

Permanent  
Revolution  
Collective



Platform



# PERMANENT REVOLUTION

## COLLECTIVE

# SOCIALISM OR BARBARISM

## INTERNATIONAL PLATFORM

# 2017

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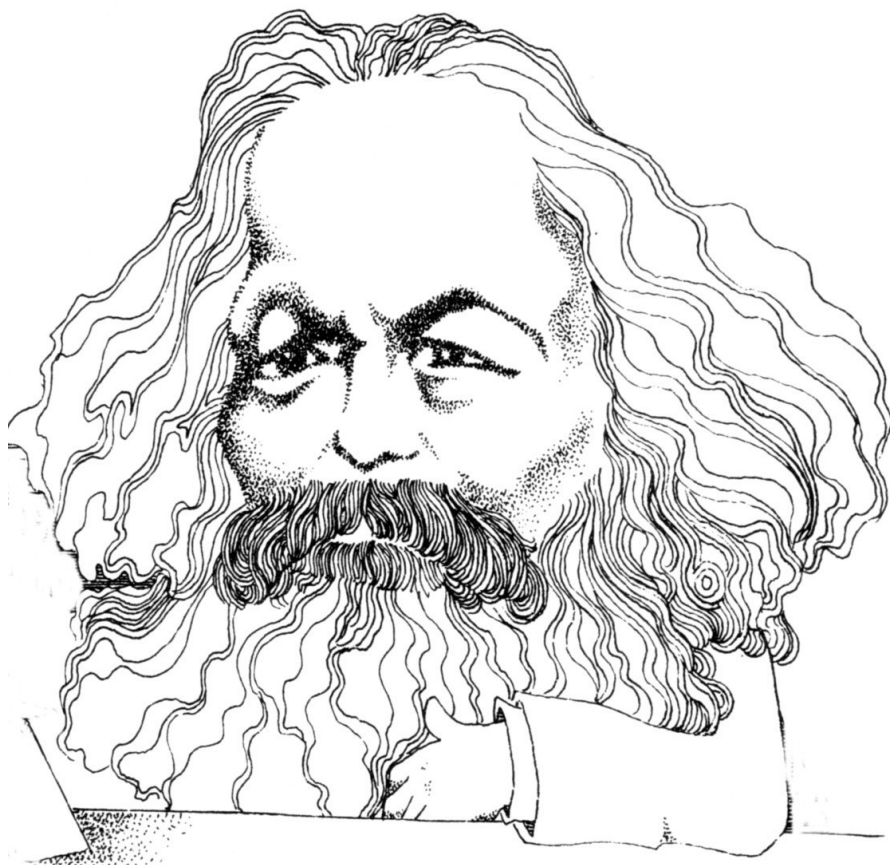
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# CAPITALISM HAS SEEN ITS DAY SOCIALISM IS NECESSARY



## 1

Humanity is able to look ahead towards a new stage of civilisation, based on the free association of producers, thanks to the development of productive forces that has been allowed by the modes of production based on constrained and exploited labour. From a historical point of view, capitalism is the anteroom for socialism.

As a mode of production, its productive forces consist of capital, the relation of production is the capitalist relation of exploitation, the product is a commodity, the surplus product is surplus value and labour is waged labour. The labour power is sold by the exploited class, which owns no means of production, to the exploiting class, which earns additional value thanks to the difference between the value of the commodities that are produced and the value of means implemented, that is: the value of the means of production used (raw materials, machines, tools, premises, etc.), and the value of the labour power that has been applied to them.

The capitalist mode of production tends to reproduce itself on an extended scale (accumulation of capital, numerical increase of the working class, globalisation), creates industry and permanently upsets the production technologies (increase in the technical composition, productivity gains, extension of needs, decrease of the unit value of the products). One way is to use science and technique on a historically unprecedented scale, two important outcomes are the saving of labour time and the establishment of relations between all human communities which were beforehand separated by distance and by geographical barriers. Thus, capitalism lays the foundations for a superior mode of production, socialism-communism.

## 2

The social forms dominated by the previous modes of production, with limited productive forces, aimed at having the exploited workers produce use values. Therefore, in these societies, crises were underproduction crises bred by a war, an epidemic or the exhaustion of resources...

In capitalist societies, the aim of the exploiters is to increase value, received as a profit added to the recovery of their invested capital. A decisive consequence of the self-valorisation of capital, of the unbridled race towards profits, is that there is no other limit to capital than its own contradictions.

From its birth, capitalism is distinguished by crises of a new type: they appear as crises of commodity overproduction that can be explained by overaccumulation of capital, by the insufficient relation between social surplus-value and social capital.

The limits that serve as impassable frame to the reproduction and accumulation of capital rest on the expropriation and impoverishment of the great mass of producers; they enter thus into contradiction with the production methods that capital must use for its own goal and that tend to promote an unlimited increase of production. Production for the market by capital in competition leads to recurrent imbalances between the different branches. The struggle of capital against labour and the struggle of capitalists against each other lead to a rise, in the invested

capital, of the part assigned to the means of production (constant capital crystallising dead, anterior labour) in relation to that assigned to manpower (variable capital that allows to activate living, new labour). This engenders a rise in the organic composition of capital and a tendency of the rate of profit to fall, which manifests itself periodically by interruptions of the extended reproduction of capital, by economic crises.

Economic crises allow accumulation of capital to resume. Indeed, the rate of profit raises again, on the one hand with the increase of exploitation facilitated by unemployment, and on the other hand by the devalorisation and destruction of capital in all its forms. Crises are violent and momentary solutions to existing contradictions, violent eruptions that restore for a moment the upset balance. The capitalist mode of production tends to spread to all activities all over the world.

The capitalist mode of production generalises commodity, which invalidates any attempt to limit commodification by preserving it. It follows also that any pretense to maintain capitalism by pretending to confine it within the nation, even wider than the cities and States of its birth, is as vain as reactionary.

Capitalism appeared in Europe in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, and it has conquered the whole world since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the early 21<sup>st</sup> century it prevails in all societies, even if former social relations live on (domestic labour, serfdom, slavery ...), which it influences, determines and modifies. Although outlines of future social relations appear (production cooperatives, distribution cooperatives, mutual insurance companies, “public services”, “social security”, initial free provision of Internet ...), capitalism submits them, deforms them and drives them back.

### 3

The generalisation of capitalism does not proceed in a uniform way: capitalist development is combined but basically unequal. The first countries having become capitalist benefit from their economic and military advance in order to rule the rest of the world. However, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century a feudal country succeeds in maintaining its independence and becomes itself a coloniser (Japan), a colony wins its independence and becomes in turn conqueror (United States).

The hierarchy within capitalist powers changes over time, but most nations in the world are still exploited and oppressed by a handful of countries. A wide range of situations exist, from the hegemonic power to the tiny colony (such as the Falkland Islands), and they include secondary imperialist powers, small imperialist countries, dominated countries that are nevertheless regional powers, dominated countries that benefit from an oil and gas rent, populated countries with no significant industry, micro-states ...

World wars are widespread confrontations where capitalist powers clash in order to alter the distribution of the world to their advantage. World War 1 endorsed the shift from British to US hegemony, World War 2 saw Japan and Germany fail to ensure their domination in Asia and in Europe in order to challenge the US.

## 4

When capitalism has reached its geographical limits, when it has created big capitalist groups that are more and more related to their State, when military conflicts for redistributing the world reach a world dimension, when capitalism has started destroying nature, it has entered into historical decline. Its progressive role fades away and its reactionary features prevail. Such a historic process of transformation was carried out in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The decay of capitalism does not prevent stages of accumulation (which are a feature of capitalism as a whole), but the economic crises are deeper. The decay of capitalism does not prevent any development of productive forces (industrialisation of some “emerging” countries, incorporation of new scientific and technical progress, appearance of new products, numerical growth of the world proletariat ...).

Nevertheless, capitalism shows a growing trend towards the production of destructive forces. Capital curbs some technical improvements, it orients scientific research towards armament, espionage and finance. The annihilation of productive forces becomes ominous for humanity: capitalist crises, unending wars, waste (advertisement, luxury goods, arms ...), irreversible deterioration of the environment, definitive removal of a significant part of the population from production, parasitism ...

## 5

The historical decline of the capitalist mode of production does not reverse the tendency towards the internationalisation of the economy. Nevertheless, there is nothing like a unified world bourgeoisie. Intergovernmental organisations on a global scale (LoN-UNO, BIS, IMF, WB, WTO ...) or on a regional scale (of which the most advanced example is the European Union) are in the hands of the most powerful bourgeoisies and they prove themselves unable to overcome national borders. For instance, against the 2008-2009 economic crisis, each important national State acted for its own capitalism, for its own finance and car companies. Inter-imperialist rivalries and the common interest of imperialist bourgeoisies in the submission of the rest of the world generate unending wars.

The bourgeoisie, even if it globalised the markets, even if big business became transnational, cannot overcome the national perspective because it is structurally fractured by the States that it created for exploiting and for competing. Thus, the European Union entered into crisis since the European bourgeoisies are unable to unify. Therefore, it does not have its own army that could hold Russia in check, compete with China and free itself from the United States.

Only the United States remain able to attempt to impose their order on all continents, even if their success is no more guaranteed since the Cuban revolution and the failure of their war in Vietnam. In addition, the ruling



imperialism is not able to drag the other imperialist powers anymore. In 2003, France and Germany refused to invade Iraq a second time. In 2015, they did everything to avoid a military confrontation with Russia in Ukraine.

Russia tries hard to keep its sphere of influence by countering militarily the NATO and the EU in Georgia, in Moldova, in Ukraine ... China becomes more and more aggressive in the South China Sea. To assert themselves, Russia and China tend to support each other. In Syria in 2013 they successfully challenged the United States and Western European countries. Russia directly intervened in Syria in 2015. However, it happens that the Sino-Russian alliance is weakened by the unilateral initiatives of the more dynamic of the two, China (Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, new silk roads).

## 6

A striking feature of the parasitism and rotting of capitalism is its growing financialisation. Economic crises often start in the form of the burst of speculative bubbles, which leads some bourgeois economists to believe that crises are only due to finance.

Financialisation is not limited to the sphere of finance and to its specialised actors: banks, insurances, credit institutions, investment companies, stock markets, rating agencies ... All of big business is concerned. The development of capitalist groups also gives a financial character to the capital of production and trade: creation of joint stock companies (fictitious capital exchangeable on the financial market), loans as bonds (another form of fictitious capital that can be transferred on the same market), purchases and sales of subsidiaries by the parent companies, protection against various risks through the demand of “derivatives” to banks, creation of banks within groups, speculation on the price of raw materials and on the exchange rates ... In this sense, all important groups became financial at the same time as they became transnational.

It proves to be more and more utopian to pretend to separate “the real economy” from finance, as the fascist or Keynesian bonesetters claim. Another feature of the decadence of capitalism is the intertwining between big transnational groups, secret services and mafias.

## 7

After the destructions inflicted by World War 2, capitalism experienced a period of unexpected growth, which caused the reformists and revisionists of Marxism to arrange explanations that granted the bourgeois State the ability to overcome the anarchy of the capitalist mode of production and to avoid crises: Keynesianism (labourists, social-democrats), State monopoly capitalism (Stalinists), permanent arms economy (Cliffists), neo-capitalism (Pabloites) ...

