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What distinguishes our Party is the political continuity which goes from Marx to Lenin, to the foundation of the Communist Party of Italy (Livorno, 1921); the struggle of the Communist Left against the degeneration of the Third International, against the theory of “socialism in one country”, against the Stalinist counterrevolution; the rejection of the Popular Fronts and the Resistance Blocs; the difficult task of restoring the revolutionary doctrine and organization in close interrelationship with the proletarian class, against all personal and electoral politics.

Fight the ferocity of imperialism

The ferocity with which, since 1948, the State of Israel has carried out the role entrusted to it (not without conflicts between them) by the victorious powers in the second world slaughterhouse - that of armed gendarme in defense of an area swollen with oil, a reservoir of cheap manpower, pregnant with current and potential social tensions – sums up to the nth degree what is happening in these days and weeks in and around the Gaza Strip.

Every war is preceded, accompanied and followed by an intense, suffocating ideological mobilization. But there is no religious, national, ethnic, cultural discussion that matters. Do not bring up, with stupid and complicit ignorance, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and other disquisitions dear to academic ideology. Don't whine as priests do about the victory of Evil over Good. Don't gloat in the name of a pacifism destined to soon transform into support for the mobilization to defend “the homeland in danger”. Let's not fill our mouths with the usual hypocritical tirades about Humanity, about Democracy, about violated and trampled upon Law, about a thousand disregarded “UN resolutions”, about the threatened West. Do not hastily fall back on the latest fashion geopolitical analyses, which claim to say everything and in reality say nothing. Here there is only one explanation: this is capitalism, its ferocity lies entirely in its imperialist phase and the structural crisis within which it has been struggling for decades in a vain attempt to get out of it.

Even just staying within the post-World War II period, anticipated and inaugurated (remember it well) by the Nazi concentration camps, by Stalin's gulags, by the cities of Guernica and then Coventry and Dresden razed to the ground, by the atomic bombs dropped by US planes on the Japanese population, the wars have never stopped: Korea, Algeria, Vietnam, Afghanistan, and so on, and in addition all the upheavals that have shocked Africa immersed in colonial and post-colonial tragedies and Latin America transformed into the backyard, complete with bloody military coups, of Yankee imperialism, and today Ukraine and, in a macabre ritual that continues to repeat itself and in which only the disproportionate number of massacres of civilians (mostly proletarians) is growing, the Middle East... Perhaps we have left behind some other horrible example?

Capitalism is war. War is in the laws of its functioning, because capitalism is the war of all against all: on the market and in society, finally leading to war scenarios. Non-war wars and war wars: this is its reality, and we are not interested in repeating here, for the umpteenth time, the entire bloody path that accompanied the affirmation of the capitalist mode of production,

continued →

INSIDE

Alongside the men and women of the Palestinian proletariat!.... 3

We will not pay for your wars!... 4

Israel and Palestine: State terrorism and proletarian defeatism 6

The long job that awaits us..... 10

France. After the rebellions in the banlieues, what's to do now? 12

For the uncompromising defence of the proletariat's living and working conditions 15

Revolutionary communism is characterised by its violent conquest of power, the destruction of bourgeois states and the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat 21

After the appeal... Here is the counter appeal 26

Back to Basics. Considerations on the party's organic activity when the general situation is historically unfavourable (1965) 27

The cycle of national and anti-colonial revolutions is drawing to an end (1979)..... 31

its existence and today's obscene tragedy of the drag on of its agony. Of course, that of capital was a gigantic step forward, for the development of the productive forces, compared to previous modes of production: but a step forward paid, right from the beginning, with a tribute of blood on the part of the proletarian class, in the factory and in the streets as in the trenches, which, for ferocity and destructiveness, has no equal in human history (sorry! pre-history). And let no more be said!

Solidarity, therefore, with the Palestinian proletarians and those of the entire Middle Eastern area, victims of imperialism in all its national forms. Open criticism of all bourgeois formations which, in fomenting the nefarious illusion of a "homeland" (to be invented or defended), shut them within the confines of an incessant slaughter. Hard work alongside our international class so that it finally returns to the open fight against the capitalist vampire, awakening from the long tormented sleep full of nightmares into which the longest counter-revolution that has hit the workers' and communist movement has thrown it back - the only way to begin to give real and concrete solidarity to all the victims, today and future, of imperialist ferocity.

Just yesterday, a few weeks before this new horrendous chapter opened, after having briefly outlined the picture of the world situation, we wrote in our press: "Faced with this picture which in the coming months could see further, dramatic developments and accelerations in a pressing progression, the need for the strengthening and international rooting of the revolutionary party is increasingly clear: that is, for a stable political organization, founded on solid theoretical-political and tactical-strategic positions and the result of in-depth analyses and long militant experience, which knows how to connect all these elements and bring them back to their profound root (the survival of a mode of production long condemned by history) and, in doing so, propose again the real prospect of the seizure of power and the dictatorship of the proletariat, indicating both its real substance and the path, long and complex but necessary, to reach them". We have nothing else to add, in these weeks bathed in new proletarian blood.

Oct. 15th 2023

"The Marxist thesis states in particular that it is not possible for an individual brain to encompass a consciousness of the entire course of history in advance, for two reasons. First of all, because consciousness does not precede, but follows being, i.e. the material conditions that surround the subject of this consciousness; and secondly because all forms of social consciousness emerge - with a certain lag that enables a general determination of this consciousness - from the analogous, parallel circumstances, i.e. economic relations, in which the individuals who (thereby) constitute a social class are placed. These individuals are forced to "act together" historically long before they can "think together". The theory that defines this relationship between class conditions and class action and its ultimate goal has nothing in common with a revealed doctrine proclaimed by individuals, i.e. by a specific author or leader, or by the "whole class" conceived of as the gross, momentary sum of a number of individuals in a given country or at a given moment: and it most definitely cannot be deduced from a very bourgeois "consultation" within the class. "

(from "The False Resource of Activism",
General Meeting of the Internationalist Communist Party, 1952)

Alongside the men and women of the Palestinian proletariat!

Strangled by the State of Israel, daily tortured by constant harassment and killings, stuck in a blind alley of vain nationalist promises from all the Arab bourgeoisies in the region (including the Palestinian one), sacrificial victims of all the more or less subterranean wheelings and dealings of western and Middle-Eastern States, the Palestinian proletarians, both men and women, in the Gaza Strip are about to suffer the umpteenth wave of slaughter after the previous ones – perhaps long past but never forgotten with anger and horror – of *Tell Al-Zataar* (Lebanon, August 1976) and *Sabra and Chatila* (again Lebanon, September 1982), as well as the many more to follow. More hundreds and thousands of Palestinian deaths (men, women, children, old people) will thus add to the daily martyrdom suffered ever since that unlucky day in 1948, when the victorious powers in the second world bloodbath made the newborn State of Israel into the *armed police* of an area that was too “sensitive” (to use a term dear to today’s geopolitics) for their respective economic interests and political-strategic balances.

It is up to Western proletarians, exploited by their national capitalisms but in a way “privileged” compared to the world’s disinherited masses, proletarian or on the way to proletarianization, to start making their voice heard again, united in their fight against *daily exploitation*, which has a common root: the survival of the capitalist mode of production. Only by returning to a daily battle *against capital*, against its national accomplices in the form of political parties in government or aspiring to it and the régime’s trade unions by now stable supporters

of their States, against all the tragic reformist and pacifist, gradualist and democratic illusions – only by means of the battle against their “own” bourgeoisies and the “higher demands of the national economy”, *against all nationalist temptations, however they are disguised*, – only in this way, and not by means of the faded rituals of proclamations or occasional marches, will the proletarians of the West be able to give practical help to their Middle Eastern brothers and sisters who are heading today for the umpteenth massacre.

We internationalist communists stand alongside the Palestinian men and women of the proletariat, as we do alongside all those in all States in the area, as well as those already massacred by the wars and skirmishes that are multiplying in various other parts all over the planet. The world economic crisis in which capitalism has been immersed – on and off – ever since the mid-Nineteen-Seventies, is accelerating the process whereby a new, worldwide, inter-imperial conflict is being prepared: Ukraine, Sub-Saharan Africa, Nagorno Karaback, Kossov... This is why the prospect and practice of revolutionary defeatism must return: no alliance with our “own” bourgeoisie or those of other States, whose defeat we ardently desire!

So that the umpteenth mass martyrdom of the proletarian masses that is being prepared in the Gaza Strip will not be in vain!

Oct. 9th, 2023

(leaflet distributed, in various languages, during demonstrations in Italy, France, Germany, and available on our website)

WRITE TO:

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kommunistisches-programm@gmx.de

FOR QUERIES REGARDING OUR POSITIONS, WRITE TO:

Istituto Programma Comunista
Edizioni Il Programma Comunista;
Casella postale 272 - Poste Cordusio 20101, Milano (Italy)

We will not pay for your wars!

Wars are not unavoidable. They never have been.

They are the avoidable consequence of the bourgeoisie's rule.

There is no peace without a constant and unyielding struggle against the rule of the bourgeoisie!

■ We will not allow the title of “defenders of peace and human rights” to be claimed by those who have never offered anything but an economic and social system that perpetrates daily the violent exploitation of wage work over the majority of humankind, and destroys the natural resources of our planet, everywhere and mercilessly – an economic and social system that has now become intolerable.

An economic and social system that is the expression of the capitalist mode of production which has always had to *make war (and force us proletarians to make it unreservedly)* to survive itself.

In just two years in Ukraine, the massacre, the slaughter, has become a fact and this, just like every other war sparked off by national bourgeois States, is a human catastrophe that must be strongly contrasted without whining rhetoric: whoever believes they are defending “freedom” or “international rights” or even “human rights” by fighting “dictatorship” in the name of whatever country is claiming “self determination” or is to be defended, is *a victim and accomplice of the war propaganda of those accursed States.*

The “special military operation” raging in Ukraine is gradually assuming the characteristics of an imperialist war “by proxy” between the Russian Federation and the United States of America.

The USA is attempting to preserve its global supremacy in the single-pole era it thought it had conquered with victory in the “cold war”, whilst the Russian Federation, with an outdated strategy of expansion and direct control over its own former borders, is attempting to affirm itself as a possible pole of aggregation for those States trying to free themselves from this supremacy.

In terms of political (diplomatic and military) relations, this war is none other than one of the expressions of the crisis of over-production, whose paroxysmal pace has been crushing the capitalist mode of production ever since the end of the cycle of accumulation that followed the dramatic conclusion of the second inter-imperial conflict. It is a sign and a departure point of the clash that is being prepared between an emerging gathering of power at the Russian-Chinese barycentre and that serving the USA.

In this international picture, the chronic Middle-Eastern conflict has become dramatically and cruelly keener.

The action carried out by the Hamas commando on 7 October, degenerating into an authentic pogrom, provided the excuse for the State of Israel (which was already pursuing a policy of daily harassment and bloody repression of the proletarians and proletarianised masses concentrated in the Palestinian territories) to let loose in the Gaza Strip *a war of extermination bordering on genocide and ethnic cleansing*: in just over three months of bombing, the death toll is of 25,000 – with very few “warriors” affected but above all children, the disabled, the elderly, women... But on the other hand, Hamas’ cruel commando action was not a “spontaneous” reaction, a sort of intifada no longer armed with stones alone, to the increasingly aggressive policy of the Zionist settlements: it was *an act of war organized by the armed branch of a part of the bigoted nationalist, religious bourgeoisie* that wishes to demonstrate that it is more and better able than others to control *(and sacrifice)* over a million and a half of proletarians in Palestine, in the name of the cruel fetish of a tiny nation.

Just as we do not consider as isolated events the “special military operation” in Ukraine, the military manoeuvres off the coasts of China, the “neo-colonial” (sic) ones in Africa and all the other conflicts that have opened up for the control of commercial routes and strategic resources, in the same way, we do not consider *the tragic and terrible new flare-up of aggression towards the Palestinian proletarians* to be an isolated event.

Now more than ever, in the light of the historical experiences of our class in every corner of the world since the First World War, the attitude towards war has become a borderline and fracture between those who (like the reformist and pseudo-revolutionary reformists of every socialist-like, nationalist and religious colour) intend sacrificing the life and future of us proletarians in the name of and on behalf of the survival of the capitalist mode of production (embodied in the lies of Fatherlands, of Peoples and of National States) and the internationalist revolutionary forces, who work and organize our class to *fight it, overthrow it and move beyond it.*

Today again, those who support one warmonger or the other in power show their faces, invoking a presumed “right to self defence” for one “national community” or the other, losing themselves in presumed “pragmatic analyses” or “geopolitics...”, and thus avoiding coming face to face with the issue and nature of the imperialist war, its causes, objectives and effects. Not only do

they conceal the function of an imperialist war *as an expression of the capitalist crisis*, but above all they are accomplices of those States which, when faced with war and its preparation, try, in the name of “national unity”, to suffocate any form of resistance or social and economic struggle.

Again in the light of historical experience, it becomes evident that the different national factions into which the bourgeoisie organizes itself to try and overcome the crisis in which it finds itself, can only make the conditions of its rule more *authoritarian, corporative, openly fascist*.

Both in the big cities and on the outskirts of the capitalist world, the only bourgeois solution to the crisis of over-production is a constant worsening of wage workers’ living and working conditions: permanent and growing losses in real wages aggravated by fast spreading inflation; more intense exploitation of our work force through “greater individual productivity”, aggravated by digitalization, by longer working hours and a faster pace of work; limitation of the right to strike and demonstrate; intensification of administrative, legal and police repression... *all manoeuvres that prepare the war economy and national unity for war*.

- **Stop the slaughter, the ethnic cleansing in Palestine, Ukraine and the world!**
- **War on war!**
- **Organization everywhere for a radical class struggle against the State of Capital, its institutions and all its parties!**
- **Organization of the struggle to defend living and working conditions, to strike a hard blow at the bourgeoisie’s economic and political interests!**
- **Refusal to accept economic and social sacrifices in the name of the national economy!**
- **An open break with social peace and a determined return to the methods and objectives of the class**

struggle, the only real and practicable internationalist solidarity for us proletarians, both in the metropolises and in in the imperialist outskirts!

- **Refusal of any partisan complicity (nationalist, religious, patriotic, mercenary, humanitarian, socialist-like, pacifist...) in favour of any one State or front of States involved in the wars!**
- **Economic and social strike action leading to real general strikes, in order to paralyze the life of the nation and open the way for political strikes, for slowing down and preventing any mobilisation and war propaganda!**

With these firm principles (and in the course of battles that *it will be forced to fight*) our class, the immense body of those who have no alternative for maintaining themselves but to sell their labour, will be able to reclaim independence in the fight against its historical enemy, the bourgeoisie and the intellectualoid and parasitic half classes that support it, against their State and their institutions.

But not unless the militant avant-gardes of our class get organized along the lines of these contents (and not only on the necessary but limited terrain of unions, environmental and social etc. issues), attaining and strengthening the party of the communist revolution, will it be possible to prepare for new actions of anti-militarism and anti-patriotic defeatism.

Letting your own State and its allies be defeated, disobeying the military hierarchy in an organized manner, fraternizing with our class brothers (also trapped in their own “fatherlands”), holding on tightly to arms and armed systems to defend ourselves in the first place and then free ourselves from the tentacles of the bourgeois institutions: transforming the war between States into a war within States, civil war, revolutionary war.

Jan.9th/2024

(leaflet distributed, in various languages, in Italy, France, Germany, and available on our website)

“The Communist Party, the political party of the proletarian class, acts collectively on the operational basis of a unitary orientation. The initial motives that cause elements and groups from within this collectivity to organize for unitary action are the immediate interests that the economic situation produces among the different groups of the working class. The role of the Communist Party is characterized essentially by the utilization of the energies thus contained to attain objectives that, in order for them to be common to the entire working class and the result of all of its successive struggles, are integrated beyond the interests of particular groups and the immediate or contingent demands raised by the working class.”

(from “Theses on Tactics of the Communist Party of Italy”, also known as “Rome Theses”, 1922)

Israel and Palestine: State terrorism and proletarian defeatism

■ We have considered it more than opportune to republish here the evaluations and comments from early 2009 devoted by our Party to the battle that had broken out then in those very months (Operation Cast Lead) as a new chapter in the interminable war that the State of Israel is waging with the complicity and direct responsibility of all the “Arab” states in the region - a complicity which, up until the “Yom Kippur war” and then the Lebanese attack, took place with an apparent military confrontation and then through diplomatic dialogue, ending up with political and economic agreements. From “Operation Cast Lead” to the one now going on, called “Operation Iron Swords”, nothing has basically changed, if not the exponential increase in the military power unleashed in the Gaza Strip onto a defenceless population, in a bloodbath that now verges on genocide. The State of Israel, repeatedly celebrated as “the best consolidated democracy in the region”, confirms its true nature and its role as a counter-revolutionary gendarme. On the other hand, the Palestinian bourgeoisie hasn’t even managed to come up with a State structure but, with the territory divided into two Bantustans, is prospering from the exploitation of an economy whose only source of income is “international aid”, cultivating the illusion of permanent guerilla warfare. Even from an exquisitely bourgeois point of view, any diplomatic solution (“two peoples, two States”) proves tragically impracticable. Once more it is clear that, since the revolutionary potential of anti-colonial movements turned off in the mid-1970s, the unresolved “national issues” have mutated into counter-revolutionary cancers that suck the blood of a proletariat imprisoned in religious, patriotic and national illusions. It is for this reason that our 2009 analysis remains tragically topical.

