



International Communist Current

Third Manifesto of the ICC

Capitalism leads to the destruction of humanity...

Only the world revolution of the proletariat can put an end to it

130 years ago, when tensions between capitalist powers were growing in Europe, Frederick Engels posed the dilemma for humanity: Communism or Barbarism.

This alternative was concretised in the First World War which broke out in 1914 and caused 20 million deaths, another 20 million invalids, and in the chaos of war there was the Spanish flu pandemic with more than 50 million deaths.

The revolution in Russia in 1917 and the revolutionary attempts in other countries put an end to the carnage and showed the other side of the historical dilemma posed by Engels: **the overthrow of capitalism on a world scale by the revolutionary class, the proletariat, opening up the possibility of a communist society.**

However, there followed:

- the crushing of this world revolutionary attempt, the brutal counter-revolution in Russia perpetrated by Stalinism under the banner of “communism”,
- the massacre of the proletariat in Germany, initiated by Social Democracy¹ and completed by Nazism,

- the enlistment of the proletariat in the Soviet Union, the massacre of the proletariat in that country, and

- the enlistment of the proletariat behind the flags of anti-fascism and the defence of the “socialist” fatherland which led in 1939-45 to another new milestone of barbarism, the Second World War, with 60 million dead and an infinite sequel of suffering: the Nazi and Stalinist concentration camps; the Allied bombings of Dresden, Hamburg and Tokyo (January 1945); the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the USA.

Since then, war has not stopped claiming lives on every continent.

1. Faced with the revolutionary attempt in Germany in 1918, the social democrat Noske said that he was ready to be the bloodhound of the counter-revolution.



First came the confrontation between the US and Russian blocs, the so-called Cold War (1945-89), with an endless chain of localised wars and the threat of a deluge of nuclear bombs hanging over the entire planet.

After the collapse of the USSR in 1989-91, chaotic wars have bloodied the planet: Iraq, Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Afghanistan, Yemen, Syria, Ethiopia, Sudan... The war in Ukraine is the most serious war crisis since 1945.

The barbarity of war is accompanied by a proliferation of mutually reinforcing destructive forces: the COVID pandemic which is still far from being overcome and which heralds new pandemics; the ecological and environmental disaster that is accelerating and amplifying, combined with climate change, causing increasingly uncontrollable and deadly disasters: drought, floods, hurricanes,

tsunamis, etc., and an unprecedented degree of pollution of land, water, air and space; the severe food crisis bringing famines of biblical proportions. Forty years ago, humanity was in danger of perishing in a Third World War, today it can be annihilated by the simple aggregation and lethal combination of the forces of destruction currently at work: *“In the end, it is all the same whether we are wiped out in a rain of thermonuclear bombs, or by pollution, radio-activity from nuclear power stations, famine, epidemics, and the massacres of innumerable small wars (where nuclear weapons might also be used). The only difference between these two forms of annihilation lies in that one is quick, while the other would be slower, and would consequently cause still more suffering”*² (Theses

2. Thesis 11, Theses on Decomposition, en.internationalism.org

on Decomposition). The dilemma posed by Engels takes a much more pressing form: COMMUNISM or THE DESTRUCTION OF HUMANITY. The historical moment is serious, and internationalist revolutionaries need to affirm it unequivocally to our class, because only our class can open up the communist perspective through a permanent and relentless struggle.

Imperialist war is capitalism's way of life

The mass media falsify and underplay the reality of the war. In the early stages the media was devoted to the war in Ukraine 24 hours a day. But as time has gone by, the war has been trivialised, not even producing headlines, its echoes not going beyond threatening statements, calls for sacrifices to “send weapons to Ukraine”, hammering out propaganda campaigns against the enemy, fake news, all served with vain hopes of “negotiations” ...

To trivialise war, to become accustomed to the repellent smell of corpses and smoking ruins, is the worst of treachery, it is concealing the serious dangers that menace humanity, it is to be blind to all the threats that are permanently hanging over our heads.

Millions of people, in Africa, Asia or Central America, know no other reality than WAR; from cradle to grave they live in an ocean of barbarism where atrocities of all kinds proliferate: child soldiers, punitive military operations, hostage-taking, terrorist attacks, mass displacement of entire populations, indiscriminate bombings.

While the wars of the past were limited to the front lines and the combatants, the wars of the 20th and 21st century are TOTAL WARS that encompass all spheres of social life and their effects spread throughout the world, dragging down all

countries, including those that are not direct belligerents. In the wars of the 20th and 21st century, no inhabitant or place on the planet can escape their lethal effects.

On the front line, which can span thousands of kilometres and extend over land, sea and air... and through space! ... Life is cut short by bombs, shooting, mines, and even, in many cases, by "friendly fire" ... Seized by a murderous insanity, forced through the terror imposed by higher ranks, or trapped in extreme situations, all the participants are forced to carry out the most suicidal, criminal and destructive actions.

