolution**" (Theses on the tactics of the Communist Party of Italy - called "Rome Theses" - 1922, II-pt 8, translated and underlined by us).

Far from eliminating one of the two terms of the relation party-class – the Anarchists and Councilists eliminate the party, the "modernist bordigists" eliminate the class – the Marxist vision and the communist position have always defended the dynamic link between the two dimensions, the party being at the same time a part of the class and its most advanced part; its "leadership" part. One of the essential questions is the one of class consciousness: "*a class is called forth ["born" in the French version] (...) **from which emanates the consciousness** of the necessity of a fundamental revolution, the communist consciousness (...). Both for the production on a mass scale of this communist consciousness, and for the success of the cause itself, the alteration of men on a mass scale is, necessary, an alteration which can only take place in a practical movement, a revolution*" (The German Ideology¹⁵). In this passage, Marx and Engels define very clearly that the class consciousness, the communist consciousness, arises from the proletariat – it doesn't come from outside the class as **historical class**. And then, they explain that the condition for revolution is "the production on a mass scale" of this consciousness, i.e. the extension of this communist consciousness in the masses of the proletariat. They define so two fundamental dimensions of communist consciousness: the consciousness of the class (its depth, the communist program) and the consciousness in (within) the class (its extension amongst the working masses). Now it is precisely the political communist organizations, groups, fractions, party, which are more capable (we could almost say they are the only ones) to defend and best express (even though not in an absolute way, nor unique) this class consciousness. And as such, their intervention in the class (including in the counter-revolutionary periods, the very ones thus where the extension of the consciousness of the class in their ranks is the most reduced) is a necessity and a duty as a moment of the historical fight between the classes. So there is a close link between the two dimensions "consciousness of the class and consciousness within the class", between the party (or the communist minorities) and the class which enables each one to assert itself and strengthen each other up to constituting an historical unity. That is why we reject the "anti-party and anti-political" vision (of Anarchist and Councilist kinds) as well as the "substitutionist vision which denies the class" (of Bordigist or modernist kind).

That is why we defend, as the ICT and the ICC today on the basis of the balance-sheet drawn by the Italian fraction (particularly in the 1930s) from the Russian experience and

on the basis of the Marxist principle according to which "*the emancipation of the workers must be the act of the working class itself*", that the **leading and fundamental** role of the party is not to exert the state power; nor to substitute for the working class as a whole for exercising its class dictatorship; and even less to identify itself with the state of the period of transition. That is why, following the Lenin of 1917 (The State and the Revolution) and the Trotsky of 1924 (Lessons of October), we consider that the party has to be on the front line of the fight for the workers councils (soviets), as unitarian organs of the class (i.e. destined to gather and organize the whole class), to be at the same time organs of the proletarian insurrection and of the class power of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. There is our main disagreement with the bordigist current. That is why we think that this question is of primary importance.

2) The Concept of Decadence

Secondly, besides the question of the Party, we take note that you reject the concept of historical decadence (or decline) of capitalism. This is coherent, if so we can say, at least consequent, with your claim to the "bordigist" vision; i.e. with the vision developed from the years 1950's and the split within the PCint (Partito Comunista Internazionale) between the "Bordigist" current and the "Damenist" current (for cataloging easier). At the theoretical level, this rejection of the concept of decadence goes along with the affirmation of the "invariance of the program" developed by "bordigism" and that we consider as erroneous: if we agree that there are invariant questions of principle in the program, there are others which evolve and change (for instance, Marx on the Dictatorship of the proletariat after the Paris Commune). It doesn't suffice to defend the program against the attacks (revisionism and opportunism) that it suffers, but also **to make it live** in order to fight against dogmatism. Now, keeping this example of the change of historical period of capitalism, the capacity and the fight of the past Marxist Left fractions (especially within the 2nd International) to take account of this new phenomenon of dominating imperialism (Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg in particular) has been a crucial moment for the opposition to the imperialist war, for the October 17 proletarian revolution, for the destruction of the bourgeois state and the exercise of the Dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia, and for the constitution of the world party of the proletariat, i.e. the 3rd International. One of the foundations of this one has precisely been the acknowledgement that the 1st World War was expressing the opening of a new historical period for capitalism. "*A new system [in French : "a new period"...] has been born. Ours is the epoch of the breakdown of capital, its internal disintegration, the epoch of the Communist revolution of the proletariat*" (Platform of the International Communist, 1st congress, 1919).