Yet as soon as the 1960s, the rate of profit fell again. The 1973-1974 crisis put an end to the “thirty golden years” or “Golden Age”. The United States ruined in 1971 the international monetary system of equivalence of exchange around the

US dollar (itself guaranteed on gold) decided at the Bretton-Woods conference in 1944, which let loose inflation and speculation on currencies.

After the world crisis of 1973-1974, the counter-offensive of the world bourgeoisie against its working class (in the name of the market) and against the workers' States (in the name of democracy), the setbacks of the working class in imperialist countries (especially the defeat of the miners in Britain in 1985, left isolated by the Labour Party and the TUC confederation), the changes in management (lean management, subcontracting, just-in-time production, use of computing technology for intensifying exploitation ...), the restoration of capitalism in most countries with State ownership and planned economy (from the capitalist unification of Germany in 1989), opened a new period of world accumulation.

Revisionists then discovered that capitalism had become "neoliberal" (as if an ideology could account for the transformations of a mode of production and as if capitalism could dispense itself from the bourgeois State), "globalised" and "financialised" (as if it was new and reversible).

## 8

Not to mention the unending national and regional capitalist crises, the return of the world crisis in 2008 has shown to the workers that capitalism was really unable to ensure prosperity and even a continuous growth.

The bourgeois worker's parties and the trade union bureaucracies accompany henceforth the attacks by their bourgeoisies, by accepting to negotiate lay-offs and wage reductions, or by constituting bourgeois governments, either alone (Portugal ...), or most often with bourgeois parties (Greece, Germany, France, Brazil ...).

The 2008-2009 crisis also proved that the self-proclaimed liberalism of the governments was just a mystification, an ideological cover for the political attack launched against social benefits (right to strike, labour law, social welfare, public services ...). In a flash, Bush Jr in the United States, Merkel in Germany, Aso in Japan, Sarkozy in France, Brown in Great Britain, Medvedev in Russia, and Berlusconi in Italy ... turned their backs on "neoliberalism": the national States, the governments and the central banks extensively intervened by all means available in order to save their financial and industrial groups. Thus, the bourgeois State contained the amount of capital destroyed. Even Hu in China, whose economy had only suffered from a slowdown in growth, resorted to Keynesian recipes (key rate cuts, public deficit ...).

These policies prepared the next turmoil: public debt crisis in Southern Europe and, to a lesser extent, in the United States, housing bubble in China, stock market bubble in the United States, stock market crisis in China.

The proletariat has borne the brunt of the 2008-2009 world crisis with massive lay-offs and the increase in the reserve army of capital. Mass unemployment and the betrayals of the trade union bureaucracies (and of the "reformist" parties such as Syriza in Greece, the PS in France, the PT in Brazil, the PCC and PS in Chile, etc.) allowed the bourgeoisie to save capitalism and to reinforce exploitation. This

results in an increase of inequalities. Even in China, where wages sharply increased for a decade, inequalities increased. Absolute pauperisation hits some working classes, as in Greece, in Argentina and in the United States.

The insufficient destruction of capital, because of the intervention of the bourgeois State, confers a fragile character to the world recovery that started by the end of 2009. Despite the phase of world accumulation, some countries (Russia, Argentina, Brazil, Turkey ...) entered into a crisis.

The weakness of world growth feeds protectionist tendencies in the fractions of national bourgeoisies that are victims of international competition. Inter-imperialist rivalries intensified from it. Traditional bourgeois parties enter into a political crisis under the pressure of new xenophobic or even fascist parties. All of them attempt to place the onus for mass unemployment and the impoverishment of large layers of the proletariat on foreigners (migrant workers, rival countries ...).

## 9

There should be no confusion between the definition of imperialisms (the features of the ruling countries) and that of imperialism (the character of the period of decay of the capitalist mode of production). For instance, Russia was one of the imperialist countries in 1917, despite its economic backwardness and its one-sided capital import, because it had capitalist groups ("monopolies") and indeed implemented a colonisation process within its borders (a "prison house of peoples").

All the more, contemporary China, which retains by force entire populations in its Western side (Tibetans and Uyghurs), of which some groups have entered into world oligopolies, which exports capital (including by taking control of foreign companies), is now imperialist. The reason is that during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, China was not a dominated capitalist country, but a workers' State, even if degenerated. Although it was incomplete, the revolution unified the country and allowed it to escape the imperialist rule. After the restoration of capitalism decided by the Stalinist-Maoist bureaucracy in 1992, China could join the group of imperialist powers in a few decades, thanks to its (geographic as well as demographic) size, and to the previous development of productive forces within the framework of planned economy (infrastructure, industry, agriculture, education, health ...). For example, its initial technical level, together with the size of the country, allowed an easier access to the most advanced techniques through the demand for knowledge transfer and industrial joint ventures.

## 10

Even if China became an imperialist power, it is no more able to pretend replacing the United States than Japan, Germany, Russia or France are, despite the former's decline, as shown by the collapse of Bretton-Woods' international monetary system (1971-1973) and by the defeat in Vietnam (1975).

The American decline feeds both the demands of its rivals and the world instability, as exemplified by the breaking up of Ukraine, war and the arms race in East Asia, and the skirmishes in South China Sea. Still, the conditions for a new world war are not met for now. This delay must be used by the world proletariat for ridding mankind of the old mode of production.

## 11

The objective conditions for the transition from capitalism to the construction of socialism-communism on a world scale have been met for a long time. Despite various impediments and distortions, science and technique are still progressing.

The share of the industrial sector weakened in the imperialist centers. But, on the one hand, some activities which are classified as “services” form a real capitalist production; on the other hand, activities of extraction, manufacture, building, transport ... increased and got diversified on a world scale.

Agriculture more and more capitalist, hit by a stagnation of its yield and by the exhaustion of many fishing resources, could easily feed humanity if it was rid of the capitalist mode of production.

The working class in no way disappeared in the old imperialist countries and it developed significantly in Latin America, in Africa and above all in Asia. By its place in the relations of production, it has the ability to transform the relations of production and to free the productive forces which suffocate within the framework of private property, profit and nation.

The development of science, technique and the means of production allows to envisage a society which fulfills the needs of the world population, which will be rid of private property, exploitation and national borders, which will be environment-friendly, whose economy will be placed under the control of the associate producers.

# THE BOURGEOISIE IS NO MORE PROGRESSIVE, THE WORKING CLASS IS THE ONLY REVOLUTIONARY CLASS



W. L. W.

## 12

Capitalism emerged through violence on a large scale against the rest of the world: sometimes through genocide, always through plunder and frenzied exploitation. The colonisation of America, of Africa and of Asia, modern slavery in the Carribean and in Northern America, which supplied raw materials for the capitalist world market, came together with the invention of racism.

Yet, from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the bourgeoisie played a relatively progressive role, in overturning the former ruling classes, in undermining and in disrupting the previous modes of production (Dutch revolution in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, American and French ones in the 18<sup>th</sup> century). It opposed monarchies, unequal rights, State religion, it trusted reason and science.

It is over. In dominant countries, during the 20<sup>th</sup> century patriotism transforms itself into the acceptance of the existing order, and even into racism and xenophobia ("migration policy", apartheid, genocide ...), including in the most democratic countries (France, Great Britain, Germany, United States, Japan ...). During the 20<sup>st</sup> century, the bourgeoisie gave up the progressive fight that it led against religion, and regressed into obscurantism (creationism, superstitions, technophobia, degrowth ...). Moreover, it financed and armed the worst counter-revolutionary racist and religious gangs.

The consequences are catastrophic: pressures against educators, attacks on religious minorities, enslaving of women, aggressions against and executions of homosexuals, intimidations and murders of artists, stonings, calling into question the right to abortion, amputations of offenders coming from popular classes..

This does not exclude the possibility of preserving or of gaining democratic conquests, but the contemporary bourgeoisie is not its vector anymore; they rather consist of concessions that it makes under the pressure of the working class, women, national minorities, homosexuals...

## 13

The struggle for defending and enlarging democracy falls on the proletariat. But the struggle for democratic freedoms that are necessary to lead its class struggle, is not separated from its own demands, whether they are basic or transitory (that is, which put capitalism into question).

The democratic catchword of a Constituent Assembly can be useful when the bourgeoisie refuses to grant the people democratic liberties (colonisation, fascism, prolonged military junta ...), but it must be rejected where democratic liberties have been won and governments are elected (as in Argentina in 2001, while all Argentinian workers' parties, including the PO and the PTS, proposed it), and it must be given up as soon as the bourgeoisie grants the Constituent Assembly in order to stifle the starting revolution (as in Tunisia and in Egypt in 2011). In such cases, the struggle for democracy passes through the disarmament of the repression forces and the establishment of workers' councils (waged workers, other workers of town and country, unemployed, workers in training, conscripts ...), the basis of the workers' State.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, democracy is conceivable only under the form of workers' democracy (dictatorship of the proletariat).

## 14

Internationalist communists advocate national rights for the national minorities that are oppressed. The proletariat of oppressive nations must fight against keeping by force oppressed nations within the borders of such States; in other words, it must fight for the right to self-determination.

For instance, the Kurds have a fundamental right to build their State. Kurdish nationalists reveal themselves unable, by their petty-bourgeois (PKK, PYD, PJAK, Komala ...) or bourgeois (UPK, PDK, PDKI ...) nature to call upon proletarians of imperialist and West Asian countries to lead a social revolution that would definitively bring down all oppressing regimes. They are left to resting on various regional powers (Iran, Turkey, Israel ...), or even on imperialist powers (United States, Russia). But the support of this or that bourgeoisie is limited and reversible, since it is subject to about-faces of its policies and selfish interests.

In order to unify the Turkish, Iraqi, Syrian and Iranian working classes, the workers of these countries must recognise the right of Kurds to separate and to unify. A united Kurdish State should differ from the multiplication of small enclaves in rivalry between them and destined to domination by foreign powers.

The Kurds, thanks to the proletarian revolution, will be able to decide freely their fate within the framework of a socialist federation of West Asia.

## 15

Likewise, the Palestinians have the right to fight against the Zionist colonisation of their territory. Jewish nationalism turned a small minority of the world's Jews into oppressors. The Israeli State has been built on the basis of the expulsion, through terrorism, of the Palestinian population from its land by the nationalist fraction of the Jewish bourgeoisie. The Zionist movement, which had not been an outright opponent to Hitler's racism and fascism, became hegemonic after World War 2, because of the extermination of Europe's Jews by German imperialism.

The bureaucracy of the USSR approved the foundation of Israel in 1948. American imperialism, which had refused to open its borders to Jewish refugees, supported the Zionist project and still supports Israel. Israel often converges with American imperialism but it pursues its own goals: it got equipped with the nuclear weapon with the complicity of French imperialism, it continues the colonial settlement in Jerusalem and in the West Bank, and it slaughters the Palestinians down to the refugee camps where they are squeezed by the neighbouring countries and, periodically, in Gaza (2006, 2008-2009, 2012, 2014).