On one part of the military front there is "remote warfare" with the relentless deployment of ultra-modern machines of destruction: planes dropping thousands of bombs without pause; drones remotely controlled to attack enemy targets; mobile or fixed artillery relentlessly pounding the enemy; missiles covering hundreds or thousands of kilometres.

The so-called home front becomes itself a permanent theatre of war in which the population is taken hostage. Anyone can die in the periodic bombardment of entire cities.... In the centres of production, people work at gunpoint, under the control of the police, parties, trade unions and all the other institutions in the service of the "defence of the homeland", while at the same time they run the risk of being ripped apart by enemy bombs. Work becomes an even greater hell than the daily hell of capitalist exploitation.

The dramatically rationed food is a filthy, stinking soup... There is no water, no electricity, no heating... Millions of human beings see their existence reduced to surviving like animals. Shells fall from the sky, killing thousands of people or causing terrible suffering, on the ground, endless police or military checkpoints, the danger of being arrested by armed thugs, state mercenaries referred to as "defenders of the homeland" ... You have to run to take refuge in filthy, rat-infested cellars ... Respect, the most elementary solidarity, trust, rational thought ... are swept away by the atmosphere of terror imposed not only by the government, but also by the National Union in which parties and trade unions participate with merciless zeal. The most absurd rumours, the most implausible news circulate incessantly, causing an hysterical atmosphere of denunciation, indiscriminate suspicion, massive stress and pogrom.

War is a barbarism willed and planned by governments that aggravate it by consciously propagating hatred, fear of the "other" rifts and divisions between human beings, death for death's sake, the institutionalisation of torture, submission, power relations, as the only logic of social evolution. The violent fighting around the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in Ukraine shows how the two sides have no scruples about the risk of provoking a radioactive catastrophe a lot worse than Chernobyl and with tremendous consequences for the population of Europe. The threat of the use of nuclear weapons looms ominously.

The ideology of war

Capitalism is the most hypocritical and cynical system in history. Its whole ideological art consists in passing off its interests as the "interest of the people" adorned with the loftiest ideals: justice, peace, progress, human rights...!

All states fabricate an IDEOLOGY OF WAR designed to justify it and to turn their "citizens" into hyenas ready to kill. *"War is methodical, organised, gigantic murder. But in normal human beings this systematic murder is possible only when a state of intoxication has been previously created. This has always been the tried and proven method of those who make war. Bestiality of action must find a commensurate bestiality of thought and senses; the latter must prepare and accompany the former"* (Rosa Luxemburg, *The Junius Pamphlet*).

The great democracies have PEACE as a cornerstone of their war ideology. Demonstrations "for peace" have always prepared imperialist wars.

In the summer of 1914 and in 1938-39 millions of people demonstrated "for peace" in an impotent cry of "people of goodwill", exploiters and exploited holding hands, which the "democratic" side never stop using to justify the acceleration of war preparations.

In the First World War, Germany had mobilised its troops in "defence of peace", "shattered by the Sarajevo attack on its Austrian ally". But on the opposing side, France and Britain went to the slaughter in the name of peace "shattered by Germany". In World War II, France and Britain feigned a "peace" effort at Munich in the face of Hitler's ambitions, while frenetically preparing for war, and the invasion of Poland by the combined action of Hitler and Stalin gave them the perfect excuse to go to war... In Ukraine, Putin said until hours before the invasion on 24 February that he wanted "peace", while the United States relentlessly denounced Putin's warmongering ...

The nation, national defence and all the ideological weapons that gyrate around it (racism, religion etc.) is the hook to mobilise the proletariat and the whole population in imperialist slaughter. The bourgeoisie proclaims in times of "peace" the "coexistence between peoples", but everything vanishes with imperialist war, then the masks fall off and everyone spreads hatred of the foreigner and the staunch defence of the nation!

They all present their wars as "defensive". A hundred years ago, the ministries in charge of military barbarism were called "ministries of war"; today, with the worst hypocrisy, they are called "ministries of defence". Defence is the fig leaf of warfare. There are no attacked nations and aggressor nations, they are all active participants in the deadly machinery of war. Russia in the current war appears as the "aggressor" as it is the one that has taken the initiative to invade Ukraine, but before that the United States Machiavellianly expanded NATO to several countries of the old Warsaw Pact. It is not possible to take each link in isolation, it is necessary to look at the bloody chain of imperialist confrontation that has been gripping the whole of humanity for more than a century.