What has happened in the Gaza Strip has been the most widespread military exercise in manhunting, target shooting and decimation carried out *against the Palestinian proletariat* for forty years now. At least one thousand, three hundred deaths, thousands of wounded and homeless, Israeli tanks running around from north to south, planes and ships bombarding the new “ghetto” of Gaza, immense devastation. As the economic crisis rages throughout the world, the deadly terrorism of the State of Israel - a State which, by reason of its history, is the avant-garde of bourgeois ferociousness, as well as the USA’s imperialist outpost - is the very same terrorism that sooner or later will rain down viciously onto the international proletariat.

Only a few months ago, we wrote: “Palestinian proletarians in Gaza, besieged from outside by an army armed to the back teeth, and controlled from the inside by Hamas militia, plunged into a state of constant alarm by ‘back-garden missiles’ and by the deadly and continuing Israeli air raids that indiscriminately decimate the population, continue to retrace their footsteps constantly in the infernal circle of their tragedy. Unfortunately no revolutionary defeatism against military interventions and the police State is forthcoming from the Israeli proletariat, indifferent and silent for so many long years, shuttered into the defence of their privileges and still prevented from escaping the meshes of an iron cage of exponential corporative unionism and the powerful machinery of national-religious consensus. And no acts of defeatism either, from the Arab-Israeli proletariat, still incapable of getting to its feet, isolated and despised by the powerful Israeli middle classes, also controlled by the opportunism in its rank and file, in religious rather than labourist or patriotic forms. And even less defeatism from the immigrant proletariat (Chinese, Philippine, Thai etc.), driven by need and still too young to refuse the competitive function assigned to it against Palestinian proletarians [...]. Unfortunately, no revolutionary defeatism against the ‘Palestinian business committee’ in the Strip and on the West Bank is advanced, not even by the Palestinian proletariat, which is still incapable of conceiving of itself as such, so that the scenario of a fatherland to be conquered (a ‘fatherland gaol’) will continue to be staged and renewed, although the stage never changes. All the players are nailed to this tragic present: and it can only be broken by re-opening the class struggle internationally and in the imperialist strongholds of which Israel is the essential pillar in the Middle East.” (“Gaza, or the fatherland gaols” *il programma comunista*, n.2/2008).

We therefore appealed, and appeal now, to a *resurgence of the class war worldwide*, upheld by our irrepressible confidence that the proletariat will be able to break out of the dead end to which it has been confined by 80 years of counter-revolution. The present world crisis will inevitably lead us into the eye of the storm and prepare the *objective conditions* for the proletarian revolution. What is happening today and will happen in the coming few years will be dictated by this historical necessity. The paths are not infinite and not casual: they are as certain as the bourgeoisie’s need to conserve itself eternally as the main dominant class is certain, even at the cost of social cannibalism or global warfare. “*Either the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or the dictatorship of the proletariat*,” is written in the tables of historical materialism.

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The Palestinian situation – which was presented as capable of becoming the detonator of social transformation in the Middle East, an explosive mixture grafted onto a so-called unresolved national issue (as we have repeated so many times and as has been confirmed by the many historical events that have taken place in the Middle East since the mid ‘70s) – has changed dramatically. The proletarian stamp assumed by the social contradictions present in the area has been emerging for decades in an increasingly explosive form, proving conclusively that patriotic ideology has merely fuelled social oppression not only by the Israeli bourgeoisie but also by the Arab-Palestinian bourgeoisie. Just one proof of this are the 4.6 million refugees, distributed as follows: in Jordan (1.93 million), in Lebanon (416 thousand), in Syria (456 thousand), in the West Bank (754 thousand) and in the Gaza Strip (1.09 million) – all subject to restrictions, checkpoints, police action by the official “friendly governments”. *The proletariat of the Middle East has now become an integral part of the international proletariat, as is confirmed by the enormous migratory flows of the past few decades - and against it, the Arab-Israeli bourgeois alliance wages its class war. This is why at this tragic time the Middle-Eastern proletariat cannot be asked to give what it cannot in terms of a prospective recovery of the revolutionary outlook, unless the class war first manifests itself to its full potential where the heart and brain of Imperialism lie, where the levers of power are situated, i.e. in the imperialist cities. The Palestinian proletarian struggle cannot be closed into a national container: survivors of a Stalinist stamp and petit-bourgeois anti-imperialists in the West who continue to demand that it should fight for a people’s, or democratic, nation by opposing patriotic resistance, are rascals who are attempting once again to destroy the potential for battle intrinsic in the condition of a class that has nothing to lose but its chains.*

Though apparently so powerful, the Israeli bourgeoisie is blinded by its own political intellect, the idea that by dint of willpower, by killing and massacring, it can overthrow all obstacles. Though seeing clearly the social misery it is immersing it in, it cannot grasp the fact that the proletariat cannot be eliminated, that *the “beggarly scoundrels” it is terrorizing today will end up by destroying it tomorrow.* It is not Hamas and the so-called national cause that resist the bombing and the ground attacks, not the guns and the missiles, as the so-called militiamen boast: what does so is the solid wall of proletarian reality, despite the high price it pays for this. All Israel will be able to do is extend its front line or drive the massacre to its bitter end, if it wishes to reach the objective of eliminating Hamas in the present situation: otherwise, it will be driven to another, umpteenth ceasefire), worsening its own living conditions and “security”. With a ceasefire, at the expense of the proletarians, Hamas would give proof of its bourgeois, dictatorial vocation. If its organization were eliminated,

the overall scenario of the class war would not change, because *it is the proletariat that is the true, albeit unaware, protagonist of present reality and nothing can change this fact.* And in any case, it is exclusively the encounter of the class party with the proletariat that will be decisive: not only in the Middle East but, first and foremost, in the imperialist strongholds.

At this tremendous moment of watershed, we do not despair of the Middle-Eastern proletariat finding the strength to escape the network of opportunism in which it is imprisoned. As in the great battles of the past, we hope that it will be able to bring onto the field the best of fighters for its cause: that it will be able to make the unfortunately inevitable, present defeat into a point of departure towards a future richer in victories. As in revolutionary Paris in 1871, as in Saint Petersburg in 1905, we will show it *not* the path of surrender and disarmament, but that of *the independent revolutionary political and organizational struggle: the transformation of this hopeless battle that it is obliged by Hamas to fight, into the great revolutionary class battle, in full awareness that the defeat of such a powerful enemy also strikes at the whole of the enemy front.*

In suggesting once again the need for *economic, political, military defeatism by the Israeli, Arab-Israeli, immigrant and Palestinian* proletariat, united throughout the area and above all in the State of Israel, we certainly do not dream of transforming the present imperialist attack into civil war simply with a slogan; nor of automatically transforming the fight for economic defence into a revolutionary battle. We are addressing our class brothers, a militant avant-garde which today is in an isolated and obscure condition, so that they may shake off the infernal trap of the reactionary present, and finally acknowledge *the proletariat as the only revolutionary class*, considering every national hypothesis closed, while reaffirming the absolute need for the dictatorship of the proletariat guided by the international communist party.

Nonetheless, this programmatic, theoretical and tactical indication would be a toothless weapon if it did not find expression (in the form of struggle and organization) in the living flesh of the gangrene from which the reactionary infection spreading through the body of the world proletariat stems. It is here in the West that economic and political defeatism must release its full potential. It is here that it must be explained to the proletariat (with patience, clarity and confidence) *how urgent and relentless the fight for the defence of our living and working conditions is*, the only path for moving forward to a *class offensive*. There is no alternative for saving the Palestinian proletariat under attack, for relieving its suffering, for leaving a stable mark in the class memory and healing the national split in the body of the proletariat as a whole.

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All those forms of struggle that promote unified and compact class organization are necessary and urgent; all forms of unionism, larger or smaller, that defend corporative interests in any economic sector, must be refused; defeatist proposals must be brought forward in all places, to force the bourgeois class enemy, wherever it may be, to loosen its hold on even the tiniest proletarian faction fighting; pacifism and disarmament, anarchist, moralist and individualist immediatism must be refused; the urgency of *the return of the revolutionary class party onto the scene* must be proclaimed and affirmed. Though not actively taking part in the ongoing bloodbath, *the bourgeoisie in any nation is jointly responsible in the first instance; class war* must be directed against it. At the moment, may class solidarity and the battle cries of brothers in all parts of the world reach the Palestinian proletariat; in the words of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg as the German and international proletariat were sent off to be slaughtered in the first World War: *“The enemy to be fought is here in our own country!”*

Historical materialism teaches us that as the Israeli bourgeoisie creates a wasteland around itself, it also weakens the conditions for its own existence, founded as it is on the exploitation of the Arab working class. Proletarianization both inside and outside the State of Israel has long been mature and with it the increasing poverty and siege of the strongholds of its wealth. When capitalist production shows its profound fragility, no social pact (either between classes or at the battlefield) can last, no territory is safe from incursions and attack. The time of mobilization, the recall of army reservists, the concentration of troops or targeted attacks belong to the field of the illusory solutions to contradictions that have become irreparable. It is no longer a matter of defining a path for ceasefire or “peace agreements”, as the pious souls covered by Israeli tanks continue to imagine, nor of finally coming to a division of the territory between two (or three?) States: all pacific intervention becomes precarious and inconsistent - mere palliatives. With the arrival of the economic crisis, the need to face the political problem of the State of Israel on an overall, Middle-Eastern, economic scale is becoming urgent, because Israel is not a foreign body within the Middle East, but has for some time been an essential part of the overall, imperialist scenario. When the time comes, the State of Israel will be called upon to be one of the main players in the partition of the Middle East: without this, it is nothing and remains nothing (it is still dealing with the issue of defining its own borders!). Because of the economic crisis, the risk of the political and economic failure of the State of Israel, completely lacking in natural resources and dependent upon the Arab bourgeoisies greedy for income and profit, may reach a point of no return. Whilst it is true that the economic tremors have not yet reached a catastrophic level, this is nonetheless the baseline against which the present action of policing the Palestinian proletariat can realistically be measured.

From the point of view of this long-term analysis, Hamas is not the real objective of this umpteenth attack, as is instead repeated in many quarters. Hamas is a contingent justification of little value, what remains of the political-religious nationalism of a parasitic bourgeoisie, supported by the “lords of ceasefire and peace” (with payment for social assistance) and by the “summit meetings” of the great Arab financiers and political, economic and strategic interests far greater than Hamas - all those who are now tired of granting credit and aid, now that in the economic crisis credit has melted away like snow under the sun. The economic blockade the Gaza Strip was subjected to since Hamas assumed its political and organizational direction increasingly risked suffocating its very existence; the opening of the border with Egypt at the beginning of the year led to the need for an escape; the economic crisis has reduced and is closing down all “living space”; the aid from Arab countries - the Palestinian proletariat’s foreign reserves - is dwindling. It was necessary to escape this trap and get rid of this fake truce. Abu Mazen, the creature of the Israeli-Egyptian alliance (Mubarak knew beforehand of the attack and supports the annihilation of Hamas by closing the frontiers with Egypt, reporting the tunnels and preventing hundreds of refugees gathering on the border to flee the country), is not the solution: he merely represents a corrupt Palestinian bourgeoisie, tired of continuing to play for a loss and tugged to and from by the real protagonists in the Middle-East. For their own part, Hamas’s “religious opium” brothers in Lebanon (Hezbollah) can only play their own game if their objectives are limited, transiting from one truce to another. Opening up the Lebanese front against Israel would, in any case, signal an extension of the conflict, the development of which would not be decided by Israel alone. The clash between the “Palestinian brothers”, the accusations launched by Al Fatah against Hamas (accused of holding the civilian population hostage) and the expectation that Israel would do the dirty work in Gaza City, entering aboard Israeli tanks, are the cruellest aspect of this sequence of events that has now reached its objective.

The recent, vigorous, working-class and union struggles (in the textile and building industries, particularly in Dubai and Cairo), the fierce fights for bread that broke out more or less all over the Arab world, are typical of capitalist development. The immense mass of credit capital capable of upholding gasping American and European capitalism, and the soaring price of oil reserves that then dropped to their historical limits - all this accompanies the fragility of this parasitic, financial capitalism. The political-strategic panorama speaks clearly to those who wish to see: the Iraqi swamp into which the great US “freedom” army has sunk, the revival of Indo-Pakistani claims, the increasing boldness of the bourgeois Afghani gangs and the dispatch of more

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American troops to the area, added to the latent political crisis in Iran all bear witness to historical developments whose scenario is destined to grow worse, day by day. It is the path of these historical developments that events in Gaza are following and will follow, *quite apart from the awareness that those involved have of them.*

Whether UN or Arab troops intervene on the Egyptian borders or in Gaza City, this does not solve the problem: indeed, it demonstrates *the absence of any way out.* Whether Hamas is a valid interlocutor, in the sense that it recognizes Israel's right to exist, or whether it remains a terrorist group with a high level of democratic consensus amongst Palestinians, this makes no difference to the State of Israel (didn't the terrorist Arafat become Abu Mazen's foster father?). From Sharon's walk across the Temple Mount to the return of the Gaza Strip to Egypt and from there to the Palestinians, from the Sabra and Chatila massacre in Lebanon to the decolonization of the Strip by the same Sharon, *there is no break, but simple continuation.*

What will cause governments most alarm, if the bloodbath continues, will be the massive declarations of solidarity from the Arab capitals (where the harsh clash between the two nationalist wings will spread) and from the many capitalist strongholds (where the Arab and in particular Palestinian proletariat has lived for decades). The conditions of exclusion that proletarians of different nationalities have been subjected to, the brandishing of racism and religious differences (weapons widely used by the bourgeoisie) give and will continue to give demonstrations a mark of impotence and weakness that the various religious and nationalist leaders will exploit in alliance with the local bourgeoisie, *to avoid class contagion.* Bourgeois governments will do all they can to break the instinctive bond with far-off proletarians massacred by such powerful forces: this bond, too, has its material role in the struggle, while the storm of "cast lead" strikes at homes and bodies. And so we trust that this instinctive bond with the immigrant proletarian masses in the imperialist cities will manage to find the *path towards unrelenting class warfare* and not the one of nostalgia for an impossible fatherland and the dream of a divine presence that will redeem them forever from the yoke of oppression. The marches that take place under the symbols of prayer do not confuse us (don't let us forget

that the first Russian revolution began under religious symbols *but soon mutated into revolutionary class war*), just as we are not confused by "secular positions", more lethal than bullets: pacifism, disarmament, reformism with or without guns, children of the same enlightened or romantic, bourgeois culture.

If the profound economic crisis will drive the proletariat beyond the wall of silence raised by the counter-revolutions led by all varieties of right- and left-wing bourgeoisies, both secular and religious, if it is driven to take a stand to defend its historical class objectives, then the first part of the revolutionary task will be achieved. The rest will come from *the presence of the class party*, the necessary guide of the revolutionary process moving towards the seizing of power and establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

[NOTE As we conclude this article, it has become clear that Hamas's hope of being acknowledged as an interlocutor has been extinguished; the truce, it is being said, will be unilateral (Israel can halt or re-open the massacre when and how it wishes) and at the hub of the latest talks are the US-Israeli agreements (first on launching the attack and then on ending it) against the provision of weapons through the tunnels. It also seems that the US does not intend taking part in the forces of intervention and control: who will be left with the hot potato? the Egyptians? Abu Mazen? the diligent French? the UN or the Arab States? Israel proposes an open-ended truce (as against the annual truce of Hamas!); and the Arab League? simply a family chat. Business as before then - apart from the thousand or so deaths and the many thousands of wounded: children, women, the civilian population in general. We are ready to bet that the money for reconstruction will be found, that the Palestinian bourgeoisie (the patriotic builders and businessmen) will readily answer the call: profit is well worth a thousand or so deaths. And there is no doubt that Israeli banks will loosen their purse strings: good deals ahead! there will be employment in the building industry, there will be new social buffers and above all political management (blackmail) of aid, there will be many religious blessings, both on the one side and on the other...*Amen*]

November 2023

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THE LONG JOB THAT AWAITS US

The sequence of events that has marked the first half of 2023 should be considered and understood as a whole for what it has to tell us, without isolating individual components.