The Union Question and the Decadence

It is not all by chance if the vision of invariance of the program and the "parallel" rejection to recognize the change of historical period (ascendancy-decadence) doesn't allow adoption of a clearer position on the unions and on unionism today ("*as for trade-union, the question is complex*" do you say) on which the bordigist current in general has always had

15 . <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/ch01d.htm>

a very confused position, indeed opportunist. You express it very well yourself: *"Under certain conditions, trade-union action can be step forward, nonetheless it may be just one step, moreover, we must remember that bourgeoisie may use trade unions as a brake for the workers movement"*.

We can't develop here on the unions and even less on the indispensable intervention (in relation to their forces and practical possibilities) of the communist groups, tomorrow the party, and the revolutionaries in the working class struggles as daily and immediate as they may be. Let's just clarify here quickly: far from our thought is the idea of waiting for the appearance of "pure" working class struggles cleared of the unions and the "left" bourgeois forces, whose aim is their sabotage, before developing the revolutionary intervention precisely against these sabotages and these forces.

Let's go back to "capitalism's decadence" and the unions: the historical period opened up from 1914 on and the generalized imperialist war has had practical political consequences for the life of capitalism itself (the tendency to state capitalism) and for the living and struggling conditions of the proletariat (the tendency to state totalitarianism and its control over all the fields of "social" life, particularly for the proletariat's "mass" organizations and conditions of "permanent" struggle). It is difficult to base a clear comprehension and "programmatic" position (and not tactical) on the union today without recognizing the historical change which had taken place in the life of capitalism at the beginning of the 20th Century.

The Parliamentary Question and Decadence

The union question – such as it is posed with the participation of the unions in the imperialist war and their betrayal of internationalism – could not be resolved theoretically and politically from the very end of the 1st World War. The comprehensions and the "methodological" approaches of the first Marxist "anti-unionists", as the KAPD for instance, quickly fall into a-political and anti-party visions. On the other hand, the parliamentary and electoral question (amongst others) could be more easily resolved on the condition, precisely, of integrating the historical importance of capitalism's change of period. We recalled how the CI had taken account of the opening of the new period. It goes the same with the CP of Italy (and Bordiga) in its struggle on the parliamentary and electoral question:

"Participation in elections to the representative organs of bourgeois democracy and participation in parliamentary activity, while always presenting a continuous danger of deviation, may be utilized [the original Italian version utilizes the past "could be..."¹⁶] for propaganda and for schooling the movement during the period in which there does ["did not"

in Italian and French] not yet exist the possibility of overthrowing bourgeois rule and in which, as a consequence, the party's task is restricted to criticism and opposition. In the present period, which began with the end of the world war, with the first communist revolutions and the creation of the Third International, communists pose, as the direct objective of the political action of the proletariat in every country, the revolutionary conquest of power" (Theses of the Abstentionist Communist Faction of the Italian Socialist Party - May 1920, we underline in bold).

For us, the recognition of an historical change between two periods which determines new conditions of life and struggle for the proletariat enables to clearly state on the political and principle class positions of today. Then, and only then, the theoretical understanding of the change of period and the recognition of the concept of "decadence or decline of capitalism" ("Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism" according to Lenin) enable to provide a theoretical and political coherence for principle (class) positions such as the unions of course, but also the elections and parliamentarism, the national liberation struggles, etc. These questions are not anymore tactical questions but questions of principle (programmatic) and they define the Proletarian Political Camp in opposition to the counter-revolutionary political forces historically and politically belonging to the bourgeois camp as the Stalinist, Trotskyist and Anarchist currents.

There, dear comrades, are the questions that we wanted to propose you to debate with us. Obviously, it matters above all in this letter to pose and propose the terms and the questions to debate. Our references to quotations must be understood as incentives to reflection and to the confrontation of our positions and not as absolute dogmas. We know that the definition of these positions (here for instance the theses of Rome) is itself historical, a moment of the fight between the classes, at the programmatic and political levels.

Fraternally, the IGCL,

December 20th 2014.