They always talk of a "clean war", which follows (or should follow) "humanitarian rules" "in accordance with international law". This is a despicable fraud, served with unbridled cynicism and hypocrisy! The wars of decadent capitalism live by no other rule than the absolute destruction of the enemy, and that includes terrorising the subjects of the enemy with merciless bombing ... In war a relationship of force is established where ANYTHING GOES, from the most brutal rape and punishment of the enemy's population, to the most indiscriminate terror against their own "citizens". Russia's bombing of Ukraine follows in the footsteps of the US bombing of Iraq, the American like the Russian governments in Afghanistan or in Syria and before that of Vietnam; France's bombing of its former colonies, such as Madagascar and Algeria; the bombing of Dresden and Hamburg by the "democratic allies"; and the nuclear barbarity of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The wars of the 20th and 21st centuries have been accompanied by methods of mass extermination employed by all sides, although the democratic side usually takes care to subcontract it to shady individuals who get the blame.

They dare to talk of "just wars"!!! The NATO side supporting Ukraine says it is a battle for democracy against despotism and the dictatorial regime of Putin. Putin says he will "denazify" Ukraine. Both are blatant lies. The side of the "democracies" has just as much blood on its hands: blood from the countless wars they have provoked directly (Vietnam, Yugoslavia, Iraq, Afghanistan) or indirectly (Libya, Syria, Yemen...); blood from the thousands of migrants killed at sea or at the frontier hotspots of the USA or in Europe... The Ukrainian state uses terror to impose the Ukrainian language and culture; it kills workers for the sole crime of speaking Russian; it forcibly enlists any young person caught in the streets or on the roads; it uses the population, including those in

hospitals, as human shields; it deploys neo-fascist gangs to terrorise the population... For his part, Putin, in addition to bombings, rapes and summary executions, displaces thousands of families to concentration camps in remote places; imposes terror in the "liberated" territories and enlists Ukrainians for the army by sending them to sending them to the slaughterhouse on the front line.

The real causes of war

Ten thousand years ago one of the means that broke up primitive communism was tribal warfare. Since then, under the aegis of modes of production based on exploitation, war has been one of the worst calamities. But certain wars have been able to play a progressive role in history, for example, in the development of capitalism, forming new nations, extending the world market, stimulating the development of the productive forces.

However, since the First World War, the world has been totally divided up among the capitalist powers, so that the only way out for each national capital is to wrest markets, zones of influence, strategic areas from its rivals. This makes war and all that goes with it (militarism, gigantic accumulation of armaments, diplomatic alliances) the PERMANENT WAY OF LIFE of capitalism. A constant imperialist pressure grips the world and drags down all nations, big or small, whatever their ideological mask and alibi, the orientation of the ruling parties, their racial composition or their cultural and religious heritage. ALL NATIONS ARE IMPERIALIST. The myth of "peaceful and neutral" nations is a pure fraud. If certain nations adopt a "neutral" policy, it is to try to take advantage of the conflict between the most resolutely opposing camps, to carve out their own zone of imperialist influence. In June 2022, Sweden, a country that has been officially neutral for more than 70 years, has joined NATO but it has not "betrayed any ideals", it has continued its own imperialist policy "by other means".

War is certainly good business for corporations engaged in arms manufacture, and it may even temporarily benefit particular countries, but, for capitalism as a whole, it is an economic catastrophe, an irrational waste, a MINUS that weighs on world production that inevitably and negatively causes indebtedness, inflation and ecological destruction, never a PLUS that could increase capitalist accumulation.

An unavoidable necessity for the survival of every nation, war is a deadly economic weight. The USSR collapsed because it could not withstand the crazy arms race that the confrontation with the USA entailed and which the latter took to the ultimate with the deployment of the Star Wars program in the 1980s. The United States, which was the great victor of World War II and enjoyed a spectacular economic boom until the late 1960s, has encountered many obstacles to preserving its imperialist hegemony, of course since the dissolution of the blocs, which has favoured the emergence of a dynamic of reawakened new imperialist appetites - especially among its former 'allies' - of contestation and every one for themselves, but also because of the gigantic military effort that American forces have had to make for more than 80 years and the costly military operations it has had to undertake to maintain its status as the world's leading power.

Capitalism carries in its genes, in its DNA, the most exacerbated competition, the EACH AGAINST ALL and the EVERYONE FOR THEMSELVES, for every capitalist, as well as for every nation. This "organic" tendency of capitalism did not appear clearly in its ascendant period because each national capital still enjoyed sufficient areas for its expansion without the need to enter into conflict with its rivals. Between 1914-89 it was attenuated by the formation of large imperialist blocs. With the brutal end of this brutal discipline, centrifugal tendencies are shaping a world of murderous disorder, where any imperialisms with global ambitions for world domination, as well as imperialisms with regional pretensions,

and more local imperialisms are all compelled to follow their expansive appetites and their own interests. In this scenario, the United States tries to prevent anyone from overshadowing it by relentlessly deploying its overwhelming military power, relentlessly building it up, and by launching constant, strongly destabilising military operations. The promise in 1990, after the end of the USSR, of a "New World Order" of peace and prosperity was immediately belied by the Gulf War and then by the wars in the Middle East, Iraq and Afghanistan, which fuelled the warlike tendencies in such a way that the "most democratic imperialism in the world", the USA, is now the main agent for spreading warlike chaos and destabilising the world situation.