After the great flare of rebellion from Iran's young proletarians in autumn 2022, which showed just how hard it is for the State – the armed extension of the ruling class – to contain the anger of the exploited, in the opening months of the new year a wave of unrest swept Great Britain, affecting many sectors in the world of work. After only a short time, in France widely supported demonstrations against pension reform spread for several weeks. In the meantime, strong protests shook the world of work in Germany. And for the moment we can pause here.

In all these cases, those who came out onto the streets were mainly (*but not only*) workers who were in some way “protected”, but still threatened by the loss of some of the miserable “guarantees” that had been hard won over time. And there were fragile attempts to set up, *in the field and not around a table*, grass-roots organisms to get round the control (always massive and in the end decisive in diluting the protests and bringing them to heel) of the powerful union structures so widely integrated into the State: fragile attempts such as those of the “Angry Workers of the World” in Great Britain, the “*sans papiers* committees” or the refuse collectors in France, the “Network of Militant Unions” in Germany – organized, with all their various limits, by the most exploited workers who thus made their voice and their militancy heard.

At this point, in July, the revolt of the French *banlieues* exploded: a spontaneous uprising, more individual than collective, which invested numerous towns and cities well beyond Paris and was a revealing symptom of the profound

frustration and oppression of a young and marginalized proletariat.

Compared to all this, in Italy, apart from the generous battles of ultra-exploited sectors, the great majority of whom immigrant proletarians (battles often fought in desperate isolation and exposed to lurid persecution by magistrates and the forces of “law and order”), everything seems to be stagnating in the false, ultra-democratic contraposition of fascism/anti-fascism. In the meantime, the nation's ruling class proceeds to dismantle “guarantees” and the scarce remains of welfare surviving from the “glorious” years of an economy in full swing – a process which, together with the reinforcement of systems of strict control and open anti-proletarian repression, involves all countries, perhaps at varying speeds and levels of intensity but always oriented towards safeguarding the *status quo* that has been in crisis for decades with no way out other than the preparation of a new world war to burn and destroy excess production, also destroying a large quota of *surplus proletarian population*.

Yes, war - indeed wars: don't let's forget them. In Ukraine we witness Russia's progressively more chronic and festering Special Military Operation (sic!), without this arousing *real and significant* defeatist class reactions in either country. Meanwhile, in sub-Saharan Africa, tormented for years by imperialist predators, the clash over the decomposing corpse of old French colonialism grows more acute (after Mali, Niger and perhaps to a less striking degree Senegal, and more recently Gabon), aided and abetted by the process of Russian and Chinese penetration – another episode, the one affecting Niger and Gabon, which cannot be interpreted through the lens of a “rebellion” against an assumed “neo-colonialism” (as many hasten to declare) but which is

a new chapter in the inter-imperialist clash that in this case, too, has been going on for decades. In South-East Asia the “Taiwan issue” and, more in general, that of a military control over the Southern China Sea remain critically open, whilst closer, in the Middle East, already hosting the ... Peace Missions (sic!) “made in the USA”, the merciless slaughter of Palestinian proletarians by the State of Israel continues with the patently obvious complicity of the Arab bourgeoisies in the region, including their Palestinian component. In the meantime, in a not-so-underground manner, the economic and financial contrast between the United States and China becomes more and more evident and we see attempts, though not always successful, by the “younger” imperialisms (the so-called Brics) to draw up real alternatives to the balances of power that have ruled the long post-war decades. As to Europe... well, it has once more become evident that it doesn't exist as a united political subject: all the more so with Germany, once the driving force behind it, now entering recession...

All this (and more: we limit ourselves here to a quick summary, with due respect to the “geo-politicians” who overwhelm us with analyses so that we fail to understand anything) is happening on a planet that is suffering visibly from the devastating effects of only three centuries of production for profit, what with “natural” disasters, massive pollution, erosion and dilapidation of resources, boundless cementification and all the other delights we are familiar with but regarding which there is no desire to understand (better: anything and everything is said and written in order to hide it) the direct link with the *modus operandi* of Capital, with the result that widespread and impotent existential Angst is fuelled, particularly amongst young people.

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All in all, the picture is of a world capitalism in a destructive and self-destructive state of panic faced with a crisis of over-production which has been dragging on since the mid 1970s; of a ruling class, in its various different national sections, engaged in cutting away (as it always has done in recurring periods of crisis) as many “dried up and unproductive branches” as possible, strengthening in all possible ways the structures of control over its historical arch-enemy and preparing for a new world war between imperialisms; and a proletariat still largely suffocated beneath the weight of the decades of counter-revolution that have deprived it not only of *the sense of its own potential power* and the memory of *its proud and battlesome past*, but also of the hope in a “new world”, *the longing for a classless society*. Faced with this picture, which could experience further, dramatic developments and accelerations at an increasing pace and in headlong succession in the coming months, the need for a stronger and internationally rooted *revolutionary party* becomes increasingly clear; that is, a stable political organization founded on solid theoretical-political and tactical-strategic positions which are the fruit of thorough analysis and a long experience of militancy and which can bring together all these elements and trace them back to their deepest roots (the survival of a mode of production that has for a long time had a historical sentence hanging over its head) and, in this way, propose once again the real prospect of the seizing of power and dictatorship of the proletariat, indicating both the substance and the path for achieving it, long and complex as it may be. The problems that the long,

disastrous and bloody agony of capitalism cannot fail to struggle with urgently need to be solved. What is communism, against all the ideological mystification and manipulation the counter-revolution has fed up onto the point of intoxication for a century, at all levels. What are the dictatorship of the proletariat and the revolutionary party’s role in it and what do they consist in. What is the dialectic relationship that should unite the revolutionary party and the proletarian class on the rocky road of its struggles, consisting in advances and retreats. What features, what political-organizational structure and what theoretical-practical tasks should the revolutionary party have as the proletariat’s militant avant-garde. What has happened to the workers’ and communist movement over the course of the past century, above and beyond the convenient narratives dished out by mainstream ideology through its opportunistic aiders and abettors. How to work realistically towards revolutionary defeatism against current wars and above all those that are being prepared. What do “democracy” and “fascism” really mean in capitalism’s imperialist phase, and how to fight against both. From the point of view of revolutionary strategy, what is implied by the final closure of the cycle of national and anti-colonial revolutions in the mid 1970s... These problems and many others have found answers from us, despite our being a minority and counter-current, over decades and decades of struggle without quarter against the multiform bourgeois enemy: not as a sterile intellectual exercise but *in contact with our class*, its fights and its experiences, both positive and negative, *to prepare it for revolution*,

no matter how far away this may appear. And we shall continue to do this because it is only around these answers that new generations of revolutionaries can gather with the real intention, and not just words and lengthy rhetorical acrobatics, to put an end to this vampire called Capitalism, once and for all. But this requires long and thorough work: the proof is the inertia that continues to hold back our class and its sudden explosions which, however, in this situation without clear and precise political objectives indicated by the presence and widespread action of the revolutionary Party, leave little or nothing to show for them – and, unfortunately, more frustration than actual positive experience. Only in this way will it be possible for our own programme (*the historical objectives of a proletariat that is finally revolutionary*, verified and confirmed in the light of the lessons received from the longest counter-revolution the proletarian and communist movement has ever had to suffer) to counter both the stupid arrogance of mainstream ideology and the grim role played by a reformism which, although unable to count as it once did on the crumbs handed out by expanding capitalism to delude the proletarians, continues to play its own paralyzing and castrating role; and to free ourselves from the ragged embrace of the half classes which, in their search for an impossible social and cultural identity, act as vehicles for all the foul vapours emitted by the decomposing corpse of a mode of production that has come to its own historical terminal and, by acting this way, keep it alive.

September 2023

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FRANCE. AFTER THE REBELLIONS IN THE *BANLIEUES*, WHAT'S TO DO NOW?

Events around the outbreak of rebellions in the French *banlieues* between the end of June and start of July this year, after the cops' cold-blooded murder of a young proletarian on the streets of Nanterre, are well known enough to warrant returning to the narration: in fact, it is not sufficient to add up figures, breaking news, names and episodes, to understand what was going on. For a political evaluation of use for the future, it seems far more useful to us to dwell on a few points we consider to be significant. First of all, it should be pointed out that the rebellions that have broken out in the past few years have not affected the "suburbs of the empire" alone, where there is less possibility of control, prevention and social repression, but the ancient metropolises right at the centre: just let's think of what happened in the USA in 2020. So we write 'Nanterre' but we might read Minneapolis, and vice-versa...

But to remain in France, it must be emphasised that in terms of extension to a national level and the dynamics of the clashes, what happened during those days undoubtedly marks a leap and a bound compared to the rebellions that exploded at the end of 2005 around the outskirts of Paris, then, too, because of the death of two kids being chased by the cops. On the spur of the moment, we wrote then: "the anger of the young people in the suburbs, exploited, shut in ghettos, strangled by an increasingly suffering economy, pursued by a police force that is well known for its unrelenting harshness and obtuse

cynicism, broke out unexpectedly and inarrestably: the umpteenth demonstration of the *increasingly profound ill-being* that is hatching in the society of capital, the *violence* that exudes from its every pore, its *total and organic incapacity* to solve even one of the problems it itself has caused. A whole mode of production that effectively demonstrates how bankrupt it is and which the young proletarians in the squalid and suffocating suburbs have brought to judgement in a direct and instinctive manner - with their anger and rebellion"¹.

Since then, at least two factors must be borne in mind: the outbreak in 2008 of the great global crisis which the capitalist mode of production has never managed to leave behind it, continues inexorably crushing the lives of proletarians in suburbs throughout the world (and not only); and, in the space of the eighteen years that have since gone by, the significant generational shift. And so poverty, alienation, exclusion and anger have spread exponentially and have clashed (it can be said on a daily basis) with police repression, armed with cutting-edge weapons of mass destruction, internationally developed. And it is on this scenario that the generation of the *petits*, as the kids and young people (between 13 and 18) are called, have grown up and become protagonists in the recent clashes. Under the material pressure of these facts, the *banlieues* themselves have gradually undergone transformation: a *class divide* has increasingly been seen within them, between a proletariat

destined for a precarious life, unemployment, a meagre day-to-day survival, and a lower middle-class of shopkeepers, religious leaders, store managers etc.

This split, already evident in 2005², widened over the days of the uprising. As always came the hypocritical yapping of the self-righteous, scandalised by the raiding of supermarkets and other shops in what are really authentic ghettos. But what do these raids demonstrate if not the *class divide* in the *banlieues* all over France? On the one hand young and very young proletarians, filled with anger, rabid, lacking a future and lacking hope, and on the other a world which in miniature cannot help reproducing the dominant structures characterising the bourgeois and petit-bourgeois universe.

The situation has some interesting reverberations, at least *potentially*. In one of the rare, reasonably lucid comments we have happened to hear, a famous sociologist like Marc Lazar declared explicitly that the *petits* do not feel "either French" (because "integration" has failed to work: how about that!) "nor Algerians, Moroccans or Tunisians". Now, we do not have the possibility of verifying how solid this affirmation may be: on the other hand, it is highly probable that it is, since due to their young age, the *petits* are as removed from the generations that figured in the "struggles for Algerian independence" in the 1950s and 1960s, as they are from the religious superstructures that for years have suffocated intolerance and anger or channelled it into dead-end paths (such as Islamic radicalism in all its variations). If it were so, we would actually find ourselves with young people who survive and move in a social no-mans-land and, by their

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1. "Dal disastro di New Orleans alle periferie in fiamme di Parigi, altre verità semplici per il proletariato [From the New Orleans disaster to the Parisian suburbs in flames, more simple truths for the proletariat]", *il programma comunista*, n.5/2005.

2. "communists must state firmly that the rebels in the *banlieues* are proletarians, against all the moves going on to present them simply as 'immigrants' or as belonging to one ethnic, national or religious group or another", in *idem*.

actions, unconsciously proclaim their condition as pure proletarians³. Since its outset, communism has always emphasised that capital is *obliged* to produce its own gravediggers. The *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848) shows that the development of industry in itself produces an increasingly numerous proletariat: *capital has agglomerated population and the proletariat is concentrated in greater masses*. From 1848 let's move to today: what actually are the *banlieues*? An enormous concentration of proletarian population numbering millions. Dialectically, the elements on which the widespread accumulation of French capital are based, i.e. extra profits from the exploitation of the ex-colonies and the low-cost proletariat coming from them, turn against the bourgeois State. The metropolitan area of Paris has an overall population of 12 million: of these people, 10 million live in the *banlieues* and half of them are pure proletarians, with a poverty rate that often amounts to over 40%. Bourgeois sociologists speak of “the lost territories of the Republic”⁴. So it is not, therefore, generically a matter of racism. Racism (in politics, culture, the media, the “forces of law and order” and so on) is one of the *operational modes* in which anti-proletarian repression becomes manifest and is applied, as the sole, true State religion⁵. Instead, this is a class war, in which the clashes in the French *banlieues* constitute the latest chapter, adding to the many

episodes of rebellion that have taken place over time: for example in the United States and in very similar circumstances.

But let us go on to another point, very much debated in this regard, in France as elsewhere. Everyday, in all the world's suburbs, police violence strikes proletarians, young or not so young: and merely suggesting, as one often hears, the need for “police reform” and a “more suitable training”, “defunding” or even “disarming” the “forces of law and order” is an ingenuously criminal way of shutting our own or other peoples' eyes to reality. In the statement that we also released online, we clearly spelled this out: “Any organization of *gendarmes*, whatever picturesque name it is given by any State, is *the body formed to defend bourgeois property*: i.e. the ‘privilege’ of appropriating and sharing ‘private appropriation’ of what we proletarians produce *socially* (this means, *all together*), whilst we are used by the monopolised forces of production, defended tooth and nail by the impersonal bourgeois class, in its companies, stores, emporiums, schools.... And formed to defend “public order” which is which is not the serenity in which we all desire to live, in a peaceful and well behaved social environment, but the social climate in which the lurid actions of the society of Capital (from the violence of the free competition of all against all to the uncountable manifestations of alienation and

reification of men reduced to sellers of labour) may proceed undisturbed, putting up merely with the criticism of murmurings, whinings and at most indignant and even violent claims to a proposal for reform...”⁶.

Faced with the unstoppable anger of the youngest proletarians, the French state, “a model of freedom and democracy”, brought 45 thousand cops onto the field including assault troops and failing, despite all this, to stop the hugely dangerous proletarian youngsters, decided to resort to censorship of the social media. In fact, as we have seen in other similar situations over recent years, in order to coordinate, demonstrators have used the tools that the bourgeoisie would like to use for social control but which have turned against it! Faced with the rebellion of the young people from the *banlieues* (a rebellion which, we wish to emphasise, was still highly instinctive, individual, marginal: how could it have been otherwise in present conditions?), the democratic bourgeois dictatorship shows the real stuff it is made of⁷. Yet, in Paris and - it seems - mainly in Marseilles, as well as in various other towns and cities towards the south of France, the *petits* managed to block one of the notoriously most aggressive, ferocious, well-armed police forces, experts in control and repression (an experience gained by long experience, since their colonial past), showing enviable organizational and tactical capabilities.

But is this enough? Again in the statement quoted above, we emphasised that we communists “are not content with enthusiastically greeting the burning of the symbols of power,” whilst well remembering what an integral part it is of communists' revolutionary practice, summed up as follows by Marx, in the 1850 Address to the Central Committee of the Communist League: “Far from opposing the so-called excesses, cases of popular revenge on hated people or public buildings linked to nothing except hateful experiences, not only must

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5. See “Repressione e militarizzazione della società, unica e vera religione di Stato [Repression and militarisation of society, the one and only true State religion]”, *il programma comunista*, no.3/2023, issued just a few days before the outbreak of the rebellions.

6 “Francia: Mentre infuriava la rivolta... [France: while the rebellion raged]”, <https://www.internationalcommunistparty.org/index.php/it/165-flash/3385-francia-mentre-infuriava-la-rivolta>.

7 Once the storm had passed, on 14 July, the great feast of the French Republic, supreme emblem of the bourgeois revolution against the *ancien régime*, took place in an armour-clad nation, an authentic state of emergency: 130 thousand police officers ranged in France's major cities, special forces, helicopters and armoured cars, for fear of the rebellions breaking out once more; in the capital alone, around 45 thousand police officers and gendarmes, élite troops, drones and armed tank were deployed in the security arrangements. This was the *fraternité*... of the bourgeois republic, itself transformed into an *ancien régime*.

these examples be tolerated, but the direction of them must be taken in hand.”⁸.

