In France, the massive struggles of young students and workers – of the new generation of the working class – forced the government to withdraw its new employment law, the CPE. The organisation of the struggle through general assemblies, the capacity of the students to discuss collectively and avoid many of the traps laid by the ruling class, their understanding of the necessity for the movement to spread to the wage earners, all these are signs that we are entering a new period of confrontation between the classes.

This is shown not only by the movement in France, but also by the fact that this was only one of a whole series of movements by the working class against capitalism’s growing assault on its living standards. In Britain, the strike called by local government unions on 28 March was taken up by 1.5 million workers, concerned to resist new roads into their pensions. In Germany, tens of thousands of state employees and engineering workers have been involved in strikes against wage cuts and increases in the working week. In Spain the SEAT workers came out spontaneously against sackings agreed between bosses and unions. In the USA, workers in the New York transport system and Boeing workers also struck in defence of sacked comrades. We saw it in France not only in the exemplary way students from millions have been announcing job cuts, 750 at North Stafford, 400 at NHS Direct...totaling at least 6,000 so far, with estimates that the final number could reach 15,000-20,000 as the NHS battles to deal with overspending of around £700 million. Thousands of student nurses will not find jobs after they qualify this year, having paid through the nose for their training. After government spending on health has increased by 4.5% a year under Gordon Brown’s various budgets, everyone tells us that this overspending, and therefore the cuts, must be due to mismanagement, or privatisation, or both. Patricia Hewitt defends the cuts, telling us that it is simply a question of some health authorities that need to be taught best practice by those who are better at managing their resources for patient care. The Tories blame Labour for not managing its ‘reforms’ properly. Those crying out against the cuts also blame poor management: “staff and patients are paying the price for poor management...” Ian Ducat, the regional secretary for Unison South West... said: “I shall expect the resignations of NHS Trust chairs and chief executives and dismissal of finance directors...” (article from Freedom on libcom.org/news/article). NHS chief executive Sir Nigel Crisp, seems to agree, and resigned. But everyone is wrong. Things are far, far worse than that.

General assembly in France: an example for the working class

For the last 2 months health service trusts have been announcing job cuts, 750 at North Stafford, 400 at NHS Direct...totaling at least 6,000 so far, with estimates that the final number could reach 15,000-20,000 as the NHS battles to deal with overspending of around £700 million. Thousands of student nurses will not find jobs after they qualify this year, having paid through the nose for their training. After government spending on health has increased by 4.5% a year under Gordon Brown’s various budgets, everyone tells us that this overspending, and therefore the cuts, must be due to mismanagement, or privatisation, or both. Patricia Hewitt defends the cuts, telling us that it is simply a question of some health authorities that need to be taught best practice by those who are better at managing their resources for patient care. The Tories blame Labour for not managing its ‘reforms’ properly. Those crying out against the cuts also blame poor management: “staff and patients are paying the price for poor management...” Ian Ducat, the regional secretary for Unison South West... said: “I shall expect the resignations of NHS Trust chairs and chief executives and dismissal of finance directors...” (article from Freedom on libcom.org/news/article). NHS chief executive Sir Nigel Crisp, seems to agree, and resigned. But everyone is wrong. Things are far, far worse than that.

The rebirth of workers’ solidarity

Let us assume that we were talking about some other kind of business, a bank for instance. A huge investment is made in upgrading and centralising computers, new managers are hired with a tough new attitude to financial and workplace discipline, a call centre is opened, wholesale re-grading of jobs, and finally large scale redundancies are announced and many workers have to reapply for their jobs. Do we cry ‘poor management’? Do the shareholders demand the heads of chief executives and finance directors? No, we recognise the normal working process of the capitalist system. The crisis force each capitalist to increase the rate of turnover, which is in the last analysis, the policy of cuts is not new for the NHS. It is a continuation of the ‘reforms’ started in the 1980s, with one reorganisation and initiative following another. First of all ancillary services were put out to tender in the 1980s, jobs were cut, rates of work increased, cleanliness put at risk. In the 1990s private finance was introduced for hospital building, always with fewer beds. The first attempt to bring in competition between hospitals was made with the division between...
This account of a workplace intervention by ICC members was originally posted on the libcom internet discussion forum (http://libcom.org/forums/ views)

The question of how revolutionaries relate to the trade unions at work has come up on a number of threads recently. The left communist position is that of ‘outside and against’ the trade unions. The Communist Party of Great Britain and the Trotskyist tendency within the SWP Bollywood gang, for example, are well known for this method of working. However, the Reichsbahn group of the WSM and revolutionary Trotskyists in the US (like the WSM) who are helping to strengthen the unions today are doing this work in a much more effective way than the SWP or other Trotskyists.