It is outrageous that, in the name of Trotskyism, the Pabloite “4<sup>th</sup> International”, the Grantist CWI, the Hardyist ICU ... have adopted the UNO solution: the prospect of two States in Palestine, which ratifies Zionist colonisation.

The Pan-Arab or Islamic nationalist leaderships of Palestinians bet on the bourgeoisies in the region, which always sacrificed the Palestinian cause, when they did not slaughter the Palestinian resistance themselves (the Jordanian monarchy in 1970, the Syrian dictatorship in 1976). The Fatah-PLO capitulated to Israel in 1989 under the pressure of the bureaucracy of the USSR.

The Palestinian proletariat must take a leading role in the struggle against colonisation and for the national independence of Palestine, and tear it away from the Palestinian bourgeoisie, whether it is Fatah, which became the guard-dog of the Israeli bourgeoisie, or Hamas, reduced to pressurising the Zionist State. The only way the Israeli proletariat can live as a class and fight against its bourgeoisie, is to recognise the democratic and national rights of the Palestinian Arabs, the first of which being the right to return. It can break with its bourgeoisie only if it has the perspective to win from it, by participating to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The watchwords of the conscious proletariat are thus: liberation of all Arab fighters, unity of Palestine, equality of all Palestinians (Jews and Arabs, men and women), separation between the State and religions, right of Hebrew workers under these conditions to live in Palestine, workers’ government, and expropriation of capitalist groups.

The overarmed colonial State and its Bantustans (Gaza, West Bank) must leave room to a socialist Palestine (that is, led by workers). It can be born only within the framework of permanent revolution in the region. The unified Palestine will be able to survive only within a Socialist Federation (that is, in transition towards socialism) of Western Asia or of the Mediterranean Sea.

## 16

Internationalist communists do not advocate a growing number of tiny States doomed to being dominated by imperialist powers. Moreover, the socialist-communist mode of production will delete all borders.

Recognising national rights is also a way to counter the petty bourgeois or bourgeois nationalist currents which mystify workers and seeks to fraternise with an imperialist power. Wherever there is no more national oppression, as in Scotland or in Catalonia, communists do not advocate separation, without calling into question the right to self-determination.

Nothing is progressive about the current dismantling of Ukraine. No doubt there are national issues in Ukraine: the historical mistrust of the Ukrainians masses against Russia; the sense of being Russian in the majority of the population in Donbass and even more in Crimea; the historical mistrust of Tatars against Russia. But the annexation of Crimea to Russia by the Russian secret services and army, the secession of a part of Donbass with the support of the Russian State, the war sparked by the Ukrainian government with the help of the United States and of the fascists gangs, do not result from national movements. The



outrageous manipulation of national feelings by imperialist powers leads to the breakup of a small country, to increasing xenophobia, to the stifling of class struggle, as in the breakup of Yugoslavia.

All history demonstrated that imperialism does not serve peoples' rights. The ruling power allows a "moderate" Islamic regime in Turkey to slaughter Kurds; the old German and French bourgeoisies just trampled on the elections in Greece and crushed the Greek people with their demands; the new Russian bourgeoisie led two wars in order to maintain by force Chechnya within its territory. Against the dangerous imperialist rivalries, against the exacerbated fragmentation of the continent, the communists advocate the necessity of the Socialist United States of Europe.

## 17

World capitalism is polarised between two classes that are themselves not homogeneous: the bourgeoisie or capitalist class (owners of enterprises, managers of enterprises, senior officials in charge of the general management of capitalism) and the working class or proletariat (workers, employees, technicians ... of manufacturing industry, of transport, of extraction, of agriculture, of trade, of finance, or unemployed).

But it comprises other social classes and layers: youth in training, traditional petty bourgeoisie of workers owning their means of production (independent farmers, craftsmen, small traders, liberal professions), civil servants (civilians waged by the State, by local authorities ...), executives (waged intermediates between capitalists or their State and operating waged workers), forces of repression (professional military men, national police, local police, secret services), lumpen (people having lost their social position, being lastingly rejected from production and living from trafficks, charity or social benefits).

Some layers are naturally close to the bourgeoisie (senior executives, business lawyers, students from rich families, mercenaries). The intermediate classes are, in general, dominated by the bourgeoisie. However, sometimes they oppose the bourgeoisie and can even ally themselves to the proletariat.

## 18

The working class can and must rally some intermediate classes in order to take power and exercise it. It is the hegemonic class of the contemporary revolution, since the studying youth, the petty bourgeois classes, the lumpen are not able to lead a revolution by themselves. They oscillate between the two basic classes.

The lumpen is sometimes used as a reservoir for counter-revolution and fascism: most Nazi aggressors of immigrants are dropouts, and Islamic fanatics who attack Jews and artists in Europe are mostly former offenders. Left to their own devices, with no proletarian leadership, the dropouts are only capable of nihilistic destructions and plunders, whose violence fascinates the Bakuninists and ultra-leftists, but which open no perspective.

In no way the proletariat can trust the urban petty bourgeoisie that seeks to use it as a back-up to its narrow democratic or nationalist projects, even if it easily abandons it to the repression of the local or imperialist bourgeoisie.

On the other hand, the dropouts and petty bourgeois can be attracted by a voluntary and determined policy of the proletariat.

Moreover, since the 1960s, thanks to the massification of secondary and higher education, the working class can attract students and stimulate their struggles (China, Germany, France, Mexico, Italy, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Turkey, Spain ...). In the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, the movement of high school students in Chile, the students' movement in Britain, the workers' movement in Wisconsin (United States), the mobilisation in Istanbul (Turkey), the popular uprisings in Africa (Tunisia in 2010, Egypt in 2011, Burkina Faso in 2014 ...) confirm the strong possibility of an alliance between the proletariat and the studying youth.

## 19

Another historical ally of the urban and rural proletariat is the poor peasantry. The working class in power will not forcibly collectivise agriculture, as did Stalin, Mao and Pol. The working peasants currently defend themselves against big landowners and capital (in China, in Brazil, in Bolivia, in Zimbabwe, etc.), but remain most often a pawn in the hands of the urban petty bourgeoisie, or even of a fraction of the bourgeoisie that betrays them.

But even when peasants wage an armed struggle against the bourgeois army, they cannot substitute for the national and international struggle of the working class, contrarily to what some Stalinists pretended: Mao Zedong, Hô Chi-Minh or Ernesto Guevara, followed by Trotskyism's revisionists (Pabloites, Morenoites, Grantists ...). This perspective is not workable in the central countries of world capitalism, where it must be consciously overthrown by the working class. At best, it led to revolutions that remained limited to backward countries (Yugoslavia, China, Vietnam, Cuba ...), because there the proletariat never exercised power, which was monopolised by a usurping, privileged and finally restorationist bureaucracy. Moreover, the Chinese revolution could not have succeeded without the proximity and the help of the USSR, the Cuban revolution could not have succeeded without the logistic support of the urban workers' movement and without the general strike.

For half a century, the Castroist experience (in Zaïre, in Bolivia, in Nicaragua, in Colombia ...) and the Maoist failures (in Peru, in India, in Nepal, in Philippines ...) have shown that the rural guerilla or the encircling of the cities by the countryside is a strategic deadlock. As a matter of fact, most guerilla currents turned into "reformist" parties, sometimes into bourgeois politicians.

## 20

The Popular Front, the Anti-Imperialist United Front, as well as all the “left” blocks which include a fraction of the capitalists (supposed to be democratic or anti-imperialist) maintain or restore the hegemony of the whole bourgeoisie over the exploited and semi-exploited.

This is even more evident of the chit-chat, useless in terms of practical perspective, by the World Social Forum, which was launched in 2001 by Brazil’s PT and the Catholic Church, with the support of the Cuban bureaucracy and of most centrists (USFI, IST, L5I, CWI, IWL, IWU, LWM, TFFI ...).

A workers’ and peasant alliance, a workers’ and popular block can be progressive only under the hegemony of the working class, which requires that the latter has its own revolutionary and internationalist party. In order to win, the working class must rally support from other workers (petty bourgeois, management workers), tear them from the rule of the capitalist class, which has a small size.

It must paralyse the forces of repression. This can be done only if conscripts, in the countries where military service still exists, are organised as workers under uniform by the party and the union that are struggling for their democratic rights against the staff. This can be done only if the workers’ movement cautions against the repressive State apparatus (while reformists and centrists claim that it must be trusted) and uses every opportunity so that the struggling workers and students defend themselves against it.

There is no way that communists could consider the police as consisting of workers like any others (as all social-democrats, most Stalinists and some centrists pretend), even less request its strengthening (as Lutte ouvrière did). The intermediary classes must feel the will of the waged workers to fight the capitalist minority through the whole course.

## 21

For this we need a program, a strategy, a party. In defending itself against capitalists, in leading all exploited and all oppressed, the proletariat cannot stop in its path. Under penalty of defeat, even of counter-revolution, it must lead the struggle until social revolution (armament of the proletariat, destruction of the bourgeois State, expropriation of big business, workers’ government ...).

The dictatorship of the proletariat, that is workers’ power, must extend revolution, under penalty of being fettered by isolation or of being immediately crushed. In this sense, the proletarian revolution is, in contrast to the previous bourgeois revolutions, prolonged, radical and international: it is a “revolution in permanence”.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century distinction between the “minimum program”, for strengthening the proletariat within ascending capitalism, and the “maximum

program”, for taking power when it would be strong enough, is now obsolete. The proletarian revolution that starts within a State cannot immediately initiate the new socialist-communist mode of production, especially in a backward country. Nevertheless, communists call it “socialist revolution”, because it puts an end to capitalism in some part of the world with the destruction of the bourgeois State and with the expropriation of expropriators, because it opens thus the way to the socialist-communist mode of production, to the society of free and associated producers.

In order to reach socialism-communism, revolution must be extended to the whole world, develop productive forces, transfer the management of the economy to the producers, and free up time for that ...

## 22

Even in countries where no democratic revolution took place, the “progressive” or “national” bourgeoisie tends, in decisive moments, to prefer being submitted to imperialism and to ally with the archaic priests and exploiters, rather than running the risk of a social revolution inevitably included in the mobilisation of the exploited classes in capitalist society.

Even if the “anti-imperialist united front” was envisaged by the Communist International during its 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> congresses in order to unite a weak proletariat (whose party should nevertheless remain independent) to the emerging national bourgeoisie, it is inapplicable, as the tragic experiences in Turkey and in China in the 1920s have shown. The strategy of “revolution in stages” endorsed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> International (a democratic revolution paving the way to an extended development of capitalism in order to prepare the objective conditions for the future social revolution) is out of date in the imperialist era, while the Stalinised Communist International revives it and then extends it to the bourgeois democracies in the form of the Popular front.

Even in backward countries, only the strategy of permanent revolution can achieve victory.

## 23

The former revolutions were led by classes that were themselves exploiting classes. For the first time the proletariat opens the way towards a classless society. While the bourgeoisie fought for strengthening itself, the historic mission of the working class is to dissolve itself during the transition from capitalism to socialism-communism.

For waged workers, who form the majority, its overthrow is necessary to put an end with exploitation, job insecurity, poverty, the alienation they experience.