16 . *"La partecipazione alle elezioni per gli organismi rappresentativi della democrazia borghese e l'attività parlamentare, pur presentando in ogni tempo continui pericoli di deviazione, potevano essere utilizzati per la propaganda e la formazione del movimento nel periodo in cui, non delineandosi ancora la possibilità di abbattere il dominio borghese, il compito del partito si limitava alla critica ed alla opposizione. Nell'attuale periodo aperto dalla fine della guerra mondiale, dalle prime rivoluzioni comuniste e dal sorgere della Terza Internazionale, i comunisti pongono come obiettivo diretto dell'azione politica del proletariato di tutti i paesi la conquista rivoluzionaria del potere"*

Struggle against Political Opportunism

21st Congress of the International Communist Current: “Cultural Revival” or Announcement of Liquidation by the “Legal Successors”?

“Last spring the ICC held its 21st Congress. Since this event coincided with 40 years of existence of our organisation, we took the decision to give this Congress an exceptional character with the central objective of making a critical balance sheet of our analyses and activities over these four decades”.

After reading the article, *Forty Years after the Foundation of the ICC, what balance-sheet and perspectives...?*¹⁷, there is no doubt that this Congress represents an important moment in the life of this organization and a particular step in its descent into the abyss of opportunism. Apparently, it adopts a new modest and self-critical attitude about all of its history far from the peremptory statements of the past about the eternal validity of the policies and positions it adopted. But actually, “today’s” ICC reflects on forty years of its existence to, as we’re going to see, draw a negative balance-sheet of its past genuine history, and thereby to justify what is set to be the final theoretical and political liquidation by those who imposed themselves through manoeuvres, condemnations and exclusions as the “legal successors” of the degenerating ICC.

The first part, *The critical balance-sheet of our analysis of the international situation*, mainly relates to what the ICC considers today as mistakes, described as immediatist, in the different analyses on the development of the class struggle: the understanding of the historical course; the underestimation of the weight of the counter-revolution; having considered the proletariat as being only on the offensive while it has just developed struggles of economic defence; a lack of mastery of Rosa Luxemburg’s theory which drove to an overestimation of the crisis of capitalism; an underestimation of the harmful effects of decomposition. Except for the last point, these admissions refer to the positions of the 1970s and 1980s. Taken in themselves, they can be more or less shared and they refer to difficulties in applying the Marxist method of analysis that any communist organization inevitably will have.

On the other hand, the genuine mistakes **linked to Marxist principles**, that is their betrayal, are fully ignored such as the rejection of the historical alternative between revolution and war at the 15th Congress, the disappearance of the perspective of world imperialist war replaced by one of “ecological apocalypse” at the 17th Congress, the denunciation of the wildcat strike of the OPEL workers in Bochum (Germany) in October 2004, the call for solidarity with the injured anti-riot police as “human beings [and] fathers of family” (!) in 2006 during the street demonstrations in France or still the appeal to participate in the humanitarian campaigns during the 2004 tsunami in Asia...¹⁸

The first part of the *Report on the Class Struggle*¹⁹ runs until the end of the 1980s and recounts fairly accurately the past analysis of the ICC. It places the concept of “historical course” at the centre of their analysis. But from the 1990s, “in the face of this advancing decomposition **we were obliged to re-examine the whole question of the historic course in a report to 14th Congress**” in 2001 (our emphasis). And for a good reason, the “Decomposition”, set up as an absolute category, has become the determining factor of the situation instead of the struggle between bourgeoisie and proletariat which is at the core of the notion of “historical course”: “since decomposition contains the risk of a gradual descent into chaos and irrational destruction, it creates immense dangers for the working class [which] could be gradually ground down by the whole process to the point where it would no longer be able to stand against the advancing tide of barbarism” up to the point of calling to fight against it – and not against the capitalist class. For instance: “the student struggle in France in 2006 and the revolt of the Indignados in Spain (...) shook a fist at the advancing tide of decomposition”! The opportunist theory of Decomposition replaces (**and liquidates**) the class struggle with the “struggle against decomposition”. As a result, the method of analysis defined by the “historical course” based on the former is no more effective and its preservation, even formal, openly contradicts the theory of decomposition.

The balance-sheet of the Congress concludes from this that “today, after 25 years of stagnation in the class struggle at the international level, the ICC must now focus on a task similar to that of Bilan in its time: **to understand the reasons for the failure of the working class to regain a revolutionary perspective almost half a century after the historic resurgence of the class struggle in the late 1960s**”. The announcement of the liquidation of the experience of the 1970s and 1980s is scheduled. And at the very moment when the notion of “historical course” is verified, when crisis and war directly reinforce each other and oblige the bourgeoisie to lead an increased class war against the proletariat.

refer to the IFICC and IFCL site. The following link for the English pages, http://fractioncommuniste.org/index_eng.php?SEC=b00, directs to the English page of the summaries of all bulletins (all original French and Spanish texts could not be translated but they can be found on these languages pages). He (or she) will find the systematic and critical statements both fractions made on all the Congresses of the ICC (and its French section) since 2001 and will find both the denunciation of its open opportunist positions and a political alternative within the principle, theoretical and political framework of this organization. All these articles can also be a main reference for drawing the history of the ICC since this date and even, to a lesser degree, since its foundation.