This direction can be none other than that of the revolutionary Party, which forcefully re-presents the crucial problem of the *general re-armament (theoretical, political, organisational, tactical-strategical) of the proletariat*, without which no generous rebellion can lead to the overturning of bourgeois power. In the days of anger and those following them, beyond the foreseeable romantic hymns to rebellion (if not to insurrection, or a “class war” which, *unfortunately*, still resides in the dreams of supporters of spontaneity of all origins and branches, in view of the fact that for the moment “class war” is led by the ruling class *against the proletariat*), and apart from the inevitable appeals to the need to “recalibrate communist theory” (yes, because no-one has supposedly noticed the new... “class composition” of a proletariat no longer... shut up in factories - bingo!), a few timid mentions of the need for a revolutionary political direction have made an appearance here and there, but so feebly that they prove to be an appeal for the sake of making one: the “question of organisation, “the role of political synthesis (the programme), “the real rootedness of a fraction of communists at the heart of the class”... But why not state openly then, that what is missing and must be worked on (solidly, profoundly and broadly, without any illusions of short-cuts or acceleration by force of will power) is the Party, founded on the chain whose links cannot be detached or isolated:

theory-principles-programme-tactics-organization? Why not state this openly and at the same time roll up our sleeves and start seriously working on it?

In another article published just after the 2005 riots in the *banlieues*, we wrote: “The path leading from rebellion (blind, spontaneous, instinctive, destructive, as all uprisings always have been) to revolution is a long and winding one. Most of all, it is not linear and not progressive. It is an illusion to imagine a class recovery advancing perfectly smoothly, thanks to a renewed (it isn’t clear how and why) awareness by the working class knowing, acknowledging, choosing and finally turning to action again, solving all the knotty problems, overcoming all contradictions, proceeding thanks to a geometrical accumulation of numerical and political strength. *This is not what class war is*. Whoever deludes themselves or others that it is, does the proletariat a great wrong. Class war (*and above all the recovery of it after over seventy years of counter-revolution* [today those seventy years have become almost ninety - *ed*] is something quite different: it is a contradictory path made up of peaks and troughs, advances and retreats, along which the proletariat class (weighed down by all the inertia, all the filthy deeds, “all the old bourgeois shit”, as Marx called it) will once more start fighting for its own *immediate and historical* interests - and will do this by clashing with all the forces that are adverse to it, *but also with all the contradictions*

it drags with and within it and which surround it, putting on pressure and threatening it from all sides. Not an abstract proletarian class, mythical in its purity and homogeneity, uncorrupt and incorruptible, which already knows what it is fighting for, knows its enemies, is clear about its aims, advancing united from the factory to the streets, from the streets to power. But instead the proletarian class *produced by capital*, which is indeed the bearer of a new mode of production but *only* as long as it identifies itself in the revolutionary party: and not thanks to sudden enlightenment but thanks to *the difficult and complex work that this party has managed to carry on in contact with it in the long period of counter revolution first before and then right in the midst of the economic crisis*. This work cannot be avoided or cut short by acts of willpower, whether generous or futuristic - *it has to be done and that’s it*. Only then will the party be able to “reveal the class to itself” and the class recognise its own avantgarde in the party. Only then will the crisis of direction of the bourgeoisie turn from its sterile (indeed decaying and morbose) position of stalemate to a fertile pre-condition for revolution. Only then will the objective and subjective conditions increasingly tend to converge and rebellions take on a nature that is not merely that of desperation. Only then will insurrection and the seizing of power *finally* be on the agenda.”⁹.

Eighteen years on and in the context of a worsening and deepening crisis in the capitalist mode of production (wars, economic and financial destabilisation, environmental destruction, dehumanisation of social life, etc.) this need proves even more urgent today. Working towards it, we shall be able to lift the *petits* and all other instinctive rebels out of their desperation, frustration and illusions of all sorts and out of the ferocious repression and militarisation of the proletarian neighbourhoods defined as “problematic”.

8. Reference to another classical text of ours is a must here: “Viva i teppisti della guerra di classe! Abbasso gli adoratori dell’ordine costituito! [Long live the hooligans of the class war! Down with the worshippers of established law and order!]”, *il programma comunista*, n.14/1962, written right after one of the many explosions of proletarian anger (Turin, July that year), immediately stigmatised by the bourgeois and opportunistic press, as the work of “hooligans”.

9. “Ancora sui disordini nelle periferie francesi. Di fronte ai contraccolpi sociali della crisi economica, lo Stato borghese e l’opportunismo mostrano in pieno il loro volto [Once more on the riots in the French *banlieues*. Facing the social effects of the economic crisis, the bourgeois State and opportunism reveal their real faces]”, *il programma comunista*, n.1/2006.

FOR THE UNCOMPROMISING DEFENCE OF THE PROLETARIAT'S LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS

Types of organization, Methods and Objectives of the Struggle

Necessity of the Struggle for Economic Defence

From a communist perspective, the historical aim of conquering political power by means of a party-guided revolutionary insurrection, in order to establish THE dictatorship of the proletariat – the only possible way to obtain a classless society – must always be at one with the *necessity* that the proletariat fights *here and now* to defend its living and working conditions against the ever present pressures exercised by capital. The Communist Party cannot afford to ignore this defensive battle: it has to intervene to give it some direction and, possibly, direct it. Reformist enemies and capital would have the battle restrained in a purely economic terrain; employing its characteristic everyday guerrilla tactics, the Party using it instead as an opportunity to provide training and a school for the class war.

Communist action on the ground during these *defensive battles*, or *battles of survival*, comes hand in hand with a series of demands – mostly economic but social as well – that are pursued with fitting methods of struggle. Indeed, for communists the methods of struggle accompany the objectives in a mutually beneficial way that nourishes the class's revolutionary preparation.

Over the last 200 years, the limited action of socio-economic struggles waged spontaneously by the workers alone has demonstrated that, without the intervention of the communist party, proletarians will never be able to achieve a political action (acting as a class *for itself*, with its own historical-political objectives);

but even remaining at this level of economic struggle (i.e., as a class *in itself*, that is, as a mere workforce within the capitalist system), they are easy prey for reformists, and are sacrificed one after the other on capital's altar, their overall conditions worse than before.

Of course, during this century-long period of proletarian history – with its organizational ups and downs, revolutionary successes and defeats inflicted by the counter-revolution – the forms adopted by these struggles for economic defence have undergone many evolutionary changes and adjustments. And these changes have accompanied the transformation of bourgeois society's superstructures (for a more comprehensive analysis of these complex processes, readers are kindly invited to read our booklet: *Partito di classe e questione sindacale, Class Party and the Trade Union Issue*, 1994).

The outcome of this evolution within the framework of the modern imperialist phase has seen the traditional trade union structure transformed into a veritable organ of social and economic control of the proletariat. But this certainly does not mean that the *necessity of economic defence* has disappeared; likewise, neither has the radical and potential antagonism of the proletariat to capital disappeared. The self-same continuation of the economic crisis and the contradictions it has given rise to, and the social consequences thereof, has inexorably driven the workers of every imperialist state to *that* very battleground, and will force them once again to adopt stable structures of defence that will also

become one of the battlegrounds between communists and the assorted front line of the bourgeois, reformist enemy.

So, the communist party doesn't deny the economic and social defensive battles (maybe because – as some would have it – “now that capital is in crisis it can't concede anything”; or – as others would have it – because “the only prospect is the seizure of power”: both positions are infantile and mechanistic), but instead works alongside them, organizing and directing, stretching them beyond their inevitable limits, in order they become a dialectical element in the development of the class struggle in a revolutionary sense.

The Communist Perspective

The demands we shall be looking at later are a synthesis of the experiences that workers have been through and have to face every day. They are indications of *recurring* and *unchanging* struggles *because the capitalistic mode of production is unchanging*. But in order that the objectives can actually be pursued, they must have an irrevocable method of struggle, and it is this method that arms our *defeatism* against the economic solidarity with the society of capital and its state, starting from every worker's solidarity with their firm.

Every economic struggle inevitably has a “local” origin, a limited and, therefore, immediate triggering factor: yet if any form of long-lasting success is to be achieved, the struggle cannot remain confined to

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its origin. *Localism* (not restricted to “geographical” isolation, but including the limits of the firm, the category and the productive sector), that is, the limitation of an economic struggle solely to the area of its explosion, has revealed itself to be a primitive and inadequate means. Precisely for this reason, localism is much beloved of both workerist reformism – which glorifies the factory council or the enterprise committee – and corporatist reformism – which glorifies the category’s characteristics. Localism is the primary means by which the “natural” division between the workers (employed, unemployed, temps, local, immigrants, young, old, female, male and especially, belonging to this or that “category” or “productive sector”) is nourished, and it is one of the causes behind the weakening of the proletariat’s capacity for struggle. In contrast, *a more united and widespread front* can be more resistant and combative, and therefore in a position to inflict greater damage on the counterpart. Supporting the independence of each category and federation, or falling into the trap of “professionalism”, are symptoms of a system geared towards the maintenance of class division: united action, on the other hand, must tend to overcome all kinds of localism.

Methods of Struggle

Strikes

Strikes are *a means of struggle*, not a “right” graciously conceded and regulated by bourgeois law. And it is as *a means of struggle* that it must be used. To be precise, it is *the primary means of struggle* because by blocking the production and distribution of goods and services, it paralyses the economic life of the bourgeoisie and strikes at the heart of the only thing that interests employers and company directors: quick profits. Strikes should therefore be staged as widely and for as long as possible. They should be carried out with a view to

causing as much economic damage to the counterpart as possible; and, inevitably, in order that the majority of companies (and, possibly, the bourgeois state itself) suffer, any artificially created internal divisions should be overcome and workers from all sectors involved.

Strikes are the main weapons used in the proletariat’s economic struggle. In fact, the bourgeoisie, fully aware of their devastating repercussions, has always sought to curtail their effectiveness by transforming them into a “civil right” that can be regulated legally or, in extreme cases, “temporarily” suspended; but, most importantly, it has introduced a policy of self-regulation which is overseen by the self-same state-integrated trade unions.

Clearly, if the proletariat wants its intention to defend and fight to be felt in full (and it will be *forced* to do it), it will have to break with this conniving class collaboration with the bourgeoisie and its State.

The organization, extension, duration and conclusion of the struggle *cannot be negotiated a priori* with the opposing class, and can only be articulated according to the force and pressure brought into play.

Any legally imposed limitation is therefore to be flatly rejected; and above all, any unionised attempt at self-regulation, requiring notice to be given along with information about the strike – its propaganda, organization and duration – is especially to be rejected.

Strikes are *acts of economic warfare*, which directly affect the immediate and long-term future of the workers. No advance “notice” is necessary: they begin and end according to how the struggle pans out and to the relations between the powers involved.

Strike Funds and Union Organization

There’s an old saying about strikes that goes: “you have to resist one minute more than the owners.” Realistically, resistance comes at a price: wages lost during the strike

must be completely made up for and, most importantly, there must be an effective and organized economic solidarity on the part of all the workers.

In anticipation of strikes, workers’ organizations must come equipped with strike funds that will collectively support *all* the workers (with no arbitrary distinctions) and *anyone* who is wage-dependent.

This explains why the organization for economic defence must possess *stability* and *continuity*: there can be no winging it at the last moment.

For this reason, an economic support is expected when joining the organization. This support has to be managed directly by trustworthy workers in the workplace, district or division where the territorial union structure is organized: the union must not be allowed to automatically collect membership dues from workers’ pay checks – as though they were bribes or taxes!

Funds organized in this way go to support the organization itself, which requires the best among proletarians who be not only able to promote its regular tasks (structure, propaganda, mobilisation, etc.), but, especially, to support workers in their fight (preparation and collective distribution of the means of support and survival for strikers involved in the struggle, legal aid and direct support for all those who undergo repression at the hands of the bourgeoisie).

Lines of Struggle

Real wages

Wages are what capital has to pay workers to guarantee their existence. They include: the means of personal subsistence (food and a little extra to satisfy other needs); the means of subsistence for the family (rent, children’s education, etc.); professional training. The real amount paid to workers in the form of wages thus mainly depends on cycles related to the supply and demand of the labour

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commodity and, especially, on the power relations that exist between workers and employers. Wage rises bring about a reduction in surplus value, hence, at the mere thought of them, every member of the ruling class, company director, Member of Parliament and minister breaks out in a sweat and seeks to keep them under strict control.

So only the struggle is able to blunt profits (*temporarily*), allowing the class some *relief* from the pressing needs brought about by productivity (which means an increase in unpaid work over that which is necessary). Whether it be in periods of prosperity, or during the periodic crises to which capital is prone, rises in wages are unable to guarantee against their continual depreciation. No law (Constitution, Workers Statute), no contract, no index-linked sliding scale can pacifically protect wages: at most they can create stable conditions which, *in the long run, are detrimental for the class*. When it comes to protecting wages and resisting those rivalries that workers are forced to become a part of in any number of situations that characterise capitalistic society, there can be no alternative to the struggle, and the unity of workers. *Pay rises* cannot therefore be limited to any single worker category or sector: *they must be acquired for the entire class*. And all wage increases should be applied to the base salary because all other optional increases are functional to increased productivity, flexibility and production performance. Substantial temporary increases must be greater for the worst paid categories: not as a result of some misguided, abstract and moralistic sense of “justice” towards the other workers, but so as to guarantee *unity among the workers as a whole*, both in the present and the future.

Besides directly attacking wages (through cuts, etc.), the bourgeoisie also operates more indirectly, by *increasing the costs of the means of subsistence, tariffs, rents and transport* (measures that affect not only the workers, but also the middle and lower middle classes

during proletarianization). These are *amounts taken away from workers' wages*, so they have to be integrated within pay rises, avoiding any confusion with the generic and undifferentiated demands of the so-called “battle against the cost of living”. If *claimed separately*, and not included as part of a much wider wage claim, the reduction in tariffs, rents and transport is not a “class” request, but becomes a nondescript “popular request”. *Deductions* must also be taken into consideration in the fight for wages: we demand that *all deductions* – be they for sickness, unemployment, pensions or family allowances – *are eliminated*. All deductions must be borne by the capitalistic class and its state. On the same basis, any form of taxation that weighs down on workers must also be eliminated.

The Working Day

Our demand is that of a *drastic reduction in working hours for the same wage*, without any watering down for the duration of the contract: this must come into effect immediately because psycho-physical fatigue must be reduced at once to ensure the workers recover their strength without risking their salary. This reduction has to be calculated in daily working hours and weekly rest days. Further drastic reductions in working hours are necessary for those involved in dangerous or physically demanding jobs. Overtime – holiday or night-time – monetised in whatever way, is to be opposed, of course. Working hours must also be reduced further for round-the-clock jobs and night-work, until such time as they are abolished.

Employment Contracts

The employment contract is a one-way relationship that the counterparty imposes upon workers to ensure there is a labour-force available for a certain period of time (impossible to calculate beforehand) under the conditions of productivity imposed by the capitalistic reality. As such, workers have to consider that the contract may be *broken when those conditions cease to apply as a*

result of changing circumstances. Workers must be able to terminate the contract at any moment.

Dismissals and Unemployment

Of its very nature, capitalism is unstable and unregulated, hence workers will always find themselves having to deal with dismissals and unemployment. These processes are neither local nor temporary in character: the industrial reserve army – that is, the mass of reserve workers (the unemployed or under-employed) – is a kind of reservoir that opens and closes on a cyclical basis. And capital exploits this mass as a *rival alternative to workers that are employed*.

It is made up of immigrant workers (in growing numbers today), workers seeking their first job, female workers and lastly, in order of time, temps. Our demands are based not only on the *fight against dismissals*, to which the mass opposition of workers – national and across the board – must give its full support; but, more especially on the *defence of wages*, which must remain *entire for all those who have been dismissed* – whatever the reason – and borne by owners and the bourgeois State. So, no to short-term redundancy arrangements on lower wages. In their place: *wages paid in full until such time as the employee is reinstated*. Even when working times are reduced (part time instead of full time, or precarious positions with fewer hours and greater flexibility), the same wages have to be paid. As far as our rejection of dismissals is concerned, it goes without saying that there is nothing moralistic about this and, equally, no support for so-called “workplace culture”.

In Response to Restructuring

The restructuring that normally accompanies Capital (the replacement of machinery and workers to increase company productivity) is impossible to avoid, but its *effects have to be fought*. These include increased exploitation, more intense work rhythms and

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unemployment for supernumerary workers. To the abstract “No to restructuring” (similar to that of “No to increased productivity”), which really has no worth as far as the defence of working conditions is concerned, we need to answer by demanding *a radical pay increase and a radical reduction in working hours*. To avoid getting trapped in the monetization of health (because of the negative effects to be experienced as a result of more intense working hours and productive flexibility), we need to fight for *a radical reduction in workloads and workdays*, as well as fighting to *prevent the dismissals* that restructuring will inevitably involve.