For working women, its overthrow is necessary for putting an end with the double working day (waged and domestic labour).

During the revolutionary fight, racial and sexual prejudices are lessened. During the dictatorship of proletariat, in the construction of socialism, when workers will alternately occupy coordination positions, when they will all receive a correct compensation for their individual contribution to the social production, when this labour will be more fulfilling, then the job and income discrimination between men and women, between Blacks and Whites ... will fade away.

World socialism-communism will provide material security, the end of the division of labour, the free development of all, richer relationships with other human beings. For the first time, human beings will consciously control their conditions of existence, while under capitalism, their own products became their masters.

The new mode of production, in its first phase, will still distribute wealth unequally between associated producers, taking into account their contribution; but in the second phase, when productive forces will be further developed to the point of material abundance, each one will receive according to his or her needs. The free fulfilment of each will be the condition for the free fulfilment of all.

## 24

Until the imperialist turn at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was possible to envisage that a proletarian revolution starts peacefully, because of both the increase in the number of the waged workers and the weakness of the bourgeois State's bureaucracy in the Netherlands, in Great Britain, in the United States ... Even in these countries, it was likely that the capitalist minority would revolt against the power of the majority and that the workers's power should crush it.

In any case, for a century, the most democratic capitalist countries have seen a spectacular strengthening of their State, especially in its civilian technocratic apparatus (senior officials, senior magistrates ...) and its repressive one (criminal justice, prisons, police, army, secret services ...).

This invalidates all the dangerous parliamentarist and pacifist illusions spread by social-democrats, Stalinists and centrists (especially those of the CWI, the IMT and the Lambertist FI-ILCWP).

Revolution necessarily passes through the dismantling and the destruction of the bourgeois State, and this requires a form of democracy which is higher than bourgeois democracy: the armament of people and the emergence of councils, bodies of both workers' united front and class alliances, bodies of dual power defying the bourgeois State and administering the workers' State, in order to march toward socialism-communism (commune de Paris, soviets, Arbeiter und Soldatenräte, comités, munkás tanács, assembleas populares, cordones, comissões de trabalhadores, shoras ...). The necessary self-organisation of the masses must constantly be put forward in the propaganda, agitation and practice of the revolutionary workers' party.

## 25

Against the real or imaginary danger of proletarian revolution, fractions of the bourgeoisie bet, as soon as the 19<sup>th</sup> century, on military leaders (Bonapartism) who momentarily take away from it the effective control of its own State.

Besides, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, since the world revolution started in Russia, the bourgeoisies did not mind going further in abdication and reaction, by resorting to extra-State counter-revolutionary gangs led by adventurers (fascism). Fascism is the mobilisation of dropouts and of fanaticised petty bourgeois against the workers' movement, against democracy and against ethnic or religious minorities. It pretends seriously to get to power, always with the help of the State's repressive apparatus, only when a fraction of the bourgeoisie bets on it, either because it has no means for democracy, or because it judges that elections, parliamentarism, reformism, popular fronts are not useful anymore.

Fascism must not be confused with xenophobic bourgeois parties that share with it chauvinism and racism, but remain within the realm of bourgeois democracy (LdN, UKIP, FN, Tea Party ...).

Since the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, some fractions of the bourgeoisie turn the main religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism ...) into religious fundamentalism, that is, into reactionary, even fascist, political trends.

Islamism was first used as a back-up by imperialism (in Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Iran, Afghanistan ...), but it slipped from its promoters' control in Iran (Islamic Republic), in Afghanistan (Talibans), in Iraq and in Syria (Islamic State-Daesh), in Palestine (Hamas), in Nigeria and in Cameroon (Boko Haram) ... Totalitarianism and barbarism deepen at every further Islamist wave. The counter-revolutionary success of Islamism does not only rely on the propaganda and subsidies by the Islamist monarchies of the Gulf, which have never been questioned by the American, French or British imperialisms. It also can be explained by the role played by religion in the popular resistance to colonialism, by the Stalinist transformation of regional communist parties into appendages of the national bourgeoisie, by the previous failure of the bourgeois pan-Arab nationalism (Nasserism, Baath, FLN, PLO, Jamahiriya ...) and by the clericalist concessions of tyrants approaching their end (Mubarak, Gaddafi, Ben Ali, Bouteflika ...).

## 26

Against fascism, which threatens all the proletariat's conquests, which targets all workers' organisations, workers must join their forces, achieve a united front of their organisations to crush the thugs of reaction.

They reject no help for fighting against the fascist danger, but they cannot call for help "democratic" or "republican" fractions of the bourgeoisie, which paralyse them without protecting them, nor the State apparatus of which a fraction informs, protects, trains and arms the fascist shock troops.

The indifference to the fascist danger and the division of the workers' ranks lead to its victory, as in Italy in 1922 and in Germany in 1933; likewise, the Popular Front prepares the defeat through disorientation, division, demoralisation of workers and poor peasants, as in Spain in 1937 and in Chile in 1973.

In order to defeat fascism, it is necessary to organise the workers' militia, the defense of strikes, demonstrations, premises, popular districts, to mobilise the exploited and the oppressed, which necessarily leads to question private property. In order to definitely eradicate fascism, one must put an end to capitalism.

## 27

In case of a conflict between a dominated country (including one led by a Bonapartist or fascist regime) and one or several imperialist powers (including the most democratic ones), or in case of an attack by a pro-imperialist fraction of the local bourgeoisie against a nationalist fraction (Venezuela), or a reformist party (Chile in 1973, Brazil in 2015), the proletariat is not neutral.

But the conscious proletariat preserves its independence, it reminds the masses of the narrow limits of the anti-imperialist inclinations of the bourgeoisies of dominated countries, it warns them about their unavoidable capitulation, and contends their leadership among oppressed.

To deliver real blows to world imperialism goes through the overthrow of its own bourgeoisie. In no way the communists call, under humanitarian pretexts, for an imperialist intervention, even if it is under guise of the UNO (as the Pabloite FI systematically does since the break-up of Yugoslavia).

## 28

While in capitalist centers fascism is aggressively imperialist, in dominated countries Bonapartism and fascism are compelled to take an anti-imperialist colour in order to get a mass base.

Even in cases when bourgeois nationalists are chattering on "socialism", the proletariat must keep its independence. In other words, the adhesion by the Argentinian Morenoite "Trotskyists" to the justicialist movement of Colonel Peron, the subordination of the Lambertist "Trotskyists" to the Algerian MNA, the participation of the Pabloite "Trotskyists" to Ben Bella's Algerian government, the support by the Healyite "Trotskyists" to the regime of the Libyan Colonel Gaddafi and to the Iraqi regime of Hussein, the involvement of the South-African Grantist "Trotskyists" in the ANC, the rallying of the Mexican Lambertist and Pabloite "Trotskyists" to the PRD, the activity of the Greek Grantist "Trotskyists" in the PASOK, the foundation by the Cliffist and

Grantist “Trotskyists” of the Scottish independentist SSP, the activism of the Cliffist “Trotskyists” in the Zimbabwean MDC, the adhesion of the Venezuelan Grantist “Trotskyists” to Colonel Chavez’s Bolivarian movement, are not better than the Stalinist rallying to the regime of the Egyptian Colonel Nasser or to the Baath regimes in Syria and in Iraq.

Even more so, any support to the clericalist counter-revolution is criminal, as the one by the Stalinists, the Barnists and the Healyites to the Iranian ayatollahs, by the Lambertists to the Algerian FIS, by the Stalinists and the Pabloites to the Lebanese Hezbollah, by the Cliffists to the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood ...



THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN CLASSES IS  
THE TRUE MOTOR OF HISTORY,  
THE PROLETARIAT CAN LEAD ITS OWN  
ONLY THROUGH ORGANISATION



## 29

Even if traditional bourgeois parties have a popular basis, or even control labour unions (Argentina, United States ...), they never can be identified with parties created by the working class, be they with a “reformist” (that is, bourgeois) programme, contrarily to the confusion frequently fostered by the Morenoite, Lambertist, Grantist “Trotskyists” ...

Blocs with representatives of the bourgeoisie and bourgeois workers’ parties often present themselves under the confused label of “*the left*”. From the point of view of the working class, one cannot define “*the left*” and “*the right*”; nevertheless, this myth created by the bourgeoisie has an ideological and political function: the opposition between “*the left*” and “*the right*” hides the struggle between classes and aims at submitting politically workers to bourgeois politicians and parties. Accordingly, Marxists resort to the terms “left”, “right”, “centre” only in a descriptive way: either to indicate an evolution, a progress or a regression, or to distinguish tendencies, fractions inside the same organisation, and wings of a class movement.

The agencies of the bourgeoisie inside the working class (labourism, degenerate social-democracy, Stalinism, reformist trade unionism) and their centrist deputies have made from the false contradiction between “*the left*” and “*the right*” one of their themes of predilection. In the United States, the social-democrats (DSA) build the “left” bourgeois party, the Democratic Party (DP); the main wreckage of Stalinism (CPUSA) calls to vote for the candidates of the DP at all levels; during the 2016 presidential election, the pseudo-Trotskyists of Socialist Alternative (affiliated to the CWI) support another candidate of “the left”, the one of the Green Party. In Argentina, organisations that appeal to Lenin and Trotsky (IS, PO and PTS) have even called their 2011 electoral bloc “Frente de Izquierda”, the same name as the small French popular front constituted in 2009 in France by the PCF with splits of the PS or of the NPA and bourgeois debris.

As this polarisation is versatile and impotent, it is declined on a world scale in variants that remain as empirical and disappointing: “the far right”, “the right of the right”, “the hard right”, “the republican right”, “the centre”, “the old left”, “the new left”, “the far left”, “the liberal left”, “the hard left”, “the soft left”, “the radical left”, “the government left”, “the extra-parliamentary left”, “the left of the left” ... The NPA, the SEP, the SL ... use an involuntarily comical term: “the false left”. To distinguish “the true left” from “the false left”, it is like looking for true astrologers and true fortune-tellers. The Communist League asserts as early as 1848 that the key to history is class struggle, the struggle between classes.

## 30

The myth of the polarisation between “the left” and “the right” comes on top of the equally fallacious opposition between “statism” and “liberalism”.

The period of decadence of capitalism led to reinforcing the State, in particular since World War 1: hypertrophy of the repressive apparatus, interference into the relations of exploitation and into the competition between capitals. Almost all States guarantee a national currency (or an interstate one, as in the case of the euro and the two CFA francs), all States manage partially the production and reproduction of the labour force (training, health, transport, family policy, town planning ...), all build infrastructures that are unprofitable for a particular capital but indispensable for the production of commodities and the expansion of capital (roads, airports, harbours, subways, trains ...).

All world and regional powers finance militarism, no State renounces totally its protectionist practices, many set up regional economic agreements, most States are considerably indebted, all attempt to defend their big capitalist groups by all means ... The reactionary bourgeois economist Lord Keynes delivered the most complete retrospective justification of the increase of the economic role of the State.