19 . <http://en.internationalism.org/international-review/201601/13787/report-class-struggle>

17 . <http://en.internationalism.org/international-review/201601/13785/40-years-after-foundation-icc>

18 . The list is not exhaustive. For the interested reader (or historian), we

Reign of Bourgeois Ideology and Failure of the Struggle against “Parasitism”.

The following passages, *The ICC’s role as a “fraction of a certain type”* and *The need for a moral and cultural “revival”*, are only there to “historically and theoretically” justify the announced renunciation. No need to linger on it except to pick out, and laugh at, the new internal slogans: “the culture of theory” (after the “culture of debate”) and “the search for truth” for one part and, for the other, the degree of penetration of bourgeois and petit-bourgeois ideologies that they reveal. And, in addition, the shameless abasement of the history of the working class movement which shows the state of degeneracy this organization has got to: “But the process of degeneration in the SPD began [the German social-democrat party before 1914] long before this abandonment of theoretical tasks. It began with the progressive destruction of solidarity between militants. Due to the abolition of anti-socialist laws (1878-1890) (...) this destruction of solidarity (permitted by the “comfortable” conditions of the democratic bourgeoisie) opened the way to a growing moral depravity with the emergence of a pogrom mentality within the SPD...”. Since the 1990s, the ICC has been explaining the crisis of political organizations of the working class movement by the existence of clans and personal hatred within their ranks. Today, the lack of solidarity between members provokes their degeneracy! Exit the greatest part of the theoretical and political lessons of the working class movement, of Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg, etc., in their struggle against political opportunism...

The part on *The defence of the organisation against attacks on the ICC* is a terrible confession of failure for the opportunism of the ICC: “The strengthening of the public and intransigent defence of the organisation is an orientation given by this Congress. The ICC is well aware that this orientation may temporarily lead to being misunderstood, to being criticised for our lack of “fair play”, and so to an even greater isolation. But the worst thing would be to let parasitism do its destructive work without reacting. The Congress emphasised that in this regard too, the ICC must have the courage to ‘swim against the current’”. In short, its fight against “parasitism” and to destroy the other groups which refused to follow it on this terrain, let’s remember their internal call for destroying the IBRP at their 16th Congress (2006), has been a failure and has contributed to its own discredit and isolation.

The Real Historical Weakness of the ICC

Actually, the choice of the noted mistakes aims to question the ICC of the 1970s and 1980s and liquidate the experience – particularly the intervention within the working class struggles – and the theoretical and political lessons of these periods; especially those from its quite permanent fight against the weight of its origins and weaknesses of the councilist kind. When we speak of councilist weaknesses – the economism fought by Lenin in his time – we don’t reduce, far from it, the problem only to the formal recognition of the necessity of the Party. The struggle against the modern economism that councilism is today, refers to the relation between “being and consciousness”, between consciousness of the class and its extension within the class, between Party and class, such as Marxism succeeded to understand at the

theoretical level; and to the practical recognition of the permanent political dimension of the workers struggles and to the method of analysis of the situations which goes with it. In particular, the Communist Italian Left taught us that there was a close link between the constant taking into account of the political dimension of the class struggle and the factor “consciousness of the class” for one part and the analysis of the development of the situation for another. Yet, the main historical weakness of the ICC is certainly its longstanding difficulty, despite its platform, to regain the whole historical experience of the working class movement. When it claimed the Left fractions of the 1930s, it was actually only claiming the journal *Bilan* from 1933 on; and the Dutch and German Lefts. It has always ignored the theoretical and political lessons and fights of the Communist Party of Italy and then its Left Fraction. Never has it really dealt, not even in a critical manner, with the Theses of Rome and Lyons²⁰ for instance. Yet, these programmatic texts present a whole method and vision that the communists must adopt to be able to develop, from a Party point of view, an analysis and understanding of the situation. “The historical course of the proletariat’s emancipation and the foundation of a new social order derives from the existence of the class struggle. Every class struggle is a political struggle; that is to say, it has the tendency to end up as a struggle for the conquest of political power and control of the new State organism” (Theses of Lyons). We can’t develop here but it is the relation to the state, the perspective of the insurrection, of the destruction of the bourgeois state and of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which determines the method and the criteria of evaluation of the development of the **political** relation of forces between the classes, that is the “historical course”. The main historical weakness of the ICC certainly lies in this ignorance of the experience of the Italian Left of the 1920s. It explains why it could not really get rid of its councilist origins despite the struggles led within it and why it fell down again in it since then²¹.