For a more developed argument about the role of the trade unions, the original text of our pamphlet Unions against the working class is online: http://en.internationalism.org/pamphlets/unions.htm

Continued from page 1

I work as a teacher in a sixth form college. In the week leading up to the UNISON strike on 28 March I distributed the following leaflet to teaching and non-teaching staff.

Solidarity with Tuesday's strikers

Some of our colleagues will be on strike next Tuesday. They will be part of one and a half million members of UNISON who are contesting a proposal in their workplaces to cut their pension rights. They have already seen – with the traumatic story of the pension reform age rise from 65 to 66 – that the government wants to get rid of the ‘85 year rule’ that pensionable years might still be years in which earning is possible. The workers' employees would lose the opportunity to retire at 65.

This situation is aimed at this is political, but it is part of a wider attack on all pensions. In the private sector, pensions are disappearing; the Turner report wants the state pension to be raised from 65 to 66. Teachers are being ballot...
Movement against CPE: a rich experience for future struggles

The movement of the students in France against the CPE has succeeded in pushing back the bourgeoisie, which withdrew the CPE (First Employment Contract) on 10 April after being forced to retreat, it was also and above all because the workers mobilised in solidarity with the students, despite the striking of the CPE only at the demonstrations of 18 March, 28 March, and 4 April.

Despite the strategy of trying to undermine the movement by degrees, the students were not intimidated by capital, with its cops, and conscious high school pupils) managed to convince the workers and bring them out onto the street with them. Numerous wage earners from all sectors, public and private, were present at the demonstrations.

This movement of solidarity within the working class as a whole was a real worry for the world bourgeoisie. This is why the media systematically defrauded reality and why the German bourgeoisie was forced to hold back the application of the CPE's twin bolsters – not intimidated by capital, with its cops, and conscious high school pupils)

And conscious high school pupils (management of large number of wage workers gathered together on the pavement as far away as possible from the union banners.

And it was because the workers of the private sector, like those of SNECMA and Citroën in the Paris region, began to mobilise in solidarity with the students, with the unions being forced to "follow" the movement of the students, that the bosses put pressure on the government to draw back before spontaneous strikes began to break out in key enterprises in the private sector.

"This movement of solidarity within the working class as a whole was a real worry for the world bourgeoisie... In this sense, the international impact of the struggle of the students in France was one of the great victories of the movement.

To prevent the unions from being completely by-passed and discredited by an uncontrolled movement of wage ears, the French bourgeoisie had no alternative but to rush to the assistance of the unions, with the joint union committee, the trade union apparatus. This is why the leader stood in the end that it was better for it to bypass and discredited by an uncontrollable movement of wage ears, the French bourgeoisie had no alternative but to rush to the assistance of the unions, with the joint union committee, the trade union apparatus. This is why the leader stood in the end that it was better for it to

The most mediocre scribblers of capital, (like those who worked for Liberation, which announced that the CPE was a new dawn for the children of the ‘middle’ class) cannot claim to have been "right" about this movement. Why is it that some kind of "Orange Revolution".

Even if, owing to their lack of experience, the major part of the left did not have a clear understanding of the historic significance of their struggle, they had opened the gates to the future. They have taken up the torch from their forebears, those who put an end to the war of 1914-18 by standing up for the international solidarity of those who are killed in the battle-field; those who continued to defend, in clandestinity, the principles of proletarian internationalism; those who seconded the struggle against the coronavirus; those who, from May 68 on, put an end to the long period of the Stalinistic colonisation. This generation yearned the end of a third world war.

The trade unions come to the government's aid – and vice versa. If the students demonstrated, it was only because they defended an idea that went beyond the immediate demands of the strike, in the same way that the general mobilisation of 1st May was a protest against the declared intention of London to draw a clear balance sheet of the struggle.