In Response to Piece Work and Incentives

Capitalism’s dynamic includes squeezing out surplus value, and with this in mind a wide variety of incentives and productivity-linked rewards have been worked out. To these must be added various forms of piece work and overtime. In particular, piece work allows for an automatic reduction in working times in progress for the same standard of production, especially where automatized industrial systems are concerned; in turn, tax reductions for overtime have recently been used as an incentive to claw back part of the wages. All of this means workers – individuals or groups, continually or non-continually – are compelled to up their productivity rates in accordance with company production needs, and this pressure forces them to compete with one another. Low wages and stressful work conditions result in workers accepting incentives and productivity rewards, bonuses and temporary overtime; at the same time, in order to reduce time spent at work, days off are offered at intervals. Contractually speaking, these kinds of incentives are legitimised by trade union organizations which, thanks to these incentives, monetise productivity and *bring about a collapse in workers’ living conditions*. For our part, demands must be made that *all forms*

of incentives be eliminated. For this to occur it is necessary to force *a reduction in workloads with equal-pay, and in stress and work rates, and a refusal to negotiate over workloads according to technical-organizational parameters; and lastly, a radical increase in basic wages so as to reduce rewards and incentives, piece work, moonlighting and cottage industry work to a minimum*.

Qualifications

The organization of work within a company imposes a division of roles, responsibilities and professional parameters that are only in small part a result of technical divisions: they represent the ideological glorification of merit, professionalism and career. Employment contracts embody these features in a vast array of levels and sub-divisions into qualifications, justified by so-called technical parameters. Division serves to maintain *a climate of competition among company employees*. To combat these myths – which are expressed in particular forms of minimum and ultra-minimum rewards – the main request is for *an increase in the basic wages for equal working time*. At the same time, *the number of levels must be immediately and drastically reduced*, with immediate upgrade of category regardless of the work involved.

In Response to Deaths at Work, Accidents and Harm

The nature of capitalistic production is such that it appropriates surplus labour and surplus value 24 hours a day. Thus it usurps the time needed by the body to grow, develop and keep itself healthy, stealing the time needed to breathe freely and enjoy the sunlight, skimping on the time meant for meals and incorporating it into the self-same process of production, and reducing the time dedicated to sleep and the maintenance, renewal and restoration of vital forces. Capital is indifferent to the life expectancy of the workforce: its sole interest lies in *establishing the maximum extent to which the work force can be squeezed on any given day*. Starting with these

disruptive effects on the physical and psychic conditions of the workers, it becomes clear just how important it is to *impose drastic limits on the criminal effects of Capital*. First off, *a significant reduction in working hours*, especially for continuous cycle processing jobs, and those that are arduous or harmful, carried out in unhealthy, unventilated or suffocating environments, or which involve contact with toxic substances; and *all out resistance against the introduction of new shifts involving night-time hours too*. However, an adequate protection of living and working conditions necessarily entails a production cost which has to be subtracted from profit, so it can never be guaranteed: a drastic reduction in working hours is not enough. Workplaces will always be potentially dangerous for the physical and psychic welfare of workers: hence the need also for *workers’ combative action, organized and generalised, to interrupt and block production at the drop of a hat, wherever a risk – even theoretical – is reported as being probable*.

There is no fatality in workplace accidents. Companies aware of the risks have already taken them into account. So workers must *impose a united action from the outside*, that overrides not only the technical assessments drummed up within the factory, but also – and more importantly – the assessment of the entrepreneurial management, which has availed itself of experts, doctors, professionals, psychologists and lawyers well paid by the company. Together with the recognition of new professional diseases, other things must be assessed on a new footing: pensions, medical assistance and holidays; all medical care must be completely free and any days lost as a result of sickness must be paid in full, no category excepted. And workers must not fall into the trap of participating in company or trade union initiatives along the lines of “controlling the work environment”. Such initiatives exploit the evergreen myth of “workers’ control” and their

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sole aim is that of making the workers *jointly responsible for the working conditions* of their comrades.

Against Discrimination

The *defence of the living and working conditions of immigrant workers* is all one with the economic and social defence of all the workers. *Active, militant solidarity* with immigrant workers is a vital necessity for the proletarian class: without this solidarity the paralysing divisions introduced by the bourgeoisie cannot be overcome, and the immediate and future unity of the workers cannot be pieced back together. And effective defence against capital becomes difficult. The general indication “against all forms of discrimination” implies *the same treatment in and outside the workplace (wages, work schedules, dismissals, unemployment, housing, pensions, sick leave and holidays)* must be at the very centre of the struggle. The fight against discrimination must also involve the *female proletariat* in terms of both working conditions, wages (complete with increases) and work time (complete with drastic reductions), and living conditions (arduous work, overtime, night work, harmful environments, etc.). As for the *young*, the long years of apprenticeship and the related reduction in salary must be abolished. *All fixed term contracts must become permanent contracts*, especially where the following weaker categories are involved: immigrants, the young, women, agricultural workers, building workers, workers in the care services and public sector workers.

Union Organizations in the Imperialist Era and Union Democracy

During the current imperialist era, the transformation of unions into structures completely integrated within the bourgeois State has been facilitated by all manner of opportunism (social-democratic, Stalinist and “post-Stalinist”, social-religious, fascist and national-

socialist, workerist and even – for what little is left of it – anarcho-syndicalist). Hence the financing of the organization – which was supposed to remain *a material means of self-defence* – has been transformed into an out-and-out business.

In all countries – whether by means of direct support (a certain amount for each member) or indirect support (the “voluntary” deposit from the pay slip to the union through the company), or through the management of pension assets and co-participations in the institutes that administer forms of assistance – official unions live and prosper like parasites on the workers. Nowhere is their role as servile bureaucrats more evident than during strikes, when they “redistribute” part of what has been set aside in a clientelist and self-serving manner. In all countries the State provides official national unions with economic support, shielding them from attacks on the part of a proletariat sick and tired of all the retreats and serial trouncings. In this way the bourgeois State exercises social control over the proletariat and the masses of union members.

The most powerful bleach isn’t strong enough to get rid of all this mould. Only *by radicalising the struggle* can these blatantly bourgeois “job agencies” be done away with.

What is more, so-called “union democracy” (i.e., the official forms of organisation adopted, in the United Kingdom, by unions such as UNITE, Unison, and GMB and, in Italy, by the three main Confederations – Cgil, Cisl and Uil) weighs heavily on the spontaneity, vitality and future of the proletarian class. Their purpose within capitalist society is to act as pressure valves for the anger of the working class: diverting the class’s energy into bureaucracy and timid non-action. This is also the purpose of their “democracy”: in 2016, the UK legally mandated ridiculous voter turnout requirements for strike action, using it as a massive hurdle to meaningful action. Whilst the Conservative Party claims that Labour is being secretly controlled

by a cabal of radical “Union Bosses”, in reality it is that the state which utterly dominates the unions via the suffocating embrace of the Labour Party, which puts pressure on the unions not do anything that would damage their bourgeois credibility. Even the latest (2023) strike wave is ham-strung by the torturous legal and bureaucratic obstacles which the unions place in the way of any action which may damage capital. Currently, a Minimum Service Bill awaits approval by Parliament which would impose a legal minimum of workers required in certain sectors – conveniently many of those which have begun to fight in spite of these union-administered roadblocks. As to Italy, there was a time when the working class composition of the main Italian union (Cgil) had us believe that its direction could be taken over – “even to the sound of beatings” – or, at least, that its original class origins could be recuperated (end goals, methods of struggle, objectives); but today that possibility is *definitively as dead as a doornail*. Corporative content and form have destroyed what used to collocate this union within the working class movement (and the remaining Italian unions – Cisl, Uil and others besides – were never taken into consideration). All category federations are moving in the same direction: Fiom (the Italian Federation of Metalworkers) and components of the so called “union left” serve as a prop and a front, and the “union democracy” continually flaunted by them, and the degree of opposition brandished by a dictatorial, closely-knit body, have the function to show a pluralist façade while cultivating the illusion that – with a touch of “internal democracy” here and there – this or that organization might once again be put at the disposal of the workers. On the contrary, our objective is *to reveal, from the inside or the outside*, that which is no longer a tendency but *a strategic alliance with the bourgeois State* in open defence of its economy.

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One symptom of the current weakness of the workers' movement and its demands is the continual appeal to so-called "working-class democracy" – exploited both by institutionalised and grassroots trade unions.

Of course, the exploitation is not identical. The "democratic sentiment" of the institutionalised unions is little more than a re-working of the rites and institutions of bourgeois democracy (referendum, ballot, secret vote, etc.), while that of the grassroots unions is a demagogical harking back to assemblyism. Whatever, the "democratic sensibility" of the workers (to which all reformists refer) is only a *conservative knee-jerk reaction among the proletarian masses*, a manifestation of bourgeois ideology mediated by commonplaces, demagogy and illusionism.

When understood as a "principle of organization and struggle", "working class democracy" is dominated by too many ambiguities: as the number of categories of workers, federations, geographic sectors, and companies

continues to grow, so multiply the interests artificially pitted against one another: these can be mediated with the democratic gambit but they are difficult to unify in a unitary front of objectives.

At best, "working class democracy" can be used as an expedient through which an avant-garde minority can ratify the success of a struggle. Far different are the means by which the contents and methods of the demands-based struggle become *organization and collective action*, capable of driving and involving the lion's share of the workers: picketing, blocking goods, working over the scabs – all instruments that lie outside quantitative majorities, yet demonstrate, with *the science of class action*, the operational *quality* of a "majority" in the struggle. The *strength* of the workers cannot attend upon the unanimity of the workers, but its deployment organizes the workers themselves into a "majority", dragging along the unruly, the doubters and even those for whom 'struggle' is a dirty word.

From Defence to Attack

Obviously these are only general indications. Or, rather, they are a *framework* for what may well become possible demands during struggles in the future. However, it is from these indications (methods, means and objectives) that we must begin again, coming up against all shades and directions of opportunism. And not just passing (whenever objectively and subjectively possible) "from defence to attack", *under the indispensable guiding hand of the revolutionary party*, but also posing correctly (*beginning with the contents and not the forms or empty husks of pure declamation*) the problem surrounding the rebirth of organisms of social and economic defence capable of effectively opposing the anti-proletarian practices of unions that, for the last by now more than seventy years, have become *load-bearing structures of the bourgeois State*.

**The Proletariat is Revolutionary
or it is Nothing**

Summer 2023

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Revolutionary communism is characterised by its violent conquest of power, the destruction of bourgeois states and the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat

Reformists of every kind (all “ex” or “post” today, seeing as Stalinism has done with its deceit and has at last come clean as to its democratic vocation for bourgeois preservation, coalescing not only with the social democrats but with all those political corporations looking to fill the capitalist mode of production with “humanity”) have always delighted in presenting the revolutionary as being rather edgy, violent in nature, hot under the collar and leaning towards impatience. They concord that the revolutionary party is a “shotgun” organization whose members – lacking anything resembling a theory, a clear cut programme or tactics – are simply intent on “destroying everything”, “burning it all up” and so on and so forth. And by offering this ignorant, stupid vision of revolutionary communism’s duties and objectives on the proletariat (i.e., on all those forced to sell their physical or mental labour), the reformists exploited in earlier times the presence of anarchist groups in the proletarian ranks and, today, mixed bags of a much more comical bent, whose scope has essentially been to create confusion by advancing ostensibly ultra-radical requests, capriciously antagonistic arguments and even by resorting to occasionally irresponsible terroristic militarism or armed vendetta. So the expedient employed to pass off the revolutionary communist as an “anarchist”, a “visionary” or a “terrorist” is as old as the hills. Lenin and his Bolshevik party were labelled “anarchists” by social democrats of the time. And that is what today’s social democrats and

assorted reformists are trying to pass us off as too. In reality, communism is revolutionary for altogether different reasons – reasons that instil sacrosanct terror in democratic (or fascist, it matters not) supporters of the capitalist mode of production. Underlying the Communist Party’s commitment to the need for a violent class struggle and the dictatorship of the proletariat is a scientific vision of social reality; and it is the self-same scientific vision that qualifies the reformist as an agent of the ruling class among the ranks of the proletarian movement.

The *Communist Party Manifesto* of 1948 begins by declaring that history is “the history of class struggles” and that, up until that time, this struggle had always ended “either in a revolutionary re-constitution of society at large or in the common ruin of the contending classes”. For real communists this is a fundamental concept: the development of the productive forces determines the division of society into classes that cannot help but be in conflict with one another because their material interests are irreconcilable. More than simply failing to eliminate the division of society into classes, the capitalist mode of production actually takes this division to its extreme: society is divided into two opposing factions. On one side the proletarians, deprived of the means of production and possessing only their labour power – the mental or physical ability to work, as we never tire of stating; on the other, the bourgeoisie, that possesses the means of production, i.e., the monopoly of property belonging

to companies, be they individual, joint stock companies, or trusts (multinationals), cooperatives or even state run companies. Hence the ease with which the bourgeoisie manages to exploit members of the proletariat: it extorts extra work from them (i.e., unpaid work: everything that exceeds the costs incurred by the maintenance and social reproduction of the proletarian class, understood simply as economic data), and this is called *profit*, which serves not only to “reproduce” capital itself, but also (as becomes increasingly evident in the imperialist age) to maintain those who do nothing productive in terms of work and who fill the plethora of the half classes.

Put simply, in order to survive, one part of society is obliged to sell its labour power to the other, which lives with the extra work it extorts from the first. Clearly, the interests of the two classes are incompatible: those who work and those who live off the work of the others can share no common interest. Far from being unique to capitalist society, this situation is common to all social formations that preceded it (or at least after the phase of primitive communism, when private property and the division of society into classes were unknown).

Division of society into classes

At the time of primitive communism, society wasn’t divided into classes. Human work wasn’t highly productive (hunting, fishing and harvesting) so *all* able members of a given community had to work in

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the area of immediate production. Children *worked*, the elderly *worked* (men and women were entrusted with “cultural” and “educative” functions, i.e., the transmission of the productive and reproductive experiences of the group to new generations; and, in many cases, those with greater expertise would be charged with taking decisions of a more general nature) and women *worked*, as their lives were not – contrary to popularly held opinion – simply subordinated to and boundaried by reproduction. Work, then, was carried out by all members of the group according to their natural abilities and possibilities; similarly, all other tasks were performed by those most suited.

As far as the work product was concerned, it belonged to the entire social group, and every individual consumed according to their needs and the overall availability. When conflict arose with another group over the use of a harvesting ground (in a broad sense), those belonging to the defeated group were either killed or absorbed by their victors: everything depended on the immediate availability of the products.

The revolutionary discovery of agriculture (soon followed by the domestication of certain animal species) saw human work now capable of producing more than whatever had served immediate consumption, and class divisions started to appear. On the one hand, the greater availability of products meant that members of other tribes defeated in war could be absorbed within the social group. Instead of killing their captives, victors assigned them productive work to do in their place (and indeed, relative technical progress meant they were able to produce enough not only for their own survival, but also to maintain their masters). On the other hand, general functions that had once been communal became the prerogative of only a part of the group. For example, it's obvious that while those defeated are assigned tasks that are immediately

productive for the rest of their days, the use of weapons is reserved to the victorious group, as indeed are the general tasks of direction – so called intellectual work.

And it is at this point in human history that the State as a political organization makes its appearance.

The State

What is the State? Certain general administrative and directional tasks of the social group already existed at the time of primitive communism, but they were usually carried out with very little differentiation among the group members. Generally, whoever belonged to a certain group was simultaneously a gatherer and a warrior, a beancounter and a shaman, or at least – out of principle – none of the useful social functions were denied to him. So, in the distant past, there *was* a kind of State that could be equated with the social group itself, and it is the collective expression of all the coordinated productive and reproductive “operations”.

However, when the aforementioned division comes about, the State is no longer identified with society; those charged with productive work are no longer called upon to take and carry out general decisions, and the State takes on another role that is completely unfamiliar: *oppression and repression* by one part of the social group to the advantage of another. And this is the specific characteristic of every State that has existed up to now, including the “democratic” bourgeois State. Indeed, as Engels has it, the State exists as a separate entity from society, elevating itself to a level above it precisely because it must carry out a repressive role. As long as society is divided into classes, the State will continue to exist; by the same token, when there is no longer anyone to repress, the State will disappear too. Or rather, its functions will be absorbed anew into the totality of functions of a purely administrative and coordinating nature involving the production and reproduction at hand.