Finally, the conclusion of this report announces in a more or less near future the official liquidation of the historical ICC by the triumphant opportunism: “The ICC is today in a period of transition. Thanks to this critical balance-sheet, its capacity to examine its weaknesses and to admit mistakes, **it is making a radical critique of the vision of militant activity that we have had until now, of relations between militants and between militants and the organisation, with as a guiding principle the question of the intellectual and moral dimension of the proletariat’s struggle.** It is a real “cultural revolution” we must engage in, to continue to learn to assume our responsibilities. It is a long and difficult process, but vital for the future.”

With the call for “**a radical critique**”, the balance-sheet is clear: it is negative. We have no doubt that it is so for the opportunism whose interest is precisely to liquidate the

20 . <http://www.sinistra.net/lib/pre/lunita/dufeadixye.html>. We have not found English translation of the Theses of Rome. Here is the link with the French version https://www.marxists.org/francais/bordiga/works/1922/01/bordiga_1922_0130.htm. The reader can also refer to the rubric “texts and theses” of the PCInt site www.pcint.org.

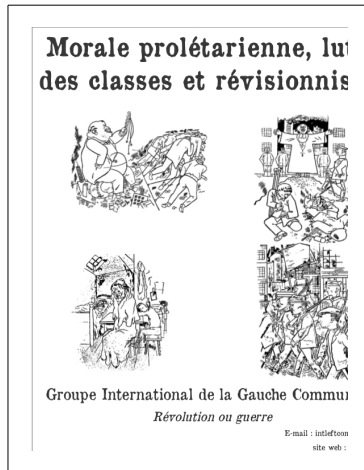
21 . It suffices to point out, amongst other things, its apology and fetishism of the “self-organization” of the French student movement of 2006 or still of the Spanish “indignados”.

theoretical and political experiences of the ICC of its first decades and to erase the real organisational experience – not the one invented today after the fact – at the levels of internal life and intervention within the class. This announcement of liquidation is thus consistent with the opportunist drift this organization has been living through since now at least 15 years.

A single question remains, formal but of importance: when will the official death certificate be registered by those who fraudulently monopolized the inheritance? When will be the change of platform and the declared break with the principles which founded this organization forty years ago?

RL, January 2016.

Proletariat Morality, Class Struggle and Revisionism



« Throughout the history of the workers movement, Marxism underlines how revisionism (...) has introduced the ideological themes of the bourgeoisie (...), the values, the morality, the interests and, in a general way, the bourgeois ideology in the working class movement in the name of "general" science, "abstract" philosophy, "human" morality and interests »

Against the opportunist theories of the International Communist Current of the years 2000...

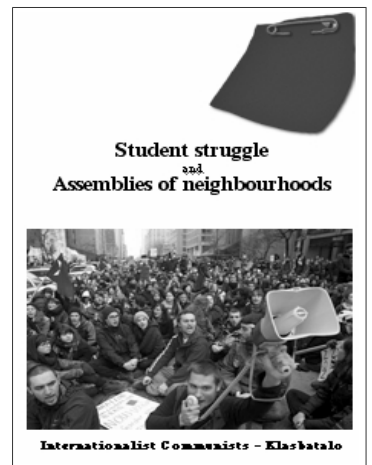
Read our pamphlet in French *Morale prolétarienne, lutte des classes et révisionnisme* !

Student Struggle and Assemblies of Neighbourhoods in Québec (2012)

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

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

(Internationalist Communists – Klasbatalo)



Text of the Working Class Movement

Seize Power or Seize the Factory? *Il Soviet*, 22 February 1920.