China has emerged as a contender of the first order to challenge America's leadership. Its army, despite its modernisation, is still a long way from acquiring the strength and experience of its American rival; its war technology, the basis of its armaments and effective military deployments, is still limited and fragile, a far cry from the US; China is surrounded in the Pacific by a chain of hostile powers (Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Australia, etc.), which block its imperialist maritime expansion. Faced with this unfavourable situation, it has embarked on a gigantic economic-imperialist enterprise, the Silk Road, which aims to establish a global presence and a land expansion through Central Asia in one of the most unstable areas of the world. This is an effort with a very uncertain outcome that requires a total and immeasurable economic and military investment and political-social mobilisation beyond its means of control, which is essentially based on the political rigidity of its state apparatus, a heavy legacy of Stalinist Maoism: the systematic and brutal use of its repressive forces, coercion and submission to a gigantic, ultra-bureaucratised state apparatus, as can be seen in the growing number of protests against the government's "zero Covid" policy. This aberrant orientation and the accumulation of contradictions that deeply undermine its development could eventually undermine the clay-footed colossus that is China. This, and the brutal and threatening response of the US, illustrates the degree of murderous insanity, of blind flight into barbarism and militarism (including the growing militarisation of social life), that capitalism has reached as symptoms of a generalised cancer that is eating away at the world and now directly threatens the future of the earth and the life of humanity.

The whirlwind of destruction that threatens the world

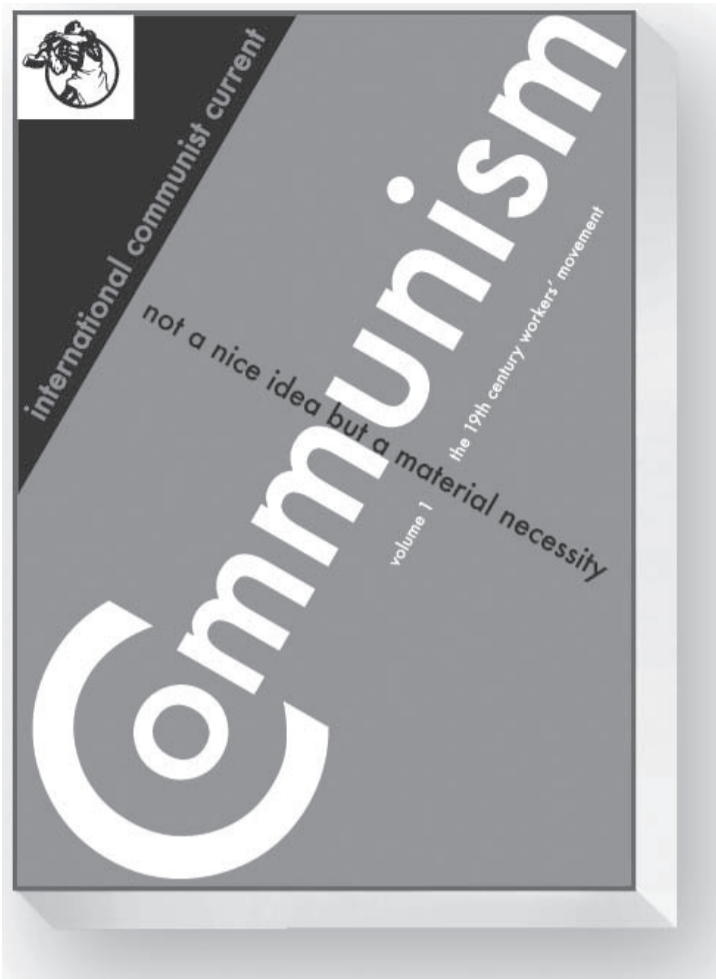
The war in Ukraine is not a storm out of a blue sky; it follows the worst pandemic (so far) of the 21st century, COVID, with more than 15 million dead, and whose ravages continue with draconian lockdowns in China. However, both should be seen in the context of, as well as stimulating, a chain of catastrophes striking humanity: environmental destruction; climate change and its multiple consequences; famine returning with great force to Africa, Asia and Central America; the in-

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credible wave of refugees, which in 2021 reached the unprecedented figure of 100 million people displaced or migrating; the political disorder taking hold of the central countries as we have seen with the governments in Britain or the weight of populism in the United States; the rise of the most obscurantist ideologies...

The pandemic has laid bare the contradictions that undermine capitalism. A social system that boasts impressive scientific advances has no other recourse than the medieval method of quarantine, while its health systems collapse and its economy has been paralysed for almost two years, aggravating a skyrocketing economic crisis. A social order that claims to have progress as its banner produces the most backward and irrational ideologies that have exploded around the pandemic with ridiculous conspiracy theories, many of them from the mouths of "great world leaders".