## 31

Since World War 2, most agents of the bourgeoisie within the labour movement have adopted Keynesianism, which is satisfied with class collaboration within the framework of the nation. All pass off the bourgeois State as benevolent and progressive, while democratic and social conquests are a fragile by-product of the struggle waged by the working class at the world and local scale. To this end, social-patriots (and their centrist deputies) designate as adversaries not the capitalist mode of production and the bourgeois State, but organisms of cooperation between States (EU, IMF, WTO ...) and an ideology (economic “liberalism”).

Instead of denouncing combines of imperialist powers against dominated countries and military treaties against world revolution, they create a diversion by targeting regional economic agreements (as the EU) or free trade treaties. At best, that takes the form of an outlet such as the World Social Forum; at its worst, it is embodied in xenophobic campaigns (leadership of the US AFL-CIO against Mexican lorry-drivers, French PdG against Polish plumbers ...) and government policies against foreign workers (all bourgeois workers’ parties conduct such a policy when they are in power).

Indeed, communists refute the patter of neo-classical economists, and of liberal free trade politicians. The working class does not need to choose between liberalism and Keynesianism, between protectionism and free trade, all equally illusory. The communist vanguard fights vigorously the division of workers by nationalism and the reactionary illusion of “capitalism in a single country”. It is from the outset hostile to protectionism and statism, of which fascists are the most resolute and extreme wing.

The economic war between imperialist powers, whether it hides behind the liberal mask or it appears openly with protectionism and the public financing of enterprises, sooner or later runs into simply war, often against dominated countries, sometimes between big imperialist powers.

The national State is a relic that restrains the development of productive forces; the socialist-communist revolution will put an end to it. The union of workers of all countries is necessary to lead it.

## 32

The capitalist relation implies capital on the one hand, wage labour on the other hand. In societies dominated by the capitalist mode of production, the two fundamental classes are the bourgeoisie and the working class. Capitalism tends to reproduce itself spontaneously, in an economic way, by simple and enlarged reproduction of capital (and of the labour force). But their position is by nature unequal.

The bourgeoisie is exploiter, which confers it privileges in terms of satisfaction of needs, leisure time, access to culture (which does not make, far from it, of all its members erudite and cultured people). Its superiority was already established economically and ideologically in the declining feudal societies or colonies when it led democratic revolutions in the Netherlands, in Great Britain, in the United States, in France, in Italy ...

Today, its political representation and the management of its collective interests require only secondarily the political parties, whose diversity reflects the traditions, the economic split and the complexity of relations with subordinate classes and with capitalist classes in the rest of the world. Its main tools of political and social domination are the State and ideology.

## 33

At the opposite pole of society, waged workers constitute an exploited, but also dominated class.

First, alienation, fetishism and reification result from specificities of the capitalist mode of production (the need for money, the satisfaction of needs by commodities, the apparent equality of exchangers on the "labour market", the wage as "price of labour", the absence of control on production and on products ...).

Then workers suffer from a lack of free time (since it is their overwork that secures plus-value), of health problems (strain, psychological tension, physical wear, occupational diseases, work-related and commuting accidents), of job insecurity (necessity to sell one's labour force in order to live, unemployment). For the majority of workers, to labour and transportation time adds domestic work that ensures the free reproduction of the labour force (as parents and foremost as women).

Fractions face discriminations as a woman (underrated trades, inferior wage, sexual harassment ...), as a young person, as a foreigner, as a member of an ethnical or religious minority, as a homosexual ... which, beside the additional oppression that weighs on the concerned individuals, can divide and weaken the class.

Lastly, one must reckon with the deliberate action of the capitalist class: on the one hand, the immigration policy, the coercion at workplace (by the small boss or the hierarchical supervision of the medium and big capital), the intimidation and repression by the repressive State apparatus, by the fascist gangs; on the other hand, the inculcation of the dominant ideology by the media (television, press, social networks ...), the priests, the patriarchal family, the school system, the conscript army ... The dominant ideology takes on different contents, sometimes contradicting each other: nationalism, religion, parliamentarism (of which the false opposition between “left” and “right”), statism, liberalism, individual competition ...

## 34

The collective struggles, the cooperation at work, the community of existence at workplace or at home, the shared leisures, the humiliations suffered, the spectacle of luxury at the other pole of society generate counter-tendencies: solidarity between workers, revolt against the existing order, class hatred ...

Contrarywise to the dominant class, waged workers and their families are nothing without the organisations that they build up to ensure their solidarity, to develop their culture and to resist the boss and the bourgeois State. The labour movement does not reduce itself to trade unions, contrarily to what anarchists and bourgeois nationalists pretend: it regroups mutual insurance companies, cooperatives, cultural and sport organisations, workers’ unions, parties of workers’ origin and, during revolutionary upsurge, militias and councils ...

In order for the proletariat to accomplish its historical tasks, while it is a subordinate and exploited class, it must have at its disposal its party, distinct from all other parties, as it was shown in practice as soon as 1838 by Chartism in Britain and as it was clearly asserted by the resolution of 1872 of the IWA (1<sup>st</sup> International).

The party is the most conscious form of self-organisation of the exploited. Without experienced and recognised revolutionary party intervening in their midst, the other types of organisation (trade unions, councils) are weakened and often impotent. Communists constitute the current of the labour movement that expresses consciously at every moment the general interests of workers, that defends the programme of revolution and internationalism.

# THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION IS WORLDWIDE, THE PARTY OF THE PROLETARIAT IS INTERNATIONAL



## 35

Unlike political parties of the bourgeoisie that remain national, even when they claim the contrary (Christian democracy, pan-Arabism, Islamism ...), the workers' party has a worldwide vocation, even if workers are not all internationalists, nor supporters of a party opposed to all bourgeois parties.

Proletarian internationalism flows from the objective situation of the proletariat (millions of waged workers migrate, workers of multiple nationalities are exploited by each big capitalist group, workers in struggle run into the national bourgeois State) and of its tasks (struggles for demands are curbed by national divisions, it is impossible to build socialism-communism at a national scale).

The situation of a country cannot be understood independently of the analysis of the world situation. Communists defend the right for workers and students to move freely in the whole world and to live in the country of their choice, contrarily to the labour bureaucracies and to the centrists (Grantists, Lambertists, Robertsonists, Hardyists ...).

In the epoch of ascending capitalism, the great revolutionary leaders have always worked with an international view, sometimes in an informal framework (innumerable international correspondences, multiple international meetings), sometimes in a formal one (CCC, CL, IWA for Marx and Engels; WI for Engels after the death of Marx). The predominant role of Marx in the IWA is explained by his talents, but also by the previous construction, after the dissolution of the CL, of an international communist network.

In the imperialist epoch, their successors have always been members of an international organisation: WI (2<sup>nd</sup> International) for Lenin, Luxemburg and Trotsky (Lenin and Luxemburg participating in person to the International Socialist Bureau of the WI); movement of Zimmerwald and CI for Lenin and Trotsky; ILO-CI and FI for Trotsky.

## 36

The Communist League founded in 1847 is international and openly revolutionary, but it is small-sized.

The International Workingmen's Association founded in 1864 (called 1<sup>st</sup> International) is a front of the whole labour movement where communism shows its superiority, and which has a mass echo in Europe.

The Workers' International founded in 1889 (called 2<sup>nd</sup> International) provides an international framework, under Marxist hegemony, to socialist parties of Europe, America, and Asia. The International rests on the successes of the German SPD (500 000 electors as soon as 1877, 2 million in 1898) and its theoretical influence, to which Engels, and then Kautsky, contribute.

Relying on the WI, workers have, within capitalist society, created parties that represent them in parliament, mass trade unions that defend them at the place of exploitation, publications that inform them and educate them (dailies, magazines ...) and associations of all kinds (cultural, sporting, women's ...).

The WI is the center of gravity of the labour movement. The Russian RSDLP constitutes itself from the start as a section of the International, in order to build a party inspired by the SPD but adapted to tsarist despotism. Its revolutionary (Bolshevik) wing definitively separates itself from its opportunist (Menshevik) wing in 1912. As soon as the Polish SDKP appears, it fights to be able to participate to the International that comprises already a more important Polish party, the PSP. The PS-SFIO is born from the merger of all socialist French groups under the impulse of the International. The British Labour Party (LP) asks its affiliation and it is admitted despite its bourgeois programme, because it is created by trade unions in order to oppose the Liberal Party in elections.

Stand away only a handful of workers' parties (the anarchist SDB of the Netherlands, the racist ALP of Australia ...); the anarchist trade unions (the North American and Australian IWW, the French CGT, the Spanish CNT ...) that distrust electoralism; the corporatist trade unions (of which the American AFL); the clericalist trade unions (such as the German GCG, the Belgian CSC-ACV, the Italian CISCL).

If the WI is openly Marxist, some sections are reluctant to communist theory (PS-SFIO, RSP of Russia), or hostile to it (PSP of Poland, LP of Great Britain ...).

But this period of ceaseless progresses of the labour movement has also its reverse, the underground conquest of its leaderships by the imperialist bourgeoisie. Little by little, the apparatuses of the mass organisations of imperialist countries (constituted of permanent agents, journalists, representatives ...), resting on the labour aristocracy, transform themselves into bureaucracies influenced by their bourgeoisie and linked to their State.

This phenomenon refracts itself through political debates inside the International: around the reformist and pacifist "revisionism" of Bernstein (1897), the participation of the French "socialist" Millerand to a bourgeois government (1900), the colonial question (1900), the war threat (1905, 1907, 1910, 1912). On this occasion a division of the labour movement sketches itself into three distinct currents: the opportunist and chauvinist wing, the revolutionary and internationalist wing, an intermediate center that tries to conciliate both.



## 37

With the opening of World War 1 in 1914, the 2<sup>nd</sup> International goes bankrupt. The labour movement splits in an irreversible way, for the main workers' parties (SPD, SDAP, PS-SFIO, LP, POB ...) and the leaderships of the main trade unions rally to their own bourgeoisie to send male workers of town and country to exterminate each other.

The working class and other workers pay dearly on the front and at the back. With the war, the bureaucracies no longer respect workers' democracy that they tolerated until then. They shamelessly rest on the State, the bourgeois media, the military tribunals, censorship, to slander and muzzle their opponents in the labour movement: individuals, fractions and organisations that stay faithful to internationalism, to social revolution, to the proletariat.

Facing the catastrophe, the first resting point of the European and world working class is that a handful of small workers' parties, formed in the framework of proletarian internationalism and the Workers' International, oppose themselves as soon as August 1914 to the sacred union (including in warring countries: Serbia, Russia, Poland, Ireland ...). The second one is that one of these parties, the best rooted one, the Bolshevik RSDLP, will take the lead, starting from September 1914, of the struggle for a new international and new parties, demarcated from social-chauvinists and centrists.

The end of the war sees the opportunist wing consecrating the split of the international labour movement: during the permanent revolution generated by the war, opportunists will exert themselves to save their bourgeoisie, even though by participating to the counter-revolution with the Army staff (KDP-SRP-MP government and "July days" 1917 in Russia, SPD-USPD government and crushing of the premature "Spartacist revolution" of January 1919 in Germany ...).

## 38

Nevertheless, the revolution is victorious in Russia and it gives power to the soviets thanks to the uprising of October 1917, launched after the Bolshevik Party conquered the majority in the soviets. The revolutionary impulse is considerable in the whole world, including in colonies and semi-colonies, little affected by the old Workers' International. The Russian, Hungarian and German revolution puts an end to the war.