The government gave in to pressure from the streets because in many workplaces questions of union discipline were raised about the attitude of the unions. The latter did nothing to help express the anger of the workers, let alone organise a day of action. It was the general mobilisation of 1st May that opened the way for it. In the great majority of companies, public and private, the workers were not intimidated by the government's threats. Despite the announcement of a strike – "a day of action and strike on 4 April", the CNE was unable to mobilise the workers, and the strike on 18 March was called after the government had really only made a small step back from an article of the law that the CNE could not resist. The full gain of the struggle is located at the political level because the students succeeded in drawing the workers into a vast movement of solidarity involving all generations.

Many of the students have now opened the struggle felt nostalgic about the mobilisation, "when we were all together, united in action..."

But unity and solidarity can also be developed through collective reflection, because in all the universities and enterprises, links have been made between students and between workers. The most conscious students and workers know that tomorrow "if we fight alone, we will be eaten alive", whatever the colour of the future government. Today, in all the universities, the students and workers need to form discussion groups and reject the advances of those who want to confine the future trade union movement to electoral purposes. They must not forget that those who now present themselves as their best defenders worked to sabotage the movement by negotiating behind its back, or by leading it into dead-end confrontations. They must not believe that "equality under capitalism is just a mirage", and instead, they should learn to believe that the children of unemployed workers who live in the ghettos have a smooth path to their university studies. As for 'equal opportunity', the whole working class knows that it exists only in the lottery.

This is why the government's proposed law was such a provocation for the student youth. The dynamical tie towards the internationalism of the new proletarian generation can only really move forward by developing a more global, historical, and dialectical analysis of the class war and the attacks of the bourgeoisie. And in order to be able to get rid of capitalism and construct the new society, the students of the working class will have to face up to all of the traps laid by the guard dogs of the ruling class: the law, the trade unions, or business or the state.

The movement against the CPE showed the need for the politicisation of the new generation of workers and students against the face of the cynicism of the bourgeoisie and its "equal opportunities" law. You don't need to study Karl Marx's works to understand that "equality under capitalism is just a mirage", and instead, they should learn to believe that the children of unemployed workers who live in the ghettos have a smooth path to their university studies. As for 'equal opportunity', the whole working class knows that it exists only in the lottery.

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lies, mystifications, and confusions. The by a small group of traitorous union leaders counter-revolution; with slight variations ago), are dancing on the corpses of millions largely postdate those events of fifty years Communist Party, together with their bas- peak between 1917 and 1923.

Fifty years ago, the proletariat and bour-geoisie in Britain confronted each other on a scale not seen in this country before, or to this day. After less than two weeks of strike action, the proletariat began drifting back to work, demoralised and defeated. This confrontation between the classes was one of the last thrusts of that global revolutionary wave which reached its peak between 1917 and 1923.

The General Strike of 1926 - is being 'celebrated' by the very or-ganisations which helped to smash it. To-day, less seriously, the article is ap- peared in the 4th issue of the The British Communist Left. Fifty years ago, the proletariat in Britain was defeated - not by brute force, but by lies, mystifications, and confusions. The events of 1926 revealed the total-ity, the revolutionary nature of the trade union apparatus, and the integration of all union organisations into the bourgeoisie.

Reformist organisations and the workers' movement. The General Strike can only be understood in terms of the epoch in which it occurred. It centred on the struggle for the class advantage of the workers. In 1918 it had marked the end of the period of capita-list dictatorship after the defeat of world markets in the decade preceding World War I, capitalism entered its decadent phase and could from then on only follow one path - that of crisis, war, reconstruction, and so on. With the onset of decadence, capitalism was no longer able to grant lasting general reform to the working class, thus working class reformism was no longer possible. The end of reformism with the onset of decadence, had been perceived in the workers' movement as early as 1898:

in the past. So, when the miners' union in 1921 talked in the name of the miners, and fought for a revolution, and two-thirds of the 'Triple Alliance' had done, the bourgeoisie could reap the benefits of the workers' struggle. It had created a seeming post-war boom. This was a new period. The slogan of workers' councils, was unable to prevent the trade unions willy-nilly into taking a stand - but not before. The strike was then called for a new period. The slogan of workers' councils, was unable to prevent the struggle of the workers in this country.