The situation is clear for all to see. Under primitive communism all the effective members of a group use instruments for fighting, gathering or hunting. The warrior is nothing different or separate – his function needs no particular recognition; he has no special powers over the rest of the group; everyone is able to perform his role and, effectively, do so. But when one part of the group is assigned exclusively to productive work, and another lives off this work, the warrior figure becomes a figure unto itself, and his role function becomes complicated: while he carries on with the established tasks of attack and defence against other social groups, he also takes on the armed defence of his own group's social structure. From this moment on, organizations of armed men serve to maintain particular social relations that allow one part of the group not to work while forcing the other to work for the first.

As with the army, so with all the other functions.

Hence the State becomes an empowered apparatus that assists the ruling class in its efforts to repress the exploited class and, according to the definition in the *Manifesto*, it is “the administrative committee of the ruling class's interests”. Whatever its shape, size or complexity, the State thus always represents *the dictatorship of one class over another*; it can be neither “free” nor “democratic”, nor “of all the people”; it is always dictatorial and oppressive, and all the more oppressive when it proclaims itself to be “free” and “democratic”.

The essence of democracy

What then is democracy? Democracy was invented in Greece in the 6th century BCE, and the first democratic State in history was created in Athens. The Greeks themselves had determined that this new concept of State was synonymous with political liberty, so what did it actually consist of? In a nutshell, this: it guaranteed freedom to various factions of

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the ruling class, but negated this freedom to the dominated class. Class division, as we have defined it, was already present in Athens: one part of the population lived in conditions of slavery and carried out productive work while another part exploited the work of the slaves. Yet the ruling class was, in turn, made up of different social stratas – the great landowners, the small-to-medium sized peasant landowners, shop-owners and artisans – whose only point of common interest was the servant class. All these classes exploited the work of the slaves, yet they could come to no agreement as to the division and destination of the over-production they extorted. It was precisely because of this dispute that the need arose for a democratic State form. Each strata of the exploiting class wanted to have a say in the way society was governed and, in order to make its voice heard, it had to fight against the others, control them and reduce their level of influence. The kind of State that closed a blind eye to this reciprocatory battle to divide up the prey and, at the same time, upheld the subjugation of the exploited class, was none other than the democratic, representative State. In practice, we can see things as follows: the artisan, the shopkeeper and the landowner all exploit the work of the slave, i.e., they steal a part of the product of his work; but if the State, (by which we mean the armed decision-making power) were solely in the hands of the landowner, the other two – the artisan and the shopkeeper – would be forced to hand over their share of the swag to him. Thus they claim the “freedom” to take part in the running of public administration, and to speak freely and take decisions “according to the interests of the city” (i.e., those of the artisans, shopkeepers and landowners). The only solution to a problem couched in these terms is a State “of the people as a whole”, that is, a State of *all* those belonging to the ruling class; it is “freedom for the people”, i.e., for all parts of the ruling class, and so on. Hence democracy means “freedom

for those who exploit” and for *their dictatorship, which is totalitarian and represses those who are exploited*. The difference between ancient democracy and its modern bourgeois counterpart lies in the fact that the former openly declared its allegiance to the ruling class, and failed to grant civil or political rights to the slave; the latter, on the other hand, which came about in the wake of two thousand years of Christian philistinism, denies the exploited any real rights while at the same time proclaiming that all men are “born free and equal” in its various constitutional bills and papers. Indeed, unlike the slave-owner of ancient times, the modern bourgeois is not content with simply exploiting his salaried workers, but expects them also to fight his wars, all the while proclaiming that if he exploits them, he does so “for their own good” and in accordance with “the mandate with which he has been democratically entrusted”. The modern bourgeois democracy – to which reformists of all shapes and sizes are willing to pledge allegiance with every saintly breath they take – also came about as a State of the ruling class, dressed up in the garb of a State “of all the people”. And so it remains. In medieval times, the landowning nobility exploited the work of serfs and town-based artisans, and a State was created befitting this end: the feudal monarchical State. As the modern bourgeoisie that avails itself of salaried work gradually took shape, it expected some kind of State representation, triggering the process that led initially to an enlightened – albeit absolute – monarchy and, later, to a constitutional monarchy. The bourgeoisie did indeed exploit salaried work, but it was the feudal nobility that held the power, and it was they who reaped the rewards. So, clearly, it was in the interests of the bourgeoisie to create a “representative” State in which it would have a political role to play alongside the feudal nobility. The ascendancy of an increasingly emboldened bourgeoisie continued

unabated and it was eventually to find itself in possession of all the wealth (i.e., all the fruits of the labour of the exploited class that derived from the new way of organizing work “invented” and monopolized by the bourgeoisie). At this point, what was required was a Republic. This was a form of State that would definitively exclude the feudal classes (by now “unproductive” and parasitical – and therefore obstacles to full capitalistic development): the Republic would represent solely the interests of all the various bourgeois components. Yet since the bourgeoisie needed the active support of the proletariat during its struggle to consolidate its State, this had to be represented not in its true colours (the guarantor and matrix organization of the bourgeois mode of production) but as an institution that represented the interests of “the entire nation”. In other words it maintained that all men were equal before the law because they were born equal, and that its State would have signified freedom for all “citizens” who were able to participate in the administrative and decision-making processes by means of delegatory and representative suffrage. In actual fact, as Marx reveals in *Das Kapital*, the game is rigged: the bourgeoisie monopolises the means of production and the product of labour, i.e., it possesses the capital (of which money is an expression), while the proletarians possess only their labour-power and are forced to sell it every day in order to receive the godforsaken wage that serves to buy that part of the product of labour which constitutes the (unstable) whole of its means of sustenance. All men are “free”, explained the bourgeoisie, and this was what it told itself too. And freedom could be expressed principally in the right (or potential right, to be more accurate) to private property: this is the true, sacred bedrock of bourgeois society, and its inviolability is guaranteed by the State of the bourgeoisie. So the only real freedom for proletarians is reduced to the right to sell their

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“property” (i.e., their labour-power) to the class that monopolises how it is used in conditions of corporate slavery. It would be more accurate to say that *the proletariat is free to die of hunger if no-one buys its property*, as it only has scant reserves and guarantees the bourgeois State a monopolistic use of the means of production – this is what lies at the very heart of its being an *instrument of class oppression*.

As an underlying principle of the State, this means that it necessarily becomes an organization that defends the propertied class against the attacks of the non-propertied classes, protecting the bourgeoisie and capital against the proletariat that attacks bourgeois property. And the constitutions of all the bourgeois States enshrine and regulate the inviolability not only of landed property but also the private ownership of every means and process of production, and the complete appropriation of production.

So if farm hands, in whatever corner of the world, occupy the lands belonging to a landowner (including those that are state-owned), they violate property and must be repressed by the State; if workers occupy a factory, they violate private property and must be jailed; and, paradoxically, if they organize a picket during a strike that prevents others from entering, they violate the property that workers have in their labour power, and must therefore be punished; if they organize a road block, they violate the right of citizens who wish to use that road, and may be fired upon, and so on. The only liberty proletarians may exercise in the “free democratic State” is that of deciding how they want (or how they’ve been led to believe they want) to dispose of the only thing they own: their labour power. However, given that this can be applied solely to the means of production (monopolized by the bourgeois class), the only thing they can do is to rent out this power to the bourgeoisie. Otherwise, precisely, they die of hunger.

The dictatorship of the proletariat

So, the democratic bourgeois State is “a machine to oppress the proletarian class”, and the elections staged to see who will govern this State are little more than a means “of establishing every two or three years which member of the ruling class will represent and oppress the population in parliament” (Lenin). If the State is a machine to oppress the proletarian class, it means that it can’t be used by the proletariat to bring about the impotence of bourgeois power. It defies belief to imagine that the bourgeois class would allow a pacific transfer of State power into the hands of the proletarian class by way of elections. And it would be even more absurd to imagine the proletariat being able to exploit the self-same instruments that safeguard, guarantee and promote the bourgeois monopoly of products and the means of production, in order to disrupt that monopoly or “convert” its uses and aims. The bourgeois State cannot be conquered, and neither can it be “infiltrated”: it must be destroyed and replaced with an alternative instrument – *a practical and scientific thesis that has been confirmed and verified* historically by communists (Paris 1871 and Petersburg 1917). So the communists negate the hare-brained thesis that when the (more or less radically) reformist parties gain half plus one of the votes (or, as an anarchist thesis would have it, the “abstentions”), the workers “will have the power”, affirming rather the pointlessness of conquering the bourgeois State. Instead the foundations need to be completely dismantled, and another state organization put in its place – a direct expression of the armed proletariat class. We have seen that the State is a machine, in other words an instrument that can serve a determined use: and the bourgeois State is the instrument that serves to guarantee the accumulation of Capital and, therefore, the oppression of the proletariat. This instrument has been purpose-built

and articulated in a particular way so that its functions may be carried out: it would be impossible for it to pursue a different or opposite function, it can not be used in bump-starting the substitution of the accumulation of capital with the socialization of production, distribution and consumption (i.e., the abolition of the market, salaried work and production for companies), and thereby rendering vain any attempt at bourgeois resurgence.

The constitutions and the bourgeois civil and penal codes, for example, have arranged for sanctions against anyone who violates private property. How could they be of any use when it comes to expropriating (no refunds allowed) bourgeois properties? The body responsible for the meting out of justice is the bourgeois magistracy. For decades this well-oiled machine has been drilled in the (more or less lenient) repression of crimes against property – crimes committed by proletarians (naïve, needy or acutely aware that the law is only a refined form of authority, a threat in the hands of those wielding the greatest power) who, with their robberies and burglaries (privately, just as bourgeois thought would have it), put into practice that redistribution of income so beloved of the reformists. How can anyone seriously believe it could be of any use to repress precisely those who wish to oppose the social expropriations while at the same time continuing to safeguard the appropriation of the labour of others. The same applies to the army, the police, bureaucracy, whatever – every cog in the wheel, large or small, of the bourgeois State. The proletariat can have no truck with an instrument of this nature: it has no choice but to destroy it and revamp another State on (not from!) the rubble that remains, another type of machine purpose-built for a different use: that of quashing the bourgeoisie and destroying the capitalist mode of production!

So why is democracy loved and defended by the reformists? Why

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do they no longer represent the true interests of the proletariat (i.e., overcoming the capitalist mode of production, destroying it at its roots), preferring instead those stratas of better paid workers and the so called “half-classes” (especially the urban *petit bourgeoisie*, intellectuals, techies, the freelancing professionals of nothingness and all those who make a living from the redistribution of income socially expropriated from the proletariat by – you guessed it – the bourgeois State). Their interest is in keeping the democratic system alive, in order to be able to claim certain improvements in the distribution of the surplus value obtained through the exploitation of proletarian work, passing it off as something eternal, like the establishment of a permanent reserve. And it is in the defence of democracy and reforms, as in the defence of peace, that these

stratas identify the defence of their benefits – be they a mobile phone, a high salary, a house, a piece of land, shares in an investment fund, healthcare or the possibility of having their children study – and they bandy this about among the proletarians as an effective system of value, thought and lifestyle. With this they bear out the meticulous communist affirmation that the dominant ideology in a class-divided society is still and always the ideology of the ruling class: and the ideology is the solid fact that the ruling class, via the distribution of its meagre surpluses, can present itself as “general class” – that which represents the interest of everyone!

The proletariat represents interests of an altogether different nature: the working class will only be able to unburden itself of exploitation and need once it has quashed at its roots the present social set-up, and

subjected all classes in society to its firm rule, until such time as *the conditions for their disappearance* have been fully met. The proletariat is revolutionary in this sense only. It expresses and uses an organization and a doctrine that are radically antagonistic and revolutionary during its struggle; it criticizes, battles against and destroys “democracy”, “peace” and “freedom” because in a society divided into classes under the capitalist mode of production, such terms are mere illusions, *evanescent mirages that serve to conceal the reality of bourgeois rule*. Assisted, accompanied and guided by the communist Party during the day-to-day struggle, this is how the grounds for the class war are prepared: *on the path to international unity, victorious insurrection, and for the dictatorial exercise of its power, denier of all bourgeois forms of freedom*.

“The party’s activity cannot and must not be limited to maintaining the purity of theoretical and organizational principles, nor to obtaining immediate success or a great popularity at any price. Always and in all situations it must develop simultaneously in these three directions:

- Defend the basic elements of the program, and refine them in relation to new events, i.e. develop the theoretical consciousness of the working class movement;
- Ensure the continuity and effectiveness of the party organization and protect it against outside influences opposed to the revolutionary interest of the proletariat;
- Participate actively in all the working class struggles, even those for partial and limited interests to encourage their growth, but always relating them to their revolutionary final goals by showing that the conquests of the class struggle are paths leading to indispensable future battles and denouncing the danger of stopping at partial successes as if they were ends in themselves and of sacrificing to these the conditions of the proletarian class activity and combativeness, i.e. the autonomy and independence of its ideology and organizations, first and foremost, the party.

The supreme goal of the party’s complex activities is to achieve the subjective conditions of the proletariat’s preparation: to enable it to take advantage of the objective revolutionary possibilities provided by history when they appear, in order to be victorious instead of being defeated. All this is the point of departure for resolving the problems posed by relations between the party and the proletarian masses, between the party and other political parties, between the proletariat and other social classes.”

(From Part Three of the “Draft Theses Presented by the Left at the 3rd Congress of the Communist Party of Italy”, Lyon 1926 – also known as “The Lyon Theses”)

AFTER THE APPEAL... HERE IS THE COUNTER APPEAL

The exacerbation of the chronic conflict in the land of Palestine, in the more general process of gestation of an inter-imperialist conflict between the concentration of “Atlantic” power and the “emerging” ones, has given new breath to the drafters of appeals, resolutions & manifestos... In short, to those who hope to voluntaristically reconstruct an “International” on the basis of an alleged “lowest common denominator” between militants and organizations who have in common (and, we admit, it is not a small thing...) only The Great Enemy: the capitalist mode of production and its devastating wars.

Nothing bad in this. But, unfortunately, from historical experience we have learned not only that “the road to Hell is paved with good intentions”, but also that to fight Capital we need to have very clear ideas about who, why and how to fight it and what the organization of this fight must be. So, this time too we reply to our willing appellants that words and adhesions alone do little to prepare our class for the fight it is (it will be) forced into. And, as always, trying to learn from the experiences of comrades acting in the heat of the struggle against all facets of these decades of counterrevolution, the International Communist Party (il programma comunista) is on the fighting line. Starting from the concrete conditions of the various “national sections” of our “international class”, we operate so that a process (a path of preparation) of *revolutionary defeatism* can be developed against this war (as against all other wars), so as to prepare the conditions for *the transformation of war between states into war within states*: from the bourgeois national war to the war that breaks national unity – the civil war, the class war, the revolutionary war.

We have always acted *within the ranks and in the struggles of our class* beginning from practical indications and attitudes that, already in the time of peace (i. e., non-warred wars), we have always indicated. And we have done this everywhere, and within the limits of our strength – always having to deal, despite ourselves, with the arrogant intellectuals who may have infiltrated our organization in search of unrealistic shortcuts. We therefore answer to these appeals that, against wars, disasters, environmental devastation and the other delights of bourgeois rule, we must organize ourselves everywhere in a long and radical class struggle against the State of capital, its institutions and all its pa+Which means:

1. Organization of the defense of living and working conditions, to hit hard the economic and political interests of the bourgeoisie.

2. Refusal to accept and suffer economic and social sacrifices in the name of national unity and economy.

3. Open rupture of social peace and decisive return to the methods and objectives of the proletarian class struggle, the only real and practicable internationalist solidarity, both in the metropolises and in the imperialist peripheries.

4. Rejection of any complicit partisan solidarity (nationalist, religious, patriotic, mercenary, humanitarian, pacifist, socialist...) in favor of any of the States or fronts of States involved in the wars.

5. Economic and social strike actions that lead to true general strikes to paralyze national life and pave the way for political strikes, aimed at slowing down and preventing any mobilization and war propaganda.

6. Wish and encourage the military defeat of one's own State and its allies (because not only is the enemy in our home, but the enemy is our home!), disobey in an organized manner to the military hierarchies (individual and mass desertion are necessary, but insufficient), fraternize with our class brothers also imprisoned in their homelands, hold onto the weapons and weapons systems tightly to defend ourselves first and then free ourselves from the tentacles of bourgeois institutions.

With (and on the basis of) these cornerstones (and in the course of battles that *it is and will be forced to fight*), our class, the immense group of those who can do nothing but sell their workforce to live, will be able to regain its autonomy of struggle against its historical enemy, the bourgeoisie and the multitude of intellectual and parasitic middle classes that support it, against their State and their institutions.

To the appeals, we thus respond with the need for a fighting organization. There is no point in beating around the bush: our class needs, has always needed, to organize and regroup its vanguards into the Party of the Communist Revolution. Appeals are not needed: work is needed for the restoration, strengthening, rooting of this Party which is not an acolyte of scribblers and chatterboxes, but rather an army, united in a continuity of theory, principles, program, tactics and organization.