The perspective of a new international takes shape with the foundation congress of the Communist International (3<sup>rd</sup> International) in 1919. The CI blends, to the internationalists of the old Marxist international, the best of anarcho-syndicalism, of anticolonialism and feminism. It aims at constructing revolutionary workers' parties in all countries.

This does not go without trial and error in the leadership of sections and of the International itself. Lenin believes in 1917 that the transition to socialism-communism will be quick; the leadership of the SB-KPD, despite the warnings of Luxemburg, decides in 1919 on a premature insurgency without having

conquered the majority of the German working class; Lenin and the leadership of the Communist (Bolshevik) Party decide the catastrophic invasion of Poland in 1920; the Communist Party of Italy led by Bordiga misinterprets fascism, which it considers as a democratic ruse from 1919 to 1921, the PCdI opposes the united front; Zinoviev and Radek make in 1920 unacceptable concessions to Islamism at the Congress of the Peoples of the East, etc.

Nevertheless, for the first time, workers' parties struggle against European and Japanese colonialism, against the oppression of Blacks in the United States ... Under the impulse of Lenin and Trotsky, the Communist International takes into account setbacks of the proletarian revolution in Europe caused by the absence of a communist party or by its inexperience, the temporary stabilisation of capitalism, the reconstruction of a "2<sup>nd</sup> International" and the appearance of a centrist international. Against leftists, the 3<sup>rd</sup> International requires from communist parties the patient work in mass trade unions, the participation to bourgeois elections, tactics of united front directed towards reformist leaderships to demarcate them through action and not only by propaganda.

The denomination "reformists" does not mean that these petty-bourgeois political parties and these corrupted trade union bureaucracies effectively make reforms, as the Lambertist current pretends, but that these traditional leaderships of the working class betray while hiding behind the objective of limited reforms, compatible with capitalism and hardly different from what bourgeois parties can grant.

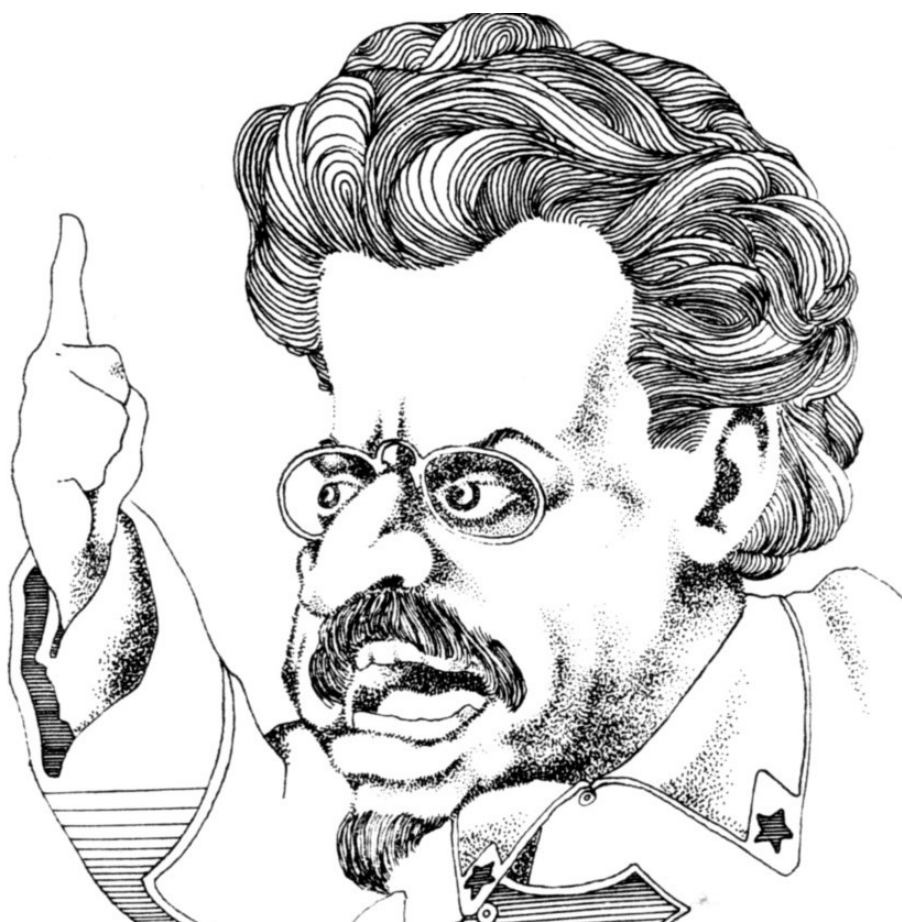
## 39

But before new parties of the Bolshevik type are forged, the old transforms itself into its contrary. The isolation of soviet power and the destructions brought about by inter-imperialist war, foreign interventions, civil war, the low economic and cultural level of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and the Caucasus empty the soviets, lead to the de facto single party, deform the workers' State, constitute a bureaucracy of the State that emancipates itself from the control of the revolutionary party.

The defeat of the Left Opposition of the Communist Party of the USSR (1924), then of the Unified Opposition (1927) are the product of a political counter-revolution that, while temporarily preserving some economic and social attainments of October (State property of the main means of production, monopoly on foreign trade ...), gives power to the privileged layer of officials of the workers' State. The latter controls henceforth the party that becomes its cover, invents the anti-Marxist ideology of "socialism in a single country".

The bureaucracy brutally collectivises agriculture (1929) and establishes in the degenerated workers' State a totalitarian regime (1934) that is exerted in the name of proletariat. Most old Bolshevik leaders are slandered, imprisoned, tortured and assassinated.

THE BUREAUCRATIC DEGENERATION OF  
THE USSR HAS CREATED A CRISIS OF  
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THE RESTORATION OF CAPITALISM IN  
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AGGRAVATED IT



## 40

With the 1920s political counter-revolution in the USSR, the bureaucratisation of the international labour movement attains an unprecedented dimension. The labourist and social-democratic bureaucracies are now supplemented with the Stalinist bureaucracies, capped by that of the USSR heading a State. All are organs of the world bourgeoisie inside organisations arising from the fight of the working class (trade unions, workers' parties, workers' State).

The bureaucracy of the USSR succeeds in containing revolution in the West of Europe and in crushing it in the East. To resist the persistent and multiform American threat, it is left with the arms race that it is doomed to lose and which exhausts the planned economy. So, after having repressed the workers' revolt of 1953, it confines the East German population by the Berlin wall.

The behaviour of the "Red Army" in Germany (1944-1946); the crushing of German workers and youth (1953), of the Hungarian (1956), Czechoslovak (1968), Polish (1971), Chinese (1967-1969, 1989) ones by the Stalinist regimes; the emptying of towns (1975) and the enslaving of the population of Cambodia by the KCP of Pol Pot (1975-1979) reinforce the dominant ideology, prevent workers from taking power in countries where capital has been expropriated and thus definitively undermine the workers' State.

The bureaucracy of the degenerated workers' State fights also the proletarian revolution in the capitalist world, for the latter would lead to the political revolution in the USSR, hence to its violent liquidation by the workers of the USSR.

## 41

After having divided the German proletariat in face of the fascist threat with the leftist line of "social-fascism" that leads to the defeat without a fight of the most powerful proletariat in Europe (1933), Stalinism destroys the Communist International as a revolutionary organisation.

Its sections are subordinated to the bourgeoisie, first in dominated countries in the name of the "united-anti-imperialist front", then in imperialist countries themselves in the name of the "popular front". Stalinism plays a crucial role against proletarian revolution in France (1936), in Spain (1936-1938), in Italy (1943-1945), in Greece (1944-1945), in France (1944-1945), in Vietnam (1945) ...

After the death of Stalin, Stalinism continues to prevent revolution in capitalist countries, undermining thus the workers' States: in 1968, the PCF saves De Gaulle and the 5<sup>th</sup> Republic against the movement of youth and the general strike; in 1973, the PCCh helps the PS to block the Chilean revolution, relies on the army led by Pinochet ; in 1973, the KKE condemns the uprising of youth against the dictatorship of the colonels, in 1989, it participates to the Greek bourgeois government led by the ND; in 1974-75, the PCP, in face of the revolution of Portuguese soldiers and workers, attempts to subordinate it to the military junta; in 1975, the PCE, as the PSOE, prevents revolution and supports

the establishment of the Francoist monarchy; since 1977, the PCIM manages loyally Bengal within India; in 1994, the SACP curbs the Black masses and enters the South African bourgeois government led by the ANC; in 2006, the PCUN-M stops the Nepalese guerilla at the doors of Katmandu and enters the national union government ...

## 42

The only force able to save the economic and social gains of the degenerated workers' States, to open the way to socialism is the working class. When it mobilises, the bureaucracy divides itself, the unique party bursts and some sectors can even join the proletariat. In the 1970s and 1980s, in the absence of a social revolution in advanced countries and of a political revolution in degenerated workers' States, workers do not play anymore their proper role, and the bureaucracy orients itself towards the restoration of capitalism.

Pabloites and Robertsonists still trust the bureaucracy; Grantists, Lambertists and Morenoites put forward, as do social-democrats, watchwords of bourgeois democracy (constituent assembly, etc.) in place of those of soviet democracy, which reinforces bourgeois ideology and restaurationist forces of capitalism (Church, fractions of the bureaucracy ...). Only the LOR defends in 1980-1982 a program of political revolution in Poland.

Bourgeois ideology, in the absence of an internationalist communist alternative, is ever more influent because of the blind alley of socialism in a single country, of the increasing inefficiency of the conduct by the bureaucracy of the complex economy, of the absence of democratic freedoms falsely associated to "socialism".

Becoming increasingly the organ of the world bourgeoisie, the bureaucracy decides in several countries to attempt to change into capitalists thanks to the plundering of the State property and, at the other pole, to turn the labour power into a commodity delivered to capital, either national or foreign.

If a fraction of the bureaucracy had then opposed restoration and had appealed to workers, one should have supported it while building organs of workers' power (soviets) and a revolutionary workers' party. But, in the GDR and the USSR, there was nothing like that, even if the Robertsonist ICL-FI attempted to persuade the Stasi to behave in that way, then magnified a pitiable coup by a fraction of the KGB and the Army staff, led without appeal to the masses, without will to prevent the return of capitalism and hence doomed to failure.

The capitalist reunification of Germany in 1989, the break-up of the USSR in 1991, the restoration of capitalism in China and in Russia in 1992 constituted historical defeats for the proletariats involved, but also for the world proletariat. New bourgeoisies were born of the variable conjunction of former bureaucrats having seized upon collective property, of enriched Mafiosi, of capitalists from the diaspora. The West-European imperialist groups took hold of the jewels of the industry of small East-European countries.

The world bourgeoisie got access to new natural resources, obtained new avenues, and exploited a well-educated labour force that was often bereft of rights. It has triumphed ideologically and politically by thinking it had repelled the ghost of communism. The Western bourgeoisies have attempted to submit more tightly the bourgeoisies of dominated countries that had used the workers' States to loosen the imperialist grip. Two new imperialist powers have emerged.