The pandemic has a direct cause in the worst ecological disaster that has been threatening humanity for years. Driven by profit and not by the satisfaction of human needs, capitalism is a predator of natural resources, as it is of human labour, but, at the same time, it tends to destroy natural balances and processes, modifying them in a chaotic way, like a sorcerer's apprentice, provoking all kinds of catastrophes with increasingly destructive consequences: global warming, triggering droughts, floods, fires, collapse of glaciers and icebergs, massive disappearance of plant and animal species with unforeseeable consequences and heralding the very disappearance of the human species to which capitalism is leading. The ecological disaster is exacerbated by the necessities of war, by war operations themselves (the use of nuclear weapons is an obvious expression) and by the worsening of a world economic crisis that forces every national capital to further devastate numerous areas in a desperate search for raw materials. The summer of 2022 is a glaring illustration of the serious threats facing humanity at the ecological level: rising average and maximum temperatures - the hottest summer since records began internationally -, widespread drought affecting rivers such as the Rhine, the Po and the Thames, devastating forest fires, floods such as the one in Pakistan affecting a third of the country's surface area, landslides... and, in the midst of this devastating panorama of disaster, governments withdraw their ridiculous 'environmental protection' measures in the name of the war effort!

"The final outcome of the capitalist mode of production is chaos", said the Platform adopted by the first Congress of the Communist International in 1919. It is suicidal and irrational, contrary to all scientific criteria, to think that all these ravages would be no more than a sum of passing phenomena, each resulting from distinct causes. There is a continuity, an accumulation of contradictions, which make a common bloody thread, which binds them together, converging in a lethal whirlwind which threatens humanity:

- We are witnessing an acceleration of all the contradictions of capitalism combining with each other and provoking a multiplying effect on the factors of destruction and chaos;

- The economy is plunged not only into crisis but also into increasing disorder (constant supply bottlenecks, a convergence of situations of overproduction and shortages of goods and labour);

- The most industrialised countries, which are supposed to be oases of prosperity and peace, are being destabilised and are themselves becoming major factors in the dizzying increase in international instability.

As we said in the Manifesto of our 9th Congress (1991): "Never has human society seen slaughter on such a scale as during the last two World Wars. Never has scientific progress been used on such a scale in the service or destruction, death, and human misery. Never has such an accumulation of wealth gone side by side with, indeed created, such famine and suffering as that of the Third World countries during the last decades. But it seems that humanity has not yet plumbed the depths. The decadence of capitalism means the system's death-agony, but this agony itself has a history: today, we have reached its ultimate phase, the phase of general decomposition. Human society is rotting where it stands."³

The response of the proletariat

Of all the classes in society, the most affected and hardest hit by war is the proletariat. "Modern" war is waged by a gigantic industrial machine which demands a great intensification of the exploitation of the proletariat. **The proletariat is an international class that HAS NO HOMELAND**, but war is the killing of workers for the homeland that exploits and oppresses them. The proletariat is the class of consciousness; war is

3. Communist revolution or the destruction of humanity

irrational confrontation, the renunciation of all conscious thought and reflection. The proletariat has an interest in seeking the clearest truth; in wars the first casualty is truth, chained, gagged, suffocated by the lies of imperialist propaganda. The proletariat is the class of unity across barriers of language, religion, race or nationality; the deadly confrontation of war compels the tearing apart, the division, the confrontation between nations and populations. The proletariat is the class of internationalism, of trust and mutual solidarity; war demands suspicion, fear of the "foreigner", the most abhorrent hatred of "the enemy".

Because war strikes at and mutilates the very core of the proletarian being, generalised war necessitates the prior defeat of the proletariat. The First World War was possible because the then parties of the working class, the socialist parties, together with the trade unions, betrayed our class and joined their bourgeoisies in the framework of NATIONAL UNION against the enemy. But this betrayal was not enough. In 1915, the Left of social democracy grouped together in Zimmerwald and raised the banner of struggle for world revolution. This contributed to the emergence of mass struggles that paved the way for the Revolution in Russia in 1917 and the worldwide wave of proletarian onslaught in 1917-23, not only against the war in defence of the principles of proletarian internationalism, but against capitalism by asserting its capacity as a united class to overthrow a barbaric and inhuman system of exploitation.

An indestructible lesson of 1917-18! The First World War was not ended by diplomatic negotiations or by the conquests of this or that imperialism, IT WAS ENDED BY THE INTERNATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY UPRISING OF THE PROLETARIAT. ONLY THE PROLETARIAT CAN PUT AN END TO MILITARY BARBARISM BY TURNING ITS CLASS STRUGGLE TO THE DESTRUCTION OF CAPITALISM.