Its doors are open to those who intend to engage in this tiring, anonymous, dangerous work. Time wasters, demagogues, sociologists, political scientists, discoverers of bizarre shortcuts, traveling salesmen and canvassers of “dernier cri” politics, do keep away.

November 2023

BACK TO BASICS

Considerations on the party's organic activity when the general situation is historically unfavourable (1965)

1. The so-called question of the party's internal organisation has always been a subject in the positions of traditional Marxists and of the present Communist Left, born as opposition to the errors of the Moscow International. Naturally, such a topic is not to be isolated in a watertight compartment, but it is instead inseparable from the general framework of our positions.
2. What is part of the doctrine, of the party's general theory, can be found in the classical texts; it is also exhaustively summarised in more recent works, in Italian texts such as the Rome and Lyon theses, and in many others with which the Left made known its prediction on the Third International's ruin; as the phenomena the latter showed, were not smaller in gravity in respect to those of the Second. Such literature is partly being used still now, in the study on organisation (meant in its narrow sense as party organisation and not in the broad sense of proletarian organisation, in its varying historical and social forms) and we are not trying to summarise it here, referring the reader to the abovementioned texts and to the vast work in progress of the *«Storia della Sinistra»*, of which the second volume is being prepared.
3. Anything concerning the party's ideology and nature, being common to us all and beyond dispute, is left to the pure theory; and the same is for the relations between the party and its own proletarian class, that can be condensed in the obvious inference that only with the party and with the party action the proletariat becomes class for itself and for the revolution.
4. We are used to call questions of tactics – though we repeat that autonomous chapters or sections do not exist – those historically arising and going on in the relations between proletariat and other classes; between proletarian party and other proletarian organisations; and between the party and other bourgeois and non-proletarian parties.
5. The relation existing between the tactical solutions, such as not to be condemned by the doctrinal and theoretical principles, and the varied development of situations, objective and – in a sense – external to the party, is undoubtedly very changeable; but the Left has asserted that the party must dominate and foresee such relation, as developed in the Rome theses on tactics meant as a project of theses for international tactics. There are, synthesising to the extreme, periods of objective favourable conditions, together with unfavourable conditions of the party as subject; there may be the opposite case; and there have been rare but suggestive examples of a well prepared party and of a social situation with the masses thrown towards the revolution; and towards the party which foresaw and described it in advance, as LENIN vindicated for Russia's Bolsheviks.
6. By avoiding pedantic distinctions, we may wonder in which objective situation is today's society. Certainly the answer is that it is the worst possible situation, and that a large part of proletariat is controlled by parties – hired by bourgeoisie – that prevent the proletariat itself from any classist revolutionary movement; which is even worse than the crushing directly operated by bourgeoisie. It is not therefore possible to foresee how long it will take before – in this dead and shapeless situation – what we already termed as «polarisation» or «ionisation» of social molecules, takes place, preceding the outburst of the great class antagonism.
7. What are, in this unfavourable period, the consequences on the party's internal organic dynamics? We always said, in all abovementioned texts, that the party cannot avoid being influenced by the characters of the real situation surrounding it. Therefore the big existing proletarian parties are – necessarily and avowedly – opportunist. It is a fundamental thesis of the Left, that our party must not abstain from resisting – in such a situation –; it must instead survive and hand down the flame, along the historical «thread of time». It will be a small party, not owing to our will or choice, but to ineluctable necessity. While thinking of the structure of this party, even in the IIIrd International's epoch of decadence, and in countless polemics, we rejected – with arguments that is now unnecessary recalling – several accusations. We don't want a secret sect or *élite* party, refusing any contact with the outside, owing to a purity mania. We reject any formula of workerist or labourist party excluding all non-proletarians; as it is a formula belonging to all historical opportunists. We don't want to reduce the party to an organisation of a cultural, intellectual and scholastic type, as from polemics more than half a century old; neither do we believe, as certain anarchists and blanquists do, being imaginable a party involved in conspirative armed action and in hatching plots.

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8. Being the decline of the social complex concentrated on falsification and destruction of the theory and of the sound doctrine, it is evident that today's small party has, as an outstanding character, the duty of restoring the principles of a doctrinal value; but it is unfortunately deprived of the favourable setting that saw Lenin achieving such a work after the disaster of the First World War. But it does not imply that we have to erect a barrier between theory and practical action; because beyond a given limit we would destroy ourselves and all our basic principles. We thus claim all forms of activity peculiar to the favourable periods, insofar as the real force relations render it possible .
9. All this should be treated much more broadly, but it is still possible to achieve a conclusion about the party's organisational structure in a so difficult transition. It would be a fatal error to consider the party as dividable into two groups, of which one dedicated to the study and the other one to action; such a distinction is deadly for the body of the party, as well as for the individual militant. The meaning of unitarism and of organic centralism is that the party develops at its inside the organs suited to the various functions, which we call propaganda, proselytism, proletarian organisation, union work, etc. , up to tomorrow, the armed organisation; but nothing can be inferred from the number of comrades destined for such functions , as on principle no comrade must be out of any of them. The fact that in this phase the comrades devoted to the theory and to the movement's history may seem too many, and too few those yet ready to action, is an historical incident. But above all senseless would be an investigation on the number of those devoted to the one and to the other display of energy. We all know that, when the situation will radicalise, countless elements will side with us, in an immediate, instinctive way, and without the least training course aping scholastic qualifications.
10. We know very well that the opportunist danger, ever since Marx fought against Bakunin, Proudhon, Lassalle, and during all the further phases of the opportunist disease, has always been tied to the influence on the proletariat of petty-bourgeois false allies. Our infinite diffidence towards the contribution of these social strata cannot, and must not, prevent us from utilising – according to history's mighty lessons – exceptional elements coming from them; the party will destine such elements to the work of setting the theory to order; the lack of such a work would only mean death, while in the future its plan of propagation will have to identify it with the immense extension of revolutionary masses.
11. The violent sparks that flashed between the reophores of our dialectics instructed us that is a comrade, communist and revolutionary militant, that who has been able to forget, to renegade, to tear away from his mind and from his heart the classification in which he was enrolled by the Register of this putrescent society; that who sees and mingles himself in the whole of the millenary space that binds the ancestral , tribal man, fighter against wild beasts, to the member of the future community, fraternal in the joyous harmony of social man.
12. *Historical party and formal party.* This distinction is in MARX and ENGELS and they had the right to deduce from it that, being with their work on the line of the historical party, they disdained to be members of any formal party. But no one of today's militants can infer from it he has the right to a choice: that is of being in the clear with the «historical party», and to care nothing about the formal party. Thus it is, owing to the sound intelligence of that proposition of Marx and Engels, which has a dialectical and historical sense – and not because they were supermen of a very special type of race. Marx says: party *in its historical meaning*, in the historical sense , and *formal, or ephemeral, party*. In the first concept lies the continuity, and from it we derived our characteristic thesis of the invariance of doctrine since its formulation made by MARX; not as invention of a genius, but as discovery of a result of human evolution. But the two concepts are not metaphysically opposite, and it would be silly to express them by the poor doctrine : I turn my back on the formal party, as I go towards the historical one. When from the invariant doctrine we draw the conclusion that the revolutionary victory of the working class can be only achieved with the class party and *its* dictatorship; when, on the basis of Marx's words we maintain that without revolutionary and communist party, the proletariat may be a class for bourgeois science, but it is not for us and Marx himself; then the conclusion to be deduced is that, in order to achieve the victory, it will be necessary to have a party, worthy at the same time of both characteristics, those of historical party and formal party, i.e. to have solved in action's and history's reality the apparent contradiction – that dominated a long and difficult past – between historical party, then as far as the *content* (historical, invariant programme) is concerned, and contingent party, that is relating to the *form*, operating as force and physical praxis of a decisive part of struggling proletariat. This synthetic clarification of the doctrinal question must also be quickly related to the historical transitions lying behind us.
13. The first transition from a body of small groups and leagues – through which the workers' struggle came out – to the International party foreseen by doctrine, takes place when the 1st International is founded in 1864. There is no point now in reconstructing the process leading to the crisis of such organisation, that under MARX's direction was defended to the last from infiltration of petty-bourgeois programmes such as those of libertarians. In 1889 the IInd International is built, after Marx's

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death, but under Engels's control, though his directions are not followed. For a moment there is the tendency to have again in the formal party the continuation of the historical one, but all that is broken up in the following years by the federalist and non-centralist type of party; by the influences of parliamentary practice and by the cult of democracy; by the nationalist outlook on individual sections, no longer conceived as armies at war against their own state – as wanted by the 1848 «*Manifesto*» –; rises the open revisionism disparaging the historical *end* and exalting the contingent and formal *movement*.

The rising of IIIrd International, after the 1914 disastrous failure of almost all sections into pure democratism and nationalism, was seen by us – in the first years after 1919 – as the complete reconnection of historical party and formal party. The new International rose declaredly centralist and anti-democratic, but the historical praxis of the entrance into it of the sections federate to the failed International was particularly difficult, and made too hurried by the expectation that the transition, from the seizure of power in Russia to that in other European countries, would be immediate.

If the section that in Italy rose from the ruins of the old party of IIrd International, was particularly inclined – not certainly by virtue of persons, but for the historical origins – to feel the necessity of welding together the historical movement and its present form, that was due to the hard struggles it waged against the degenerated forms, and to the refusal of infiltrations; which were not only attempted by those forces dominated by nationalist, parliamentary and democratic type positions, but also by those (in Italy, maximalism) influenced by anarcho-syndicalist, petty-bourgeois revolutionarism. Such left-wing current fought particularly in order to have more rigid conditions of admissions (construction of the new formal structure), completely put them into effect in Italy, and it was the first to realise the danger for the whole International, when they gave faulty results in France, Germany, etc.

The historical situation, for which the proletarian State got formed in only one country, while in the others the conquest of power had not been achieved, made difficult the clear *organic* solution of leaving in the hands of the Russian section the helm of the world organisation.

The Left was the first to realise that, whenever the behaviour of the Russian State would start bearing signs of deviations – both in internal economy and in international relations –, a discrepancy would take place between the politics of the historical party, i.e. of all revolutionary communists of the world, and that of a formal party defending the interests of the contingent Russian State.

14. Such an abyss has since then gone into so deeply that the «apparent» sections, depending on the Russian leader-party, are doing, in the ephemeral sense, a vulgar policy of collaboration with

bourgeoisie, not better than that, traditional, of the corrupted parties of the IIrd International. The above enables, and entitles, the groups that come of the struggle of the Italian Left against Moscow's degeneration, to understand better than anyone else on which path the true, active (and therefore formal) party can keep itself faithful to the characters of the revolutionary, historical party; that potentially exists at least since 1847, while, from a practical point of view, proved itself in great historical events, through the tragical series of revolution's defeats.

The transmission of this undeformed tradition, to the efforts made to create, without historical pauses, – a new international party organisation cannot be organisationally based on the choice of men, though very qualified or well informed of the historical doctrine; organically speaking, such transmission can only utilise, in the most faithful way, the line linking the action of the group through which the abovementioned tradition revealed itself 40 years ago, to the present line. The new movement cannot wait for supermen, nor have Messiahs, it must be founded on the revival of what could be preserved for a long time; but preservation cannot be restricted to the teaching of theses and to the search for documents, it uses living instruments in order to form an old guard and to hand over – uncorruptedly and potently – to a young guard. The latter rushes off towards new revolutions, that might have to wait not more than a decade from now the action on the foreground of historical scene; the party and the revolution having no concern at all for the names of the former and the latter.

The correct transmission of that tradition beyond generations – and also for this beyond names of dead or living men – cannot be restricted to that of critical texts, nor only to the method of utilising the communist party's doctrine by being close and faithful to classical texts; it must be related to the class battle that the Marxist Left – we don't want to limit the revival only to the Italian region – set out and carried out in the most inflamed real struggle during the years after 1919, and that was broken, more than by the force relations with respect to the enemy class, by the dependence on the centre, degenerating from centre of the historical world party to that of an ephemeral party, destroyed by opportunist pathology, until such dependence was, historically and de facto, broken.

The Left historically tried, without breaking off with the principle of world centralised discipline, to give revolutionary battle – although defensive – while keeping the vanguard proletariat intact from any collusion with middle classes, their parties and their doomed to defeat ideologies. Having even that historical chance of saving, if not the revolution, at least the core of its historical party, being missed, it has today began all over again, in a torpid and indifferent objective situation, within a proletariat infected to the

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bone of petty-bourgeois democratism; but the dawning organism, by utilising the whole of doctrinal and praxis tradition – as confirmed by the historical verification of timely expectations, puts it into effect also with its everyday action; it pursues the aim of re-establishing an always wider contact with the exploited masses, and it eliminates from its structure one of the starting errors

of Moscow International, by getting rid of democratic centralism and of any votation mechanism, as well as even the last member eliminated from his ideology any concession to democratoid, pacifist, autonomist or libertarian trends.

(first published in «il programma comunista» n. 2, 1965)

LENIN ON INTERNATIONALISM

If a German under Wilhelm or a Frenchman under Clemenceau says, “It is my right and duty as a socialist to defend my country if it is invaded by an enemy”, he argues not like a socialist, not like an internationalist, not like a revolutionary proletarian, but like a petty-bourgeois nationalist. Because this argument ignores the revolutionary class struggle of the workers against capital, it ignores the appraisal of the war as a whole from the point of view of the world bourgeoisie and the world proletariat, that is, it ignores internationalism, and all that remains is miserable and narrow-minded nationalism. My country is being wronged, that is all I care about—that is what this argument amounts to, and that is where its petty-bourgeois, nationalist narrow-mindedness lies. [...] The Frenchman, German or Italian who says: “Socialism is opposed to violence against nations, therefore I defend myself when my country is invaded”, betrays socialism and internationalism, because such a man sees only his own “country”, he puts “his own” ... bourgeoisie above everything else and does not give a thought to the international connections which make the war an imperialist war and his bourgeoisie a link in the chain of imperialist plunder. [...]

The socialist, the revolutionary proletarian, the internationalist, argues differently. He says: “The character of the war (whether it is reactionary or revolutionary) does not depend on who the attacker was, or in whose country the ‘enemy’ is stationed; it depends on what class is waging the war, and on what politics this war is a continuation of. If the war is a reactionary, imperialist war, that is, if it is being waged by two world groups of the imperialist, rapacious, predatory, reactionary bourgeoisie, then every bourgeoisie (even of the smallest country) becomes a participant in the plunder, and my duty as a representative of the revolutionary proletariat is to prepare for the world proletarian revolution as the only escape from the horrors of a world slaughter. I must argue, not from the point of view of ‘my’ country (for that is the argument of a wretched, stupid, petty-bourgeois nationalist who does not realise that he is only a plaything in the hands of the imperialist bourgeoisie), but from the point of view of my share in the preparation, in the propaganda, and in the acceleration of the world proletarian revolution.”

That is what internationalism means, and that is the duty of the internationalist, the revolutionary worker, the genuine socialist.

Lenin, The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky (1918)

The cycle of national and anti-colonial revolutions is drawing to an end

(Account of the Report to the Party's General Meeting, 2-3 november 1979)

Right after the Second World War our Party foresaw a long cycle of capitalist accumulation, whose end would indicate a condition for the recovery of the proletarian class struggle. But while in the West, doped by the Stalinist counter-revolution, history was virtually at a standstill, the East was boiling over with revolutionary energy. This explains why, in the 'fifties, our Party devoted a long series of General Meetings¹ to the recovery of Marxist theory on national and agrarian issues and to the interpretation of the upheavals going on in the "Third World".

For Marxism the destruction of colonial relations is not only an objective precondition for communism; the political struggle for the national-bourgeois revolution clears the ground for the proletarian class struggle. Thus the fight for bourgeois claims and the "class blocks" that are constituted on this basis have revolutionary legitimacy in areas and historical periods precisely marked out by the theory. However, it is a banal mistake, made symmetrically by frontism and indifferentism, to conclude from the capitalist nature of the struggle the subordination of the Party to the ideology and the bourgeois programme: the proletariat takes part in the struggle under its own flag and does not hesitate to proclaim capitalism as its enemy, even when it helps it to emerge in all

its class violence. If this were not so, the Manifesto of 1848, and the Marxist prospect of the "dual" or "permanent" revolution which dates back to this time, would become just obscure hieroglyphics.