## 43

The labour bureaucracies did not disappear even so. New trade unions even appeared since the late 20<sup>th</sup> century (in the United States, in France, in Germany ...), and also new bourgeois workers' parties: PT in Brazil (constituted during a period of class struggle by the trade unions but under the influence of the Catholic Church, joined by all centrists), LP in the United States (from a few trade unions and with the help of centrists, stillborn), PRC in Italy (Stalinist split, joined by centrists), SLP in Great Britain (from a trade union, stillborn), DL in Germany (merger of a social-democratic split and of Stalinists, joined by most centrists), PdG-LFI in France (socialist split reinforced by Lambertists), Syriza in Greece (merger of Stalinists and centrists) ...

On the one hand, no mass revolutionary workers' party has unmasked and weakened "reformism", for the 4<sup>th</sup> International has disappeared. On the other hand, the bourgeoisie accepts to pay the costs of it in order to divide and contain the working class. For the bourgeoisie, dispensing with domesticated trade unions and bourgeois workers' parties needs either getting round or integrating labour organisations by Bonapartism, or destructing them by fascism. These solutions are themselves risky.

## 44

Stalinism collapsed as an international apparatus resting on State bureaucracies (Russian and to a lesser extent Chinese and Cuban).

Its legacy (statism, socialism in a single country, subordination to a fraction of the bourgeoisie, chauvinism, physical violence within the labour movement, cult of the leader ...) still weighs heavily. Remnants of Stalinism go on with their counter-revolutionary role within trade unions and as parties ...

In Central Europe and in Germany, reconverted Stalinism established new bourgeois workers' parties. Most often, nothing differentiates anymore former Stalinist parties from traditional (born Marxist) social-democracy, which itself does no more differentiate itself from (never Marxist) labourist parties since half a century.

Most former Stalinist parties do not refer to socialism anymore. One exception is the KKE that returned to the adoration of Stalin and resumed in Greece his sectarian policy that allowed the victory of Hitler.

Sometimes, Stalinism engendered bourgeois parties: liberal (in the political sense) ones as the PD in Italy, nationalist ones as the KPRF in Russia, despotic ones as the CCP in China ...

Like traditional reformism, defrocked Stalinists participate to capitalist governments with bourgeois parties (SACP in South Africa in 1994, PCF in France in 1997, PRC in Italy in 2006, PCCh in Chile in 2014 ...).

Trade union bureaucracies negotiate attacks against jobs, wages, working time or retirement pensions, sabotage struggles by isolating them in a single business, in a single enterprise, by calling to symbolic “days of action” with the support of reformist parties and centrist organisations.

Often trade union leaders divert discontent against what is foreign (the WTO, the European Commission, migrant workers ...). In these circumstances, the working class has less illusions towards reformists of any origin than in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, even if it keeps voting for them and joining trade unions.

In the absence of a revolutionary workers’ party, reformism rises again from its ashes when it has been away from power for a while or by using new labels to keep fooling the expectations of the working class and youth (Die Linke, Syriza ...). The crisis of leadership is not solved.

## 45

Nobody can assert that world revolution would have triumphed if the Bolshevik-Leninist International (4<sup>th</sup> International), created in 1938 to solve the crisis of leadership engendered by the changeover to counter-revolution of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Internationals, had attained it, had succeeded in building mass parties.

What is certain is that its destruction weighed heavily in the continuation of betrayals by social-democracy and by Stalinism, in the survival of the parasitic bureaucracies in the workers’ States, in the hegemony of bourgeois nationalism in the dominated countries, in the domination by bourgeois democrats and by the clergies in the last wave of popular revolts in Eastern Europe, in the ease of capitalist restoration. The red thread of continuity has been broken.

## 46

In 1939, a tiny group animated by Barta deserts the French section, the POI, and the 4<sup>th</sup> International without any political divergence.

Within the American section, the SWP, the first revisionist and liquidator wave of Burnham and Shachtman, which refuses in 1939-40 to defend the USSR and questions its nature as a workers’ State, is theoretically and politically fought by a fraction led by Leon Trotsky and James Cannon.

The 4<sup>th</sup> International is victim during the war of joint repression by imperialist democracies, fascist regimes and the Stalinist bureaucracy, hundred of its cadres are murdered, starting with Trotsky. The war separates sections that experience opportunist (France, United States ...) or sectarian (Greece ...) deviations.

But they are still limited or corrected. The International Secretariat transferred to New York and the European Secretariat clandestinely constituted in Paris converge despite the absence of relations. The 1946 conference, oriented by the American section (SWP led by Cannon) and by the new International Secretariat (Pablo, Frank, Mandel ...), strives to maintain the course fixed by Trotsky.

However, the 1948 congress persists in believing that there is still an economic crisis and that the situation remains revolutionary. It brushes aside the warnings of the majority of the British section (RCP led by Haston), supported by the delegation of an Argentinian group (POR led by Moreno).

The disarray facing the beginning of a new period of accumulation and the apparent triumph of Stalinism that overthrows capitalism in Eastern Europe and in the Far East leads it to more serious deviations of orientation. From 1948 to 1951, the IS, with the support of the SWP, capitulates in front of Stalinism (first Tito version, then Mao version) and of bourgeois nationalism in Latin America. For the Pabloite leadership, the objective processes accomplish the tasks of revolution, it suffices to bring pressure on those at the head of the movement in order for them to go the furthest possible.

The programme is moreover revised in the 1951 congress in order to return to two obsolete strategies: the reform of the USSR of which a fraction of the bureaucracy is entrusted, the anti-imperialist united front with the national bourgeoisie.

## 47

But a communist organisation does not let itself be destroyed easily.

It is still possible then to save the FI by a bitter struggle within itself, waged by a centralised and determined fraction. The majority of the French PCI (led by Bleibtreu) and of the Swiss section (MAS led by Buchbinder) dispute the capitulation in front of Stalinism as soon as 1951. The IS excludes the PCI in 1952, the majority of the American section (under the impulse of Cannon) and of the British section (Club led then by Healy) break with the IS in 1953. An international fraction is proclaimed by the Club, the MAS, the PCI and the SWP in November 1953: the International Committee of the 4<sup>th</sup> International, joined later on by the Chinese section in exile, the RCP led by Peng, and the Argentinian POR led by Moreno.

But the ICFI does not turn back on the adoption of the anti-imperialist united front that restores the strategy of revolution by stages and opens the way to all opportunisms towards nationalists of dominated countries; it asserts explicitly federalism that allows each member section to sink into the same opportunism as the Pabloite ISFI. So, the POR adapts itself to Argentinian nationalism, the Club to British labourism, the SWP to the pro-imperialist wing of American Stalinism, the PCI to Algerian nationalism ... The ICFI is moribund.

It is finished off in 1963 by the split of the SWP (led by Hansen) and of the Argentinian PO (led by Moreno). The SWP and PO converge into Castroism and guerrillaism with the ISFI (of Mandel and Maitan): they form together the USFI.



## 48

In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, organisations that appear as the continuity of the 4<sup>th</sup> International, mainly the ISFI/USFI and to a lesser extent the ICFI, continue to attract parties and fractions of another political origin: LCRJ / Japan in 1957, LRSH / Hungary in 1961, Matzpen / Israel in 1962, Grupo Comunismo / Spain and People's Democracy / Ireland in 1968, Socialist Club / New Zealand in 1969, ETA-VI / Spain in 1970 ...

Nevertheless, the tendency towards liquidation inherent to the USFI of Pablo-Mandel-Hansen engenders multiple fractures around three poles: the JCR-LC-LCR-NPA / France that aligns itself on Stalinism and on all fashions of the petty bourgeoisie, the PRT-PST-MAS / Argentina that aligns itself on petty-bourgeois and bourgeois nationalism of dominated countries, and the SWP / United States that aligns itself on the Cuban bureaucracy and repudiates openly Trotsky ...

The paralysis of the "orthodox" ICFI as soon as 1953 then the departure of the SWP and the SLATO in 1963 lead to a burst of equivalent opportunisms around the Healyite SLL-WRP of Great Britain that oscillates between adaptation to labourism and to pan-Arabic nationalism, of the Lambertist OCI-PCI-PT-POI of France that adapts itself to European social-democracy and to cold war trade unionism, of the Robertsonist SL of the United States that adapts itself to Stalinism at the moment when it collapses, of the Loraite POR of Bolivia that adapts itself to nationalism of its own country ...

The political destruction of the 4<sup>th</sup> International gives a chance of survival to anterior splits that would have been anecdotal: VO-LO of Hardy in France that keeps all the defects of the self-dissolved sect of Barta while adapting itself to Stalinism; IS-SWP of Cliff in Britain that has its origin in the refusal to defend the Chinese revolution in the middle of the Korean War, but follows closely anything that mobilises the petty bourgeoisie of the next decades; Militant of Grant in Great Britain that adapts itself to labourism in its own country and to bourgeois nationalism of dominated countries ...

## 49

In default of a 4<sup>th</sup> International, the revolutionary wave of the 1960s-1970s benefits some usurpers of Trotskyism: the SWP leads the movement against the Vietnam War in the United States, the LC successfully presents Krivine to the 1969 presidential election in France, the LCR and the WRP publish a daily respectively in France and in Great Britain, the OCI takes the leadership of the French students' union UNEF, the PST attracts 14 000 members in Argentina, Militant controls the youth of the Labour Party and the mayoralty of Liverpool that defies Thatcher, the SWP leads the movement against the Iraq War in Great Britain ...

The revolutionary rise also pushes the revisionists to radicalise their language and their references: during the 1970s, the LC-LCR and the OCI in France, the

SLL and the IS-SWP in Great Britain, wrangle over Lenin and Trotsky. In their wake, the SL chooses as sole activity to polemise with centrism, then a rather vast and dynamic milieu.

With the surging back of 1980s-1990s, sects become ossified: the Robertsonist ICL-FI abandons its intervention in trade unions, the Healyite-Northist QI denies any workers' nature to the mass organisations of the working class (trade unions, "reformist" parties). The main centrist currents wallow in the "ecological", "anti-globalisation" or "indignant" confusion (the Pabloite FI, the Grantist IMT and CWI, the Cliffist IST ...), indeed even towards the Islamist reaction (the Lambertist FI, the Cliffist IST, the Morenoite IWL and TFFI ...).

Most liquidators of the 4<sup>th</sup> International launch "wide parties" that repudiate bolshevism and socialist revolution (Lambertist FI, Grantist CWI and IMT, Morenoite Movimiento ...) or join popular fronts (as the SWP with Respect in Great Britain in 2004, LO during the 2008 French municipal elections ...). Some go as far as supporting bourgeois candidates (as the LCR in France in 2002, SA in the United States in 2008 ...). Others speak against the free movement of workers (SL, SPEW ...).

The regime of most of these organisations is authoritarian and sterilising. Healy and Lambert even resort to slander and violence against their opponents. The lack of internal democracy comes at the cost of the Castroite purge in the American SWP, the scandals and the burst of the British WRP, the repeated splits of the French LO and POI, of the British SWP ...

The flag of the 4<sup>th</sup> International is henceforth more than torn, more than sullied.