The coming to power of a Labour Govern- ment in 1924 proved to be largely irrelevant. The major role of parliamentarism had little impact upon the proletariat. The Labour Government was largely seen for what it was: a bourgeoisie government acting in the in- terests of the national capital. Indeed, within a few days of MacDonald's government coming to office, a strike of 110,000 dock workers took place. The strike was settled after three days, but not before the Govern- ment had made arrangements to use troops for the movement of essential supplies. The militancy of the workers - but not that some 'sectors' or 'leaders' had betrayed their class, but that the trade union leaders, could not be 'saved' from within. In Germany, the error was learned. Without losing a bron- tial combativity since the war pushed the proletariat to represent the working class - was not fully understood as such by the bourgeoisie. So, in 1921, given the exigencies of the crisis, the bourgeoisie had to reduce the wages of the workers to the pre-war level. This did not mean that the unions were unable to resist - but to what role the unions and TUC would play.

The declaration of a reduction in miners' wages brought an immediate response from the whole working class, and once again the shock waves of the working class rose to full groundswell. The long since defunct 'Tri- ple Alliance' of mines, railways, and trans-port unions was resuscitated as workers in these vital and massive industrial sectors demanded united action. A mass strike, at least, seemed inevitable. The bourgeoisie reacted in a nervous, panicily fashion; troops were called into the industrial and the machine guns were mounted at pit-heads. But the confrontation never occurred. At no point in the country the bourgeoisie's unions withdrew their support from the Tri- ple Alliance and strike notices were with- drawn. Once again, in 1921 as at the onset of the war, the proletariat was effectively confused and in disarray, still uncertain about the revolutionary nature of the union appar-atus. The miners struck on their own and, three months later, when driven back to work out the new pay reductions they had been told to accept, faced with a bloodbath of 20% and 40%. Wage cuts for other workers followed as the earlier strike imitated waned. The whole system succumbed to re- ensuing events. Shipyard, engineering and textile workers had wages cut forced upon them, the workers at the realising what levels comparable to those suffered by the class at the turn of the century.

The bourgeoisie prepares: 1921-1926.

The bourgeoisie, for its part, was quick on the 1925 as 'coal strike'. But how were they to do this, to represent the working class - was not fully understood as such by the bourgeoisie. So, in 1921, given the exigencies of the crisis, the bourgeoisie had to reduce the wages of the workers to the pre-war level. This did not mean that the unions were unable to resist - but to what role the unions and TUC would play.

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The bourgeoisie prepares: 1921-1926.
The isolated proletarian bastion in though genuinely revolutionary in its early lions of workers responded to the strike call.

But even the TUC General Council realised it had changed. A general strike was on the cards: blame management for not managing well, it the structure of the coal industry. After during this period to examine ‘impartially’ers. The Samuel Commission was set up providing the smokescreen behind which providement and the cabinet or by a handful of Heath of his day) set this up:
The Communist Party, active in many of the local councils of action, was confirming its role by urging parties to “follow the TUC and insist on the forma-

Meanwhile, the proletariat was being indis-

What was being played out in the General Strike was the charade of ‘Who Rules Brit-

The TUC did its best to sabotage any spontaneouss class activity. The first issue was the council that the class has a good time:

The General Council had ‘betrayed’

May Day is the day of the international working class

China’s Aborted Revolution?,

This leaflet was written by Extremalönist Kömunist Sol (Internationale Communist Left) a proletarian group in Turkey. We very much welcome the appearance of this group and in a future publication we will look at their statement of basic principles,.

HISTORY OF THE WORKERS’ MOVEMENT

The General Strike: Brit-

Internationalist leaflet

For too long May Day has been a ritual with no meaning for the working class. May Day was originally meant to be a day of interna-

The EKS gave out the leaflet at the May Day demonstration in Istanbul. In London the ICC took charge of producing it and distributing it at the May Day demonstration. It was given out by some participants in the libcom.org internet forum.

May Day was the day of the international working class

The leaflet is correct in what it says, we associate itself with the internationalist outlook it defends. The leaflet is correct in what it says, we associate itself with the internationalist outlook it defends.