In order to open the way to the Second World War, the bourgeoisie ensured not only the physical but also the ideological defeat of the proletariat. The proletariat was subjected to merciless terror wherever its revolutionary attempts had gone furthest: in Germany under Nazism, in Russia under Stalinism. But, at the same time, it had been recruited ideologically, behind the banners of anti-fascism and the defence of the "Socialist Fatherland", the USSR. "Unable to launch its own offensive the working class was led, bound hand and foot, into the second imperialist war. Unlike World War I, the Second World War did not provide the working class with the means to rise up in a revolutionary way. Instead it was mobilised behind the great 'victories' of the 'Resistance', 'anti-fascism', and colonial and national 'liberation' movement." (Manifesto of the First International Congress of the ICC, 1975).

Since the historic resumption of the class struggle in 1968, and throughout the period when the world was divided into two imperialist blocs, the working class in the major countries refused to make the sacrifices demanded by war, let alone go to the front to die for the Fatherland, thus closing the door to a Third World War. This situation has not changed since 1989.

The fight against inflation and the fight against the war

However, the "non-mobilisation" of the proletariat of the central countries for war IS NOT ENOUGH. A second lesson emerges from historical developments since 1989: MERE NEGATIVITY TO WAR OPERATIONS, AND SIMPLE RESISTANCE TO CAPITALIST BARBARISM IS NOT ENOUGH. STAYING AT THIS STAGE WILL NOT STOP THE COURSE TOWARDS THE DESTRUCTION OF HUMANITY.

The proletariat needs to move to the political terrain of the general international offensive against capitalism. "The working class will only be able to answer capital's attacks blow for blow, and finally go onto the offensive and overthrow this barbaric system thanks to: (-) an awareness

of what is at stake in the present historical situation, and in particular of the mortal danger that social decomposition holds over humanity; (-) its determination to continue, develop and unite its class combat; (-) its ability to spring the many traps that the bourgeoisie, however decomposed itself, will not fail to set in its path." (Theses on Decomposition, thesis 17).

The backdrop to the accumulation of destruction, barbarism and catastrophes that we are denouncing is the **irreversible economic crisis of capitalism that is at the root of its functioning**. From 1967 capitalism entered into an economic crisis from which, fifty years later, it is unable to escape, on the contrary, as shown by the economic upheavals that have been taking place since 2018 and the growing escalation of inflation, it is worsening considerably, with its consequences of poverty, unemployment, insecurity and famine.

The capitalist crisis affects the very foundations of this society. Inflation, insecurity, unemployment, hellish pace and working conditions that destroy workers' health, unaffordable housing... all testify to an unstoppable degradation of working class life and, although the bourgeoisie tries to create all imaginable divisions, granting "more privileged" conditions to certain categories of workers, what we see in its entirety is, on the one hand, what is possibly going to be the WORST CRISIS in the history of capitalism, and, on the other hand, the concrete reality of the ABSOLUTE PAUPERISATION of the working class in the central countries, fully confirms the accuracy of the prediction which Marx made concerning the historical perspective of capitalism and which the economists and other ideologues of the bourgeoisie have so much mocked.

The inexorable worsening of the crisis of capitalism is an essential stimulus for the class struggle and class consciousness. The struggle against the effects of the crisis is the basis for the development of the strength and unity of the working class. The economic crisis directly affects the infrastructure of society; it therefore lays bare the root causes of all the barbarism that hangs over society, enabling the proletariat to become conscious of the need to completely destroy the system and no longer try to improve some aspects of it.

In the struggle against the brutal attacks of capitalism and especially against the inflation that hits workers as a whole in a general and indiscriminate way, workers will develop their combativity, they will be able to begin to recognise themselves as a class with a strength, an autonomy and a historical role to play in society. This political development of the class struggle will give them the capacity to put an end to war by putting an end to capitalism.

This perspective is beginning to emerge: "in the face of the bourgeoisie's attacks, anger has been building up and today, the working class in Britain is showing that it is once again prepared to fight for its dignity, to reject the sacrifices that are constantly demanded by capital. Furthermore, it is indicative of an international dynamic: last winter, strikes started to appear in Spain and the US; this summer, Germany and Belgium also experienced walkouts; and now, commentators are predicting 'an explosive social situation' in France and Italy in the coming months. It is not possible to predict where and when the workers' combativity will re-emerge on a massive scale in the near future, but one thing is certain: the scale of the current workers' mobilisation in Britain is a significant historical event. The days of passivity and submission are past. The new generations of workers are raising their heads" ("The ruling class demands further sacrifices, the response of the working class is to fight!" ICC International Leaflet August 2022)

We are seeing a break from years of passivity and disorientation. The return of workers' combativity in response to the crisis can become a focus of consciousness animated by the intervention of communist organisations. It is clear that each manifestation of the breakdown into the decomposition of society manages to slow down workers' combative efforts, or even paralyse them at

first: as was the case with the movement in France 2019, which was hit by the outbreak of the pandemic. This means an additional difficulty for the development of struggles. However, there is no other way than struggle, the struggle itself is already the first victory. The world proletariat, even through a process necessarily strewn with pitfalls and traps set by the political and trade union apparatuses of its class enemy, with bitter defeats, keeps intact its capacities to be able to recover its class identity and finally launch an international offensive against this dying system.