# FOR THE REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS' INTERNATIONAL, FOR PARTIES THAT PREPARE THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION



## 50

The two previous mass internationals (WI, CI) have succumbed to a counter-revolutionary bureaucracy. The FI that should construct a new mass international to replace them has failed and given way to centrism and sects. Nevertheless, their activity has not been in vain, and the programmes of the CI and the FI are not obsolete.

Communism is the tendency of the real movement of the world proletariat. The communist theory and programme become embodied in the persistence of communist organisations, in their international collaboration and in their intervention in class struggle.

## 51

The basic principles of the Communist League (1847-1852) remain valid: the struggle between social classes is decisive, the working class has no fatherland, it must struggle for democratic freedoms, and ultimately it must take power. The working class must develop its own programme and its own party, it cannot give any trust to bourgeois parties nor to petty-bourgeois parties, it must present its own candidates to elections and arm itself. Unlike reformists and centrists who sometimes justify themselves with selected pieces from the Manifesto published in 1848, communists know that it is specified and corrected by the 1850 Address in the light of the experience of the 1848 revolutions.

The IWA (1864-1876) asserted the necessity of internationalism, of strikes and trade unions, of the struggle against slavery and national oppression, of political struggle, of the destruction of the State apparatus, of workers' power. Contrarily to confusionists and opportunists, internationalist communists do not forget the lessons of the struggle against backward Proudhonians or Bakuninist adventurers, and foremost the experience of the Paris Commune (1871 Address).

The WI (1889-1914) showed that elections had to be used, that mass trade unions could limit exploitation, that mass parties could prepare the revolution, that war had to be fought and that one had to brush aside the participation of workers' parties to bourgeois governments. Communists claim as legacy not opportunism (Jaurès, Bernstein, Van Kol ...) that seemed to remain a minority in the WI, nor even the conciliating center that covered in fact the opportunist practice of parties and trade unions with an orthodox veil (Bebel, Kautsky, Plekhanov ...), but the internationalist wing that fought it frontally, in particular the SDKP in Poland and the Bolshevik RSDLP in Russia.

## 52

In the framework of the Zimmerwald pacifist movement (1915-1919), the left fraction (Bolshevik-RSDLP / Russia, SDKP-Roslamowcy / Poland ...) asserted that capitalism had entered into its phase of decline which laid socialist revolution on the agenda; that the redivision of the world would lead to wars between great powers, that the only means to prevent war was the socialist revolution, but that if the military conflict occurred nevertheless, the proletariat had to use it to take power; that a new international and new parties, delimited from social-imperialists and pacifists, were needed.

The CI (1919-1922) specified moreover that it was necessary to destroy the bourgeois State through an uprising, to take power with councils that realise democracy for the masses. The parties of the CI must unify all communists of their country and be disciplined, be ready to go underground, ally the working class with the other exploited layers, recognise the rights of national minorities and oppressed peoples (in particular in the colonies), participate in elections in the preparatory phase of revolution, work in mass organisations of the working class (in particular trade unions), propose fighting unity against the bourgeoisie to other mass organisations of the working class (workers' united front).

The complements brought about by the conferences of the International Left Opposition (1930-1933) and by the first three conferences of the 4<sup>th</sup> International (1936-1940) remain valid: the essential problem of world revolution comes from the crisis of leadership of the working class, the Communist International and its parties having definitively gone over to the side of the bourgeois order, the Stalinist parties have become the twin stars of social-democratic parties; one must generalise the strategy of permanent revolution; the popular front, that is the alliance with the bourgeoisie, prepares fascism; the USSR remained a workers' State, despite its degeneration, which had to be defended against imperialism and against its agent, the bureaucracy, by overthrowing it through a political revolution; the serious democratic demands remain valid, they have any meaning, as the participation to elections, the general strike and transitional demands, only towards the taking of power by the working class and its allies.

The programme of the 4<sup>th</sup> International is not confined to the 1938 Programme, communists base themselves equally on the 1940 Manifesto.

## 53

No objective process, even the most favourable one, exempts from the conscious construction of the world party of revolution.

Since more than 100 years, there is no more possible common party between internationalists and chauvinists, which invalidates the attempts to remake the 1<sup>st</sup> International (Lambertist FI ...) or the intention of avowed neo-

Kautskyists (CPGB / Great Britain) or concealed ones (Grantist CWI and IMT, Pabloite FI ...) to remake the 2<sup>nd</sup> International.

The pretenses to build a wide party with anarchists, "anti-liberal" social-democrats, defrocked Stalinists or ecologists, are nothing but the camouflage of the crossing over to reformism and social-patriotism.

The destruction of the Bolshevik-Leninist international more than 50 years ago, the disappearance of any world Bolshevik-Leninist center, the degeneration of the sections that had attempted to defend themselves and to defend it, the discredit since then thrown over "Trotskyism" forbid to "reunify", "reorganise", "reconstruct", "refound", "regenerate", or "recreate" the 4<sup>th</sup> International.

## 54

Reformism will disappear only by the victory of the world proletarian revolution.

To lead the socialist revolution, one must start by solving the crisis of leadership of the proletariat by constructing the revolutionary workers' international. First of all, internationalist communists remain faithful to the strategy of the armament of the people and to the creation of soviet forms.

The strategy of the unity of the working class, that of the alliance with other workers and future workers, unfold themselves in tactics for conquering the trust of vanguard workers and destroying the authority over the masses of the bourgeoisie, of reformism and centrism: work in mass trade unions as they are, battle for the independence of all workers' organisations towards ruling classes and the bourgeois State, united front of all mass workers' organisations against economic and political attacks of the bourgeoisie, entryism (while defending the whole programme), revolutionary candidatures when it is possible against all bourgeois parties (failing that, call to vote for the candidates of mass reformist parties when they face candidates of parties of the ruling class).

Communists defend what remains from the collectivised economy in Cuba and North Korea against imperialism, a task that cannot be placed in the charge of the local bureaucracy, of the Castro family, of the Kim dynasty.

Communists fight all Islamist currents in Asia and in Africa in a clear and determined way in a perspective of permanent revolution: right to strike, independent organisation of workers, secularity of the State, prohibition of polygamy, equality between men and women, mixing at school, scientific, artistic and cultural freedom, sexual freedom ... Such watchwords are also valid in many other countries, including the most democratic ones, against bigots and fascists.

Hundreds of thousands of workers and activists try every year to escape misery, oppression and repression that they bear in their country. Communists claim unconditionally the freedom of movement and of settling for workers and students and the same rights for all workers of a country, they recommend self-defense against police persecutions and racist attacks ...

The oppression of women has not disappeared, although equality between the sexes has progressed on a world scale thanks to the progresses of contraception, to the extension to girls of education, to the right of divorce, to the massive incorporation of women into the proletariat and to the fight of women themselves. Women are especially victims of capitalist restorations and of Islamist reaction. Communist organisations must mobilise the revolutionary potential of working women, unite the ranks of the working class, fight male violence, demand equality on all levels, the right to contraception and abortion, free quality nurseries ... They must ensure in their midst the best conditions to recruit and form communist cadres among women.

The defense of the environment of humanity is part of transitional demands as it requires the overthrow of capitalism, the development of science and engineering to the benefit of the poorest, the rational planning by the producers themselves.

## 55

Internationalist communists rely on the tens of thousands of militants who, throughout the world, want to overthrow the bourgeoisie, to confront its armed gangs, to find again the way of the October revolution. Without breaks in the traditional workers' organisations, petty bourgeois nationalism and centrism, there will be no new communist international nor revolutionary workers' parties.

The construction of these will not be a spontaneous process, but the result of a bitter and prolonged struggle of the international communist nucleus in class struggle. In the current state of confusion and dispersion, it is a matter of gathering, with patience, on an international scale and in each country, internationalist communist elements, whether they originate from so-called "Trotskyism", from other currents of the labour movement (including Stalinism), or from the nationalism of the oppressed.

The fact that some opportunist organisations still appeal to Leninism and Trotskyism plunges them into peculiar contradictions and facilitates the work of Bolsheviks to unmask and liquidate centrism and gain from it forces (organisations, fractions, individuals) for the revolutionary workers' international.

Questions of national tactics (what one must do in a trade union, the call to vote when there is no possibility to present a revolutionary candidate ...) can be correctly tackled and solved only on the basis of an international programme.

The international organisation that organises the fight for the international is centralised and democratic. It strives, through debate and action, to separate in the labour movement what is revolutionary from opportunism and sectarianism. Its sections do the same in each country.

If necessary, the local internationalist communist group enters into a mass workers' party or into a workers' organisation that evolves towards revolution.

Communists must do the maximum for the atmosphere of their organisations

to be free, for workers to educate themselves and become intellectuals, for professional intellectuals to be under the control of the basis.

Likewise, communists fight in the whole labour movement for workers' democracy, from which they have nothing to fear.

On these bases, communist organisations work together at the construction of the revolutionary workers' international that will allow the definitive victory of socialist revolution, freeing humanity from exploitation, opening the way to socialism-communism, to a society of plenty that will allow the fulfillment of all.



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# Socialism or Barbarism

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*It is our interest and our task to make the revolution permanent until all the more or less propertied classes have been driven from their ruling positions, until the proletariat has conquered state power and until the association of the proletarians has progressed sufficiently far – not only in one country but in all the leading countries of the world – that competition between the proletarians of these countries ceases and at least the decisive forces of production are concentrated in the hands of the workers.*

(Engels & Marx, Address of the Central Committee to the Communist League, March 1850)

*The International consists in the coming together (first ideologically, then in due time organisationally as well) of people who, in these grave days, are capable of defending socialist internationalism. (Lenin, Dead Chauvinism and Living Socialism, December 1914)*

*The center of gravity of the class organization of the proletariat resides in the International. (Luxemburg, Directive principles, February 1916)*

*« The working men have no country » means that his economic position (le salariat) is not national but international, his class enemy is international, the conditions of his emancipation also, the international unity of the workers is more important than the national. (Lenin, Letter to Inessa Armand, 20<sup>th</sup> November 1916)*

*Internationalism rests on the insolvency of the national state, which has long ago outlived itself and which has turned into a brake upon the development of the productive forces. (Trotsky, Preface to The Permanent Revolution, 29<sup>th</sup> March 1930)*

*A revolutionary or, rather, pseudo-revolutionary trend that is national and not international proves thereby that it is non-Marxist and anti-Marxist. (Trotsky, With Marxist Glasses, 16<sup>th</sup> May 1930)*

*It is wrong to view a national organization as the foundation and the international as a roof...It is, of course, possible in the epoch of imperialism for a revolutionary proletarian tendency to arise in one or another country, but it cannot thrive and develop in one isolated country; on the very next day after its formation it must seek for or create international ties, an international platform, an international organization. Because a guarantee of the correctness of the national policy can be found only along this road. (Trotsky, To the Editorial Board of « Prometeo », 19<sup>th</sup> June 1930)*

*The struggle against war presupposes a revolutionary instrument of struggle, that is, a party. There is none now either on a national or on an international scale. A revolutionary party must be built on the basis of the entire experience of the past. (Trotsky, The War and the Fourth International, June 1934)*