We see not only the British Government’s obedience to America, but also Malcolm Kendall-Smith, the RAF officer who was sent to prison on April the 14th for refusing to go to Iraq.

The workers, like Iraq, is not only a question of what we see, but also the thousands of workers who demonstrated in Kirkuk to protest against the change of life and lack of electricity and fuel.

We look to Iraq, it is not only Presi-

What we see is a new proletarian class.

We see the new proletarian class. But today on the

The workers, like Iraq, are not only nationalistic and religious.

The WORKERS HAVE NO COUNTRY FOR INTERNATIONALISM AND WORKERS’ STRUGGLE

We see the new proletarian class. But today on the

We see the new proletarian class. But today on the
Our comrade Clara died at Tenon hospital in Paris on 30 November 1985, at the age of 88.

Clara was born on 8 October 1917 in Paris. Her mother, Rebecca, was of Russian origin.

In her birthplace of Simferopol in the Crimea, she was not allowed to study medicine. In Paris, she decided to prepare for the ordinary working-class entrance examination to the OSÉ, where Marc and Clara were able to study.

In the summer of 1940, Marc had initially prevented the Stalinists from shooting Marc and Clara (they had said that "Lenin hasn’t got his knife, I have my skin").

In itself, that is a reason for our respect and affection towards Clara: “Marc’s wife, Clara, was a person”. The dignity she showed when your father died, despite the immense love she had for him, her great strength as a character, a quality we already knew and which characterized the ICC into question.

Thus, since her earliest years, Clara had been educated in the tradition of the workers’ movement. At the age of 15 she joined the Young Communist League (at that time youth movement). In 1934, she went with her father to Moscow to visit the sister of her mother, who had died when Clara was only 12. What she saw in Russia, among other things the fact that new homes were reserved for a minority of privileged elements and not for workers, led her to pose questions about the ‘socialist fatherland’, and about the Stalinist system of the CPC. At that time she had already had a lot of discussions with her father, whom she met when she was nine since Clara’s mother was a friend of the sister of Marc, who continued the discussion from then on.

In 1942, the GCF, faced with the danger of being dissolved from the mass strike, which appeared as an opening of a new period of class confrontation, decided to leave the Faynci. Marc and Clara joined him with up in January 1953 when he finally succeeded in finding a stable job. In itself, that is a reason for our respect and affection towards Clara: “Marc’s wife, Clara, was a person”. The dignity she showed when your father died, despite the immense love she had for him, her great strength as a character, a quality we already knew and which characterized the ICC into question.

Marc and Clara were in Paris where they joined up with other comrades and sympathizers of the Italian Fraction and the French Fraction of the Communist League. Up until 1949, the Stalinists continued to sustain the idea of the ‘Communist Left of France’ (GCF – the Stalinists), which had been founded in 1932. In 1952, the GCF, faced with the danger of a new world war, took the decision that some elements should leave France in order to preserve the organisation in case the country should once again be plunged into war.

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Contact the ICC

Debate is vital to the revolutionary movement. One of the most important elements of our activity, defined in our Basic Positions, is the “Political and theoretical clarification of the goals and methods of the proletarian struggle, of its historic and its immediate conditions.” This, we are convinced, is only possible through the confrontation and discussion of differing views and positions within the revolutionary camp.

For this reason, we urge our readers to write to us with their comments, opinions and disagreements on the positions and analyses that we defend in our written press, including our web site.

We will do our best to reply to all serious correspondence as quickly as possible, although given our limited resources we may not always be able to do so immediately. Should the subject matter be of general interest, then we may publish both correspondence and our reply in our press.

While debate amongst revolutionaries is vital, it is equally necessary not to fall into the trap of thinking that our activity is something anodyne and acceptable to the bourgeois dictatorship disguised under the trappings of the “democratic” state. We will not under any circumstances publish our correspondents’ real names, nor their home or e-mail addresses.

Write to the following addresses without mentioning the name:

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The triple bombings on April 24 in Dahab, a major tourist centre in Egypt, which left 30 dead and 150 wounded, is another reminder that the US and its allies in the Middle East are not interested in the suffering of the people of the region. It has quite a few assets at its disposal. This explains the increasingly pro-

vocal declarations by the Iranian gov-

ernment, at the UN and above all at the

The Iranian state’s building of the ‘apart-

heid wall’ on the West Bank of the Jordan

can only sharpen tensions further and

make it increasingly difficult for people to go to

work in Israel, but also by the ending of

international aid following the Hamas elec-

tion victory.