The following text is an important moment of the Marxist Left struggle against the tendency represented at turns by Anarchism at Marx and Engels' s time, by Economism at Lenin's, then after by councilism of the years 1930 until our days. When it was published, the "apolitical tendency" was expressing in Gramsci's journal Ordine Nuovo, amongst others, and was basing itself on the workers councils movement which was developing at that time in Italy. We have no doubt on the fact that these questions will arise – they already arise when an important struggle looks to organize itself – and that the same fight will have to be led by the communists – the main groups of the Communist Left had already to lead it against the fetishization of "self-organization" as in the "indignant" ["indignados"] movement in Spain.

The working-class disturbances of the past few days in Liguria have seen yet another example of a phenomenon that for some time now has been repeated with some frequency, and that deserves to be examined as a symptom of a new level of consciousness among the working masses.

Instead of abandoning their jobs, the workers have so to speak taken over their plants and sought to operate them for their own benefit, or more precisely without the top managers being present in the plant. Above all, this indicates that the workers are fully aware that the strike is not always the best weapon to use, especially under certain circumstances.

The economic strike, through the immediate harm it inflicts on the worker himself, derives its utility as a defensive weapon for the worker from the harm the work-stoppage inflicts on the industrialist by cutting back the output which belongs to him.

This is the state of affairs under normal conditions in the capitalist economy, when competition and price-cutting force a continual increase in production itself. Today the profiteers of industry, in particular the engineering industry, are emerging from an exceptional period in which they were able to amass enormous profits for a minimum of effort. During the war the State supplied them with raw materials and coal and, at the same time, acted as sole and reliable purchaser. Furthermore, through its militarization of factories, the State itself undertook to impose a rigorous discipline on the working masses. What more favourable conditions could there be for a fat profit? But now these people are no longer disposed to deal with all the difficulties arising from shortages of coal and raw materials, from the instability of the market and the fractiousness of the working masses. In particular, they are not disposed to put up with modest profits which are roughly the same or perhaps a bit below their pre-War level.

This is why they are not worried by strikes. Indeed they positively welcome them, while mouthing a few protests about the absurd claims and insatiability of the workers. The

workers have understood this, and through their action of taking over the factory and carrying on working instead of striking, they are making it clear that it is not that they have no wish to work, but that they have no wish to work the way the bosses tell them to. They no longer want to be exploited and work for the benefit of the bosses; they want to work for their own benefit, i.e. in the interests of the work-force alone. This new consciousness that is emerging more clearly every day should be held in the highest regard; however, we would not want it to be led astray by vain illusions.

It is rumoured that factory councils, where they were in existence, functioned by taking over the management of the workshops and carrying on the work. We would not like the working masses to get hold of the idea that all they need do to take over the factories and get rid of the capitalists is set up councils. This would indeed be a dangerous illusion. The factory will be conquered by the working class – and not only

by the workforce employed in it, which would be too weak and non-communist – only after the working class as a whole has seized political power. Unless it has done so, the Royal Guards, military police, etc. – in other words, the mechanism of force and oppression that the bourgeoisie has at its disposal, its political power apparatus – will see to it that all illusions are dispelled.

It would be better if these endless and useless adventures that are daily exhausting the working masses were all channelled,

merged and organized into one great, comprehensive upsurge aimed directly at the heart of the enemy bourgeoisie.

Only a communist party should and would be able to carry out such an undertaking. At this time, such a party should and would have no other task than that of directing all its activity towards making the working masses increasingly conscious of the need for this grand political attack – the only more or less direct route to the take-over of the factory, which if any other route is taken may never fall into their hands at all.

Bordiga, “prendere la fabbrica o prendere il potere ?”.



OUR POSITIONS

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

working class. The expression of social strata with no historic future and of the decomposition of the petty bourgeoisie, when it's not the direct expression of the permanent war between capitalist states, terrorism has always been a fertile soil for manipulation by the bourgeoisie. Advocating secret action by small minorities, it is in complete opposition to class violence, which derives from conscious and organised mass action by the proletariat.

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

OUR ACTIVITY

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

OUR ORIGINS

- The positions and activity of revolutionary organisations are the product of the past experiences of the working class and of the lessons that its political organisations have drawn throughout its history. The IGCL thus traces its origins to the successive contributions of the Communist League of Marx and Engels (1847-52), the three Internationals (the International Workingmen's Association, 1864-72, the Socialist International, 1884-1914, the Communist International, 1919-28), the left fractions which detached themselves from the degenerating Third International in the years 1920-30, in particular the German, Dutch and Italian Lefts, and the groups of the Communist Left which had specially developed in the 1970s and 1980s and which were stemming from these fractions