The aim of the first Report presented at the General Meeting was to sum up the issue and establish more or less how far this historical movement had come in the "Third World", now that we are expecting an imminent recovery of the proletarian class war and there is the greatest interest in defining what forces weigh in favour of the communist revolution. It was also a matter of weighing up more systematically the characteristics that the proletarian battle must assume in the different regions of the world, what we have inherited from the bourgeoisie and the extent to which the bourgeois revolution of the past decades has – or has not – cleared the ground for the proletarian struggle. But when affirming that the revolutionary, bourgeois cycle in the "Third World" is coming to an end, it was important before completing our appraisal, to return to the Marxist notions of *geographical area* and *historical cycle*, and this could only be done by drawing on the experience of the proletarian movement in the last century, to ascertain the criteria that allow us to establish whether a certain phase is coming to an end and a historical cycle is about to close.

The cycle of capitalism and geographical areas

The idea of the cycle of capitalism is a familiar one in Marxism. Based on a text like "The Cycle of the Capitalist Economy and the Historical Cycle of the Bourgeoisie's Political Dominion"², and taking

as examples the great English, American and European revolutions, the Report highlighted how, in the initial, *revolutionary*, phase, there are revolutions whose social interest is to seize state power and destroy the old, juridical relations that hinder the development of modern production forces. Thus, a phase of full capitalist development opens, leading to a third phase, in which, with the outbreak of imperialist wars, society finds itself obliged to do away with capitalist relations in order to advance along its own path. Does this mean that, now that Europe and America have reached the senile phase of the capitalist cycle, the social fabric on all continents has started to decay and the immediate tasks to be completed are anti-capitalist and communist everywhere?

At the start of the last century, giving a positive response to this question would already have meant denying the capitalist-bourgeois nature of the Russian Revolution, nevertheless affirmed by the Bolsheviks, even though the proletariat was the only class able to carry out those tasks.

In fact, it is only between the XIXth and XXth century that the penetration of capitalist relations started to spark off capitalist revolutions outside the area of Europe or America. Having said this, it would be absurd to imagine what other continents should follow the same path as Europe, were it not for the fact that, with capitalism having reached the stage of imperialism, the young capitalisms must adopt more modern economic, military and political measures right from the start, which alone obliges them to cover the phases of capitalist development at the pace of a forced march. A comparative study of the European-American cycles and the

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1. Cfr. the bibliography on this subject published in no.18/1979 of *il programma comunista*.

2. "Le Tesi della Sinistra [The Left's Theses]", in *Prometeo*, no.5/January-February 1947, now in *Per l'organica sistemazione dei principi comunisti* [For the organic settlement of communist principles], pp.71-81.

“Third World”, in which the Report made every attempt to abide solely by criteria that make it possible to evaluate the degree of capitalist maturity in different geographical areas, enabled us to highlight the coming end of the revolutionary transformations made by capitalism, globally concluded in Latin America, more advanced in the Middle East (including the Maghreb) than in the rest of Asia and still largely delayed in “Black Africa”.

The Report emphasized the contradictory movement of this phenomenon, which reveals more advanced characteristics as well as others that are considerably behindhand compared to Europe in a comparable capitalist phase. Most important, in the “Third World” capitalism is accompanied – with a weaker factor on the vast national markets like China and a major factor in the areas most crushed by imperialist relations – by a phenomenon of *economic emargination*. The problems raised by this phenomenon cannot be solved by resorting to the illusion of a passage through all the stages of a pure capitalist development and, less still, the chimera of economic independence, but only by the worldwide communist revolution, which will share all the planet’s resources and use them rationally according to a *single world plan*.

The bourgeois revolutionary cycle of yesterday and of today

The Report then pointed out the gap between the *capitalist cycle* determined by the same *bourgeois tasks* and the *political bourgeois cycle*, which depends on the ability of the latter to complete these tasks. This ability is measured on the ground of a class war caused by the relations between all the classes, not on the scale of countries individually considered, but of vast geographical areas, and by the relations between these same areas; all this in broad historical eras and not in the details of one event or another, as is remembered from the classical Marxist texts³, which have at the same time made it

possible to highlight the fact that the limits between the phases and areas considered are not at all absolute or rigid, but relative and mobile.

Thanks to the revolutionary bourgeois cycle in Western Europe between 1789 and 1871, and referring to our basic texts⁴, it was possible to point to the phenomenon of political unification in a geographical area due to a general alignment of forces in the clash between all the classes in this area, linked to certain international relations. Applying this criterion to the events that have been causing upheaval in the “Third World” for over a century, a single geographical area could be identified, along with Latin America and “Black Africa” which form specific, albeit not closed areas, in the group of regions extending from Korea to the Maghreb.

This area unifies in waves that succeed one upon the other: the one beginning in 1906, which strengthens in 1917 and whose impetus is broken by the defeat of the Chinese proletarians and peasants in 1926-27; and the one following the Second World War, starting out from the Chinese epicentre which we have called “phase of eruption of the anti-colonial revolution”, during which the proletariat is chased off the scene of history, whilst the bourgeoisie, as in Europe in 1848, can drive itself to the limits of its historical potential.

Having located the broad geographical areas, the Report had to deal with the difficult issue of identifying the historical phases. The same method

3. Cfr. our *Lezioni delle controrivoluzioni* [Lessons of the counterrevolutions], 1 September 1951 (now in a single publication of the same name) and, Lenin’s, *Sotto la bandiera altrui*, in *Opere*, XXI, pp.119-140.

4. Lenin, *Sotto la bandiera altrui*, cit., and our *Russia e rivoluzione nella teoria marxista*, nos. 21/1954 and 1/1955 of *il programma comunista* (now in a single volume of the same name).

5. “Malenkov-Stalin: toppe, non tappa [Malenkov-Stalin: Patch and not stage]”, in *il programma comunista*, no.6/1953.

6. Cfr. in particular the *Lettere a Lafargue* [Letters to Lafargue] of the 8 and 29 October 1889.

as before was applied, taking into account the fact that, for Marxism, broad periods are determined by *great historical events*, such as wars or revolutions.

The study of the European-American area shed light on the weight of the class struggles in France, i.e. in a country where the bourgeois revolution “*came at the right time*”⁵, whilst in countries where it came late, such as Germany, the bourgeoisie, already alarmed by the consequences of its own revolution, i.e. by the emergence of the proletariat, was to give proof of its historical cowardice. In perfect coherence with Lenin, in the area of Asia our Party showed that the Chinese revolution had also come at the right time – a phenomenon that recurred, at the other pole of the same area, in the Algerian revolution. It is therefore of the utmost interest for the XXth century to consider first and foremost the attitude of the Chinese bourgeoisie. A comparison was made between the present convergence of enemies over the past thirty years, i.e. the Chinese bourgeoisie and American imperialism on the one hand, and on the other the convergence at the end of the last century between the French bourgeoisie and Czarism, where Engels was already pointing to a sure sign of the decline not only of the French but, more in general, of the European bourgeoisie.

Above all, starting out from Engels’ texts⁶, the Report highlighted the *phenomenon of the political unification of the bourgeoisie, of its “dominion as a class”*. This is without doubt the safest criterion for affirming that the bourgeoisie has ceased to be a *rising class* and that the proletariat now remains the only class able to *forward the course of history*. These types of phenomena have already been identified by our Party over the past few years, both in the intertwining of democratic and military-dictatorial forms in Latin America, and recently in the Maghreb, though in different forms to those present at the end of the XIXth century in Europe, given the rapid importation today of modern

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methods of government and, in particular, the single party.

The empirical ascertainment that the bourgeois revolutionary cycle had come to an end made it necessary to give an explanation for the *proven curtailing* of the historical cycles. This phenomenon is naturally based on the fact that capitalism is treading its path at an accelerated pace, but also on modification of the alignments of international forces: if, in fact, the bourgeoisie's most bitter enemy last century was feudalism, the revolutions of the XXth century found themselves tackling imperialism as their most powerful enemy, a political enemy and economic competitor more than a social enemy, even when applying pressure on pre-bourgeois forces against the anti-imperialist movements.

Imperialist dominion has often built up States *earlier* than the political maturity of the local bourgeoisies, because of the general needs of accumulation. This has undoubtedly been a factor determining the more rapid exhaustion of the bourgeoisies' capacity for progress even in their most extreme factions, those of the petit bourgeoisie. Above all, it is clear that, faced with the danger of mass radicalism, the social complicity that had already become clear in the last century between the bourgeoisie and the nobility as the ruling class, despite being social enemies, was obliged to take giant steps between *the young bourgeoisie and imperialism*, without obliging either to capitulate socially – a phenomenon which was also to appear in the more radical revolutions such as the Chinese or Algerian. According to Lenin's forecast, the "Third World" bourgeoisies should have been bolder than the Russian bourgeoisie. They actually were, but, we must add, as an accomplished bourgeoisie on a world scale, *historically late*.

Balance sheet of the anti-colonial revolutions

This historical comparison has made it possible to highlight the fact that, apart from "Black Africa", we

have entered a phase of bourgeois consolidation, an intermediary phase in which the bourgeoisies are testing any remains of their progressive capacities, whilst waiting for the proletariat to be in a position to take its fate into its own hands in order to move forward. The important thing is not to confuse the end of the revolutionary phase of the "Asian awakening", which corresponds to the end of the "post-war wave", with another cycle, that of post-war "capitalist prosperity", even if the end of the two cycles comes simultaneously.

It was therefore interesting to consider the result of these revolutions. At the expense of, and to the shame of chauvinist and ultimately racist indifference, which saw nothing but misery and bourgeois lies in the bourgeois revolutions, without the subversive side, the *course of history was not, however, halted*. The Report showed, figures in hand, the enormous increase in the number of proletarians in the "Third World" following the maturing of capitalism on the "backward" continents; if, in fact, 50% of the world's factory workers were Europeans in 1917, today only 25% are, whilst the "Third World" provides 33%. Today Asia, counting only Japan to India, has more industrial proletarians than the old Europe (Russia excluded). In addition, this working class is bursting with vitality, as proven by the struggles in Latin America, but also in the Near East, in India and even in China. Most of all, this working class finds the ground cleared ready for *its own* revolution, particularly where, as in Asia, giant States have come into being which drive immense social forces to converge towards and against a single state fortress.

But an even more important fact is that today the *class front*, which was legitimized yesterday for the revolutionary anti-feudal and anti-capitalist struggle, is no longer advocated except for the defence of the *national economy and production*, losing all historical significance and driving the proletarian class to separate from the bourgeoisie on the grounds of *class warfare*, a

phenomenon which naturally cannot come about fully *unless it is bound to the class party, the revolutionary party*.

The Report also recalled the political situation of the "Third World" proletariat, on their way out of the wave of independence with *strong social belligerence* made more acute by the capitalist crisis, so that the urgent problem arises of the immediate constitution of organisms independent of the bourgeoisie and the acquisition of *freedom of political movement* in the fight against the bourgeois State.

Lastly, the Report demonstrated the impossibility of the anti-colonial wave ensuring even the slightest beginnings of cross growth into proletarian revolution, because of the Stalinist counter-revolution and the way, already identified by Engels and Lenin, that this inhibited the *consequent* realization by anti-colonial revolutions of the same "minimum bourgeois victories" despite all the upholders of the "revolution by stages".

The phenomenon has been amply illustrated by tracing a picture of the bourgeois tasks yet to be accomplished in the fields of the fight against national oppression, agriculture and forms of caste and religious oppression etc., in the geographical areas and sub-areas of the "Third World", a picture that can be better presented in a more complete account of this Report, destined to appear shortly in our theoretical journal.

The Report concluded by recalling that, if since 1848, the prospect of Marxism has been that of the *communist revolution*, in the areas of young capitalism this is prepared not only by advancing the demands of the anti-capitalist struggle, but also by using the *remains of bourgeois tasks*, whose persistence is not a reason for us to condemn the proletariat to serve as cheerleaders for the bourgeoisie, but one more reason to dispatch the latter into the common grave of history as soon as possible.

(from *il programma comunista*, n. 23/1979)

The internationalist n. 4 - Summer 2017

- The World of Capital Increasingly Adrift
- The Rot Is Growing in the United Kingdom
- In and Around Turkey
- US Proletarians
- “Once-Upon-A-Time” America. But Is It Really So?
- No to the Military Adventures of “Our” Bourgeoisie!
- The “Black Panther” Movement
- Residues and Cankers of the So-Called “National Issues”
- Class War
- Long Live the French Workers’ Struggle!
- The Enemy Is At Home. But “Our Home” Is the World
- Territorial Organisms for the Proletarian Struggle
- Against All Imperialist Wars
- Why We Are Not “Bordigists”

The internationalist n. 5 - Winter 2018/2019

- Abandon the voting booths! Either prepare for elections, or prepare for revolution!
- 1917-2017. Toward the Future
- Great Britain. Once again and endlessly “The Housing Question”
- From Germany. The Hamburg G20 Summit: a mega-show of democratic illusions
- The Beleaguered Path of the African Proletariat
- Tunisia a new blaze of rebellion!
- Humanitarian Intervention as an Imperialist Political Act
- Iran. A blaze of class war
- Open Party and Closed Party
- The Ghost of the European Unity
- Proletarians pay with their lives for the survival of a mode of production which is by now only lethal
- Back to Basics. Party and Class (1921)

The internationalist n. 6 - Winter 2019/2020

- Proletarians pay with their lives the survival of a mode of production that amounts to murder
- Migrants: The Stink of Bourgeois Politics
- The “Migrants’ Caravan” Before the US Democratic Wall
- “A historical movement going on under our very eyes”
- Save the planet... But how?
- 1919-2019. In memory of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht
- One Hundred years ago, the Foundation of the Third International
- Eight Theses Regarding Russia (1953)
- Not to forget. A Page by Engels
- Class Memory. Peterloo 1819
- First May 2019. Drive back the attack by capital! Organize the response of the proletariat!
- The “gilets jaunes”: a people’s revolt short of breath, a long wave of people’s illusion
- Out now: issue no. 2 of Kommunistisches Programm
- Turkey: In the depths of the social, economic and political abyss
- Venezuela: Between democratic-bourgeois and military adventurers

The internationalist n. 7 - Winter 2020/2021

- And When the Emergency is Over?
- USA: Racism, Class Struggle and the Need for the Revolutionary Party
- AFTER MINNEAPOLIS. Let the revolt of the american proletarians be an example to proletarians in all metropolises
- Three Texts from the Sixties
- Virus and class struggle
- The Long, Long Night of the Living Dead
- The winds of war blowing across the entire middle east proclaim the need to prepare for revolution
- The Bourgeois State is a Tool of Oppression and Repression
- Don't let us forget what May Day is!
- What distinguishes our Party
- What Is Communism?
- Day by day the need for communism grows dramatically
- Why we are not "bordigists"

The internationalist n. 8 - Spring-Summer 2022

- In Ukraine as in the whole world, in the face of the imperialist war, the proletarian watchword once again must be: revolutionary defeatism against all bourgeoisies and their States! (leaflet)
- Capitalism is war
- Against ongoing imperialist wars and those under preparation
- Afghanistan: the crocodile tears of imperialism
- May 1st 2022.
Against the wars of capitalism, prepare revolutionary defeatism (leaflet)
- From the Pandemic Front: Three Articles
- 1921. Birth of the Communist Party of Italy. A Section of the Communist International.
The war for revolution and a class dictatorship continues without respite
- The Question of Power
- Back to Basics: Nature, Function and Tactics...
- Where We Come From

The internationalist n. 9 - Spring-Summer 2023

- Ukraine: core issues underlying the world crisis
- Who is attacking "Europe"?
- The difficult path of a renewed class struggle faced with war
- Prepare revolutionary defeatism against the imperialist war!

SOME LEAFLETS

- We greet with enthusiasm the rebellion of the young women and the proletarians in Iran
- War, disaster, environmental destruction, high cost of living and the other treats bestowed by bourgeois rule
- Other chickens come home to roost
- Eighth of March two thousand and twenty three
- The wave of strikes in Great Britain continues and is a forerunner of battles resuming in the rest of Europe
- "We are all anti-fascists!"... So what?
- How the communist party works
- To fight against the war of capital, we need to fight again against the peace of capital

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il programma comunista

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il programma comunista

La lunga strada della prospettiva rivoluzionaria

il programma comunista

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Kommunistisches Programm

Organ der Internationalen Kommunistischen Partei

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il programma comunista

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Ukraine. Another step closer to a new world war



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the internationalist n.7

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the internationalist n.9

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Kommunistisches Programm

Organ der Internationalen Kommunistischen Partei

Di fronte alle guerre del Capitale, i nodi vengono al pettine

Kommunistisches Programm

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Di fronte alle guerre del Capitale, i nodi vengono al pettine

the internationalist n.6

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Di fronte alle guerre del Capitale, i nodi vengono al pettine

Kommunistisches Programm

Organ der Internationalen Kommunistischen Partei

Di fronte alle guerre del Capitale, i nodi vengono al pettine

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Ukraine. Another step closer to a new world war

Kommunistisches Programm

Organ der Internationalen Kommunistischen Partei

the internationalist n.9

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