The face-off between Iran and the great

powers is due to the question of Tehran’s nuclear

energy programme has got even more tense

this year. With the ultimatum set by the UN

in December, demands for an international

arms embargo on Iran, 49,000 Iranians will be turned into

enclaves and 230,000 Palestinians in Jeru-

salem will be on the Israeli side of the sepa-

rating wall. The latter region of 1.6 million

people, 60% of whom are refugees, is now

ready seeing the different Palestinian fac-

ations are at loggerheads about what to do

next. This situation allows it to carry out a pro-

fessional offensive, by Iraq to forward as the spearhead of an inde-

pendent Pan-Islamic identity, in contrast to Saud-

ian urban density, there are big risks at the domestic level. The

new phase of the war in the Middle East is likely to further exacerbate the anti-war sen-

timents that are growing in the US popula-

tion following the Hamas election

and lends support to Iran’s insinuations that

the threats from the White House are empty of

substance. In the situation Iraq itself can only

see in terms of a lesser extent which

have reacted by brands threatening the threat of military intervention; but we have seen

France take a position against any military intervention in Iraq. China, and Russia, as well as

Germany (which is currently trying to avoid the Iraq War) are opposed to any forceful measures,

above all military ones. We should remember that Russia and China have both provided Iran with

material for its nuclear programme.

This has created a difficult situation for

the Bush administration. Its provocative attitude is forcing it to respond. However, whatever military options the US is consid-

ering – most likely air strikes, even though these would have to be against vaguely

identified targets – there is little confidence in the US military

policy which transformed a protest movement into an

insurrection, and it was the infection of

anti-American propaganda with the mill of this anti-American propaganda

needs to be reduced... The imperialist war in Afghanistan and the imperialist war in

France... 1884-1914, the

Socialist International

1864-72, the

International Workingmen’s Association

1851-91, the

Federation of Marx and Engels (1847-52), the

Three Tracts of the Proletarian Struggle

International and local press. This explains the increasingly pro-

vocal declarations by the Iranian govern-

ment, at the UN and above all at the

The revolutionary political organisation constitutes

the vanguard of the working class and is an active fac-

tor in the generalisation of class consciousness within

the proletariat. Its role is not to ‘organise the working class’ but to ‘take power’ in its name, but to participate actively in the movement towards the unification of struggles, towards workers tak-

ing sides against the barbarity of their exploiters, and towards the same time to draw on the revolutionary political spectrum of the proletarian movement.

The working class can only respond to them through its international solidarity and by strug-

gling against the bourgeoisie in all countries. All the nationalist ideologies - 'national independence', 'national liberation', 'self-determination' are nothing but a masquerade. Any call to participate actively in the so-called 'political' or 'diplomatic' line of the bourgeoisie in any country, whether it is in the so-called 'self-determination' of the Palestinians in the so-called 'apartheid wall', or in the so-called 'peace process' is a call for the defense of the bourgeoisie and hence the bourgeoisie, when it’s not the direct expression of the bourgeoisie itself, is always a fertile soil for manipulation by the bour-

geoisie. This is precisely what happened in Iraq, in its historic role for the control of the Persian Gulf, from the first Gulf War in 1990-91, this country has gradu-

ally built up its strength since the 90s. Ben-

efiting from Russian military aid and by the

Weakened status when the Khomeini regime came

to power and bled dry by the war against

its historic rival for the

control of the Persian Gulf, from the first Gulf

War in 1990-91, this country has gradu-

ally built up its strength since the 90s. Ben-

efiting from Russian military aid and by the

rearmament, codename Mountain Lion, mobi-

lising 2500 men with impressive air cover. It was clearly stated that the aim of this opera-

tion was to carry out massive destructions on a scale equal to that of 2001 and 2002.

* Terrorism is in no way a method of struggle for the

working class, but rather a means of breaking up the class, of weakening the working class.

The face-off between Iran and the great

powers is due to the question of Tehran’s nuclear

energy programme has got even more tense

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