The obstacles that the class struggle has to overcome

The twenties of the twenty-first century will therefore be of considerable importance in the historical evolution of the class struggle of the workers movement. They show - as we have already seen since 2020 - more clearly than in the past, the perspective of the destruction of humanity that capitalist decomposition holds. At the opposite pole, the proletariat will begin to take its first steps, often hesitant and full of weaknesses, towards its historical capacity to pose the communist perspective. Both poles of the alternative, Destruction of Humanity or Communist Revolution, will be posed, although the latter is still a long way off and faces enormous obstacles in asserting itself

It would be suicidal for the proletariat to try and conceal or underestimate the gigantic obstacles that come both from the activity of Capital and its states and from the putrefying atmosphere that is contaminating the social environment all over the world:

1) The bourgeoisie has drawn the lessons of the GREAT SHOCK of the initial triumph of the Revolution in Russia and the world revolutionary wave of 1917-23, it showed "in practice" what the Communist Manifesto declared in 1848: "A spectre is haunting Europe — the spectre of communism... The bourgeoisie produces... its own grave-diggers ... the proletariat".

a. It COLLABORATES INTERNATIONALLY against the proletariat as was seen in the face of the revolution in Russia 1917⁴ and Ger-

4. The combined armies of the United States, France, Great Britain and Japan collaborated from April 1918 with the remnants of the former Tsarist army in a

many in 1918 or against the mass strike in Poland in 1980.

b. It has developed a gigantic apparatus of control, diversion and sabotage of workers' struggles made up of trade unions and parties of all political colours, from the extreme right to the extreme left.

c. It uses and is going to use all the instruments of its state and the mass media to launch constant ideological campaigns and co-ordinate political manoeuvres aimed at counteracting and obstructing the consciousness and struggles of the proletariat.

2) The decomposition of capitalist society exacerbates the lack of confidence in the future. It also undermines the confidence of the proletariat in itself and in its strength as the only class capable of overthrowing capitalism, giving rise to "every man for himself", generalised competition, social fragmentation into opposing categories, corporatism, all are a considerable obstacle to the development of workers' struggles and above all their revolutionary politicisation.

3) In this context, the proletariat is in danger of being dragged into interclassist struggles or piecemeal mobilisations (feminism, anti-racism, climate or environmental questions...), all of which open the door to a diversion of its struggle onto a terrain of confrontation between fractions of the bourgeoisie.

4) "Time is no longer on the side of the working class. As long as society was threatened with destruction by imperialist war alone, the mere fact of the proletarian struggle was sufficient to bar the way to this destruction. But, unlike imperialist war, which depended on the proletariat's adherence to the bourgeoisie's "ideals", social decomposition can destroy humanity without controlling the working class. For while the workers' struggles can oppose the collapse of the economy, they are powerless, within this system, to hinder decomposition. Thus, while the threat posed by decomposition may seem more far-off than that of world war (were the conditions for it present, which is not the case today), it is by contrast **far more insidious.**" (Theses on Decomposition, Thesis 16)

This immensity of dangers should not push us into fatalism. **The strength of the proletariat is the consciousness of its weaknesses, its difficult** Civil War that caused 6 million deaths.

ties, the obstacles which the enemy or the situation itself raise against its struggle. "Proletarian revolutions ... constantly criticise themselves, constantly interrupt themselves in their own course, return to the apparently accomplished, in order to begin anew; they deride with merciless thoroughness the half-measures, weaknesses, and paltriness of their first attempts, seem to throw down their opponents only so the latter may draw new



German Revolution 1918

strength from the earth and rise before them again more colossal than ever, recoil constantly from the indeterminate immensity of their own goals – until a situation is created which makes all turning back impossible, and the conditions themselves call out: *Hic Rhodus, hic salta!*" (Marx: "18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte").

The response of the Communist Left

In serious historical situations such as far-reaching wars like the one in Ukraine, the proletariat can see who are its friends and who are its enemies. These enemies are not only the major figures such as Putin, Zelensky or Biden, but also the parties of the extreme right, right, left and extreme left, who, with a wide range of arguments, including pacifism, support and justify the war and the defence of one imperialist camp against another.

For more than a century only the Communist Left has been and is capable of denouncing im-

perialist war systematically and consistently, defending the alternative of the class struggle of the proletariat, of its orientation towards the destruction of capitalism by the world proletarian revolution.

The struggle of the proletariat is not limited to its defensive struggles or mass strikes. An indispensable, permanent and inseparable component of it is the struggle of its communist organisations and,

concretely, for a century now, of the Communist Left. The unity of all groups of the Communist Left is indispensable in the face of the capitalist dynamic of the destruction of humanity. As we already affirmed in the *Manifesto* from our first congress (1975): "Turning its back on the monolithism of the sects, the *International Communist Current* calls upon the communists of all countries to be aware of the immense responsibilities which they have, to abandon the false quarrels which separate them, to surmount the deceptive divisions which the old world has imposed on them. The ICC calls on them to join in this effort to constitute (before the class engages in its decisive struggles) the international and unified organisation of its vanguard. The communists as the most conscious fraction of the class, must show it the way by taking as their slogan: 'Revolutionaries of all countries, unite!'"

ICC (December 2022)

Political positions of the ICC

World Revolution is the section in Britain of the **International Communist Current** which defends the following political positions:

* Since the first world war, capitalism has been a decadent social system. It has twice plunged humanity into a barbaric cycle of crisis, world war, reconstruction and new crisis. In the 1980s, it entered into the final phase of this decadence, the phase of decomposition. There is only one alternative offered by this irreversible historical decline: socialism or barbarism, world communist revolution or the destruction of humanity.

* The Paris Commune of 1871 was the first attempt by the proletariat to carry out this revolution, in a period when the conditions for it were not yet ripe. Once these conditions had been provided by the onset of capitalist decadence, the October revolution of 1917 in Russia was the first step towards an authentic world communist revolution in an international revolutionary wave which put an end to the imperialist war and went on for several years after that. The failure of this revolutionary wave, particularly in Germany in 1919-23, condemned the revolution in Russia to isolation and to a rapid degeneration. Stalinism was not the product of the Russian revolution, but its gravedigger.

* The statified regimes which arose in the USSR, eastern Europe, China, Cuba etc and were called 'socialist' or 'communist' were just a particularly brutal form of the universal tendency towards state capitalism, itself a major characteristic of the period of decadence.

* Since the beginning of the 20th century, all wars are imperialist wars, part of the deadly struggle between states large and small to conquer or retain a place in

the international arena. These wars bring nothing to humanity but death and destruction on an ever-increasing scale. The working class can only respond to them through its international solidarity and by struggling against the bourgeoisie in all countries.

* All the nationalist ideologies - 'national independence', 'the right of nations to self-determination' etc - whatever their pretext, ethnic, historical or religious, are a real poison for the workers. By calling on them to take the side of one or another faction of the bourgeoisie, they divide workers and lead them to massacre each other in the interests and wars of their exploiters.

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

* All factions of the bourgeoisie are equally reactionary. All the so-called 'workers', 'Socialist' and 'Communist' parties (now ex-'Communists'), the leftist organisations (Trotskyists, Maoists and ex-Maoists, official anarchists) constitute the left of capitalism's political apparatus. All the tactics of 'popular fronts', 'anti-fascist fronts' and 'united fronts', which mix up the interests of the proletariat with those of a faction of the bourgeoisie, serve only to smother and derail the struggle of the proletariat.

* With the decadence of capitalism, the unions everywhere have been transformed into organs of capitalist order within the proletariat. The various forms of union

organisation, whether 'official' or 'rank and file', serve only to discipline the working class and sabotage its struggles.

* In order to advance its combat, the working class has to unify its struggles, taking charge of their extension and organisation through sovereign general assemblies and committees of delegates elected and revocable at any time by these assemblies.

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

* The working class is the only class which can carry out the communist revolution. Its revolutionary struggle will inevitably lead the working class towards a confrontation with the capitalist state. In order to destroy capitalism, the working class will have to overthrow all existing states and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat on a world scale: the international power of the workers' councils, regrouping the entire proletariat.

* The communist transformation of society by the workers' councils does not mean 'self-management' or the nationalisation of the economy. Communism requires the conscious abolition by the working class of capitalist social relations: wage labour, commodity production, national frontiers. It means the creation of a world community in which all activity is oriented towards the full satisfaction of human needs.

* The revolutionary political organisation constitutes the vanguard of the working class and is an active

factor in the generalisation of class consciousness within the proletariat. Its role is neither to 'organise the working class' nor to 'take power' in its name, but to participate actively in the movement towards the unification of struggles, towards workers taking control of them for themselves, and at the same time to draw out the revolutionary political goals of the proletariat's combat.

OUR ACTIVITY

Political and theoretical clarification of the goals and methods of the proletarian struggle, of its historic and its immediate conditions.

Organised intervention, united and centralised on an international scale, in order to contribute to the process which leads to the revolutionary action of the proletariat.

The regroupment of revolutionaries with the aim of constituting a real world communist party, which is indispensable to the working class for the overthrow of capitalism and the creation of a communist society.

OUR ORIGINS

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